

ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES, LANGUAGE STUDIES,
JOURNALISM AND COMMUNICATION
DEPARTMENT OF LINGUISTICS
(GRADUATE PROGRAM)

**A THEMATIC ANALYSIS OF LINGUISTIC TABOOS AND THEIR
CORRESPONDING EUPHEMISTIC EXPRESSIONS IN OROMO**

BY
BIRHANU TAKELE BAYISA

December, 2017
ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA

**A THEMATIC ANALYSIS OF LINGUISTIC TABOOS AND THEIR
CORRESPONDING EUPHEMISTIC EXPRESSIONS IN OROMO**

BY

BIRHANU TAKELE BAYISA

**A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO
THE SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES
ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY**

**IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DOCTOR
OF PHILOSOPHY DEGREE IN LINGUISTICS**

**December, 2017
ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA**

ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES, LANGUAGE STUDIES
AND COMMUNICATION
DEPARTMENT OF LINGUISTICS
(GRADUATE PROGRAM)

A THEMATIC ANALYSIS OF LINGUISTIC TABOOS AND THEIR
CORRESPONDING EUPHEMISTIC EXPRESSIONS IN OROMO

BY

BIRHANU TAKELE BAYISA

APPROVED BY:

_____	_____	_____
Advisor	Signature	Date
_____	_____	_____
Examiner, Internal	Signature	Date
_____	_____	_____
Examiner, External	Signature	Date
_____	_____	_____
Chair person, Department of Graduate Committee	Signature	Date

December, 2017

ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA

Declaration

I the undersigned declare that the dissertation hereby submitted for the degree Doctor of Philosophy in general linguistics at Addis Ababa University is my own work and has not been previously submitted at another university for any degree. To the best of my knowledge, it contains no materials previously published or written by another person, except references have been duly acknowledged.

Name of the Candidate: Birhanu Takele Bayisa

Signature: _____

Date of submission: _____

This dissertation has been submitted for examination with my approval as University Supervisor.

Name of the Supervisor: _____

Signature: _____

Date of submission: _____

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank and express my sincere appreciation to all those who have helped, assisted and contributed to the successful completion of this dissertation. Without their help and support, this journey would not have been possible.

Primarily, all the compliments, praise and thanks to God who enabled me succeed in my work. I am also very much grateful to my advisor Dr. Telemriam Fufa for his guidance and constant supervision as well as providing me with necessary information and support without which the completion of this work would not have been possible.

I am greatly indebted to the Addis Ababa University and Madda Walabu University for the financial support they provided for this study. Besides, I am grateful to Addis Ababa University, particularly to Afaan Oromoo and literature department which invited me to present seminar paper from part of my dissertation on 2015's conference. I also thank all the staff that gave me their precious time and commented on my presentation at the forum.

My heartfelt thanks go to the zonal culture and tourism bureaus of Bale, Eastern and Western Hararghe, Eastern Wollega and Horro Guduru Wollega zones of Oromia Region for the invaluable information they gave me regarding my study as well as for the suitable conditions they created to me to meet with my respondents during data collection.

I would like to express my gratitude to Dr. Gemechu Kedir, Dr. Birhanu Oljira, Dr. Tilahun Telila, Lemi Kibebew (PhD candidate), Mr. Wolde Eshetu, Mr. Feyisa Eticha, Mr. Bala Sukanna, Abebe Lemessa (PhD candidate), Bedilu Teka (PhD candidate), for their very constructive and insightful comments which is helpful to the refinement of this dissertation.

I am thankful to my beloved wife, Terefech Feyisa, for her love, support, encouragement and sacrifice she made for me. I would also like to thank my little son, Sagni Birhanu, who always gives me love and happiness, and who bore with me when I deprived him of myself during the study.

I have furthermore to thank my brother Mosisa Takele and my whole family who encouraged me to complete this study.

Also I offer special thanks to my colleagues: Habtamu Duguma, Diriba Demiso, Indalkachew Degu, Zelalem Wannaw, Beyenu Gedefa, Abebu Hailu, Ayantu Daniel, and Merga Wannaw who were always ready to give me their warm-hearted encouragement, friendship and support for the successful completion of this study.

To all the above individuals and to several friends and colleagues whose names were not listed and who have assisted me directly or indirectly I feel very much indebted.

Table of Contents

Contents	Page
Acknowledgments.....	i
Table of Contents	iii
List of Tables	ix
Abbreviations.....	x
Abstract	xi
CHAPTER ONE.....	1
INTRODUCTION	1
1.1. The People and the Language.....	2
1.2. Background of the Study	8
1.3. Statement of the Problem.....	12
1.4. Objectives of the Study.....	15
1.4.1. General Objective	15
1.4.2. Specific Objectives	15
1.5. Significance of the Study	16
1.6. The Scope of the Study.....	17
1.7. Research Methodology	17
1.7.1. Research Design.....	17
1.7.2. Source of Data and Sampling Technique.....	18
1.7.2.1. Source of Data	18
1.7.2.2. Sampling Technique.....	18
1.7.3. Instruments and Data collection procedures	19
1.7.3.1. Research Instruments	19
1.7.3.1.1. Focus Group Discussion	20
1.7.3.1.2. Observation	21
1.7.3.1.3. Unstructured Interview	21
1.7.3.1.4. Introspective Method	22
1.7.3.2. Procedure.....	22
1.7.4. Method of Data Analysis	22
1.8. Theoretical Framework of the Study	23
1.8.1. Pragmatic Approach to Euphemism	24

1.8.1.1. Euphemism and Context of Situation.....	25
1.8.1.2. Euphemism and Speech Act Theory	26
1.8.1.3. Euphemism and Face Theory	28
1.8.1.4. Euphemism and Politeness Theory	29
CHAPTER TWO	34
2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE ON TABOOS AND EUPHEMISMS	34
Introduction	34
2.1. Taboo	34
2.1.1. Origins of Taboo	34
2.1.2. The Power of Taboos	36
2.1.3. From Taboo Acts to Taboo Words	37
2.1.4. Definition of Taboo (words)	39
2.1.5. Categories of Linguistic Taboos	42
2.1.5.1. Taboos Related to Death	47
2.1.5.2. Taboos Related to Disease	48
2.1.5.3. Taboos Related to Sexuality.....	48
2.1.5.4. Taboos Related to Body Parts and Bodily Excretions	49
2.1.5.5. Taboos Related to Woman	49
2.1.5.6. Taboos Related to Marriage Relationship	50
2.1.6. Factors Behind Using or Avoiding Taboo Words	50
2.1.7. Some Previous Studies on Linguistic Taboos.....	53
2.1.7.1. Taboos (linguistic Taboos) Studied at International Level	53
2.1.7.1.1. Semantics and Taboo Words	59
2.1.7.2. Taboos Studied in the Oromo Society.....	62
2.2. Euphemism	66
Introduction.....	66
2.2.1. Definition of Euphemism.....	67
2.2.2. Historical Background of Euphemism.....	68
2.2.3. Euphemism, Language and Culture	69
2.2.3.1. Euphemism and Language	70
2.2.3.2. Euphemism and Culture	70

2.2.4. Classification of Euphemism	72
2.2.5. Functions and Motivations of Euphemism	72
2.2.6. Purposes and Uses of Euphemisms.....	73
2.2.7. The Common Characteristics of Euphemism	74
2.2.7.1. Indirectness.....	74
2.2.7.2. Universality	75
2.2.7.3. Culture Specificity.....	76
2.2.7.4. Beautification	76
2.2.7.5. Formality	77
2.2.8. Formation of Euphemistic Expressions	77
2.2.8.1. Formal innovation	78
2.2.8.2. Semantic Innovation.....	80
2.2.9. Euphemisms and Style.....	85
2.2.10. Semantic Aspects.....	85
2.2.10.1. The Definition of Semantics and Meaning.....	86
2.2.10.2. The Definition of Word Meaning and Context	87
2.2.10.3. Semantic features	88
2.2.10.4. Semantic fields	89
2.2.11. Multiple Senses of Lexical Items.....	89
2.2.11.1. Primary meaning of a word meaning	89
2.2.11.2. Secondary meanings of a word	89
2.2.12. Literal meaning versus figurative meaning.....	90
2.2.12.1. Literal meaning.....	90
2.2.12.2. The figurative meaning	91
2.2.13. Semantic Change and Euphemism.....	91
2.2.13.1. Types of Semantic Change in Euphemism.....	92
2.2.13.1.1. Generalization.....	92
2.2.13.1.2. Specialization.....	92
2.2.13.1.3. Pejoration	93
2.2.13.1.4. Amelioration	93
2.2.14. Semantic Relations and Euphemism.....	93

2.2.14.1. Synonymy.....	94
2.2.14.2. Antonymy.....	95
2.2.14.3. Hyponymy.....	95
2.2.14.4. Prototypes.....	96
2.2.14.5. Homophones.....	97
2.2.14.6. Homonyms.....	97
2.2.14.7. Polysemy.....	98
CHAPTER THREE.....	99
3. PRESENTATION AND DESCRIPTION OF DATA.....	99
3.1. Introduction.....	99
3.2. Taboo Expressions and Euphemism Related to Death.....	100
3.2.1. Ways of Expressing Death Based on Age.....	102
3.2.1.1. Euphemisms for Adult’s Death.....	103
3.2.1.2. Euphemisms of Youth’s Death.....	107
3.2.1.3. Euphemism For a Child Death.....	109
3.2.2. Ways of Announcing Somebody’s Death.....	112
3.2.3. Expression of Condolence to the Family of Deceased.....	115
3.2.4. Causes of Death and Relative Euphemistic Expressions.....	122
3.2.4.1. The euphemistic expressions of the term <i>bakakkaa</i> ‘thunder’ and the death caused by it.....	122
3.2.4.2. Suicide and Euphemistic Expression.....	127
3.2.5. Taboo and euphemistic expressions related to addressing name of deceased.....	129
3.2.6. Pragmatic Features of Euphemistic Expressions of Death.....	132
3.3. Taboo Related to Diseases and Corresponding Euphemisms.....	132
3.4. Taboo and Euphemism Expressions Related to Woman.....	152
3.4.1. Taboos related to the word <i>dubartii</i> ‘woman’.....	152
3.4.2. Taboos and Euphemism Related to Virginity.....	155
3.4.3. Taboos and Euphemism Related to Pregnancy.....	160
3.4.4. Taboo and Euphemism Related to Delivery.....	163
3.4.4.1. Taboos and euphemism related to <i>c’iniinsuu</i> ‘labour’.....	163
3.4.4.2. Taboo and Euphemism Related to the word <i>alte</i> ‘delivered’.....	164

3.4.4.3. Expressions of Congratulating a Delivered Woman	166
3.4.4.4. Taboos and euphemism related to barren, abortion and miscarriage	168
3.4.5. Taboo and Euphemism Related to Menstruation.....	170
3.5. Taboo and Euphemism Related to Sexual Organs and Sexuality.....	174
3.5.1. Taboos and Euphemisms Related to Male Sexual Organ.....	174
3.5.2. Taboos and Euphemisms Related to Female Sexual Organ	178
3.5.3. Meaning Extension of Male and Femal Sexual Organ	181
3.5.4. Taboo and Euphemism Related to Sexual Act	183
3.5.4.1. Insulting Expressions Related to Sexual Organs and Act	188
3.5.4.2. Expression Used for Prostitutes	190
3.5.4.3. Expression Related to Rape.....	190
3.5.4.4. Homosexuality.....	191
3.6. Taboos and Euphemisms Related to Body Parts	192
3.6.1. Taboos and Euphemisms Related to Impaired Body Parts	192
3.6.2. Taboos and Euphemism Expressions Related to Normal Body Parts	202
3.7. Taboos and Euphemisms Related to Excretion	204
3.7.1. Taboos and euphemisms related to <i>udaan</i> ‘faeces’ and <i>haguu</i> ‘defecating’	205
3.7.2. <i>uufuu</i> ‘farting’	208
3.7.3. Vomiting	211
3.7.4. <i>bulaa</i> ‘sperm’	213
3.7.5. Taboos and Euphemism Related to <i>hobbaatii</i> ‘placenta’ and <i>oota</i> ‘aminotic- fluid’	217
3.8. Taboos and Euphemisms Related to Name	218
3.8.1. Taboo Names Related to Marriage Relationship.....	218
3.8.1.1. Naming the Bride	219
3.8.1.2. Taboos and Euphemisms Related to Sexual Intercourse in Honeymoon	220
3.8.1.3. Taboos and Euphemisms related to <i>Aruuzaa</i> ‘honeymoon’ in Hararghe Oromo.....	222
3.8.1.4. Taboos Related to Name Calling and Substitution Mechanisms	224
3.8.1.4.1. Taboo Name to be Avoided by the Wife	224
3.8.1.4.2. Taboo Name to be Substituted by Husband.....	231

CHAPTER FOUR.....	233
4. DISCUSSION AND FINDINGS.....	233
4.1. Introduction.....	233
4.2. Categories of Taboos and Euphemistic Expressions usage in Oromo.....	233
4.3. Strategies of Euphemizing Taboos and Their Semantic interpretations.....	237
4.4. Similarities and differences of taboos and their euphemistic expression among the study areas.....	246
4.5. Factors Determining Taboos and Euphemism Expressions.....	247
4.6. Consequences of Violating Taboos and Euphemistic Expressions	251
4.7. Implication of Taboos and Euphemistic Expressions	252
CHAPTER FIVE	255
5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION.....	255
5.1. Conclusion	255
5.2. Recommendations.....	260
References.....	262
APPENDIX -A.....	272
APPENDIX -B.....	277
DABALEE- A.....	278
DABALEE- B.....	283
APPENDIX_C	284

List of Tables

Table 1: Taboos and euphemisms related to male sexual Organ in Bale	175
Table 2: Taboos and euphemisms related to male sexual Organ in Hararghe.....	176
Table 3: Taboos and euphemisms related to male sexual Organ in Wollega	177
Table 4: Taboos and euphemisms related to female sexual Organ in Bale	178
Table 5: Taboos and euphemisms related to female sexual Organ in Hararghe.....	179
Table 6: Taboos and euphemisms related to female sexual Organ in Wollega	180
Table 7: Names of sexual organs and their extended meaning out of their specific areas	181
Table 8: Taboos and euphemisms related to sexual acts	184
Table 9: Taboos and euphemisms related to <i>jaamaa</i> ‘blind’	194
Table 10: Taboos and euphemisms related to <i>naafa</i> ‘lame’	196
Table 11: Taboos and euphemisms related to <i>dinkii</i> ‘dwarf’	197
Table 12: Taboos and euphemisms related to <i>duudaa</i> ‘deaf’	199
Table 13: Taboos and euphemisms related to deformed lip, stammer and hunchback	201
Table 14: Taboos and euphemisms related to <i>udaan</i> ‘waste’ and <i>haguu</i> ‘defecating’	206
Table 15: Taboos and euphemisms related to <i>uufuu</i> ‘fart’	209
Table 16: Taboos and euphemisms related to <i>hook’k’isa</i> ‘vomit’	212
Table 17: Taboos and euphemisms related to <i>bulaa</i> ‘sperm’	215
Table 18: Taboos and euphemisms related <i>hobbaatii</i> ‘placenta’, <i>oota</i> ‘amniotic fluid’ and <i>finc’aan</i> ‘urine’	217

Abbreviations

1	first person
2	second person
3	third people
ABL	ablative case
ABS	absolute case
ADJ	adjective
ASSO	associative marker
AUX	auxiliary
BEN	benefactive
CAUS	causative
CP	complimentizer
COP	copula
CNV	converbial
DAT	dative case
EP	epenthesis
F	feminine
FOC	focus
GEN	genitive case
INF	infinitive
IMPR	imperative
INTRG	introgative
IPFV	imperfective
INST	instrumental case
JUS	jussive
LOC	locative
MD	middle
M	masculine
NEG	negative
NOM	nominative
PASS	passive
POSS	posessive
P	plural
PFV	perfective
RCP	reciprocal
RDP	reduplication
REF	reflexive
REL	relative
S	singular
VBZR	verbalizer
VN	verbal noun

Abstract

This study identifies and describes the linguistic taboos and their corresponding euphemistic expressions among the Oromo of Oromia Regional State. To conduct the study, qualitative method was employed. The main instruments of data collection were focus group discussion, unstructured interview, observation and introspective method. The framework of the study is a pragmatic approach to euphemism and taboo which mainly includes euphemism to context of situation, speech act theory, face, and politeness theory. The data were analyzed and interpreted based on the framework. The findings of the study revealed that in daily communication, the Oromo societies of the research areas are highly intertwined with social taboos. They prohibit uttering taboo words or expressions related to death, disease, woman (pregnancy, menstruation, delivery and virginity), sexual organs, sexual acts, some normal and impaired body parts, excretion and names related to marriage relationship. These tabooed subjects are categorized into: context-specific and generally unmentionable taboos. Context-specific includes non-taboo words and words related to the hearer's physical or social defect. Non-taboo words are words which have neutral meaning in everyday speech and have got tabooed inference in specific-context. Taboos related to the hearer's physical or social defects are any words with connotations to the hearer representing his/her physical or social defect. Mentioning taboo terms related to physical impairments and diseases are categorized under this topic. General taboos are unmentionable words which are absolutely forbidden words. Taboos related to death, sexual organs, sexual acts, excretion and name of father-/mother-in laws are categorized under this section. Whatever taboo terms are, the Oromo societies of the study areas use euphemistic expressions to mild, roundabout, indirect, polite, less distasteful, inoffensive, agreeable, tactful, less explicit, to make taboo words comparatively favorable meaning or less unpleasant association whereas the substituted taboo words/expressions are characterized as harsh, blunt, direct, distasteful, painful, unpleasant, indelicate, offensive, or frightening. The Oromo of study areas avoid uttering these taboo expressions to save someone's face loss through euphemistic expressions and make the speaker or hearer free from any embarrassment or feeling of shock. To do this, they use euphemistic expression strategies like metaphor, metonymic, circumlocution, synecdoche, hyperbolic, understatement, antonymic, onomatopoeia and borrowing. The society of the study areas use distinctive euphemistic expressions for a single tabooed term except some expressions they use in common. In fact, the usage of linguistic taboos and euphemistic expressions are determined by differences of age, gender, relationship, geographical location, context of use and the like. Among the areas this study has been undertaken, taboo words and euphemistic expressions may be reflected as taboo words/euphemisms which are similarly taboo/euphemistic expression in all research areas, taboo words/euphemistic expressions which have meaning extension, taboo words/euphemistic expressions which are taboo/euphemism in one of the research site, and not known or has another meaning in other sites of the study. Finally, to minimize problems encountered by taboo words and euphemism expressions, further research must be conducted by concerned bodies.

Keywords: *linguistic taboos, euphemism, euphemism strategy, pragmatic approach, negative connotation, transference of meaning.*

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

This study is a thematic analysis of linguistic taboos and their corresponding euphemistic expressions among the Oromo of Bale, Hararghe and Wollega. It consists of five chapters. Chapter one is an introduction. It consists of the background, statement of the problem, objectives, scope, significance, methodology and theoretical farework of the study. Chapter two is devoted to origin of taboo, power of taboo, from taboo acts to taboo word, and definition of linguistic taboos and to some previous studies, classification of linguistic taboos and motives for the use of taboos. Besides, this chapter is concerned with definition and the historical background of euphemism, the integration of euphemism with language and culture, classification of euphemism, functions and motivations of euphemism, purposes and uses of euphemism, the common characteristics of euphemism which include indirectness, implicitness, universality, culture specificity, beautification and formality. Also it consists about formation of euphemistic expressions, semantic aspect of taboo and euphemism, semantic change in aboo and euphemism semantic relations and euphemism. Chapter four is concerned with the presentation and descriprion of a thematic linguistic taboos related to death, disease, woman (pregnancy, menstruation, delivery and virginity), sex (sexual organs and sexual acts), some normal and impaired body parts, excretion, names related to marriage relationship with their corresponding euphemistic expressions. Chapter four provides the description of the results under the umbrella of the analyzed data. Thus, the aim of this part is to identify categories of linguistic taboos, strategies of euphemistic expressions, similarities and differences of linguistic taboos and euphemistic expressions used among the Bale, Hararghe and Wollega Oromo, consequences of breaching taboos, factors which affect linguistic taboos and euphemism and the significance of studying linguistic taboos and their euphemistic expressions. The dissertation ends with chapter five, in which major conclusions and recommendations of the study are shown. It indicates some possible regulation on the violation of euphemistic expressions and thereby suggests some gaps for further studies.

1.1. The People and the Language

The Oromo people are native African ethnic group found in Ethiopia and to smaller extent in Kenya and Somali. Gragg (1982:xiii) reports “the Oromo live over a large area stretching from close to the Sudan border in the West, through Addis Ababa, and beyond Harar in the east, from the northern Kenya in the South and east of Rift Valley to Wollo in the north”. In line with this, Kebede (2009:1) says in Ethiopia, the Oromo people live in an area extending from Tigray (Raya) in the north to Kenya in the south (Waata), and from Wollega in the west to Hararghe in the east with Addis Ababa at the middle.

On the other hand, there is inconsistency among researchers in figuring out the number of the Oromo people. This inconsistency tells that much more research is needed to know the exact figure of the speakers. More recently according to the ‘Summary of Population and Housing Census of Ethiopia’ (2007), Oromo people are 25.3 million out of the 73.9 million of the total population of the country. The data indicates that the people are the largest ethnic group in Ethiopia and cover the overwhelming majority, more than 32% of the population of the country.

The Oromo people permanently live on the Oromo land, Oromia; Oromia¹ is located in the Eastern central and Western parts of Ethiopia. Its capital city is called Addis Ababa, which is also the same for the country Ethiopia. Oromia is the largest regional state in Ethiopia both in terms of population and land size. It covers an area of 367,000 square kilometers. Topographically, Oromia is located at 500-2500 meters above sea level. It has a warm and mild climate (Tolemariam, 2009). The climate is as varied as the physical geography. Although close to the equator, because of the mountain ranges, high altitude and vegetation, the region has favorable climate. About 80% of the population lives at 1800 meters to 2500 meters altitude where the temperature is very good for agriculture (Gada 2004:4).

The life of the people is based on mixed economy. But agriculture is the backbone and the predominant occupation which is followed by pastoralism. There are varieties of crops, plants and farm animals. The land produces coffee, cereal crops, vegetables, fruits,

¹ Oromia is one of the nine ethnically-based regions of Ethiopia.

etc. The farm animals include cattle, sheep, goats, donkeys, mules, horses, camels and chicken.

In their long life history, the Oromo people are enriched with their own culture. The one which is highly developed and well known self-sufficient system has influenced every aspects of the life of the Oromo is the 'Gada' system. The Gada system is the social, political, legal, and religious system of the people. A century ago, the people were practicing the system of Gada. According to Gadaa (1988:10), "a Gada system is a system that organizes the Oromo society into groups (about 7-11) that assume different responsibilities in the society in every eight years. It has guided the religious, social, political, and economic life of the Oromo [people] for many years, and also their philosophy, art, history, and calendar. Generally, the Gada system is a uniquely democratic, political, philosophical, social, and religious institution that governs the life of every individual in the society from birth to death.

Different religions are practiced among Oromo: Christianity, Islam and a traditional religion called *Waak'effannaa*².

The Oromo language (self name *Afaan Oromoo*) is one of the languages of the East Lowland Cushitic within the Cushitic family of the Afro-Asiatic Phylum (Bender, 1976:166; Gragg, 1982: Xiii; Baye, 1986:8). It is spoken in three countries of north eastern Africa: Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia. It is one of the major Ethiopian languages. According to Gadaa (1988:9) and Mahdi Hamid Mude (1995: xi), *Afaan Oromoo* is the third most widely spoken language in Africa after Arabic and Hausa. According to Kebede (2009) in the present day Ethiopia, *Afaan Oromoo* is spoken by about 40% of the population and is used as a language of inter-group communication in several parts of the country.

² *Waak'effannaa* is the traditional or indigenous religion/faith system of the Oromo people which is monotheistic, where the followers of this faith system do believe in only one Supreme Being.

The language is referred to as Afaan Oromoo/Oromo/Oromiffa by different researchers and writers (Samuel Legesse, 2010:5). For the sake of simplicity, in this paper, 'Oromo' is used for the people while 'Afaan Oromoo' is for the language.

Afaan Oromoo had been a vernacular language for a long period of time. But since 1991 the language has become an official language: language of education, language of court and language of business in the Oromia region. Since 1991, Oromo script was shifted from the Ethiopic to Latin. The language is taught as a subject in the first cycle (1-4), second cycle (5-8) and third cycle (9-10) of education. Afaan Oromoo also serves as a medium of instruction in the first and second cycles in Oromia. The language has also been instituted as a medium of instruction in teachers training colleges and KG. Besides, B.A. degree is offered in different universities such as Addis Ababa University, Jimma University, Haramaya University, Madda Walabu University, Wollega University, Ambo University, Mattu University, Arsi University, Bule Hora University and Dilla University. These universities are training Afaan Oromoo teachers, journalists and social workers who participate in the fields of public relations, culture and tourism bureaus. At present while M.A. degree in Afaan Oromoo is being offered at Addis Ababa, Jimma, Haramaya, Wollega, Madda Walabu and Arsi Universities, PhD degree in Afaan Oromo is given only at Wollega University.

Due to the fact that Oromo dialectology has not been studied exhaustively, there is no clearly defined dialects and isoglosses³ (Baye 1986:8); because neither the exact boundaries nor its sub-divisions are determined. For instance, there is a discrepancy among the reports of the writers regarding the dialects. However, scholars have classified it in different ways. Bender (1976) has classified Oromo dialects into: Mecca (Western), Tulama (Central), Wallo and Rayya (Northern), Arusi, Guji and Borena (Southern) and Hararghe (Eastern). The basis of this classification seems to be geographical although it is not stated in the work. Kebede (1984) proposed four dialects of the language. Their geographical divisions are Northwestern, Eastern, Central, and Southern.

³ Isogloss refers to "a line marking the limit of use of word or other linguistic feature" (Francis, 1983:3).

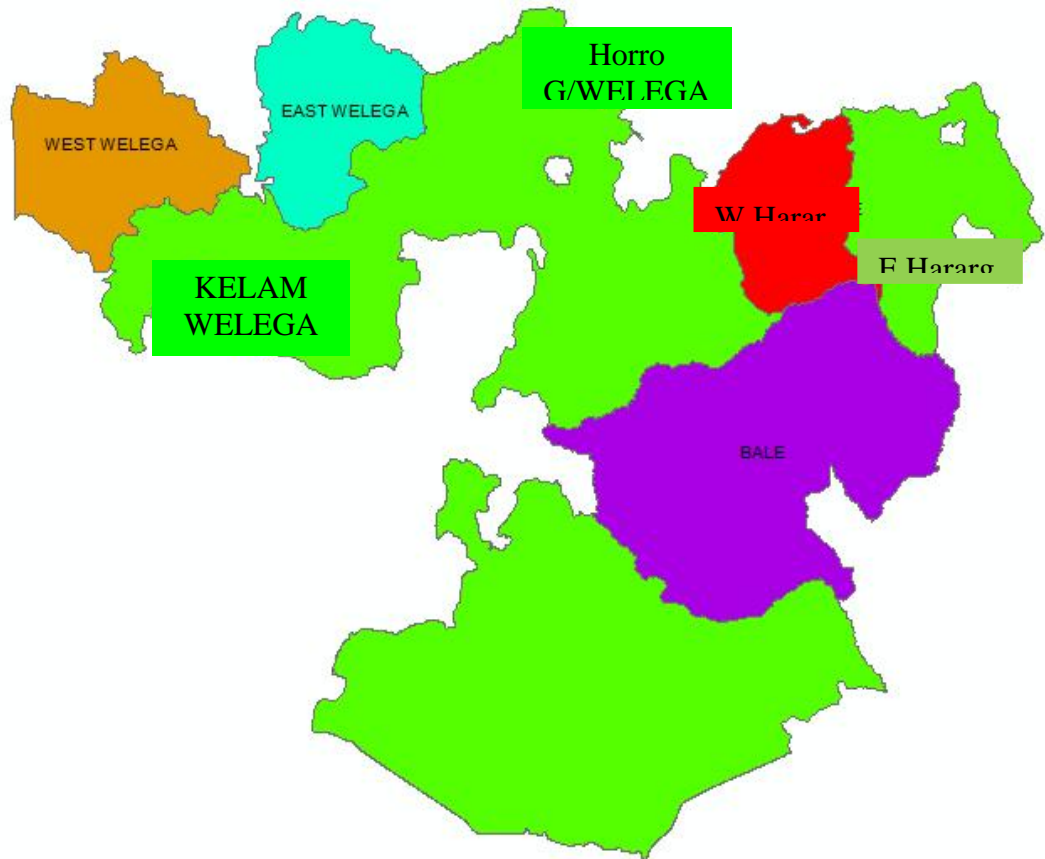
Depending on these authors' and the others' classifications, Mekonnen (2002) divided the dialects of Oromo into Borana, Gujii (both Southern), Arsi-Bale (South Eastern), Hararghe (Eastern), Wallo, Rayya (both Northern), Tulama (central) and Mec'c'a (Western).

Kebede (2009), in his Ph.D. dissertation, has proposed ten genetic units in Afan Oromo dialects. From these, he has listed Western, Eastern, Central, Waataa, East, Wollo and Rayya as synchronic dialect areas and Eastern, South-East-North, North-Eastern and North as the historical units. According to him, each genetic unit is determined on the basis of the morphophonemic pattern (or bundle of isoglosses). His morphophonemic isoglosses have also been supported by evidence from the lexical phonetics isoglosses that was discussed in his thesis, too.

Kebede (2009) also revisited and proposed ten dialect classifications of the language. From the genetic unit, he identified that six are the synchronic dialects and four are the historical units from which the synchronic areas are developed. This classification is the latest and the most updated than the rest. In the same token, Feda (2015:7) recently classified dialects of Afan Oromo into six clusters, Western (Wollega, Illubabor and Jimma), Central (Tuulama, or Shewa), Northern (Rayya and Wollo), Southern (Borana and Guji), Southeastern (Arsi and Bale) and Eastern (Harar),

However, the main purpose of the current study is not to discuss the classification of Oromo dialects in detail. But it is just an attempt to show that a single word can have various meanings due to the variation of dialects among the people in the research areas and can create miscommunication/misunderstanding between communicants who come from different dialects. The current research has focused on the Oromo societies who live in Oromia Regional State: Bale, Hararghe and Wollega zones.

Map of the study areas



Different dialects are spoken in these selected zones: Southeastern dialect (Bale), Eastern dialect (Hararghe) and Mac'c'a dialect (Wollega). According to the current administrative divisions, Hararghe province is divided into Eastern and Western zones, but Wollega province remained unchanged until the adoption of new constitution in 1995, and later on it was also divided into Eastern and Western Wollega zones. Similarly, after a while Kellam Wollega separated from Western Wollega zone as another zone, and on the other side, Horro Guduru separated from Eastern Wollega zone and recognized as independent zone. The former Wollega province is now divided into four zones (Eastern Wollega, Horro Guduru Wollega and Western Wollega and Kellam Wollega zones).

The following section provides some information regarding the research sites:

I. Bale

Bale is one of the zones in Oromia Region of Ethiopia. It is bordered on the south by the Ganale Dorya River which separates it from Guji, on the west by the West Arsi Zone,

on the north by Arsi, on the northeast by the Shebelle River which separates it from West Hararghe and East Hararghe, and on the east by the Somali Region. Bale has historical places and tourist sites which attract people from inside and outside of the country. Bale national park and the Sof-Umar cave are the well known tourist sites of the zone. The Oromo people of this zone are called the Bale Oromo.

II. Hararghe

As aforesaid, in derg regime Hararghe province was divided into two zones (Eastern and Western Hararghe zones). East Hararghe is one of the Zones of Oromia Region of Ethiopian. It took its name after the former province of Hararghe. Eastern Hararge is bordered on the southwest by the Shebelle River which separates it from Bale, on the west by West Hararghe, on the north by Dire Dawa and on the north and east by the Somali Region. The Harari Region is an enclave inside this zone. West Hararghe is bordered on the south by the Shebelle River which separates it from Bale, on the southwest by Arsi, on the northwest by the Afar Region, on the north by the Somali Region and on the east by East Hararghe. The Oromo people of this area are called the Hararghe Oromo. They speak Eastern dialect of Oromo.

III. Wollega

Wollaga is one of the provinces of Ethiopia located in the Western part of the country. It is bordered by the Sudan in the West, by the Gambella region and Illuu Abba Bora province in the South, the Benishangul Gumuz and Amhara regions in the North, and Shawa province in the East. The Oromo people of this area are called the Mac'c'a Oromo (Tesso, 1999). The reason why I was interested to these research areas were explained under the section of sampling techniques.

It should be noticed that the research areas Hararghe and Wollega were selected according to the former demarcation or division. This means that their separation into different zones as the form of the present day could not create communication barrier among the speakers. Since these divisions indicate that dwellers speak the same dialect or categorized under similar dialect. Thus, in this study, the four Wollega zones are taken as Mac'c'a Oromo dialect speakers regardless of little differences. The same is true for the Hararghe province because both western and eastern zones are the Eastern dialect

speakers while the Oromo people living in Bale province are categorized under Southeastern dialect (Fedaa, 2015, Mekonnen, 2002).

In this research, the most important thing that we should understand is, when I say Bale Oromo, Hararghe Oromo and Wollega Oromo, I am not saying there are group of Oromo called Bale, Hararghe and Wollega Oromo, but it refers to the Oromo societies living in these areas (provinces) and speaks the stated Afaan Oromoo dialects regardless of the zonal differences in each province. Hereafter, while comparing the taboo words/expressions and their euphemistic expressions of the three research areas, the names of the places are used to refer to the Oromo societies of the area. Thus, there should not be confusion for the mixing of these territorial divisions of Oromo people by considering them as different groups of Oromo people. In the analysis part, the research sites are treated according to their alphabetical order: Bale, Hararghe and Wollega with no other reason.

1.2. Background of the Study

Human languages are regarded as the most important instrument for communication. It does not matter whether it is in the spoken or written form. We can understand each other through language (Helmi, 2008:12). Language is a means to transfer information and ideas containing meaning or vital messages about life, character and personality (Helmi, 2008:12, Babou-Sekkal, 2012:17). To do this the interlocutor may recognize the certain conversations of the action and utterance of the other (Sari, 2008:10). However, when we say this, meaning is not made by language alone (Ghounan, 2013). "In speech it is accompanied by gesture, postural, situational and paralinguistic information" (Helmi, 2008:12). The meaning of any discourse always depends on how people try to connect it to contextual information. Therefore, understanding the language and the context when the language is used in communication is inseparable. It means that true meaning often lies not in the actual words uttered or written, but in the complexity of social knowledge. As a result, the meanings of words are generally interpreted differently because of the impact of our culture which dictates how we think and behave in various situations. In a general sense, language occupies a vigorous place to influence people's views and concepts about their world. By means of language, individual identities become explicit

since it mirrors their social status and environment (Babou-Sekkal, 2012:17). Besides, “Language is not simply a means of communicating information; it establishes and maintains the relationship of the society” (Babou-Sekkal, 2012:17).

Furthermore, there are some aspects that affect language including the social structure, the social environment and values of the society. “Language is deep rooted in the culture of its people since it reflects their norms and taboos” (Ghounane, 2013:18). Therefore, speakers do not randomly choose the forms and the styles to use language. They bear in mind several aspects namely how close one another interlocutors, when and where the conversation takes place, and whom the interlocutors are (Sari, 2008:10). Hence, ignoring these beliefs during interaction may lead to severe assault between speakers since every individual has to behave appropriately in his/her society depending on its norms.

Every single time we speak, we tend to speak according to the norm of a certain society in order to avoid insulting, embarrassing, affecting the interlocutors’ self-esteem and judging other hearers in the negative way. In this vein, one should note that “all languages have certain words, expressions, sentences and topics which are banned to be uttered or discussed in public. This language or words are called taboos” (Ghounane, 2013:19). Sari (2008:10) called these taboo words ‘dangerous words’ which is well known as ‘taboo or dysphemism’. According to Sari, to overcome the effect of these taboo words, the speaker may conceal the truth by avoiding the dangerous words.

In fact, certain taboos/words exist in all languages and cultures, although each society has its own norms and taboos which are not to be used, or at least in certain circumstances (Helmi, 2008:13). So, according to Ghounane (2013), taboos are the cultural beliefs of the society which are universal and culture-specific. Besides, in order to avoid embarrassments/effects which taboo words enhance, people try to look for substitutions that can cover the harmful power of taboo words. Consequently, euphemisms are employed to replace offensive expressions that can cause harm and shame for speakers. These expressions are related to the religious and cultural beliefs of a given society and define its socio-cultural structure (Ghounane, 2013).

When we talk about taboo words and their euphemism, we have to remind that language, society and culture which are the most important issues to discuss about them. Regarding this, Yakubu (2012:60) states as “Every language, culture and society are so intertwined that it is impossible to understand one without the other”. The language of a particular society is an integral part of its culture, so when we talk about linguistic taboo of Afaan Oromoo (Oromo), it is inevitable to raise the idea of Oromo culture and norm. Because it is impossible to understand language comprehensively without considering the context of culture and the context in which communication takes place (Alixé 2012:13). This type of language features is studied in sociolinguistics perspective. Wardhaugh (1986:13) indicates that sociolinguistics is seen as the study of language in relation to its socio-cultural context. Sociolinguistics focuses on the relationships that exist between language, society and culture. It is part of linguistics, which treats language as a socio-cultural phenomenon, including linguistic taboos. It is widely accepted that linguistic taboos are the effects of beliefs and values of a society. The beliefs and values of a society can also have an effect on its language. Trudgill (1986:5) says that it is the society which affects language and its environment. According to Trudgill, the most interesting way in which society affects its language is through the phenomenon known as “taboo”. We communicate with each other using different words or expressions of language to deal with social context and social values.

In language, there are taboo words/expressions that we do not say overtly; users know them covertly in some way. If speakers overtly use these taboo words, they are regarded as violators of social norms and customs; at the worst point he/she might be rejected or excluded from the formal setting of the society. These expressions and concepts used in a limited context in a society are called linguistic taboos. According to Aris (2013), linguistic taboo exists and frequently used in all cultures in spite of its nastiness. So, when taboo words are violated in particular society’s norm, they create fear, shame or sense of shock.

A linguistic taboo is a kind of behavior which is believed to be supernaturally forbidden or regarded as immoral. According to Wardhaugh (1986:239), “ linguistic taboo is the prohibition or an avoidance in any society of behavior believed to be harmful to its

members in that it would cause them anxiety, embarrassment or shame”. So, in language, there are expressions unsuitable for use in a specific social context, and are therefore prohibited or restricted.

There are many definitions for the notion linguistic taboos; however, the present study has relied on the working definition of Qanbar (2011:88). According to her, “A linguistic taboo is any word or a phrase or a topic that if mentioned in public causes embarrassment and feeling of shame or provokes a sense of shock, and it is offending to the hearer’s sensibilities or beliefs”.

In whatever cases, people do not directly talk about taboo words or expressions; if they are compelled to talk about them, they talk in very roundabout ways. In the first case we have instances of linguistic *taboo*; in the second we have the employment of *euphemisms* to avoid mentioning about these taboo words directly (Wardhaugh 1986: 238).

The form of language avoidance in a certain way is euphemism. The term euphemism is used to substitute words and phrases which are considered impolite and embarrassing since people need to speak indirectly and politely (Holder 2008: 65). In this vein, Pyles and Algeo (1970: 201) stated that “euphemism is any term that replaces a taboo word in a language”.

The Oromo culture and language also consist of rules and norms that guide the daily businesses of the people. When these rules and norms are violated, it could result in imposition of sanctions. A linguistic taboo is part of the language and culture which is a sensitive topic in our daily communication; so it is significant to know taboo words and the strategies of using euphemistic expressions to avoid taboo which offend someone when communication takes place.

For example, in Afaan Oromoo classroom teaching-learning process, taboo words may also create a problem between students and teachers who come from different dialects. Regarding this, I have faced an unforgettable event while I was teaching in Madda Walabu University. One day, I was teaching about a paragraph, and then I gave a topic for the students and I wrote the topic on the blackboard. The topic was ‘*tamboo*’. As soon as I wrote this word, some students began getting shocked, laughing at me and giggling at one

another. At that moment, I was not able to understand what went wrong and felt uneasy about the matter. Later on, one student immediately told me that, “instructor, the word *tambo* has a connotative meaning which is taboo for those students from Bale and Arsi zones, because in these zones, the word ‘tamboo’ refers to ‘vagina’, but the same word is used to mean ‘tobacco leaf’ in Wollega”. Such issues encouraged me to delve further into taboo word and their corresponding euphemistic expressions according to their particular areas.

On the other hand, not only violating taboo words can create offence/embarrassment but also using inappropriate euphemism by itself can be considered as taboo. Because not only the differences of meanings of taboo words lead to communication barriers/problems among Oromo society but also the differences of euphemistic expressions given for a similar taboo referent in different specific context/place can do similar effects. However, research has not yet been conducted to treat such cases in Oromo. Therefore, such words and expressions and things related to this topic motivated me to conduct study on this topic.

1.3. Statement of the Problem

Language expresses the culture of the society in which it is spoken. Every language has customs and norms which guide and shape the culture of its people. Each language has particular culture and pattern of behavior; there are certain boundaries and restrictions in the culture and use of a language. Violation of these boundaries or restricted rules is regarded as taboo and the action of violating these rules can lead to punishment. For this reason, custom and norm can guide and shape linguistic taboos of the societies (Yakubu, 2012:55).

According to Ghounane (2013:98), researchers are hardly motivated to carry out research on this topic due to its sensitiveness so that little is known about linguistic taboos and their euphemistic expressions. This statement seems true in our current case even though no research has been conducted on this topic in Oromo. In our daily speech, breaking Oromo society’s taboos cause different problems between interlocutors; especially among the speakers who come from different dialects.

Afaan Oromoo has various dialects; due to this reason some words have double meaning (meaning extension); these meanings may result in positive or negative responses.

Moreover, there were communicative events that happened at different times and places which can be cited as evidence for the existence of problems related to taboo words in this society.

It is better to present the practical event that took place in Guji zone of Oromia region due to the connotative meaning attached to the taboo term 'Guji'. Guji is a word used in two senses in dictionary *Galmee Jechoota Afaan Oromoo* (Dictionary of Afaan Oromo) compiled by Ethiopian Language Academy. In this book, the first sense of the word is given as "one tribe of Oromo living in Southern part of Oromia" whilst the second sense of the word 'Guji' is described as "servant or housemaid or slave" in (Šawa zone). At certain time, this has caused critical opposition among the Guji Oromo as the result of which property was damaged. The case ended in burning the copies of the dictionary in fire at the presence of the regional top official to settle the mass discontent. This indicates that how much taboo terms/words are sensitive among this society.

Knowledge of taboo word is very essential in preparing teaching materials/student's text books or any text book in Afaan Oromoo. If some words have different connotative meanings in addition to their usual denotative meaning out of their particular area owing to the obvious dialect variation in the language, it can create ambiguity among the users. As a result of this, the text book writers should take care of about taboo words not to use in the contents of that book. For example, a word which has a formal meaning in given zones of Oromia may have taboo meanings in another zone and vice versa. However, identifying this issue by itself needs a big research project; because Oromo society's norms need using taboo words in accordance with their particular area/dialect. Thus, to fill such gaps, we have to necessarily get corpus data or compiled materials of taboo words. Moreover, such challenges still points out an urgent study.

Knowing about taboo words/expressions is also very essential not to use them in different mass media or media prints. Because in using them in media or mass media can provoke shame or feeling of shock on people hearing it. Regarding this, there was,

unforgettable event that took place in Borena zone. The event happened when athlete Derartu Tullu won the marathon race and awarded a cup. At that moment the reporter was reporting the news in Afaan Oromoo as *Darartuu Tulluu fiigic'a fageeña maratoonii kaattee*, '*geeba*' *badaafamte* when directly translated into English it means: 'Derertu Tullu ran marathon distance and awarded a cup'. However, in this sentence the word *geeba* and *kaattee* have connotative meaning in Borena Oromo. Where in Borena, the word *geeba* refers to 'penis' and *kaattee* 'copulate' which both are taboo; so they were shocked when they heard the report. Thus, Borana Oromo comprehended the report as 'Darertu Tullu was awarded male's sexual organ for the race she won' which is highly taboo; while the word *geeba* means 'cup', *kaattee* is 'run' in Bale zone.

Besides, not all taboo words are taboo; because, some words/expressions which are non-taboo/neutral have got tabooed meaning in specific contexts and create other problems between speakers and hearers; because their tabooedness is determined only in the given contexts. Anyhow, failing to use euphemistic expressions according to the particular society's norm is taboo by itself.

The context of language use listed or cited above, there seem compelling reasons to undertake research on the topic under scrutiny, because violating of linguistic taboos is considered as violation of social norms. These violations can again result in conflict among individuals or between an individual and group at worst. As far as I know, exhaustive works have not been done on Afaan Oromoo linguistic taboos and their corresponding euphemistic expressions. Even nowadays, it is heard when people use taboo words/expressions without euphemizing. Especially, young generation seems have no consideration to be careless to use linguistic taboos and their euphemistic expressions. Therefore, this topic needs critical study to raise the awareness of the users about linguistic taboos and their euphemistic expressions to avoid the problems encountered by them.

In general, the present study attempts to answer the following basic research questions:

1. How the Bale, Hararghe and Wollega Oromo categorize taboo words/expressions and euphemize them in everyday use?
2. What are the differences and similarities of taboo words and euphemistic expressions used among the Oromo people of the selected areas?
3. How do the semantics of taboo words and their euphemistic expressions are interpreted in the research areas?
4. What are the factors determine taboo words and their euphemistic expressions?
5. What consequences of breaking taboo words in the research areas?
6. Why the Oromo people of the research areas required to use euphemism instead of taboo words?

1.4. Objectives of the Study

The objective of this study is divided into general and specific objectives.

1.4.1. General Objective

The general objective of this study is to identify and describe linguistic taboos and their corresponding euphemistic expressions among Oromo of Bale, Hararghe and Wollega zones of Oromia Region.

1.4.2. Specific Objectives

The specific objectives of the study are:

1. To describe how does Bale, Hararghe and Wollega Oromo categorize taboo words/expressions and euphemize them in everyday use.
2. To sort out the differences and similarities of taboo words and euphemistic expressions used among the Oromos of the selected areas
3. To explain how the semantics of taboo words and their euphemistic expressions are interpreted in the research areas
4. To identify the factors that determine taboo words and their euphemistic expressions
5. To determine the consequences of breaking taboo words in the research areas
6. To express why do the Oromo people of the research areas required to use euphemism instead of taboo words

1.5. Significance of the Study

This study is expected to contribute the following issues. It would encourage the interest of people to study linguistic taboos and their euphemistic expressions existing in Oromo or other societies. It is believed that the key issues of taboo and euphemism have not previously been researched fully; hence the understanding derived from this study is useful guide for educators involved in similar or related research topic and will facilitate new approaches to Afaan Oromoo curriculum design. This study is very important for curriculum designers of Afaan Oromo, lexicographers who prepare Afaan Oromoo dictionary and people who work on Afaan Oromoo standardization and translation. Furthermore, people can use this finding as reference if it is kept in libraries at school or university and zonal cultural and tourism bureaus.

This study also contributes important insights into applied linguistics and intercultural communication to explore the functions of euphemism and concepts of the sociolinguistic and psycholinguistic aspects of the use of euphemism in contact situations from both native and non-native speakers' perspectives. It also enhances the sociocultural motivation, including the pragmatic areas of politeness strategies and social motivation as well as linguistic restriction. Since language restriction can be discussed over broadly oriented and interdisciplinary fields, the focus will be on euphemism in relation to discrimination and human perception towards the use of euphemism.

All languages have expressions categorized as euphemism, which is designed to protect a speaker from being offensive and/or to demonstrate a positive attitude towards interlocutors. Since its engagement is mainly unconscious, native speakers in general do not focus their attention on euphemism. However, it would be considered a very complex factor by language learners when required to understand terms and concepts in the target language and culture.

Besides, this dissertation creates understanding in the form of comments, correction or sanction by identifying inappropriate use of language that have negative social consequences and used to increase the relationship of society which help them to live together in harmony or peacefully respecting each other and their society's norm. It also helps to conduct a comparative study of linguistic taboos and the euphemistic expressions

of the currently selected areas (zones) with another zone of Oromia Region. Therefore, it will make valuable contribution to obtain knowledge on the subject.

Finally, this study practically enables the readers who need to document taboo words and their euphemistic expressions. It contributes something for people who want to know about Oromo culture, norm, and language or for Afaan Oromoo learners as a second language.

1.6. The Scope of the Study

This study is concerned with a thematic analysis of linguistic taboos and their corresponding euphemistic expressions in Oromo. As linguistic taboos can be categorized into different subjects; this study is limited to describe linguistics taboos related to death, disease, woman, body parts (defect), sex and sexuality, excretion, names related to marriage relationship and their euphemistic expressions. Due to financial and time constraints the current study delimited only to these few zones, namely: Bale, Hararghe and Wollega Zones even if Oromia region has 17 zones.

1.7. Research Methodology

This part presents the research methods and the procedures designed to answer the research questions. It includes research design, data source, sampling techniques, research instrument, data collection and data analysis.

1.7.1. Research Design

To conduct this research, descriptive qualitative method is employed. Descriptive qualitative method is a better method to be used in order to collect data to specify, delineate, or describe naturally occurring phenomena without experimental manipulation (Seliger and Shohamy (1989). The method is used to establish the existence of phenomena by explicitly describing them. Qualitative data tend to be in the form of words and sentences than numbers. In order to achieve the intended objectives of this study, the aforementioned method was employed. According to Ghounane (2013), qualitative research allows the researcher to gain access to the motives, meanings, actions and reactions of people in the context of their daily life. In essence, qualitative research is oriented toward the search for meanings, that is, the interpretation and meanings people give to events, objects, other people, and situations in their environment.

1.7.2. Source of Data and Sampling Technique

1.7.2.1. Source of Data

The primary source of data for this study is native speakers of Afaan Oromoo who live in Bale, Hararghe and Wollega zones. During data collection, social variables like age, gender, relationship or intimacy and context are considered because they may determine linguistic taboos usage and their euphemistic expressions.

1.7.2.2. Sampling Technique

To select the research area, purposive sampling technique was used. As Creswell (2003:185), in case of qualitative research, for the purpose of deep understanding of the subject matter under study or research question, it is up to the researcher to make a decision on the research participants, sites and even the material to be used. This research was undertaken on Oromo people of Bale, Hararghe and Wollega. The researcher chose the research areas depending on the following reasons: In case of Bale, I have been an instructor at Madda Walabu University since 2007; this institution is located in Bale zone. So, I am familiar with the culture, norm and dialect of Oromo of Bale zone (Southeastern dialect). From Bale zone, the data were gathered from Sinana and Dinsho woredas. In the case of Wollega, I am familiar with the dialect because I was born and brought up in Wollega, and I can speak Mac'c'a (Wollega) dialect. This case also created a suitable condition to communicate informants during data collection. In the case of Eastern Wollega zone, the data were gathered from Wayu-tuqa and Guto-gidda woredas whereas Jardaga-jarte and Horro weredas selected from Horro Guduru Wollega zone. When we come to Hararghe, I purposely took the eastern dialect of Oromo (Hararghe) for two reasons. First, I took it to compare the eastern dialect with the western Oromia (mac'c'a) dialect. Socond, I have learned my BA degree for three consecutive years in Haramaya University which is located in the same zone. During that time, I had observed when Hararghe Oromo use taboo words. In short, to show the similarities and differences of taboo words and their euphemistic expressions among these zones, I included Hararghe Zone, Odaa Bultum and Ciro woredas from (Western), Awaday town administration and Haramaya woreda from (Eastern).

Besides, to select the participants of the study, purposive and snowball sampling techniques were used. Snowball sampling is used as supportive technique to identify

participants. This technique involves using the already identified participants to connect with the other potential participants who are trusted to give valuable information for the study. Having informed the inclusion points, the new selected participants introduced me the rest potential participants who can give tangible information on the topic. This is to say that selection of participants is purposive. To use this method, at the beginning I went to zonal culture and tourism bureaus and communicated with experts of language and culture in that particular office regarding the topic. The experts, themselves gave me ample of data/information regarding the topic or issues related to it. Because they know about their particular society and they also simply introduced me with other potential participants. After several contacts the participants established strong relationship with me. Then, after I had informed my interest (aim), I asked them questions regarding categories of taboos within their euphemistic expressions that the particular society avoids or uses. Besides, having established connection or rapport, I again used these informants as snowball or chain to connect with the rest potential participants. The participants were Oromo (native speakers of Afaan Oromoo) who were born and lived in that particular area for long years.

1.7.3. Instruments and Data collection procedures

Research instruments are very important to obtain the result of the study. They are a set of methods which are used to collect the data.

1.7.3.1. Research Instruments

These are resources or tools which are supposed to be utilized in the study for one to come up with consolidated required information in order to prove the theoretical framework of the research being undertaken by an investigator (Liali, 2008:31). To collect the data, the present study has used a focus group discussion, participant observation, unstructured interview and introspective method.

According to Kumar (2011:156), every step of research on taboo is sensitive and difficult. In this light, he maintains that “researchers have to use a number of approaches to deal with this sensitiveness problem; but it is difficult to say which approach is best for the study of taboo.” As far as linguistic taboos are concerned, the researcher could design techniques and strategies for collecting data before the actual data collection was started. For instance, instruments were given to individuals who have the background of

sociolinguistics and to my advisor to get comments. Based on the comments obtained, necessary modifications were made.

1.7.3.1.1. Focus Group Discussion

As Dawson (2002:29) states focus group may be called focus group discussion or group interviews. When focus group discussion is performed, the participants share their collective experience of the group: brain storming, thinking together, inspiring and challenging each other, and reacting on issues and points given to them by researcher. When this instrument is accomplished, the researcher has the freedom to decide the manner and sequence in which the questions would be asked and has also the freedom to explore reasons and motives. The main task of the researcher or moderator in case of a focus group discussion is confining the respondent to a discussion of issues with which he seeks to get (Dornyei, 2007:130).

During the employment of this research instrument, a group of people were asked to come together in group to discuss about linguistic taboos subjects such as death, disease, physical defect, body parts or excretions and some taboo names related marriage relationship within the euphemistic expressions. They mentioned tabooed subjects which are less sensitive than the linguistic taboos related to sexual organs, sex and sexuality. Due to this, the group discussions were employed in mixed group while the highly tabooed subjects were discussed by separating discussants into different age and gender group (male and female). Because these topics are sensitive, in mixed group people prohibit themselves from giving information freely due to embarrassment. The discussants also discussed consequences of breaking linguistic taboo and the roles of linguistic taboos in their daily life. The discussion was conducted according to the guidance of the moderator.

During the discussion, I was moderating and introducing the topic, asking specific questions, controlling digressions and stops break-away conversations. And I made sure that no one dominates the discussion whilst trying to ensure that each of the participants makes a contribution.

1.7.3.1.2. Observation

I also used observation as one instrument of this research. Observation offers an investigator the opportunity to gather authentic data from what is naturally occurring in social situation. In this way, I looked directly what was taking place in a situation rather than relying on second hand account; because this instrument enables me to look at everyday behavior that takes place in communication. In the sense I was actually there to observe and experience the actual use of linguistic taboos and their euphemistic expressions as one of the important data collection instrument of this study. Since I am a native speaker of Afaan Oromoo, I could identify the presence or absence of the euphemistic expressions they use for corresponding taboo words/expressions without much problem during observation.

According to Dawson (2002:33) through observation, the researcher makes careful observation, gain a deeper understanding about people's behavior, motivation and attitudes regarding the particular topic. This means participant observation is a method that helps to understand the motives and meanings of people's behavior from the viewpoint of those involved in the behavior which is studied. During this time, the researcher may act as covert participant observer or participant observer. This way of data collection can be a valuable and rewarding method for qualitative inquiry (Dawson, 2002:33). I observed respondents' feeling while they were discussing different tabooed subjects in group. I also observed which tabooed subjects are highly or moderately shocking while the focus group discussions were taking place.

Focusing on this instrument of data collection, I understood the phenomenon to what extent respondents use euphemistic expressions to avoid taboo expressions in their daily conversation. Participant observation also helped to figure out the hidden information in communication.

1.7.3.1.3. Unstructured Interview

Unstructured interview allows maximum flexibility to follow the interviewee in unpredictable directions, with only minimal interference from the pre-prepared research agenda. The intention is to create a relaxed atmosphere in which the respondent may reveal more than he/she would in formal contexts. Since taboo words are sensitive topic,

an interviewee may feel embarrassment if I ask him/her in the direct or structured way. According to Dornyei (2007:123), when this method is employed, no detailed interview guide is prepared in advance although the researcher usually thinks of a few (1-6) opening questions (sometimes called “grand tour” questions) to elicit the interviewee’s story. However, in this research, I used more than six open questions. This instrument gives greater freedom while recording the responses to include some aspects and exclude others. For the reason this instrument was flexible, the researcher could easily approach to the interviewee and change his/her style of conversation depending on the given speech. For these reasons, I used this instrument to get sufficient data regarding linguistic taboos and their euphemistic expressions or other issues related to it.

1.7.3.1.4. Introspective Method

According to Mwanambayu (2011:65) this method is valuable in undertaking research where the investigator is the major source of data in sociolinguistics; because he or she is a native speaker of the language. Similarly, I am a native speaker of Afaan Oromoo; I used my native competence of the language to conduct the present study. This method was executed; because it is better to access information to the respondents. When this method was executed, I gave some clues to my respondents on linguistic taboo subjects and their corresponding euphemistic expressions to remind respondents about the other linguistic taboo subjects and their euphemistic expressions they know in that particular area.

1.7.3.2. Procedure

I adopted three steps in collecting the data for the study. First, the research questions and objectives were formulated to show the direction of the study. Second, the relevant literature was reviewed. Third, data gathering tools were developed and data gathering were employed through focus group discussion, observation, unstructured interview and introspective method.

1.7.4. Method of Data Analysis

The data obtained from participants were analyzed qualitatively according to basic research question and objectives. The analysis of data included several steps. First, I noted the recorded conversations related to the linguistic taboos and their euphemistic expressions. Then, all the words and expressions related to taboos and euphemisms were

listed and verified through unstructured interview. Next, I identified the types (themes) of linguistic taboos, analyze the semantics of their euphemistic expressions, the strategies they use to euphemize taboo expressions, describe the similarities and differences of taboos and their euphemistic expressions among Bale, Hararghe and Wollega, subsequently variables which determine the avoidance of taboos and usage of euphemistic expressions are identified. At last, the discussion of findings, conclusion and recommended suggestions were given.

1.8. Theoretical Framework of the Study

In the attempt of studying the linguistic taboos and their corresponding euphemistic expressions in Oromo, I used a pragmatic approach to euphemism. Since taboo words and euphemism can be interpreted in terms of pragmatic concepts, for this study using this approach seems essential. Pragmatic approach to euphemism includes euphemism to context of situation (Leech, 1983, Allan and Burridge 1991, 2006), speech act theory (Searle, 1979), face and politeness theory (Goffman, 1967, Brown and Levinson (1987). Besides, the pragmatic approach is used to analyse meaning systematically and interpreted according to a particular context (Wilson 2003).

In this study's framework I did not differentiate between taboo and euphemism as two different linguistic phenomena. In a sociolinguistic study like the present one, the word taboo denotes any prohibition on the use of particular lexical items. Given the definition of euphemisms and taboo words, taboo and euphemisms are thus two faces of the same coin (Grady and et al 1997). To show the relationship of taboo words and euphemism, Ikram (2010:17-18) explains taboo words as they can cause discomfort, harm or injury and to the worst in certain cases they can lead to illness or death. Thus, euphemism more or less originates from taboo; because it is to substitute the taboo words. In my opinion, this statement is not always true because the reverse may be occurred in communication. From this explanation we can understand that euphemism and taboo words are inseparable things. Therefore, when we talk about euphemism, the existence of taboo words is already known. The approach used in the present study is presented hereunder:

1.8.1. Pragmatic Approach to Euphemism

The study of speech as a part of human culture has attracted scholars from different disciplines including linguistics, anthropology, pragmatics and sociolinguistics (Qanbar 2011; 88). Pragmatics is not an old area of language study; it has developed very quickly and soon became a rich area of language analysis (Abdulla, 2012).

According Leech (2014:30), pragmatics generally aims to explain phenomena of language use in context, especially contextually determined interpersonal meanings. One prominent theme here is the issue of indirectness: of accounting for the commonly indirect relation between what people say and how their utterances are (meant to be) interpreted. To this, we may add the need to explain why certain forms of expression (and their associated meanings) are to a greater or lesser extent favored and others disfavored or avoided (in our case taboo words and euphemism).

Pragmatics has been variously defined. However, one clue in which most of the definitions have in common is 'meaning in use' or 'meaning in context'. That is to say, it interprets utterances in situational contexts rather than on the basis of truth conditions. As a result, it has always been a challenging area because it is essentially the study of the relation of signs to interpreters i.e. the study of the relation between linguistic forms and the 'endlessly diverse world of human meaning' (Yule, 1996:3).

Impoliteness is unsuitable and unfortunate behavior which is closely connected with emotional reactions implies simply deviations of rules and conventions. Culpeper (2011: 23) states that "Impoliteness comes about when (1) the speaker communicates face-attack intentionally, or (2) the hearer perceives and constructs behavior as intentionally face-attacking, or a combination of (1) and (2)". Instead of these taboo/impolite words or expressions, people use euphemistic expressions to avoid taboos. So, taboo brings forth issues of politeness and impoliteness because participants of an interaction generally seek to save their own and their addressee's face. In such case, when a tabooed expression is to be avoided to prevent face loss, speakers make use of euphemisms being more polite.

As far as euphemism is concerned, authors have differently illustrated the phenomenon of pragmatic approach; they finally settled their viewpoints within different frameworks of pragmatic concepts. Leech describes euphemism in terms of 'Polite theory/principle', and

he/she believes that 'people's particular desire to look on the brighter side rather than the gloomy side of life' motivates them to “disguise unpleasant subjects by referring to them by means of apparently inoffensive expressions” (Leech, 1983:147).

Euphemisms achieve safe communication among members of the same society. Sociolinguists realize that euphemisms are an essential part of any language and culture. Since language is a crucial means of communication, sociolinguists conclude that there is a need to understand and analyze the nature of taboo words and their euphemism expressions according to their social concerns, cultural issues and situational context (Ikram, 2010:135). In the study of euphemism the pragmatic approach of euphemism is very important; because pragmatically euphemism is a rich cultural and functional language phenomenon (Allan and Burridge, 1991). According to Leech (1983:70) pragmatics is the study of “how meanings interpreted in communicative situations, in relation to the role of the speaker and the hearer”.

1.8.1.1. Euphemism and Context of Situation

The term context is an elusive concept in linguistics, and particularly in pragmatics (Yule, 2006:112). It is an account for the way language functions as 'a model of action'. Accordingly, this could be meaningful if it is only matched with an appropriate 'context of situation'. As the result of this, the meaning of any single word to a very high degree is dependent on its context. This means the word which is spoken in real life, is never detached from the situation in which it has been uttered. In other word there is no linguistic behavior that is inherently polite or impolite (Leech, 1983).

Language has a crucial connection with the cultural and social contexts in a specific society. As a social, cultural and language phenomenon, euphemism is inseparable from its context of situation, and it is not only speakers meaning determined, but also to a great extent, context-determined. In Allan's and Burridge's (1991:4) words, “euphemism and dysphemism are principally determined by the choice of expression within a given context: both world spoken of and the world spoken in. We cannot properly judge something as euphemistic or dysphemistic (taboo) without this information which is why illustration dictionaries of euphemisms are never entirely successful”. According to their illustrations, a euphemistic expression has no meaning except in its context of situation,

which unconsciously determines whether to euphemize it or not. Similarly, in Oromo society, it is difficult to identify taboo-words and non-taboo words without their real context.

When we schematize the relation of euphemism to its context of situation we have to follow questions like: Who is saying what to whom, under what circumstances, under what conditions, with what intended and with what result (Andrews, 2001:133). The question 'who is saying what to whom' means message, addressor and addressee. The question 'under what circumstances' refers to the setting or the physical environment, 'under what conditions' tends to be 'the purpose' and the last two points seem to be best interpreted by the essential theories of pragmatics like speech act, politeness principle, etc. "Language is used in social context but not in a vacuum. It is closely related to the social and cultural values. The use of language is influenced by social variables such as, gender, education, age and social status" (Ikram, 2010:2). Therefore, in this study this theory is very important point. Depending on the given context of use a word which is taboo in a given context may not be taboo in another context.

1.8.1.2. Euphemism and Speech Act Theory

Speech act theory is concerned with how an utterance is defined in terms of the intentions of the speaker and the effect it has on the listener. According to this theory, when people communicate with one another, in addition to the exchange of information, they perform various acts coincidentally. Austin (1962) pointed out that an utterance produced by a speaker conveys three layers of meanings which are interrelated to one another, vis a vis:

1. The literal meaning of the utterance produced by the speaker.
2. The speaker's intention conveyed in the utterance and
3. The effect that the utterance has on the hearer.

These three layers of meanings are linked to three types of acts: A locutionary act, an illocutionary act and a perlocutionary act. A locutionary act is simply the act of uttering a sentence that makes sense for the interlocutors and follows the grammatical rules of that language. An illocutionary act has to do with the issuing of an utterance with conventional communicative force achieved in saying something to convey the message

through the medium of language, such as 'warning', 'wishing', 'promising', 'stating', etc. and finally, a perlocutionary act, which is the listener's correspondence for what the illocutionary act has proposed (Searle, 1979:1). Look at this example:

I will see you tonight.

The phonetic realization of the utterance, which the speaker pronounces is the locutionary act. The intentional purpose of the speaker that has wished to convey due to the locutionary force is known as illocutionary act, for instance: the speaker in this utterance might mean to threaten, to promise or merely to state that s/he has planned to see him/her'. The hearer's reaction for the speaker's meaning is the perlocutionary act. When the illocutionary force of an utterance can be simply determined from the literal meaning of its words, it is called direct speech act as can be found from the example. Nevertheless, if the hearer had to use his or her own experience, (the linguistic and non-linguistic context) and the other related factors to interpret the illocutionary act of the utterance, it is known as indirect speech act.

Thus, indirectness as one of the most common characteristics of human language communication can be effectively achieved by the use of circumlocutory or euphemistic expressions. The only difference between indirect speech act utterances and lexical euphemistic expressions, as far as indirectness is concerned, is the conventionality of the euphemistic expressions. That is to say, euphemistic expressions are indirect, roundabout expressions but the communicators of the same language can very easily reach their perlocutionary forces, without operating on the illocutionary act of the expressions unless it is very particular or very new (Searle, 1979:12).

From the given explanation, speech act theory is applicable to conduct research on linguistic taboos and euphemism in Oromo society. When we euphemize taboo terms, the three layers of meaning are linked to three types of acts. For example, speaking the term *saluu* 'fuck' in public is taboo. So, instead of this term people use *waliin c'iisan* 'they slept together'. The literal meaning of the utterance produced by the speaker is *waliin c'iisan* which refers to the sleeping that someone sleeps with somebody in the normal context. When this expression is uttered, the intension of the listener determines the meaning of the expression that results answer. For example, if the intention of the

speaker is to inform the sexual intercourse performed, the listener may be comprehended as normal sleeping. In this context, to identify the meaning of the utterance relying on the the context in which the communication takes place is very important.

1.8.1.3. Euphemism and Face Theory

Face theory was firstly proposed by Goffman (1967) as a face-work theory and later developed by Brown and Levinson (1987) within a more comprehensive framework of politeness theory. Essentially, this theory is considered as one of the keystone elements for the analysis of mutual interactions in conversation. Based on the face notion of Goffman, face is a sacred thing for every human being, an essential factor communicators have to pay attention to, and that face wants are reciprocal (if one wants his face cared for, he should care for other people's face. According to Yule (1996:60), the notion of 'face' which “means the public self image of a person which refers to the emotional and social sense of self that everyone has and expects everyone else to recognize”. Euphemism as a powerful linguistic tool has the ability to smooth out the interpersonal difficulties in communication, and reduce any potential conflicts or unfriendliness between the interlocutors by avoiding certain taboos that can negatively affect conventional norms of tact as well as the speaker's and addressee's social image” (Elicer, 2005:78).

From this perspective, euphemistic use is closely tied to politeness by means of the notion of *face* proposed by Goffmann (1967) and developed by Brown and Levinson (1987). Verbal mitigation significantly contributes to reduce taboo words which may create conflict and hostility in interpersonal interaction. In doing so, euphemistic strategies enable a space safe from conflict in which the interlocutor does not feel any threat towards his public self-image (*face*). Therefore, euphemism, face and politeness are interrelated phenomena.

According to Brown and Levinson (1987:61), Face is “something that is emotionally invested, and can be lost, maintained, or enhanced, and must be constantly attended to in interaction”. Every person has face which is one's public self-image. The speaker tends to use a politeness strategy such as euphemism to avoid face loss of either the hearer or the speaker. In addition, Brown and Levinson (1987:62) divided face into two types; the

negative face and the positive face. The negative face, which is related to the person's freedom of action and freedom of speech, means to be free to utter any term without any consideration of its negative effect on the hearer/speaker's face or feelings. The positive face is related to the person's need to be accepted and admired by other members of a society.

When a speaker describes something euphemistically either motivated by his desire to save the hearer's face or possibly threatened to lose his own face, by means of direct speech acts, especially to order or request that is why the theory sometimes called Face Threatening Act (FTA) (Brown and Levinson, 1987:65). Thus, the purpose of the speaker's resorting to euphemism to refer to the hearer's unpleasant or socially restricted issue is to save his/her face. For example, if a doctor asks, when was your last 'period'? Is it on schedule?; through the use of 'period' (i.e. monthly period) as a euphemism instead of 'menstruation' or 'bleeding' the doctor greatly maintains the patient's face and to some extent his own face.

1.8.1.4. Euphemism and Politeness Theory

In linguistics, politeness is the act of using polite speech during a conversation. First it was introduced into linguistics by Goffman (1967) on the study of face, politeness gets interest in linguistic studies in 1978 when Brown and Levinson successfully attempted to develop a theory that could help understand the principles of politeness and at the same time, account for framework in any study regardless of region, culture or language.

Allan and Burridge (2006:33) wrote about politeness and face maintenance which are represented by using euphemism. They pointed out that euphemism arises from conscious or unconscious self-censoring. Euphemism is employed to protect the speaker from being embarrassed or ill thought of and at the same time to protect the hearer or any third party from any expected offence. This reinforces the speaker for being polite. According to them, politeness is linked to context, place and time which are inoffensive and at best pleasing to an audience (Allan and Burridge, 2006:30).

The aim of politeness is essentially to provide conditions for smooth flow of communication between the sender and the receiver (Alix, 2012:23). Euphemism acts on

each positive and negative dimensions of face: first, it responds to the speakers need to soften potential social conflicts which may alter the interlocutor's prestige; second, it supposes a way to minimize a threat to the interlocutor's autonomy. Thus, face is so closely connected with euphemism that the latter has been defined by Allan and Burridge (2006: 32) with reference to the concept of face as follows: "A euphemisms is a words or phrases used as an alternative to a dispreferred expression, in order to avoid possible loss of face: either one's own face or that of the audience, or of some third party".

Euphemism plays a great role in face maintenance since it softens the communication among people. In communication, speakers always try to earn respect from hearers. So speakers, according to the circumstances, need to use appropriate strategies to express politeness and obtain the best communicative effect. This is the essential core of the Politeness Principle. Leech (1983:132) concluded that the Politeness Principle consists of six maxims; they regulate the relationships between the interlocutors in terms of 'self' and 'other' and tend to go in pairs as follows:

1. Tact Maxim
 - a. Minimize cost to other.
 - b. Maximize benefit to other.
2. Generosity Maxim
 - a. Minimize benefit to self.
 - b. Maximize cost to self.
3. Approbation Maxim
 - a. Minimize dispraise of other.
 - b. Maximize praise of other.
4. Modesty Maxim
 - a. Minimize praise of self.
 - b. Maximize dispraise of self.
5. Agreement Maxim
 - a. Minimize disagreement between self and other.
 - b. Maximize agreement between self and other.
6. Sympathy Maxim

- a. Minimize antipathy between self and other.
- b. Maximize sympathy between self and other.

Using euphemisms by a speaker leads to the observance of the PP (politeness principle) maxims in a way that the more euphemisms are used the more politeness is fulfilled, and the reverse can be largely true. Offering options and indirectness strategies are two very significant aspects of euphemistic expressions on one hand, as well as of tact maxim on the other. They can considerably minimize cost to the hearer and make him/her feel more released than to be required or described straightforwardly. Thus, one can point out that the more indirect the utterance and the more options allowed to the hearer, the more convincing politeness shown. For example, compare these pairs of sentences taken from Abdulla (2012:44).

- A. If you 'keep on this diet', you will be 'on the heavy side'.
- B. If you keep on eating too much, you will become very fat.

The speaker in (A) shows politeness by using roundabout euphemistic expressions to refer to one's socially unacceptable phenomena such as 'eating too much' or 'become very fat' of utterance (B) in which the speaker directly mentions them. As a result s/he seems to be little rude or impolite. Most of the euphemistic expressions which are attached to the hearer's socially unpleasant issues are aimed to minimize dispraise to somebody, specially the job titles. In the below example, A is more pleasant to call someone while B is not:

- A: You are a sanitation engineer.
- B: You are a rubbish collector (not preferred)
- A: You are a meat technologist.
- B: You are a butcher (not preferred)
- A: You are a fire fighter.
- B: You are a fireman (not preferred) from (Abdulla, 2012:44)

Leech (1983) devotes a special maxim for the observance of minimizing disagreements, and maximizing agreements between the speaker and the hearer. He believes that the greater agreement the interlocutors perform, the more polite their communication is. For example: Tom and Jack are talking about their friend; Henry's decision to marry a black girl. Tom asks him and Jack does not agree with.

Tom: How do you think of Henry's marriage with 'the coloured'?

Jack: That is a noble idea and I admire his courage.

However, the literal meaning of Jack's reply tells Tom that Henry has made a right decision to marry 'the coloured'; yet what he intentionally believes is quite opposite to what he says. By doing this, he has been able to minimize disagreement to others as well as, maximizing praise to others, and that is corresponding for what is claimed by both agreement maxim and approbation maxim. Finally, euphemistic expressions can clearly account for sympathy of the participants and minimizing the antipathy if there were any. For example:

A. I am terribly sorry to hear about your father's 'passing away'.

B. I heard about your father's death (no sympathy).

In the first utterance (A), the speaker maximizes the sympathy between himself and the hearer, and coincidentally, minimizes the antipathy by showing his depressed feeling and using a euphemistic term 'passing away' in place of 'death', which is blunt and unpleasant. Whereas, the second utterance (B) is obviously impolite because the speaker shows no sympathy and directly mentions 'death' which is offensive to the hearer. Thus, there is no observance of maxim of sympathy.

Depending on the maxims above, speakers try to shorten the psychological distance between each other on the one hand, and save faces of sides, the speakers and the counterparts, on the other hand. This is the essence of the Politeness Principle. Euphemism is a way to maintain the Politeness Principle. For example, most people usually refer to toilet as "rest room", "powder room" or "bathroom" in order to be polite and not to offend others.

Generally, from the given descriptions, face and euphemism have strong relationship. In daily communication, people have to be polite to save each other's face and make their relations more harmonious. They can achieve this goal by using euphemisms instead of taboo words.

Eliecer (2005:85) explained the mutual dependent of euphemism, politeness and face. To make our communication polite and comfortable for hearers we must use euphemism

which aims to avoid offensive words in social discourse and preserve the face of the interlocutors. Look at their mutual relationships in the following figure:

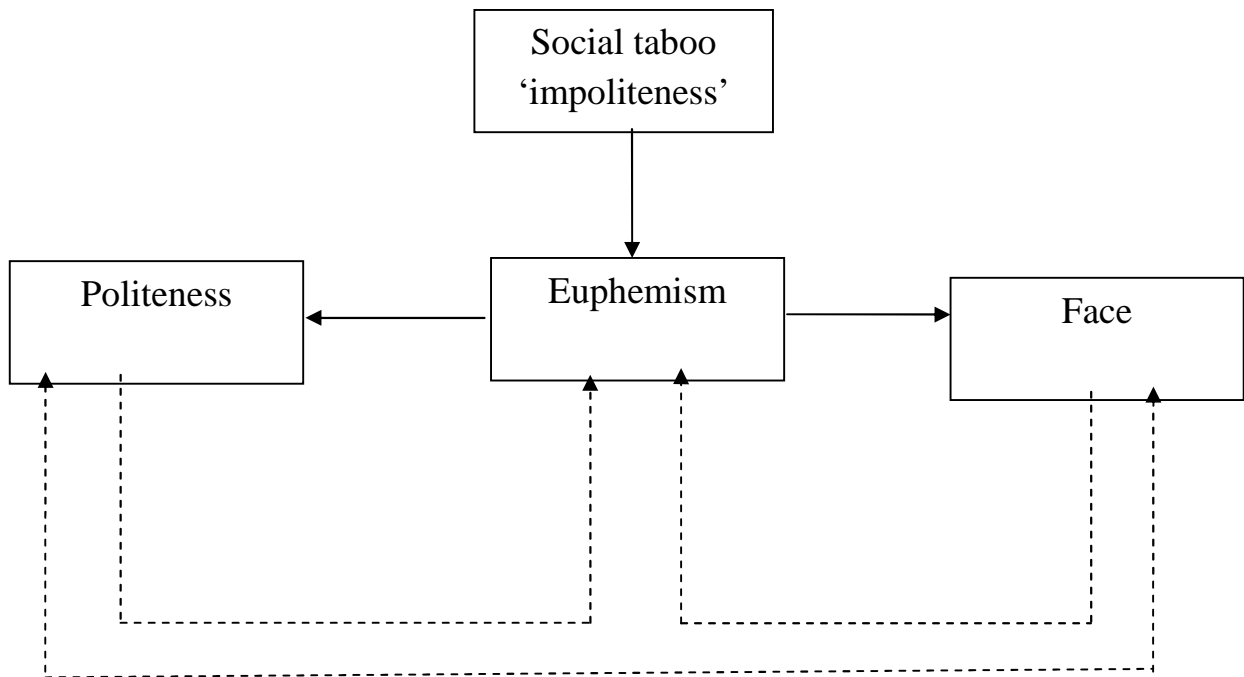


Figure 2: The reflexivity between politeness, euphemism and face (adopted from Eliecer 2005:85).

In avoiding the threat of certain conflict speech acts or taboos, euphemism responds to a double motivation, as shown above: first, to reinforce politeness in social discourse; second, to preserve the addressee's face, and by extension, his or her own. Generally speaking, the greater the oncoming face-affront, the greater is the politeness shown, and the greater is the degree of euphemism required.

CHAPTER TWO

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE ON TABOOS AND EUPHEMISMS

Introduction

This chapter talks about origin of taboo, power of taboo, from taboo acts to taboo words, definition of linguistic taboos, factors behind using taboo words, previous studies conducted on linguistic taboos internationally and particularly on Oromo society, themes of linguistic taboos and motives for the use of taboos.

2.1. Taboo

2.1.1. Origins of Taboo

'Taboo' which is an English word comes from the Tongan word *tabu*. In the 1770s, Captain James Cook explored the Pacific islands and observed the behavior of the Polynesian people. In their journals, Captain Cook and fellow shipmates recorded *taboo* as a significant local word meaning forbidden, such as when a thing was not to be eaten, entered, or touched (Cook 1812:676) as cited in Ghounane (2013:33). Because of this origin, taboo is a trait often associated with so-called primitive cultures. This is a mistake; because taboo exists in primitive societies and western contemporary ones (Fairman, 2009: 29). Jay (2000) supports this idea as: every culture has domains of thought that are taboo. Taboos are sanctions on thoughts and behaviors that a society finds too powerful, dangerous, or mysterious to consider openly. It may be wrong to our modern minds to place taboo language solely within so-called primitive cultures. While all primitive societies have taboo words, the sophisticated, contemporary culture has forbidden words too. Therefore, it would be also error to think of taboo as a modern social construct. Research into taboo word has theorized about the origin of taboo words, which include: superstitions, social conformity, religion, customs, and conventions (Xian, 2011: 6). From these explanations we can understand that taboo was the cornerstone of the whole social order. There was also no part of the social system that was not regulated and governed by taboo.

Taboo is a prohibition on behavior for a specific society in a specific context. In every culture including the Oromo culture, there are both taboo acts (things that you are not

supposed to do) and taboo words (things that you are not supposed to say). While some taboo acts have corresponding taboo words, others do not. Andersson and Trudgill (1990) consider and compare taboos relating to sex and cannibalism. According to them, sex is not entirely forbidden; it's regulated by a set of conscious and subconscious rules. So in the given appropriate time, place, and person, sex is not taboo. However, according to my opinion this does not seem true; because in Oromo society even husband and wife do not talk freely about things related to sex and sexuality due to the influence of culture. Cannibalism is one of taboo acts. However, there are no unspeakable, unprintable English words—taboo words—referring to cannibalism. In Oromo society, cannibalism is not well known. Instead of this the 'evil eye person' who is called *budaa* is well known and feared by the people. In Oromo society, this evil eye person is a little bit related to cannibalism. As the result of this, people do not call the term *budaa* 'evil eye person' and replace it by the term *ija* which literally means 'an eye'.

“Ethnologists stress out the fact that the taboo phenomenon is a universal one, as it refers not only to beings and objects, but also to the words designating them” (Mocanu, 2017:1). However, sometimes people say incest and cannibalism may be absolute and universal taboo. But, there is time when this reality may deviate. For example, Egyptian Pharaoh Ramses II married several of his daughters; the survivors of the 1972 Andes plane crash ate the dead to stay alive. So, it is better to say taboo may differ from one society to another society. However, although cannibalism and incest are taboo in the majority of societies, modern research has found exceptions for each and no taboo is known to be universal (Fairman, 2009:27, Allan and Burridge, 2006:10). So, different culture may have different taboo areas, and there may be a difference in the extent to which they are considered taboo (Andersson and Trudgill, 1990: 56-57).

According to Fairman (2009:28), even though there are no absolute ideas regarding tabooed subjects, there are typical categories of taboo associated with, body effluvia—feces, urine, menstrual fluid, snot, and semen, sex organs and sex acts. Again, taboos about death, disease, and dangerous animals can denote similar concepts. Anyhow, what do these categories have in common?

Collectively, they all deal with situations in which one is at risk of serious harm. For example, improper handling of food can lead to sickness and death. Our body fluids not only harbor disease but can also contaminate others. Dangerous animals and disease directly threaten our health and security. One even puts the soul at risk when dealing with the sacred. Thus, specific behaviors viewed as dangerous to the individual or community become taboo to protect the community from harm (Fairman, 2009: 29). So, from this expression one can understand that there are different reasons that make tabooed subjects, taboo.

2.1.2. The Power of Taboos

According to Mocanu (2017:1) vocabulary interdictions should be related to the belief in Supreme Being of the word and the human fears materialized as taboo. From this particular perspective, the linguistic taboo becomes the expression of certain socially conditioned interdictions which are rarely linguistically determined. Accordingly, some terms are considered as taboo in a given society, but not in another. Along with superstitions and beliefs, linguistic taboo is motivated by emotional and social reasons, by education, politeness, good manners, decency, kindness, etc. that force the speaker to avoid phrases or words that are considered to be too tough, rude or indecent and use instead euphemisms (Mocanu, 2017:1). So, these statements show us the beliefs and the attitude people have towards norm of the society determine the power of tabooeness of something.

Furthermore, people are at metaphysical risk when dealing with sacred persons, objects and places; they are at physical risk from powerful earthly persons, dangerous creatures and disease. A person's soul or bodily effluvia may put him/her at metaphysical, moral or physical risk, and may contaminate others; a social act may breach constraints on polite behavior. Taboos can lead to illness or death, as well as to the lesser penalties of corporal punishment, incarceration, social ostracism or mere disapproval (Allan and Burridge, 2006:27).

For instance, to explain about power of the taboo word 'fuck', lexicographers demonstrate how the conscious efforts of those who compiled dictionaries deliberately eliminated the word for centuries. Sociologists note the cultural influences on offensive

speech. Linguists expose the sexual and nonsexual meanings of *fuck* (Fairman, 2009). Even if the term *fuck* is powerful to speak in public there is a time when people are obliged to utter this term especially in swearing or insulting situation. From this issue, we can realize that there is a time when we are influenced to use taboo words without euphemizing them. This may be the reason why (Andersson and Trudgill, 1990: 53) consider swear words as taboo and they define swearing: (a) refers to something that is taboo in the culture; (b) should not be interpreted literally; (c) can be used to express strong emotions and attitudes.

2.1.3. From Taboo Acts to Taboo Words

As it is explained before, even though there are no absolute typical categories of taboos, collectively, they all deal with situations in which one is at risk of serious harm (Fairman, 2009). For example, cleanliness taboos such as avoiding contact with bodily fluids, do not play with feces, etc. But how does this transform into a taboo against saying *shit*? It's as if prohibition in the 1920s forbade not just the sale of alcohol but saying the word *whiskey* as well. So how do we move from taboo behavior to taboo words? Look at the answer in the next paragraph.

The transmutation has a scientific explanation. Let me use effluvia taboos as an illustration. Researchers in public health and hygiene like Curtis (2007) cited in Fairman (2009:29), contend that our hygiene instincts are the product of disgust. Curtis found that while people have difficulty explaining their reactions, they nonetheless have a powerful feeling of disgust to avoid filthy, sticky, oozing, teeming matter. Seeing a disgust trigger (like vomit or pus) automatically produces a subconscious hygienic reaction. Disgust helps us avoid those things that were associated with the risk of disease in our evolutionary past. The disgust reaction would obviously be strongest if confronted with eating or touching effluvia. Seeing body fluids, or images of them, also invokes disgust. But even thinking about our excretions (and the body parts that are responsible for them) generates disgust. Because the disgust reaction is involuntary, hearing the words triggers the response. Consequently, the words themselves become the objects of disgust and, therefore, taboo. In this way, taboo acts (handling feces) transform into taboo words (saying *shit*). This explanation clearly avoids the confusion that may be created between

the boundary of taboo acts and taboo words. However, it is sometimes heard when people interchangeably use taboo instead of taboo word.

In accordance to the above statement, there is a strong relationship between taboo acts and taboo words. Both are forbidden because they are regarded as immoral for certain circumstances. Supporting this idea, Fairman (2009:27) states every society has its own particular taboo act and taboo words. Taboo acts related to any activities should be avoided, while taboo words related to any words should not be uttered. Both are identified with one another since several taboo acts are related to taboo words while others do not. The popular case of this phenomenon is the act of incest. Incest is considered taboo because it refers to the sexual activity that is strongly forbidden in a society. In the same sense, any words which refer to incest activity such as *motherfucker* will also be categorized as taboo; because it indicates the activity. Nonetheless, there is an alternate word that is said as taboo while the activity it indicates is certainly not. When people talk about excretion, it is often considered as taboo while the act itself is not forbidden if it is done by the appropriate person in a suitable place and time. Therefore, words that are related or linked to taboo act will automatically become taboo words (Allan and Burrige, 2006: 2)

To give an explicit explanation on how taboo acts and taboo words are related to each other, Fairman (2009: 29) presents effluvia taboo as an illustration to support the idea. As already known, the disgust response of one individual will be stronger if he or she is facing or touching effluvia. Moreover, when he or she is thinking about excretion and the part of human body that are responsible for it, it will invite disgust reaction. Therefore, when an individual hears the words that indicate the act, he or she will automatically generate the response.

In my opinion taboo words are taboo by themselves; because they are avoided not to be mentioned in public setting. Standing on the idea of taboo, I only focus on taboo words not on taboo acts, therefore the definition of taboo words will be explained in the next section.

2.1.4. Definition of Taboo (words)

Taboo is a very vital topic in all linguistic communities, and it is as old as human society. It is practised and manipulated by the members in their day to day communication. Due to the place it occupies among society, it can be explored from different visions. Specialists in various fields talk and investigate it. Thus, definitions of taboo have appeared in the literature of many fields (Ahmed, 2013:14). Therefore, the term taboo is difficult to define since every society has expressions or behaviours that are considered taboo. In line with this, Trudgill (2000: 18) claims that taboo topics are culture-specific since topics that are forbidden in one culture can be beneficial in another one. In this sense, he states that “The type of word that is tabooed in a particular language will be a good reflection of at least part of the system”. In contradiction with this point of view, Wardhaugh (2010:240) maintains that taboo words are universal. This statement is better explained through his speech as “each social group is different from every other in how it constraints linguistic behaviour in this way, but constrain it in some such way it certainly does. Perhaps one linguistic universal is that no social group uses language quite uninhibitedly”. With this purpose in mind, Wardhaugh further explains that people avoid certain acts or expressions that are forbidden because they result in embarrassment. In this sense, Wardhaugh (2010: 239) defines the word taboo as follows: “Taboo is the prohibition or avoidance in any society of behaviours believed to be harmful to its members in that it would cause them anxiety, embarrassment, or shame”.

Similarly, Laitinen (2009) argues for the above idea when he maintains that a taboo can be anything that is forbidden to be mentioned or spoken. He also adds that taboos are the result of cultural norms and historical practises shared by the members of a given speech community. For this reason, some expressions, that are considered taboo in a society, are not necessarily forbidden in another community.

In the same line of thought, Allan and Burridge declare that since a community’s members share the same principles, they have also what is called ‘shared taboos’. In this sense, Allan and Burridge (2006: 9) highlight as “To an outsider, many prohibitions are perplexing and seem silly-but they are among the common values that link the people of

a community together. What one group values, another scorns. Shared taboos are therefore a sign of social cohesion”.

On the other hand, over the years, the definition of taboo has shifted from meaning “strictly forbidden” to simply “offensive” or “grossly impolite” (Hughes 2006:464). She (2006:462) posits the view that today taboo refers increasingly to “prohibitions against socially unacceptable words, expressions, and topics, especially of a sexual and racist nature”.

Indeed, Allan and Burrige (2006:27) agree with Hughes in that any word that can be dangerous or cause harm, injury or discomfort to either an individual or the community is often subject to taboo. “They arise in cases where the individual’s acts can cause discomfort, harm or injury to him-or herself and to others. Any behaviour that may be dangerous to an individual or his, her community is likely to be subject to taboo, whether this is in the domain of the sacred or the otherwise metaphysical, or touches on earthly persons of power or concerns contact with dangerous creatures”.

This means that as Allan and Burrige (2006:1) have pointed out a taboo is “a proscription of behavior that affects everyday life”. They also claim that people always tend to avoid such unacceptable behaviours unless they intentionally tend to violate taboos. Besides, Anderson and Trudgill (1990:55-56) observed that some taboos are important elements in the structure and social life of a culture; for example, sex does not mean that this area of life is forbidden, but it is regulated by conscious and unconscious rules. From this expression we understand that the context in which the communication takes place determines the tabooed subjects. In line with this, Allan and Burrige (2006:11) states taboo as “a proscription of behaviour for a specifiable community of one or more persons, at a specifiable time, in specifiable contexts”. Therefore, taboos may arise out of restrictions sanctioned by a society in its disapproval of behavior believed to be harmful or because they violate societal norms and moral values (Allan & Burrige, 2006: 9). Besides, Wardhaugh (2010:238) supported this idea saying that certain things are not said; because people do not talk about them, and when these things are talked about, they are talked about in very roundabout ways, i.e. euphemistically. Wardhaugh

further notes that euphemistic words allow us to talk about unpleasant things to disguise or neutralize the unpleasantness.

Akmajian and et al (2010:303) assert that taboo words are those words that should not be employed completely or at least prevented in different setting or polite situation. It means that to avoid any misunderstanding, each person who belongs to different cultures with different values should not talk about words that can shock them especially in polite conversations. They also mentioned that, what counts as taboo language is something defined by culture, and not by anything inherent in the language. To be a taboo or not a taboo language is determined by its culture (Akmajian and et al. 2010:304). Here we can understand that culture is a keystone to decide an expression is taboo or not. Similar to this idea, Apte (1994) defined linguistic taboo as words that many people consider offensive or shocking. He gave views that linguistic taboos are words that are avoided; because they are deemed and unfit for normal linguistic usage, and by a community's consensus are banned in everyday language in the public domain.

Trudgill (1974) considered linguistic taboo is anything that is associated with things that are not said, particularly in words and expressions in a given society. Related ideas were also explained by Mbaya (2002:225) as linguistic taboos are those words or expressions in a language which are avoided as a result of their indecency, shocking character or immorality, and in order not to hurt the other members of the society. Other scholars claim that the avoidance of taboo word is associated with religion or being polite. For example, according to Yule (2006:211) "Taboo terms are words and phrases that people avoid for reasons related to religion, politeness and prohibited behavior".

Recently, in her study, Qanbar (2011:88) used the following working definition of linguistic taboo as: "A linguistic taboo is any word or a phrase or a topic that if mentioned in public causes embarrassment and feeling of shame or provokes a sense of shock, and it is offending to the hearer's sensibilities or beliefs".

The use of such a word, phrase or topic can be offensive to a hearer's sensibilities or beliefs. Thus, the use of such a word, phrase or topic becomes an unpleasant experience; which does not only upset the entire circle of people, but also makes the persona of the

taboo user because in using such a ‘taboo’ word, he/she has become offensive to the hearers, group, culture or society. In my opinion, any words or expressions which cannot fit the social meaning in communication is considered as taboo; however, some words/expressions which have neutral meaning have got tabooed meanings in specific context.

However, according to Allan and Burridge (2006) taboo words have come to be known under many synonyms. Among the most common epithets that stand for taboo words can be mentioned as: dirty words, four-letter, bad words, off-colour language, forbidden words, swearing, offensive words, expletives, and a long etc.

Apart from the above definitions it is clear that one can come up with some points. Firstly, all of these definitions use words whose roots are avoided, prohibited, forbidden, and banned. Secondly, they focus on both social traditions which are taken into account as laws and norms of people derived from their customs and beliefs. Therefore, it seems that all these definition have something in common.

2.1.5. Categories of Linguistic Taboos

According to Goddard and Patterson (2000: 38), different categories of taboo language are reflections of what society thinks taboo is. Goddard and Patterson (2000: 67) also add that the attitudes of people towards the categories of taboo differ from one culture to another.

Hence, the classification of taboo words may vary from one society to the other society as well as from author to authors (Goddard and Patterson, 2000, Anderson and Hirsch, 1985, Qanbar, 2011, Hongxu and Guisen, 1990, Wardhaugh, 1986 and Allan and Burridge, 2006). Therefore, different researches have been conducting **research** on taboos and their categories, but I categorized linguistic taboos of Oromo based on the categories explained by Allan and Burridge (2006:1). Because the way they have categorized taboo directly or indirectly can incorporate the existing taboos in Oromo society.

According to Goddard and Patterson (2000:38), the different category of taboo words is the reflections of what society thinks about taboo. Regarding this issue, Samadi, (2014:28) states that what is considered as severe by a group of people may be seen as

mild for others. Hence, the classification of taboo words may vary from one society to the other. It appears that within a particular cultural context, people may speak different languages in different social contexts but there seems to be some common prohibitions in terms of language and behavior. So, this idea shows us how much it is difficult to categorize linguistic taboo subjects easily because it varies from society to society within their cultures.

Anderson and Hirsch (1985:79) claim that Western societies take linguistic taboo categories like sexual organs, sexual relations, religion, church, excrement, death, physically or mentally disabled, prostitution, narcotics and crime. On the other hand, Hongxu and Guisen (1990) classify taboo words in Chinese language into four main subjects:

1. Sanctity -which is associated with names or words which are sacred to pronounce or write.
2. Sex - this includes sex organs, sexual behavior and morality
3. Bodily functions - which represents unclean functions of body such as urinating and defecating
4. Unpleasant matters like superstitions, misfortunes, death, and certain names of animals and so on.

These four categories of taboo words or usage, on observation, seem to align with Iranian society. In Iranian culture, sex, bodily functions, religious-related topics and other matters such as death and superstitions are considered sensitive topics to be discussed. Hence, the common taboo words in Iranian society like Chinese society (see Hongxu and Guisen, 1990) are mostly associated with one of these subjects. For instance, writing or saying the name of the holy people, like the name of kings in ancient China (Hongxu and Guisen, 1990) was considered taboo and ordinary people were not allowed to use these names. Likewise, writing or saying the name of God and his Prophet in Islamic culture is forbidden. But in Oromo society, addressing the name of prophet is not known as taboo; instead they prohibit addressing the name of father-/mother-in- laws, wife and husband considering as taboo.

These four categories of taboo words categorized by Hongxu and Guisen (1990) also seem to align with the Oromo society's taboo. In Oromo culture, sex, bodily functions, religious-related topics and other matters such as death and superstitions are considered sensitive topics to be spoken in public. Hence, the common taboo words in Oromo society are mostly associated with one of these subjects.

The death taboo which existed in Chinese culture also reflected in Oromo culture. For instance, in Oromo, mentioning words related to death brings misfortune to the speaker. Not only this but also words related to sex and bodily functions are considered as taboo and not used in both Chinese and Oromo.

Wardhaugh (1986) also categorizes indecent words and phrases into:

1. Copulative terms (sex),
2. Human genital terms (bodily functions),
3. Sexual irregularity terms (not having a permanent partner for sexual intercourse),
4. Excretory terms which means to eliminate the solid waste matter from body through the anus,
5. Animal terms which includes certain kinds of animals based on religious beliefs like pig for Muslims,
6. Death.

This kind of phenomenon occurs not just because the action itself sounds crude to the hearer, and in some instances, the word can be disgusting for the hearer because these words can conjure unpleasant images. As we can see on the above paragraph, Wardhaugh (1986) had almost the same classification for taboo words as Hongxu and Guisen (1990) did but in a more detailed pattern. Hongxu and Guisen (1990) categorized death and certain names of animals under the unpleasant category while Wardhaugh (1986) categorized those taboo words in a separate category. The classification of Wardhaugh (1986) however did not include any taboo words related to sanctity and religious issues.

According to Akindele and Adegbite (1999), who performed a study on taboo words in African society, tabooeness is one of the social structures in society and this phenomenon is quite clearly reflected in both language and action. Tabooeness can be characterized as

being concerned with some behavior that is forbidden or regarded as immoral or improper. For instance, similar to the Oromo people of the research areas, the people of Yoruba, the southwestern Nigeria, do not often describe the genitals and menstruation by their technical terms. However, the Akindele and Adegbite's (1999) study was restricted to sex and bodily functions and did not cover the wide range of taboo subjects as Hongxu and Guisen (1990) suggested.

Besides, Allan and Burrige (2006:1) present taboo categories of Western world as: body and effluvia, the organ and acts of sex, diseases, death and killing, physical and mental handicap, religion and church, naming and addressing sacred persons, beings, objects and places, food preparation and consumption, prostitution, narcotics and criminal activity. These tabooed subjects are also exists in Oromo society's taboo. As the result of this, I would like to categorize taboos in Oromo depending on the classification of Allan and Burrige (2006:1).

On the other hand, Ullmann (1970), Allan (2001), Sari (2007:24) and Siska (2010:16), classify linguistic taboos into three more or less distinct groups. As my opinion these three distinct groups are the preconditions for the existence or categories of taboo words.

i. Taboo of fear

In some cultures certain words are believed to invite evil consequences such as to exasperate demons, alienate the gods or activate a calamitous meteorological phenomenon. Among certain people, the uttering of a word is believed to invoke unseen powers (Ahmed, 2013:2). People fear to call the name of:

- (a) Personal name is tabooed on any island the inhabitants supposed uttering a taboo name to attack the owner of the name. However, in Oromo, personal names are tabooed for sake of respect than fear; except the name of the deceased person and some animals' names.
- (b) Dead persons are tabooed in some societies which is also true in Oromo. If they uttered the name, they would call the dead from their resting place. Violation of such taboo is thus believed to cause misfortune, sickness, death and even offense to living descendants.

In this respect, Ghounane (2013:51) gave good example, in all native Australian languages, when a number of a community dies, the members of his community is forced not to mention his/her name or, even, any word that is similar in pronunciation to his/ her name. Because these words are taboos and must be replaced. Consequently, they, the members of the community are forced to search for sweet words (loan words from other languages) to replace the lost words caused by the death of the community member.

- (c) The name of God is to avoid metaphysical malevolence and blasphemy. In line with this, in many cultures the name of gods and devils are taboo and people manage to avoid mentioning them directly, otherwise they would be accused of blasphemy Mwanambuyu (2011).
- (d) Dangerous animals are regarded as taboo; because there is a fear that animals may know where the speaker is and may respond to the call. However, animals' names are not only feared due to their dangerousness than religious wise.

Regarding this issue, what Ghounane (2013) explained in Algerian context supports this idea; because in Algerian context, however, people have developed some euphemistic expressions before uttering the names of some animals (pig, dog, donkey, etc)

ii. Taboo of delicacy

All most all people tend to prevent uttering critical and unpleasant preferences or events to make their speech delicacy. Typical examples are physical and mental disorders, and cancer. Instead of these expressions people use *sychoisi* and *big C*, respectively. So, it is a general human tendency to avoid direct reference to unpleasant or embarrassing subjects or to avoid hurting others' feelings. For example, *garbage collectors* are called sanitary engineers, *old people's home* is named retirement village. In Oromo to refer to a lady expecting a child most people use *k'uufa k'abdi* 'she is full', *mataa lama* 'two heads, *lubbuu lama* 'two souls' instead of saying *ulfa* 'she is pregnancy'.

iii. Taboo of propriety/Decency

This typical taboo goes to sexual acts, bodily effluvia, body part function and curse. For instance, one should take care while uttering terms like shit, sperm, urine, belch breath, snot, fart and menstruation to make of their speech good. In one way or another, the taboo categorization that we have seen above may be included into one of the three preconditions illustrated by Allan (2001).

As we have seen, different tabooed subjects have been categorized by different authors; however, I have rearranged the linguistic taboo categories relying on the Allan and Bridge (2006:1) as:

2.1.5.1. Taboos Related to Death

Taboo is reflected on those unavoidable events in our lives that we fear like ‘death’. As human beings, we avoid talking about death since we get shocked and scared of it because it causes grief and suffering. Therefore, everybody realize that death is something that we are scared of, something that causes unhappiness and sorrow, and for such reason, individuals avoid talking about it as a natural phenomenon. As Soler (2011:81), this happens because the concept of death is taboo and thus, will be the words related to it, being the most explicit ‘to die’ which is replaced by: ‘to pass away’, ‘to depart’, ‘to go’, ‘to pass on’, ‘to decease or to perish’ or by other euphemism such as ‘s/he’ has gone to Heaven above’; ‘s/he is part of a better life, now’; ‘s/he was such a good person that the angels needed her/his company’ and many other ways of avoiding the fact that person is actually ‘dead’ through euphemisms.

Allan & Burridge (1991:153) say that death is a fear-based taboo. They give four reasons outlining why death taboos are motivated by fear: (1) Fear of the loss of loved ones; (2) Fear of the corruption and disintegration of the body; (3) Fear of what follows the end of life, the unknown; and (4) Fear of malevolent spirits, or dead. Many people have remarked that death has now become the great taboo subject – the ‘unmentionable’ in contemporary polite society. Yet death is a fear that every person must face.

Religion also plays its role to make death taboo. This means that death is an important concept in both Christian and Islam. In both faiths, “there is life after death and that death should not be feared. But the next life is either in hell or in paradise, and that depends on how humans conduct their affairs in this world” (Soler, 2011:81). What can be also understood from the above quotation is that death is not an end but the passage into a new and eternal existence. They avoid terms related to death by using different mechanisms of euphemisms (Soler, 2011:81). In Oromo society taboo words related to death and their euphemistic expressions are analyzed in the analysis part depending on the age of the

deceased person, cause of the death as well as the ways people strengthen one another in the occasion of condolence.

2.1.5.2. Taboos Related to Disease

Many people believe that words have great relations with what they represent; in similar way, some serious diseases are considered as taboo topics. According to Mwanambuyu (2011:43), Cancer is said in a roundabout way as “Big C” or “terminally ill”. Also disease of mental disorder and intelligence deficiency may be euphemized as “He is not all there.” “She is a little eccentric/a little confused.” In addition to this, diseases like syphilis and gonorrhoea have been considered as taboo (Mwanambuyu 2011:43) and euphemized as ‘growth’ for first one and ‘social disease’ for left term. In similar way, in the Oromo society, there are many diseases which are considered as taboo which people prohibit from calling their direct name without euphemizing. The name of these diseases has explained in the chapter four (4.2).

2.1.5.3. Taboos Related to Sexuality

This section shows the difference in the various issues related to sex especially sexual acts. For example, the earlier writings did not talk of homosexuality and incest with reference to taboo. It is an attempt to shed light on all these cases. According to Ahmed (2013), historically, sex was one of the most sensitive taboos. Therefore, using it in public shows how serious it would have been when mentioning it.

Sexual activity is tabooed as a topic for public display and severely constrained as a topic for discussion. The language of sexual pleasuring and copulation gives rise to a great deal of verbal play and figurative language (Allan and Burrige, 2006:144). Generally, the concept of sex to a large extent reflects people's moral values. That is to say, one's strong personality is measured by one's preservation from socially unpermitted sexual affairs. Consequently, it has become a thin-skinned topic in every day conversations unless referring to it is unavoidable. Socio-religiously, sex is divided into two major categories, legitimate sex (i.e. sex inside marriage) and illegitimate sex (i.e. sex outside marriage). Both are completely taboo for being openly talked about, and they are variably euphemized in daily conversations (Abdulla, 2012). In Oromo, this issue is true; people never use expressions related to sexuality except in the context of insult.

2.1.5.4. Taboos Related to Body Parts and Bodily Excretions

If we use words related to bodily excretions (to shit, to pee, to burp, etc.), sexual organs or body parts we are told off because physiological functions and the product of this functions are tabooed in societies (Allan and Burridge, 2006:144). By supporting this idea, Soler (2011:82) points out, no culture would accept that an adult would use the words defecate or urinate or even saying 'I am going to take a shit' or 'I am going to piss' in public but s/he would be expected to use euphemisms such as: 'I need to spend a penny'; 'I am going to wash my hands'; 'I am going to powder my nose'. In the United States 'I am going to the bathroom'. In any language there are certain things which must be avoided of mentioning. It applies to the words with such connotations as well. In fact, in English, except tears, all the words concerning bodily excretions are believed taboo (Gao, 2013:2312).

2.1.5.5. Taboos Related to Woman

Arab societies have made some topics taboo in order to protect women from embarrassment. Regarding this, Sadiqi (2003:78) claims that: "The use of taboo to protect collective and public identities, as well as property and social identity, is a peaceful, but very powerful means of keeping women invisible and legitimizing their exclusion from what culture considers 'serious' domains". Sadiqi (2003:80) further argues that the strongest linguistic taboos, in Muslim societies, are related to female body and its changes. Woman is dealt with differently: it is unacceptable to discuss sensitive issues, especially those relevant to sex and other sensitive or fragile issues. The closer in relation to women when involved in conversation, the more sensitive it would be. In Arab society talking to women, even greeting a woman in public places like streets or markets, is not preferable, unless necessity urges both to do that. The tabooeness surrounds women and even the reference to them is not preferable. It is not acceptable to mention women's name for certain cultural reasons (Ahmed, 2013:111).

Sadiqi (2003:80) also claims that girls socialize in an environment where sexual discrimination is sanctioned by society. This explains the spread of taboos related to sexuality. According to her, there are three major tabooed topics related to sex in the Arab world including virginity, menstruation and menopause.

As it has been noted by Sadiqi (2003:80), “Virginity symbolizes the honor of both girl and her family. Just as motherhood is venerated after marriage, virginity is venerated before marriage. The great value attributed to virginity is attested in the fact that girls are more watched than boys before marriage”. In similar way, virginity is respected in the Oromo society too.

On the other hand, menstruation, for over decades, has been considered as something unclean, dirty and embarrassing. In some societies, for example, women are treated as untouchable during their menstrual period. Menstruation is usually considered as a face-threatening act since menstruating women should not be involved in religious rites (Brown and Levinson, 1978: 67). They are forbidden to perform prayer (salat) at mosques, and according to some Muslim scholars' opinion, they are not even allowed to touch the Qur'an (Ahmed, 2013).

In Oromo, there are taboo expressions related to woman like addressing the spinster one by *dubartii* ‘woman’, virginity, pregnancy, deliverance and menstruation, etc). These taboo expressions related to woman and their corresponding euphemisms are analyzed in the analysis part.

2.1.5.6. Taboos Related to Marriage Relationship

In Oromo culture husband and wife start to avoid mentioning the name one another including their father-/mother-in-law and individuals who are close relatives. The main reason for observing this custom is deferential: the wife explains to the others that the taboo-name is now so respectable that she does not mention it. Of course, the degree of deference will vary from the husband and his parents downwards. This constraint is binding on the wife forever, including after the husband's death or after divorce. In law courts for example, when complaining against their husbands, wives usually refuse to tell the judges the names of the defendants for *laguu* reasons (Mbaya, 2002:227). In addition to this, In the Oromo society, there are names to be avoided and substituted which was well described in analysis part.

2.1.6. Factors Behind Using or Avoiding Taboo Words

Taboo words are found in a large number of languages in the world, i.e. they are mostly universal. People use them differently depending on their culture, race, gender, religion,

etc. People find words that may be unsuitable for usage in a polite company, that is to say, speakers decide what is or what is not proper language since society affects language and language affects society in one way or another. This means language is changeable under the process of time and society, in turn, changes and develops since people's needs are also changeable (Muho and Bakir, 2014).

Similarly, Hongxu and Guisen (1990) suggest that taboos occur because of a socio-cultural phenomenon which is associated with superstition, custom or even hierarchical power. They mention that every society prohibits or restricts certain kinds of behaviors and use of particular words, phrases or expressions. This prohibition does not apply to all as the way one culture manages itself differs from another. A taboo usually develops because one or more individual of a society considers certain acts or behavior as repulsive, offensive or derogatory, and when there is consensus, the practice gets carried down from generation to generation and so it becomes taboo after a period of time (Samadi, 2014:28).

According to Helmi (2008:22), "we learn taboo term to know and avoid of using it, not to know and utilize it". Taboo words occur in almost all of languages, moreover, failure to adhere because often-strict rules governing and using them can lead to punishment or public shame. Many people will only use them in restricted set of situations. However, there are always those who are prepared to break taboos as irrational and unjustified, as in ceratin movements for free speech (Wardhaugh, 2010:239).

According to Wardhaugh (2006: 239), taboo words are disregarded in particular occasion; because they have several functions such as to draw attention to oneself, to show contempt, to be provocative, and to mock authority. Therefore, there are different factors that force people to use or avoid taboo terms. From these expressions we can understand that taboo words may be used or avoided depending on the given situation. For example, in the Oromo society of research areas, taboo terms are avoided to respect the social norms, in order to not offend and embarrass someone. On the **other** hand, it may also used to express our emotion and frustration, especially during insult. Therefore, likewise we avoid taboo expressions through euphemism; there is also a time when we

use them without a euphemism. As Jay (2000: 95), a taboo language has positive results depending on the reasons of use including humor, jokes, or storytelling.

By supporting Jay (2000), Montagu (1967:7) hold that there are several causes for swearing. According to him the term, 'swear' and 'taboo' are interchangeably used. Jay (2000: 243) holds that there are several reasons for swearing:

(a) Psychological Reasons

When we accidentally damage or hurt ourselves we release or frustration through swearing and curse. Related to this issue, Allan and Burrige (2006:252) state that one can relieve stress or change mood from irritable to relax by swearing. There is a psychological gain in letting off steam and expressing extreme emotion through cascading expletives and forbidden words (Allan and Burrige, 2006: 252). Similar to this, Montagu (1967) points out that to have a 'good swear', when in a difficult situation and to relieve pain or sorrow could make us good (in the same way that having a good laugh or crying could help us in a specific moment). He also indicates that it is a form of relieving frustration without being physically aggressive (Montagu 1967: 76). This idea seems true among Oromo; because in their daily conversation we hear taboo words used by people especially while they become emotional. At this moment, they may curse or insult through forbidden expressions. More expressions often related to sex organ, and sexuality are employed by youth group.

In line with the expressed idea, Jay (2000: 57) also expresses that swearing has two purposes: (1) To damage or hurt the other person which he denominates 'hostile aggression' or (2) To obtain a reward, a satisfaction, which peers admire and respect. He called this purpose 'instrumental aggression'. According to him, we swear to humans and animals, paradoxically, at no one: 'Cursing is both an essential aspect of language and at the same time an essential aspect of how one acquires an emotional identity through language usage' (Jay 2000: 79).

(b) Social and Linguistic Reasons

As we have mentioned earlier, when in a frustrating or difficult situation we tend to swear or use taboo words to release stress. However, swearing is not only an instinctive response to pain but also for using derogative language to become integrated in a certain

group, to be accepted by others who employ similar vocabulary. Sometimes Jay calls taboo words by dirty words. These dirty words are used in a figurative sense to express anger and they dramatically change in history depending on social forces such as 'ethnic group status, subcultures, religion, and the need for professional jargon' (Jay, 2000).

2.1.7. Some Previous Studies on Linguistic Taboos

Studies on taboo have been carried out by a large number of scholars of different fields such as sociology, psychology, linguistics or philosophy all around the world (see Steiner 1967; Qanbar, 2011; Ningjue, 2010:4 to name but a few). Under this section, I have presented some previous studies that I found while I was reviewing related literatures. In the following, let us look at some studies which have been conducted at international level and in the Oromo societies in particular.

2.1.7.1. Taboos (linguistic Taboos) Studied at International Level

There are many studies which are conducted on linguistic taboos by different scholars on different societies. Hongxu and Guisen (1990) attempted to analyze linguistic taboos in Chinese. They discussed the creation, observance, and socio-cultural influences of linguistic taboos. They viewed taboos as a socio-cultural phenomenon associated with superstition, custom, and hierarchical power. They mentioned that every society prohibits or restricts certain kinds of behaviors and use of particular words, phrases or expressions. However, according to my opinion, this prohibition does not apply to all since one culture manages itself differs from another. Because one or more individual of a society considers certain acts or behavior as disgust, offensive or derogatory, and when there is consensus, the practice gets carried down from generation to generation; so it becomes taboo after a period of time. In instances of taboo, such acts and things must not be talked about or mentioned, at least publicly.

Consequently, expressions or words related to social taboos become verbal or linguistic taboos. For Hongxu and Guisen (1990:66), taboos fall under two categories: macro linguistic and micro linguistic. By the former, it is meant all the words that are observed by almost all speakers in a speech community to be despicable and filthy such as sex and death. By micro linguistic taboos, it is meant that certain words are perceived as taboos in relation to a specific context in which they are used and this encompass the participants

themselves, their age, gender, social status and relationship to each other. They are believed a linguistically non-taboo word may convert to a taboo word in a particular situational factor and vice versa. So, from this expression we can understand that to say a certain words taboo or not, the purpose of the conversation, subject matter, setting (formal and informal situation) are the major determinant.

In general, for the analysis of the Chinese's taboos, Hongxu and Guisen (1990:66) proposed a framework which includes a "macro context" (that is, societal factors) and "micro context", which includes situational factors such as register and interlocutors. These resulted in three varieties of taboo: absolute taboo, a quasi-taboo and non-taboo.

Similarly, Qanbar (2011) has conducted a reseaech on linguistic taboos of Yemeni society. When we compare and contrast the Qanbar's study with the linguistic taboos of Chinese conducted by Hongxu and Guisen (1990), they have a big similarities and little difference. Qanbar (2011) has investigated the linguistic taboos of Yemeni society in terms of their relationship with the social context in which they are used, and the socio-cultural factors affecting their use which is similar with the focus of Hongxu and Guisen (1990). As it is already said, according to Hongxu and Guisen (1990), taboo falls under: macro linguistic and micro linguistic while Qanbar (2011:91) calls these two categories as: context-specifi and general taboo. However, the main focus of these categories is similar. To conduct their study on taboo, Hongxu and Guisen (1990) proposed the framework "macro context" (that is, societal factors) and "micro context" while Qanbar used face and politeness theory which is proposed by Brown and Levinson (1987).

In so doing, Qanbar (2011) has examined and described different categories of linguistic taboos in the Yemeni society and the strategies the Yemeni speakers use in order to avoid these words through different types of replacement of taboo words with more acceptable words such as using jargon terms, constructions, euphemisms, creating antonyms, metaphoric expressions, circumlocution, and use of standard Arabic terms. She has argued that these processes are conditioned by the cultural and religious norms of the society. From this elaboration, we can see that Qanbar presented 'euphemism' as one type of replacement of taboo words but in current dissertation, I took 'euphemism' as the

main topic which help us to avoid taboo words in general and used other types of replacement strategies stated by Qanbar to euphemize taboo words.

In the same vein, Aliakbari and Raeesi (2015:93) have investigated different kinds of taboos used in the Pashtoon society. They have provided an insight into Pashtoon society and culture as well as norms, customs and belief shared among the members of this society. They have also offered an explanation why certain words are considered taboos in the society, and why certain taboo words are accompanied by particular conventionally-fixed words (neutral words which got tabooed connotation in specific context).

Related to the ideas of Aliakbari and Raeesi (2015:93), an anthropologist, Montagu, holds similar point of view and proves that taboo words are indeed social constructions by citing the fact that not every culture contains taboo language (Montagu, 1967:55). He explained taboo as it is a social and cultural phenomenon used under a certain cultural context. However, a certain language or social taboo is not necessarily taboo for another. Not necessarily in different language, even in similar speech community, the word which is taboo in one area may not be taboo in another area. In the case of Oromo, in the Southern dialect (Bale), the term *bukkee* encodes the sense 'dysfunctional penis', but the same term is used in the rest of the dialects to denote 'near or beside voice' (Amanuel and Samuel, 2012:37).

As Qanbar (2011:89) cited Alkhatib (1995) studied the linguistic taboos of Jordanian Arabic. He described how linguistic taboos are generated, what they are generated for, how they can be violated, and what mechanism can be used by the speaker to avoid them. He stated that linguistic taboo in Jordanian society seems to be the general tenets of taboo which posits that words are subject to a strict set of rules agreed upon by the speech community members and that shared values concerning their meaning and the reality they signify is a precondition for communication.

When we compare and contrast the Aliakbari and Raeesi (2015:93)'s study with Alkhatib (1995), their main focus was, to discuss about taboo issues but Aliakbari and Raeesi (2015) did not explain the mechanism of euphemizing taboo terms like Alkhatib

(1995). Also Alkhatib (1995) concluded that the socio-cultural factors which determine the use of taboo words with their equivalent euphemistic expressions. However, the current study has included the main issues raised by two scholars.

Besides, different scholars have been conducted research regarding the attitudes that people have towards linguistic taboos. For instance, Pang Chor (2009) conducted a research on the use of linguistic taboos by speakers of English in Hong Kong. She believed that a taboo concept can have positive and negative aspects. She suggested that the more a linguistic expression emphasizes negative aspects, the more that expression bears tabooess. She considered Dewaele's (2004) study who believed people have different perception of taboo words. Dewaele (2004) was the first person who studied the strength of words, a scalar system which compared emotional force of taboo words. Pang Chor (2009:7) studied people's reaction and the degree of their tolerance to linguistic taboo words by applying Dewaele's (2004) scalar system. In addition, she went on to categorize these taboo words in relation with taboo concepts including 'death', 'poverty', 'race', 'sex' and 'body' by applying Hongxu and Guisen's (1990) framework which we have already explained before.

Samadi (2014) conducted the study on "macro and microcontextual taboo words in Iranian pre and post revolution movies". This study compares the taboo words used by characters in movies. These characters portray lower class and middle class members of Iranian society. Two Iranian movies produced before and after the revolution (1979) have chosen to conduct this study. The data source of the study comes from "Qeisar" and "The Separation". To answer the research questions and analyze the data, Hongxu and Guisen's (1990) framework for taboo words is used.

In comparison to Pang Chor's (2009) study and the Samadi (2014), it must be mentioned that Pang Chor (2009) focused only on microcontextual (situational) factors suggested by Hongxu & Guisen (1990) in forming taboo language. Amongst those micro-context factors including participants, purpose of conversation, setting, content and medium, she investigated participants merely as one of the factors affecting the use of verbal taboos. She considered their age, gender and social status to conclude the linguistic taboo phenomenon among people who speak English in Hong Kong. However, Samadi (2014)

considered both microcontextual (situational) and macrocontextual (societal) factors which may affect the formation of taboo words regarding two Iranian social classes presented in the movies.

In Iranian context, it was found that a study on taboo words in Farsi had been conducted by Bakhtiar (2011). He tried to examine how social and contextual factors such as “gender” and “formality of situation” could determine the offensiveness level of a concept. He also looked at the use of euphemisms in Farsi. He applied Allan & Burrige’s (2006) pragmatic approach to euphemisms to show how x-phemistic value of words in Farsi is affected by particular situational context. Bakhtiar (2011) organized the x-phemisms into three groups: 'euphemism', 'orthophemism' and 'dyphemism'.

According to Allan and Burrige (2006:32), euphemisms and orthophemisms are words or phrases used to avoid taboo words. A dysphemism is a word that has an offensive connotation (Allan and Burrige, 2006:32). Bakhtiar surveyed the expression that Iranian men and women aged 20-30 and the expressions indicating the concept of 'prostitute' ranging from highly euphemistic to complete taboo were obtained based on the circumstances stated in the questionnaire. The participants were allowed to choose whether the word is '*polite*', '*neither polite nor necessarily impolite*' and '*offensive*'. In the second part of the questionnaire the participants should imagine themselves sitting in a cafe discussing the topic of 'prostitution' with a very close friend and they could choose one of the three options of '*polite*', '*neither polite nor necessarily impolite*' and '*offensive*' by considering the current situation.

To analyze his data, Bakhtiar (2011) applied statistical methods. From his findings, he deduced that in formal situations, both genders believed that the slang for the word “prostitute” is taboo and offensive or dyphemistic. However, in informal situations the words were considered not taboo or orthophemistic or they were euphemistic. He also concluded that women, in general, considered more words to be taboo or offensive and dyphemistic than men would. The difference between Bakhtiar’s (2011) study and the Samadi (2014) would be that the taboo words chosen by Bakhtiar is on one theme, prostitution, in three particular situations while the Samadi focuses on a number of

themes and situations where as the current study has included both themes discussed by the two authors.

In fact to avoid mentioning certain words and expressions in a language is a common practice in more than one society. But, taboo language is not only associated with lack of decency. Very often, it is just a matter of convention where the normal use of an item in a language is inhibited due to particular social values and beliefs. The tabooed items vary from one society to another. According to Trudgill (1986: 30), the strongest taboo-words in the English-speaking world are still associated with sex, followed by those associated with excretion. In Norway, there are expressions which are mostly connected with the devil, and in Roman Catholic culture, they are words essentially associated with religion.

According to Mbaya (2002:2), in traditional Africa, taboo includes words for sex and parts of the body, words for death, for marriage and kinship relations, certain birds' and animals' names, etc. For example, in Ciluba, sex is referred to as *mesu* (eyes). In Wolof, the lingua franca of Senegal, it is called *kanam*, which means "face". The Wolof expression "to chat up a girl" for example is translated as "to ask for a face" (*gnan kanam*). As to death, several euphemistic expressions are used, especially for announcing the death of a great person: "to disappear" in Ciluba; "to finish one's work" or "to sleep" in Wolof; "to go" or "to leave" in Lingala, etc. On other hand, taboo is associated with respect. To show respect, Africans address people, especially the elder ones, by using euphemism. As an example, in Mandingo (West Africa), elder brothers and sisters are respectively called *Kollo* and *Diadia* (elder brother, elder sister); not by their names. Still for reasons of respect, Luba women call their husbands "uncles", "chiefs" or "dads", and husbands call their wives *Muina kuanyi* ("the owner of my house") *Mwa bana* ("the mother of children") or after the names of their children e.g. *Mwa Mbuyi* ("mother of Mbuyi"). In Oromo also the wife calls her husband as *abbaa manaa ko/kiyya* 'owner of the house', *jaarsa kiyya* 'my elder' and so forth rather than calling his name.

In addition to the ideas that have been expressed by Alkhatib (1995) cited in Qanbar (2011), Al-Azzeh (2010) was an attempt to explore the tabooed words which Jordanian Arabic speakers prohibit to speak in public and forced to euphemize in their daily communication. The study examined the effect of social variables such as, the dialectal

variety, gender and age on the use of euphemism in the Jordanian society in the light of Politeness Principle and Context Theory. Actually, the ideas have been presented by the authors are supporting each other.

2.1.7.1.1. Semantics and Taboo Words

Language contains different levels of analysis: phonological, morphological, syntactic, semantic ...etc. Each level is concerned with a certain angle in language (Ahmed, 2013:44). Semantics is concerned with the meaning that entities have in a language. Saeed (2009:3) defines semantics as “the study of meaning communicated through language.” Speakers of language have their knowledge about their language, how words, phrases, and sentences are constructed, how to pronounce them, and how to use them in their context. The knowledge of a speaker is shown by linguistic description. The job of the semantist is to describe semantic knowledge represented by the meaning of language. This section sheds light on semantics of taboo words, i, e, their meaning in language. Or, let us say to deal with the internalized components of linguistic competence that the speakers of a linguistic community share and its internal semantic competence. Therefore, semantics is the description and explanation of the way in which linguistic expressions have meanings. According to Reiner (2010:2), one of the richest and most fascinating parts in linguistics because of the issues it deals with. Before dealing directly with taboo words, it is necessary to explain some related topics in semantics as the following:

a. Denotative Meaning

This term is used interchangeably with conceptual and cognitive meaning. The denotation of an expression is an immortal part of reality that the expression is linked with. For instance, as Topping (2010:17), the word 'blue' denotes the colour blue. This means that denotative or is what the word refers to in reality, or it is the lexical meaning in dictionaries. This kind of meaning is stable and constant regardless of ages and societies. As far as taboos are concerned, the words associated with sex or health is not considered fearful or horrible when the literal meaning is indicated (Topping 2010:17). The strength of these words lies behind or consists in the way these words are used whether literally or for insulting or degrading ...etc (Ahmed, 2013:46).

b. Connotative Meaning

Connotative meaning, on the other hand, is defined by Leech (1981:12) as “the communicative value an expression has by virtue of what it refers to over and above purely conceptual content.” Unlike the denotative one, this type of meaning has the characteristic feature of being unstable and changeable. It is apt to vary from one society to another, from age to age, and even from person to person (Ahmed, 2013:45). It is indeterminate and open-ended in the same way our knowledge and beliefs about the universe are so. To make it clear, consider the following: the red colour is popular in China, as He (2009:161) states, it signifies success, progress, and revolution. On the contrary, it stands for an evil omen, or danger steaming from the spirits of bullfighters for Westerners. For Americans, red has the association of fire, blood, cruelty of war, violence, and revolution.

Compared to ‘red’, ‘white’ in Chinese culture is basically taboo because it shows the Chinese's material and spiritual disgust. Traditionally, it makes people of China tend to think of solemn mourning, which originated from ancient times for colour of superstitions; whereas for Westerners’ purity, elegance, and frankness are signified by white. Being discussed elaborately as a taboo word by Allan and Burridge (2006:51), *bloody* has simply the idea of blood that it had unpleasant and violent connotations which would make it very suitable to be used as an intensifying word.

Additionally, it would give rise to lurid association of bloodshed and murder especially when it is used with expressions like *bloody battle* and *blood murderer* (Ahmed, 2013:45). It was believed that it would be associated with the underworld. Apparently, the connotations of both red and white, as colour terms, given above, are of value to reflect how people or societies differ in the way connotative meaning works. How taboos work in language is perceived in the same way as their connotations which hold tabooess.

c. Social Meaning and Meaning Change

The role language plays in society has already been referred to when interacting with others to maintain social relations. This helps to express the fact that the social meaning of the items are picked up by the participants. To a great extent, it fulfills the social

aspects of language. Thus, Leech (1981:14) defines the social meaning as “a piece of language conveying about the social circumstances of its use.” Elements represented by geographical or social origins of the speakers, level of style, and the social relationship between the speaker and listener are encoded to form the social meaning. Lessig (1995:956) notes that social meaning is subject to some other elements like the social background of participants, words and their uses, and the time when a word is used. In the respect of talking of taboo words and social meaning, as taboos are a part of social components in language, the above criteria will be discussed with reference to their social use and meaning.

It is clear that death is a taboo topic as it was discussed earlier with reference to its expressions. If social meaning exists, they are to be used as tools and means to ends, individually or collectively selected. People vary in the way these expressions are selected; one uses an insult to oppress others; others use an expression to endear. A certain language is employed to identify one meaning rather than another. The task of the sociolinguist is to understand these meanings and how they are signaled in language. As far as social meaning and taboo words are concerned, Lobner (2002) draws a comparison between the Japanese language which forces its speakers into their hierarchical social thinking and the Westerners into observing sexual taboo. Because of the difference in social sides of these two cultures, language reflects social structure and cultural standards. Referring directly to sexuality is impossible if language does not provide appropriate words. The sexual revolution in the Western culture revealed that speech communities rapidly developed acceptable expressions in society when taboo loses its force.

The social background is an important factor. The social meaning reflects the status of participants in society and their background. For instance, Ahmed (2013:86) point out that women show greater restraint than men while using taboo words. The freedom of the seniors to use taboos is only less remarkable. The social background is noticeable even between children of the same age; let us say peers, it depends on the values accepted in the family or a group in which the child grows up.

d. Semantic Change and Taboo

Semantic change is studied under historical semantics; which means the study of the change of meaning of expressions through time, in particular, the changes of the meaning of words. Regardless of the historical, geographical, political, and any other reasons cause semantic change; it is to focus on the relationship between semantic change and taboo words (Ahmed, 2013:48). Cultural influences change the language. The background image that motivates the figurative shift is an aspect of the culture of a given linguistic society. One of the powerful sources for semantic change is taboos.

In fact, semantic change in general is concerned directly with the connotations of expressions rather than their denotations. Connotations, as Leech (1981:12) refers to, are the viewpoints adopted by an individual or a whole society. These viewpoints are represented by the attitudes, beliefs, images, and feelings towards words used by people. This fact is emphasized by Palmer (1981:92-3). It is true that people will change names in order to avoid such connotations, and there is a natural process of change with taboo words.... Because the word is associated with a socially distasteful subject, it becomes distasteful itself. But the process is, of course unending since it is essentially the object and not the word that is unpleasant .Words even become taboo when the distasteful object is referred to be the word in a different sense Thus we are unwilling to take to intercourse to mean social or commercial relationships, and it has been often pointed out that it is for similar reasons that in America the male domestic fowl is a rooster. To make it clear, a word does not change, what has changed is the connotative meaning of these words.

2.1.7.2. Taboos Studied in the Oromo Society

The topic of linguistic taboo has not got much attention in Oromo society; because nothing has been written so far on this topic. But this does not mean the total absence of such works. So, I have attempted to present some related works done in Oromo society so far as follow.

Taboo is a practice for the the Oromo people everywhere they found. Mbaya (2002:224) described a custom in Oromo culture (Illubabor) known under the name of *laguu* or *laga a*, which means ‘taboo’, which consists in avoiding mentioning the names of the

persons who have relations by marriage. The study shows that because of taboo language, husband, wife and the in-laws avoid addressing their respective names and substitute for them several forms, most of which are coinings. The study has analyzed the taboo-words and describes the mechanisms used for substitution. Besides, this work, treats *laguu*, i.e. when, how and why to observe it; the types of names that are avoided; their substitutes and how they are found; and finally the violation of the custom and subsequent sanctions. The study paves the way for further studies, which might be carried out on language use and culture within this tribe. However, this study did not cover taboos related to bride, bridegroom, sexual intercourse performed on the wedding day, and renaming a bride as well as breaking of the rules and regulations of honeymoon.

In line with Mbaya (2002), Wondessan (1991:73-5) has also studied the *laguu* term related to the name of father-/mother-in-laws or other close relatives and how wife avoids mentioning these names in the Oromo society of Arsi Zone Dodolaa area. According to him, when the wife avoids addressing these proper names, she substitutes them by using different mechanism. For example, she substitutes the first syllable of the proper name which is a similar with that taboo name or she uses the synonym meaning of that name or uses circumlocution system. For example, if she wants to avoid the name, *Burk'aa*, she substitutes this name by its synonym which is *madda*. The two terms, *madda* and *burk'aa* have an equivalent meaning with 'wellspring'. The difference between Myaba's (2002) and Wondessen's (1991) study was, Wondessen has only discussed how a wife avoids the name of her husband's father, mother and other close relatives while Myba discussed how both the wife and the husband avoid the name of one another, father-/mother-in-law. Besides, the substitution mechanism that has been raised by Myaba (2002) was more detail than Wondwosen's (1991) study.

In relation to taboo, Tadesse (2013:53) dealt with one aspect of taboo which is associated with number nine in *Guji* Oromo culture not as a counting number but as a number that has special significance. In other words, he concentrated on the number nine entirely from the point of view of its application, and not its being an abstract concept. In *Guji* Oromo culture, number nine is associated with a critical time, with a ghost, and with illness and death. This is clearly evident in *Guji* Oromo proverbs, in children's games,

and in the pregnancy and birth of a ninth child. In his study, after providing an overview about *Guji* Oromo, he introduced what he calls “riddles” associated with the number nine in their culture. He has found out why nine, among all other numbers, is considered a special number that the society considers as taboo. Finally, an attempt was made to disentangle the riddles associated with number nine by employing anthropological models and insights.

Besides, in *Guji* Oromo culture, as in many cultures, there are taboos and mystical belief about numbers. There are also numbers that have symbolic significance. For instance, there is a belief among the *Guji* Oromo that the counting of human beings and domestic animals can lead to their destruction. To circumvent the taboo, they identify their livestock individually by name. In line with, what was observed by (Asmarom, 1973: 281) about the *Borana* Oromo is equally true for the *Guji*. According to him, each animal is a unique creature with a different color, shape, pedigree, name, and life history. The herdsman recalls not only how he acquired the animal, but often the specific and emotionally tinged circumstances of acquisition. For human beings too, counting is done indirectly. For example, instead of saying “I have eight children (from a wife)” one may say, “After one more child I will celebrate *sallii-falla*”- a ceremony held for the pregnancy and birth of a ninth child (Tadesse, 2013:56). The indirect counting of human beings may have created confusion to official enumerators and contributed to the underestimation of the *Guji* population during census counts. It is interesting to note that the number nine is associated with ghosts. The *Guji* do not believe in life after death, and, therefore, do not worship ancestors. They do however; believe in the existence of *ekeraa*, to mean a soul of dead person wandering in wilderness for a short period of time. *Ekeraa* is feared because it is said to be dangerous to the living. It is usually associated with danger, with illness that reduces people to skeletons, and with death.

Taboos related to numbers are not unique in Oromo, unlucky numbers are found in many societies, though no such a single number has any universal significance. For example, in America and much of Europe, for example, number thirteen is associated with bad luck, and many buildings skip “thirteen” in numbering the floors. According to Tse (2011:134) most Hongkongers relatively construct referring to the patterns of behavior, values, and

beliefs, that is, the number four (/si/), which means ‘death’ in Chinese culture, that guide the daily life of an individual or a group of individuals within a cultural community. For example, taboos include living on the fourth floor, having number four in one’s home address, car plate number, and phone number. Violation of these taboos will lead to punishment and irresistible consequences. People of Hong Kong which is 99% of the population is Chinese observe taboos not out of respect they are afraid of death. Because of this cultural aspect, they try to avoid talking about death thinking that death may come upon them and to their relatives. Therefore, avoid staying on the fourth floor in the hospital. In some private hospitals in Hong Kong, no patients would like to stay on this floor unless they want to spend less money, since these hospitals charge less for wards on the fourth floor. In this study, my focus is not discussing taboos related to number, I raised this issue simply to notice that the term ‘taboo’ is existed among Oromo people.

The other scholar, Ostebo (2009) has studied about *wayyuu*- ‘women’s Respect and Rights among the Arsi-Oromo’. This study does not directly talk about ‘taboo’ but indirectly it has a similar implication with taboo. In his study, the effort was to strengthen human rights through great cultural sensitivity and with an aim at both revealing and incorporating “traditional” notions of human rights into the discourse. According to him an account of *wayyuu* is a moral concept of respect and sacredness. It is one of the major constructs in a “traditional” Oromo worldview and is a concept with clear religious connotations. It is reflected in various cultural practices and has other implications for regulation of sexual accepted behavior.

According to Osebo (2009:1050), even if the term *wayyuu* is not easy to translate into English, it has the following representations:

- Something which is sacred
- Something that should not be touched
- Something or someone to fear

The given representation can share the definition of taboo given by Fairman (2009) under section (2.1.1). According to him, taboo (tabu) describes the behavior of Polynesians towards things that were not to be done, entered, seen or touched/entered and eaten. On

the other hand, Ostebo's description of *wayyuu* has a relationship with the term *saffuu* in Oromo that has been equivalently applied by Gemechu (1993).

According to Gemechu (1993:260), *saffuu*, "stands for everything we do not understand, including a person's evil deeds", "having *saffu* means that you know how to behave according to the laws of our ancestors". For another, it means, for example, that "a younger boy may not sit on a higher stool than older boys. If he does this, people say, 'he does not know *saffu*'. Finally, another summarizes *saffu* in this way: "people say *saffu* when they hear of things they do not want to hear.

Some conceptual representation given for *saffu* by Gemechu includes/shares the features or the definitions that have been given for taboo. In my opinion the society's *saffuu* should be respected through the society's social taboo; so, taboo can be one element that embraced under *saffuu*. Besides, I disagree with that Gemechu's spelling the term as *saffuu* because we pronounce the term as (safu:), so the correct spelling of the term must be *safuu*.

2.2. Euphemism

Introduction

Under relation of taboo words, euphemistic is one of scientific phenomena which is interesting to be discussed, because every society have their own language to euphemize taboo words (Helmi, 2008:31). According to Ikram (2010:17), "people pay much attention to the destructive power of words, expressions or thoughts. The feelings and gestures that accompany the words can hurt, injure, and even lead to death". Therefore, euphemism is predetermined by social and situational contexts. In line with, Ikram (2010:17) states as euphemism carries out communication in a more pleasant, smooth and effective way; because taboos extend to cover discussion of taboo topics, resulting in euphemisms replacement of taboo words (Mahmoud, 2015:5). Therefore, euphemism is an important matter as the implimentation of words that are used by the language user to cover up the harsh reality of what is being referred to.

In this chapter, definition and historical background of euphemism, classification of euphemism, common characteristics of euphemism, the communicative function of euphemism, formation of euphemism and semantic aspects were described.

2.2.1. Definition of Euphemism

Almost in all cultures, there are some topics and issues which are taboo, offensive or limited in use that people avoid referring to directly. Alternatively, they use covering and roundabout expressions, which are known as euphemisms. Since taboo topics are deemed inappropriate in certain contexts, one might make a choice for euphemisms instead. The word *euphemism* is derived from Greek and is defined, according to Burchfield (1986:13), as use of an auspicious word for an inauspicious one and fair of speech. Additionally, according to Holder (2008: 65) the term euphemism was derived from the Greek word ‘euphemo’, meaning “speaking well”. The latter is divided into ‘eu’, which means “good, well” and ‘phemo’, meaning “speech or speaking”. Both definitions given by Burchfield (1986) and Holder (2008) show us euphemism is the way in which we replace bad words by good expression.

So, in their daily communication, people use euphemism in order to not offend hearers. In relation to this, Allan and Burridge (2006:32) state euphemism as words (or phrases) substituted for other words thought to be offensive to avoid the loss of face; either one’s own face or, by giving offense that of the audience, or of some third party. According to this definition, euphemism is a system that helps us to change impolite expression into polite. Regarding this, Hughes (2006:151) notes, euphemism is an essential mode of politeness, and thus it is a continuous process in the life. Euphemisms result from change in the moral sense of society in certain areas in which society has shared guilty conscience or is afraid to mention a taboo topic. However, the definition which given by Hughes as ‘afraid to mention a taboo topic’ for euphemism does not fit the reality of euphemism; because people use euphemism not only for the case of afraid, but also for the sake of respect one another. For example, in Oromo society, husband and wife avoid mentioning the name of each other as the result of the respect, not to be afraid of mentioning it.

Leech (1981:45) also defines euphemistic terms as they are painkillers for the disgusting issues, he assesses them as a means that enable people to refer to, live with and talk about things without being shocked and disturbed. For example, among English speakers, the expressions ‘sleep with’ and ‘go to bed with’ are preferred over ‘to have sex with’. From

these expressions we can understand that euphemisms are figurative (Allan and Burridge 1991:14).

Wardaugh (1986:240) noted that “Euphemism is endemic in our society; the glorification of the common place and the elevation of the trivial. We are constantly renaming and repackaging them to make them sound better”. According to Wardaugh euphemistic expressions neutralize unpleasant or tabooed subjects which people consider more disagreeable or offensive to them or their audience. For example, in public settings, speaking about death, and dying, unemployment and criminality is not allowed. These offensive expressions may be taboo, fearsome, distressful, or for other reason have many negative connotations to excite a speaker’s communication attention in given occasion or context (Helmi, 2008:33).

Finally, although scholars defined euphemism from different perspectives, the definitions of euphemism share the following features:

1. The purpose of using euphemisms is to avoid directly speaking out the unpleasant or taboo reference.
2. Euphemism is a kind of polite and roundabout mode of expression.
3. Euphemism is used to soften or beautify the unpleasantness of reality.

2.2.2. Historical Background of Euphemism

Social interaction is exposed to many challenges. It is threatened by the existence of sensitive topics which have tabooed concepts. As Ikram (2010:17) “Euphemism more or less originates from taboo. It is to substitute the taboo language”. According to Ikram, euphemism in nearly all societies traces back to religious and superstitious powers. In the primitive societies, people could not refer to the name of their gods or God directly. They believed that there was a close relationship between the names of things and the objects themselves, in such a way that the names were viewed as the extension of the things. Instead, they could refer to them by their attributes. For example, 'thunder', symbols or the extended meaning ‘the rock’, by their titles (the Lord) as Neaman and Silver (1983: 2) cited in Abdulla (2012:4). Thus, the power of such terms was considered as word magic to avoid fear of dangerous things. However, in the Oromo societies of the research areas, addressing the name of God is not considered as taboo; because people call it by different

names for sake of respect Him. Therefore, euphemism is created to replace taboos which are forbidden or impolite depending on the taboo and culture of the people who interpret them. There is a strong relationship between euphemism and taboo. Burchfield (1985:14) argued that a language without euphemisms would be a defective instrument of communication. Because directly using taboo words may cause disagreement or conflict between communicants.

According to Abdulla (2012:5), most of the taboos of the Anglo-Saxon period survived to the 16th and 17th centuries correspondingly, euphemism was fully flourished, particularly among the English middle classes. They were conservative enough to avoid the direct reference to sex, the Lord, death and the excretory functions. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, English euphemism developed more widely as the British Empire expanded. The common people started using euphemistic terms for crimes, money and poverty; whereas the high class would use euphemisms for the former traditional areas such as death, sex, excretions, etc

Allan and Burrige (1991: vii) report that euphemisms have existed throughout history and they are used even among preliterate people. In line with this, Hughes (2006:151) states that all communities from the primitive to the advanced use euphemisms. She points out that they are often defined as the use of deliberately indirect, conventionally imprecise, or socially comfortable ways of referring to taboo, embarrassing or unpleasant topics. From these expressions we can understand that in history euphemism has been used by everyone to makes communication polite, inoffensive and maintain someonece's face.

2.2.3. Euphemism, Language and Culture

Euphemism enables people to communicate smoothly and without conflict due to social issues. Individuals of a certain society share the norms and traditions, and their society develops and guides individuals not to be misled at any moment. Individuals, on the other hand, vary in the way they perceive and control these norms and values (Ahmed, 2013:63). From this idea, we can conclude that whatever it is one cannot ignore in order to maintain safe communication. As such, euphemisms are outward and visible signs of

our inward anxieties, conflicts, fears, and shames. As Rawson (1981), euphemism has relationship with language and culture.

2.2.3.1. Euphemism and Language

According to Wardhaugh (1986:238), “Language is used to avoid saying certain things as well as to express them”. If so, we can say that language is the tool of taboo and euphemism. By following Wardhaugh, we can say that where there is language, there are both taboo and euphemism. This shows that there is close relation between language, taboo and euphemism. So, taboo and euphemisms are embedded so deeply in our language that few of us, even those who pride themselves as being plain-spoken, ever get through a day without using them. Based on these assertions, one can argue that the relation between language, taboo and and euphemism are so intrinsically close that it is impossible to study one without analysis of the other. In line with this, Alix (2012:30) euphemism is one form of language. Figurative speech like hyperbole, metaphor, understatement, circumlocution and many others are so commonly used in euphemistic utterances. This shows us how much figurative speech is supplementary for taboo and euphemism. Euphemism has experienced the process of growth and development. Therefore, euphemism not only expands and enriches vocabulary but also contributes to the appropriate and effective use of that language. Therefore, in our communication we make our language suitable through using euphemism or make it bad through using taboo language.

2.2.3.2. Euphemism and Culture

According to Alix (2012:31), in modern linguistic studies, it is incomplete to analyze any linguistic phenomenon, related to meaning, without describing and realizing the culture or norms of that speech community, since language and culture are two inseparable categories of human behavior. For this reason, it is preferable to check how linguists perceive the language-culture relations. Due to the broad and fuzzy boundaries the term culture has, linguists find it troublesome to propose a comprehensive definition. In relation to this Goodenough (1957:167) says, “A society’s culture consists of whatever it is one has to know or believe in order to operate in a manner acceptable to its members, and to do so in any role that they accept for anyone of themselves”. Accordingly, the term culture includes all human behavior (including all speech activities). From these

explanations we can understand that culture is the cornerstone to euphemize taboo expressions. Because people hate something to speak or prefer to speak as per the culture they live in.

According to Abdulla (2012:12), it is inevitable that there are lexical items in all languages that are readily open for cultural interpretations. Thus, the essential trends are unconventional regarding the form of relation that is ever held between culture and language of any speech community. Thus, the multi-dimensional relations between the two essential categories lead linguists to attempt at theorizing the language culture relations. It encourages them to assert that the existence of one implies the other; the change in one irresistibly results in a change in the other, and our inability to describe our culture parallels our inability to describe our language.

Linguists centre their attention to those language phenomena that carry both verbal and nonverbal cultural norms; to these linguists the priority is devoted to the euphemistic terms. Euphemisms are heavily loaded by cultural, social and even spiritual values (Abdulla, 2012:13). According to Abdulla, they are a set of expressions (among other cultural terms like kinship terms) that the sociolinguists regularly find themselves involved with during their cultural or linguistic analyses. Euphemisms represent complicated levels, and classes of culture. Euphemisms can be easily tracked in our conversation and they reflect different levels of culture and various patterns of culture, to some extent, euphemism is a mirror of culture. Therefore, euphemism, as an indispensable part of every language, is a mirror of morality, customs, politics, life style, background, etc (Alix, 2012:32). This means that euphemism cannot exist without social culture. Learning euphemism well means more than merely mastering the pronunciation, words and grammar. It means learning to see the world as native speakers of that language see it, learning the ways in which their language reflects the ideas, customs and behavior of their society, and learning to understand their mentality.

In short, the relationship between euphemism and culture is obvious: euphemism, as a cultural linguistic product, displays its multiple mapping relations with culture, it changes along with the development of society, and the use of euphemism varies with the

variations of the context. Euphemism is a reflection of culture and understanding culture underlying euphemisms enables one to catch the meaning conveyed.

2.2.4. Classification of Euphemism

In the second half of the twentieth century, sociolinguists classified euphemism into many categories according to different rules and principles. For instance, As Rawson (1981:88) suggested euphemistic expression is divided into two general types, positive and negative. The positive ones are also called stylistic euphemisms. They inflate and magnify, making the euphemized items seem altogether, grander and more important than they really are. This kind of euphemism often involves the many occupational titles to salve the egos of the workers like 'sanitary engineer' for 'garbage man', 'lady of the evening' for 'prostitute' (Ikram, 2010:19). Unlikely, the negative euphemisms deflate and diminish. They are defensive in nature; they are mostly for avoiding the tabooed terms or eradicating anything else that people consider offensive like in Afaan Oromoo *waliin c'iisan* 'sleep with' instead of *wal salan* 'fucked each other'. From this example, we can understand that negative and positive taboo can be overlapped. Even if the expression *waliin c'iisan* 'sleep with' was a euphemized expression, still it is taboo but less than the direct term *walsan* 'fucked each other'. Consequently, 'the euphemisms, whether positive or negative, may be used either consciously or unconsciously'.

On the basis of the correlation between the euphemistic meaning and the original meaning, sociolinguists classified euphemism as conscious and unconscious (Rawson, 1981). Unconscious euphemisms are mainly the words that develop as euphemisms, but with the passage of time they are acquired as orthographic terms and they begin to lose their euphemistic weight, like cemetery, which has become a standard term for graveyard. But the conscious euphemisms constitute a much more complex category and often lead to social double thinking, like 'the loss of her husband' for 'death', 'go to restroom' for a person wants to urinate.

2.2.5. Functions and Motivations of Euphemism

From the previous definition, it seems as though euphemism is the entity to complicate linguistic clarity, as well as the whole process of human interaction, both positively and

negatively. As Hasegawa (2002:22) states, any attempt to complicate or confuse a human concept implies perplexity and involves a degree of inherent danger. Regarding euphemistic use, people generally tend to draw more attention to lexical alternation. However, this is not the only aspect of euphemistic function and motivation. Euphemism is related to broader contexts such as a situation, a person or an object in a more agreeable, more reassuring or politer light than would be afforded by the hard glare of reality or by crude, direct definition. This is because of the source of euphemism is suppression and therefore untruth, a frequent precondition is some kind of elevation (whether moral, social, or stylistic) which the euphemism tries to sustain (Adams, 1985:46). Therefore, most euphemisms are an attempt to the same aim, 'concealment, denial, obfuscation'.

2.2.6. Purposes and Uses of Euphemisms

Euphemisms are accommodation and deception at the same time. In certain social contexts, they are used to avoid embarrassment and the direct mention of social taboos. In other situations, they are used to give more importance and a higher status to certain individuals and events. For example, calling a person who collects trashes as *kosii funaantuu* 'garbage collector' is taboo; instead of this it is better to say *k'ulk'ulleesituu* 'sanitary engineer or cleaner'.

Euphemisms are also used to ameliorate the effects of consequences of certain acts or incidents. For example, terms or phrases such as 'collateral damage' for killing innocent civilians in war, an 'invasion' becomes a 'rescue mission' and 'bombings' become 'protective reactions' (Allan & Burrige, 2006:230). Amelioration plays significant role in changing the semantics of the given euphemistic expressions. The same occurs in the business world where euphemisms are used by management to conceal a reality that would otherwise have a negative effect on the organization. Thus firing employees is described in terms of 'lay off', 'downsizing', 're-engineering', or 'involuntarily separated', and demotions are said to be 'vocational relocations'. Seemingly benign words are used to soften the shocking reality of being fired or demoted.

In the domain of political discourse, euphemisms can be employed for kind or evil purposes. Regarding to this, Rawson (1981:28) states that "when euphemisms are used

to purposely conceal our inward anxieties, conflicts, fears, and shames, they become ‘doubletalk’ designed to mislead and are convenient words for people who lie about what they are doing”. As Rawson states that both parties of the communication, in using and accepting these misleading euphemisms, are parties to the ‘conspiracy’. The conspiracy is that both interlocutors pretend that what such euphemisms stand for does not exist, and these are taken at face value.

Euphemisms are also often used in social and religious contexts, especially when this relates to collectively agreed upon taboos such as ‘death’, ‘bodily functions’, ‘sex’, and ‘profanity’ (Helmi, 2008:35). In almost all societies, there is an implicit understanding that such topics are to be euphemized. For example, in both English and Afaan Oromoo, there are functionally equivalent expressions that are employed to maintain face-saving and to avoid embarrassment, or to spare the listener feelings of discomfort. In English, for instance, ‘pass away’, ‘depart’, or ‘met his maker’ are used for ‘die’. In Afaan Oromoo, the same effect is obtained by using *‘bok’ote* ‘took rest’, *darbe* ‘passed away’ *gara Waak’aa deeme* ‘departed to God’, etc instead of the direct *du?e* ‘died’.

In the area of bodily functions people employ euphemistic expressions to refer to these things. For example, in English things related to ‘urination’, water closet (WC) reads as ‘bathroom’. Similarly, in Afaan Oromo, saying *mana udaanii* ‘lit. waste house’ is so shameful, thus people use *‘mana finc’aanii* ‘toilet’. Euphemisms are also used to soften descriptions of physical or social handicaps. In English, blind people are said to be ‘visually impaired’ whereas in Afaan Oromoo, *k’aroo abeessa* ‘sightless’.

2.2.7. The Common Characteristics of Euphemism

As a language and cultural phenomenon, euphemism has several characteristics in which almost all languages have in common. They are the basic procedures on which the whole phenomenon of euphemism is built. The following points are the common characteristics of euphemism (Abdulla, 2012:45, Samoskaite 2011:18).

2.2.7.1. Indirectness

Indirectness is the most frequent characteristic of euphemism. It is the strongest motivation in the creation of new euphemistic expressions, whenever the oldere euphemism ones lose their indirectness away to their references. All human

psychological nature tends not to refer to taboo or unpleasant topics directly, but in a circumlocutory way, because euphemisms are all beating around the bush.

Indirectness recalls an earlier attitude that the non-logical relation between the signifier (the phonetic form of language) and the signified (the object) enables the speakers of a language to make the relation between them indirect, and 'to speak indirectly is to speak with skill' (Hudson, 1996: 261). This corresponds with what Brown and Levinson (1987:162) constructed in terms of a linguistic link between degree of politeness and degree of indirectness; in a sense that, the more indirect the speaker is in expressing his ideas, the more polite he would be. According to Rawson (1981:1) euphemism is the act of 'substituting a mild, indirect term in place of an embarrassing or unpleasant expression'. This implicit characteristic of euphemism enables the speaker in several figurative forms, such as (metaphors, doublespeak, etc.) to avoid revealing personal information and minimizing the effect of face threatening acts.

For instance, there are a number of indirect euphemistic expressions in English to say that someone is "imprisoned" each according to its context: He is behind the wire, he is now a productive custody, he lives on the government's cost, he is in a community treatment centre, he is in the place of correction, he broke of contacts with the enemy and he is in the concentration camp (Abdulla, 2012).

2.2.7.2. Universality

The concept of universality of euphemism, undoubtedly, can best be realized in terms of the universality of language politeness because euphemism is a major criterion of politeness; because politeness has already been identified as a universal language phenomenon. In nearly all cultures all over the world, there are some strategies to avoid some issues that speakers of its language do not intend to refer to them so overtly because referring to them is either forbidden or unpleasant. Euphemism's universal characteristic may not be related to language, but to human beings. For example, all human beings need a place for defecation/urinate on and it is not language's fault that the place is disgusting, but it is the whole universe that has used to refer to it euphemistically.

2.2.7.3. Culture Specificity

To claim that euphemism is a universal language phenomenon does not mean that what is euphemized in one language should identically be euphemized in the other. No topic is universally forbidden, what cannot be said in one language can be in another and vice versa. That is to say, people in different cultures use language differently due to many factors such as, social values and cultural heritage, religious beliefs, and behavioral rules. These culture differences stimulate some culturally sensitive issues with respect to the use of euphemism. It will finally bring us to the end that “most euphemisms and dysphemisms are culture specific and express a culture's symptomatic fears and anxieties” (Abdulla, 2012).

Regardless categories of euphemism, such as death, sex, bodily excretions, etc, there are some other social and political issues among languages, which are culturally varied. For example, in some societies, to mention one's name during a particular action or behavior is believed to bring offense and curse. So, indirect ways and/or euphemistic procedures are used to refer to him/her when avoidance is impossible. For example, in Bangalam Upper Congo, to mention one's name while fishing is taboo (Abdulla, 2012). In similar way, in Oromo, metaphorical expressions are used to substitute some animals' names like calling a wolf ‘uncle/master’. In Kurdish, it is preferable to say *mashalla* “may God willing you” when one compliments a child. These are all cultural specific affairs and rarely found in other cultures as (Troike, 2003:210 cited in Abdulla, 2012).

2.2.7.4. Beautification

It is obvious from the literal meaning of the word euphemism 'to speak beautifully', whichever the function of euphemism would be the essential motivation is to beautify the offensive, unpleasant and painful language conversations.

Beautification, as a keystone feature for all kinds of euphemism, inevitably appears during the comparison of the older offensive or unpleasant term with the current expression commonly used to refer to the object or issue. For example, one is no more a, ‘bastard child’ but a ‘love child’, and a ‘prostitute’ is a ‘lady of the evening or a comfort woman’ (Abdulla, 2012).

2.2.7.5. Formality

Jay (2000:154) believes that vulgarity and slang expressions are informal while euphemisms are employed at formal level...the use of euphemistic expressions is not more than picking up an appropriate level of formality in speaking. This could be true when one notices that intimate friends rarely euphemize socially restricted topics. More precisely, even when they tend not to mention a topic overtly, the euphemistic expression, which they use, sounds more formal comparing to the rest of expressions in the context. That is to say, euphemistic expressions, by all means, and at any levels of formality, are more formal terms than their non-euphemistic counterparts.

The levels of formality of euphemisms vary relatively according to the formality of the context. That is to say, having two different contexts of different degrees of formality may require different euphemistic expressions of the same reference. For example, there are different euphemistic terms for the sexual act 'intercourse'. For example, to express the death of some- body, people may say *du?e* 'he died' *bok'ote* 'he took a rest', even if the two expressions are refer to the death of the person, the second expression is more formal than the first one.

The word 'copulation' is specified to animals nowadays. The last two utterances "He is 'meeting' her and 'He is 'going out" with her can hardly seem relevant to the sexual act; yet friends can easily understand, for what they are meeting or going out as the context determines it. Further, a speaker considerably uses each one of them according to the formality and appropriateness of the situation.

2.2.8. Formation of Euphemistic Expressions

Euphemism may be formed in a number of ways. However, there is no uniform or standard formation of euphemism; different scholars discovered formation of euphemism from different angles (Alix, 2012:26). In the following, let us look at the euphemistic formation strategies that different authors have found out. The ideas of these scholars are more or less similar to each other.

As Warren (1992:133), innovating euphemism is based on both structural and semantic features. By structural features, Warren explains types of word formation devices, phonemic modification, and loan words. The Warren's model of euphemism formation

has a relationship with the pragmatic context or contextual meanings, i.e. new meanings for words in a particular context, are constantly created in the contexts we use the language. This creation of euphemism is rule governed and the acceptability of new meanings depends on, for example, the strength of ties between the new term and its referent, whether the new term is considered to be of lasting value, i.e. the referent has no other name, or if the new term is a desirable alternative (Linfoot-Ham, 2005:230).

In short, according to Warren (1992:133) there are two ways of innovating euphemism formation. They are formal innovation and semantic innovation. The two ways of innovation are then subdivided as below:

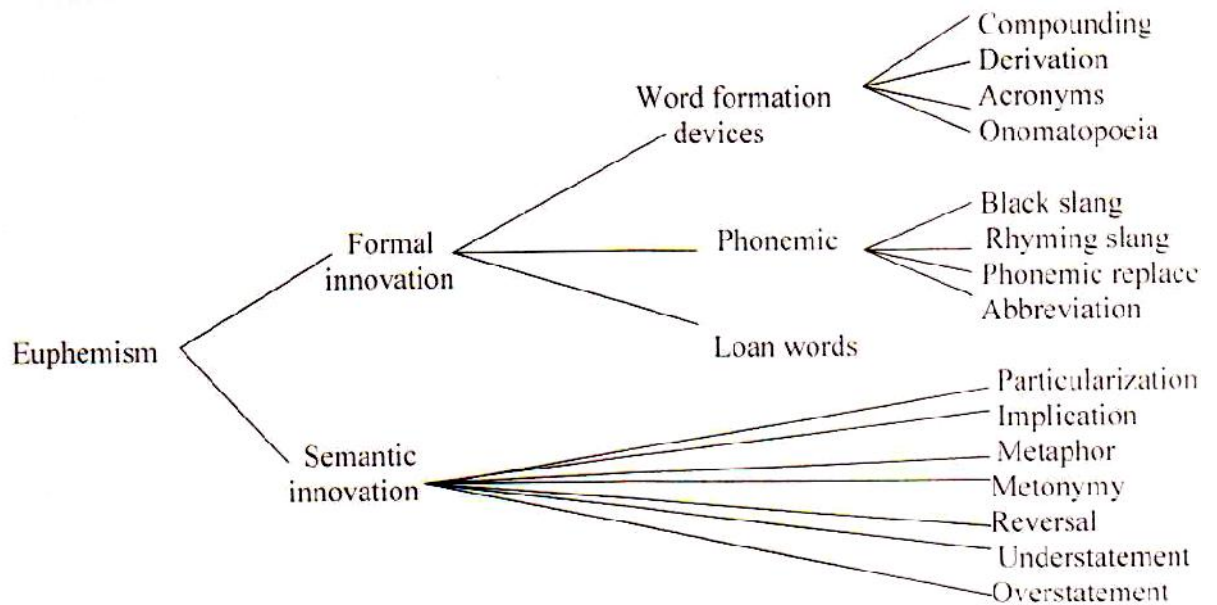


Figure 4: Classification of the main devices for constructing euphemisms (adopted from Warren, 1992:133)

The diagram is explained below with some illustrative examples:

2.2.8.1. Formal innovation

This formal innovation of euphemism involves the followings:

(i) Word formation devices: They include five ways (Warren, 1992:133). They are:

1. **Compounding:** is a word containing a stem that is made up of more than one root or the combining of two individually innocuous words. For example, ‘blowjob’ from ‘blow and job’ for ‘masturbation’.

2. **Derivation:** adding to an existing word an adposition. It involves usually a change in word class. For example, the word 'fellatio' [oral sex], the modification of a Latin term 'fellate', to suck.
 3. **Acronyms:** words composed of the initial letters of the words of a phrase. For instance, WC is the acronymy of 'water closet'.
 4. **Onomatopoeia:** Is the method of word formation, with words that are echoic in character. Here the sound of "things" hitting together during the sex act is employed to refer to the act itself. Look at this example, 'bonk' for 'sexual intercourse'. From the word formation device, onomatopoeia is functionable in this research.
- (ii) **Phonemic modification:** in the formation of euphemism, phonemes are modified to alter an offensive word, for example:
1. **Back slang:** is a phonetic process in which the back part of the tabooed term is transferred to the front part of it. For example, 'enob' [bone] for erected penis, and 'epar' [rape] (Warren, 1992:133).
 2. **Rhyming slang:** is creating euphemisms that phonetically rhyme with their dispreferred counterparts, such as that and this for piss (urinate) refer to phonemic replacement when the tabooed words are remodelled by matching part of them with semantically unrelated ones. Look at this example, sugar and shoot for shit. 'Bristols' for 'breasts', a shortened and further euphemized version of 'Bristols cities' (titties) which becomes a "semi-concealing device" (Burchfield, 1985:19).
 3. **Phonemic replacement:** is one mechanism of euphemizing taboo words by using mispronunciation of the offensive term. For example, the word 'shoot' used to replace the offensive term 'shit'; in this process the phoneme 'i' in shit is replaced by 'oo' in the word shoot. This kind of euphemism is used while Bale Oromo replace the name which is taboo due to the case of marriage relationship.
 4. **Abbreviation:** the reduction of a tabooed phrase into one of its parts like 'knickers' from knickerbockers or a shortend form of word or phrase to be used to represent full form. Look at this example, 'eff' as in 'eff off' for 'fuck off'.

A short term written and read based on its words combination; such as S.O.B for son-of-a-bitch and pee for piss. Similar to acronyms, abbreviation is formed by shortened word as well. The difference is that abbreviation is not a word, as the example of S.O.B.

(iii) Loan words: euphemism can be occurred by loan words that we borrowed from other languages. For example, Latin, Greek, and French contribute greatly for enriching English euphemis terms. Some examples include:

1. French: 'mot' for 'cunt' and 'lingerie' for 'underwear'.
2. Latin: 'faeces' for 'excrement' and 'anus' for 'ass hole'.
3. Other languages: 'cojones' for 'testicles', is Spanish, and 'schmuck' for 'penis' in Yiddish which literally means 'pendant'. This borrowing system of euphemism is used by Orumo of Bale and Hararghe. Moreover, they **borrow** Arabic words.

Generally, in the process of euphemizing taboo words, the word formation devices like acronymy, derivation, rhyming slang, and abbreviation are not functionable in Oromo societies of the research areas.

2.2.8.2. Semantic Innovation

In this euphemism innovation, a novel sense for some established word or word combination is created (Warren, 1992:133). Warren's examples about semantic innovation are:

1. Particularization

It is a meaning represents a subcategory of the literal meaning of a given word. For example, the word 'satisfaction' for 'orgasm' and 'innocent' for 'virginal'; both of which require contextually based inference by the reader/listener to be comprehensible.

2. Implication

Implication is used when both the contextual referent and the conventionally common referent are concurrent. Thus, 'to go to the toilet' is used for 'to urinate' or 'to defecate' whilst 'to sleep with someone' means 'to have sex'. In order to comprehend the intended contextual meaning, listeners or readers, need to infer meaning from the context and the word used. The two examples mentioned above have already been standardized by use, but with a phrase such as 'he switched off the light', listeners must grasp the intended meaning of this statement from both the expression and the context. Without

contextualization, the euphemistic meaning which hints to sex will not be grasped. Besides, implication is something that is implied or involved as natural consequences of something else. In this case, a dispreferred term is implied by the speaker and several steps are needed to retrieve the exact meaning of this implication. For example, the 'natural daughter of 'X' for 'illegitimate child' or 'loose' which implies 'unattached' which leads to the interpretation 'sexually easy or available'.

3. Metaphor:

In the case of metaphor there is at least one shared property between the conventional and euphemistic referents. Thus, 'balls' for 'testicles' as both shares a similar shape. The very essence of a metaphor is that it produces an aesthetic function and hence this is often used in literary works and public oratory. Thus, metaphors are pervasive in euphemism formation and it is clear that many euphemisms are figurative. To mention but a few: 'to kick the bucket' and 'to go to the happy hunting grounds' for 'to die' or 'to spend a penny' for 'to go to the toilet'.

Thus, metaphor is a speech meaning that is generally implicit and it replaces literal meaning. As the metaphorical transfer the creation of a concept, usually euphemistic expression is standing for tabooed issues through comparison. In English, a multitude of colorful metaphorical euphemisms surround 'menstruation', centering around "red", e.g., 'the cavalry has come ', a reference to the red coats of the British cavalry, "it is a red letter day" and "flying the red flag" (Allen and Burridge,1991:62). Other metaphorical euphemisms are 'globes', 'brown eyes' and 'melons' for 'breasts' (Rawson,1981:38), and 'riding' for 'sex', which is common to many languages.

For years, metaphor was considered as a stylistic language which is simply implemented to decorate the language. It was also considered as an odd way of expressing thought. However, Lakoff and Johnson (1980), in their theory of conceptual metaphor, changed the earlier understanding of metaphor. The Conceptual Metaphor Theory views metaphor as a cognitive mechanism whereby one experiential domain is partially mapped onto a different experiential domain, the second domain is structured or understood in terms of the first one. The domain that is mapped is called the source domain, and the domain that is mapped to is called the target domain. The two main functions of metaphor are highlighting and hiding (Lakoff and Johnson 1980).

Taylor (2002:487) presented the critical appraisal of Lakoff's approach to metaphor. In short, Lakoff and Johnson made three principal claims. Firstly, metaphor is ubiquitous in ordinary language-it cannot be dismissed as mere figure of rhetoric, confined to certain literary genres. Secondly, the metaphor of ordinary language displays a high degree of coherence and systematicity. Thirdly, metaphor is not just a manner speaking, it is a mode of thought; the concept that metaphorical expressions designate are themselves structured in terms of metaphor. Besides, metaphors are systematic; the systematicity that allows us to comprehend one aspect of a concept in terms of another will necessarily hide other aspects of the concept. To focus on one aspect of the concept, a metaphorical concept can keep us from focusing on other aspects of the concept that are inconsistent with that metaphor (Lakoff and Johnson 1980).

Through conceptual metaphor, the source domain, in our case (euphemistic expression) is mapped systematically to the target domain (taboo expression). Because of the systematicity, some aspects of the target domain (the positive, favorable or neutral aspects) are highlighted while others (the negative, unpleasant, or embarrassing aspects) are hidden. For example, in the conceptual metaphors DEATH IS REST and DEATH IS A JOURNEY the REST and JOURNEY domains are mapped onto the DEATH domain.

Therefore, the euphemisms were assigned to their corresponding semantic and lexical processes, and then discussed in terms of their correspondences between the source domain and target domain, two key concepts of the Conceptual Metaphor Theory. In the present study, the metaphor is the most powerful (i.e. the most frequently used) process in the formation of euphemisms in Afaan Oromoo. The very high frequency of use of metaphorical euphemisms in this study confirms Fernandez's (2006: 96) argument that the use of metaphor stands out as the most prolific linguistic device of referent manipulation.

4. Metonymy (Otherwise called 'general-for-specific')

This category includes the maximally general, for example, 'it' for (sex) and the contextually dependent 'thing' for (male, female sexual organs, etc). So, it implies co-occurrence between the new euphemistic referent and the conventional one. It could be a cause-effect such as 'to go to bed with' for 'to have sex',

5. Reversal or irony

Reversal or irony is using antonyms ironically or spontaneously to mean the opposite. It occurs when the conventional meaning is semantically reversed to refer to the contextual meaning. Examples like: 'crazy' (creative) and 'enviable disease' (syphilis), both of which enable reference to something 'bad' by using opposites (Linfoot-Ham 2005). According to Trinh (2007), irony is the “expression of one’s meaning by saying the direct opposite of one’s thoughts in order to be emphatic, amusing, sarcastic, etc”. It is very important to euphemize taboo words. For example, when we address a short person (dwarf) by *Lemmanoo* which means ‘bamboo’ it is an ironic expression. Besides, to call slow learner, he is so intelligent that no examiner has agreed to pass him so far

6. Understatement or litotes

It is used when the conventional and new contextual referents share some features in common and a neutral feature is employed in the euphemistic structure to downplay the connotations of the original. Examples include 'drug habit' for 'drug addiction' which are linked by the continual consumption of drugs, or 'to sleep' meaning 'to die' with both actions having the element of unconsciousness in common. Therefore, it is the way of presenting a tabooed issue as less significant than it really is. Expressions, like ‘not very bright’ (thick/stupid) fall into this category.

7. Overstatement or hyperbole

It is the opposite of understatement; because it is the exaggerated language for emotional effect in which taboo is distorted by making it bigger and better than it really is. For instance, the expression ‘flight to glory’ used instead of ‘died’ and ‘visual engineer’ for ‘window cleaner’. When the new contextual structure gives the conventional referent a somewhat exaggerated tone e.g. in Afaan Oromoo, *garbittii* ‘slave’ becomes *gargaartuu manaa* 'servant', 'househelper'.

In addition to Warren’s (1992) euphemism formation that is figuratively expressed, there are several ways of euphemism formation. Regarding this, additional points have been raised by (Allen & Burridge, 1991, Siska, 2010:19, Samoskaite, 2011:16 and Jackova, 2010:29-30). Here, I have raised some points which are not discussed by Warren hereunder.

i. Circumlocution

Circumlocution is roundabout way of thinking (often includes metaphor and metonym) and it forms compound and idiom sentence. It occurs in expressions such as ‘little girl’s room’ means ‘toilet’, ‘categorical inaccuracy’ means ‘lie’, rape ‘become criminal sexual assault or a serious offense against a woman’, faeces ‘become solid woman waste’, etc.

ii. Clipping

The euphemism starting off with a modifying word then the modifier is dropped as a phrase causes to be euphemistic; for instance, ‘Jeez’ for ‘Jesus’, ‘bra’ for ‘brassiere’ (both are end-clipped).

iii. Omission/deletion

Omission refers to eliminating the tabooed words by making a pause or by failing to provide any facts about the tabooed issue, both of which require contextually based inference by the listener to be comprehensible. For example, did you? – For did you have sexual intercourse?

Omission is divided into two

- a. Quasi-omission- it replaces a no-lexical expression for the dispreferred expression to be burbling. For example, like mmm, er-mm, etc. For instance ‘this is a little- mmm-isn’t it’. It is a most unique kind of euphemism that uses a non lexical expression as replacement of dispreferred expressions.
- b. Full- omission – it seems less common than quasi omission, like ‘I need to go’ by omitting ‘to the lavatory’. Therefore, this kind of euphemism avoids the dispreferred expression.

iv. Synecdoche (part-for-whole euphemism)

Sometimes this is called called by meronymy (Trinh, 2007). Synecdoche is a special kind of metonymy in which “a part or aspect of a person, object, etc. is meant to refer to the whole person, object, etc”. For example, ‘I have got a cough’ may occasionally ignore the accompanying ‘stuffed up nose, post nasal drop, and running nose’. The characteristics one- for -one substitution euphemisms can be supposed as kind of euphemism that really replaced a term with another with no bound of lexically and semantically.

2.2.9. Euphemisms and Style

Jackova (2010:15) found out that euphemisms are not represented only by lexemes. He claims that euphemisms, like synonyms, are chosen according to the context. Style and euphemisms are in relation, in which euphemisms support the intended style and style supports euphemisms. According to him, each expression should be assessed according to a context. Context provides extra information, apart from dictionaries of euphemisms. The effort to maintain a face is involved in every social interaction where context is crucial. There exist rules, which should be observed by a speaker to save his/her own face and to be considerate of the face of his interlocutor. He renders four conventions that should be adhered by a speaker to stay euphemistic. They have related implication with Grice maxims:

1. Speaker should state his/her argument clearly. He/she should omit any extra data that are not necessary for hearer to understand.
2. Speaker should act frankly and not give any information he/she is not sure to be truth.
3. Speaker should keep within the context, not digress or be irrelevant. Giving misleading information may cause incomprehension.
4. Speaker should avoid ambiguity, compose his/her message stylistically suitable and omit unnecessarily long sentences.

2.2.10. Semantic Aspects

In this section, discussing semantics is needed because the lexico-semantic analysis is important for the recognition of the relation between the taboo words and their euphemism equivalent, since understanding words, among other things, implies understanding lexico-semantic relations. A selection of particular words is a specific way of encoding meaning, so lexico-semantic relations can indicate alternative ways of encoding meaning, which is highly important in exposing euphemisms.

It is also important to show that the relation between taboo words and their euphemisms equivalents is not only the relation of synonymy, which implies that euphemisms and non-euphemistic equivalents denote the same entity. As far as the analysis of euphemisms is our concern, we analyze other lexico-semantic relations that can be

employed for the purpose of euphemizing: hyponymy, metonymy, polysemy, antonymy and homonymy, etc. So, under this section, definition of semantics, meaning, semantic change, types of meaning, semantic relations and factors facilitating semantic change of taboo and euphemism are discussed.

2.2.10.1. The Definition of Semantics and Meaning

Semantics is the study of a word meaning. According to Palmer (1981:1), semantics is the technical term used to refer to the study of meaning. In semantics, meaning is defined as a referent or something that is referred to by a word. A meaning brings information to user about something in order to understand the use of word or sentences in particular context. The meaning is a verbal definition which is conventionally assignable to a form. When euphemisms are tackled on the light of their semantic values, some points are brought to the attention. This section focuses on semantic aspects in euphemism and issues related to it. Obviously, euphemisms are employed to make something unpleasant seem pleasant and acceptable, they are substitutes for words that have bad connotations or are not preferred. To avoid these bad or unpleasant expressions in a conversation, a new name is given, and attitudes are worked on too (Ahmed, 2013:168). In his discussion of the types of meaning, Leech (1981:15) calls “the way language reflects the personal feelings of the speaker, or his attitude towards something he is speaking about”, as effective meaning. In this type, meaning is conveyed and reflected through the connotative content of the word used, whether positive or negative.

Any word used, of course, has the semantic features [+good] or [+bad], depending on how the word is perceived by people in their culture. Though being close in meaning and sharing the same basic semantic features, the substitutes or euphemisms are neutral or even pleasant. When the meaning is clearly disvalued, as Chaiké (1982:196) explains, a new substitute or euphemism should be invented or replaced by another one. Euphemisms are characterized by the loss of their euphemistic character, regardless of the reason behind their rise (religious, fear, or social reason). Therefore, words can be having initially euphemistic forms and through time they become taboo; then again replaced. So they assume, what Pei (1949:251) mentions, “the full stark significance and connotations of the original word they have displaced, become taboo, and ultimately have to be replaced by new euphemism.” Psycho-linguistically, taboo, according to Ahmed

(2013:167), is defined by its affectation, the reactions aroused by the world, not by their denotative meaning

According to Trinh (2007:10), semantics is a technical term used to refer to the study of meaning. Unfortunately, 'meaning' covers a variety of aspects of language; there is no general agreement about the nature of meaning, what aspects of it may properly be included in semantics, or the way in which it should be described. There are three main aspects that are commonly considered as included in semantics: word meaning (or, to be more precise, lexical meaning), sentence meaning and utterance meaning. But, the meaning of a words, sentences and utterances will be clear in a context of a situation.

2.2.10.2. The Definition of Word Meaning and Context

Word meaning is what a word means, i.e. "what counts as the equivalent in the language concerned" (Hurford and Heasley, 2007: 3). In daily conversation, the meaning of a word is used in various contexts. Context can differentiate the meaning of two similar words. At first, a word has just lexical meaning or denotative meaning but, the meaning of taboo word and euphemism will be clear if a word is put in a context of a sentence or a context of a situation. For example, in the sentence "Legion is a good *film* that will be released on June 2017", the word "film" refers to a series of moving pictures recorded with sound that tells a story. However, in the sentence, "Be careful with this *film*", it will be used to capture an image", the word "film" in film making terms refers to a thin sheet or a strip of developed photographic negatives or transparencies (Topping 2010:17).

According to Tobing (2010:16), there are three features of context that we consider. Firstly, the setting that refers to the time and place where the situation happens. Secondly, the activity that refers to impressions, feelings, responses and perceptions. Thirdly, the relation refers to the relation among the speech participants. From the given ideas, when we euphemize taboo word it creates different meaning in different context. However, taboo and euphemism can have different entities even if the one replaces the other but they also can co-exist and their use is determined by the degree of formality of the communication. Therefore, these features of context are very essential in the avoidance of taboo terms and their corresponding euphemism employment.

2.2.10.3. Semantic features

One obvious way in which the study of basic conceptual meaning might be helpful in the study of language would be as a means of accounting for the ‘oddness’ we experience when we read sentences such as: *The hamburger ate the boy*. We should first note that the oddness of these sentences does not derive from their syntactic structure. According to the basic syntactic rules for forming English sentences, we have well-formed structures. This sentence is syntactically good, but semantically odd. Since the sentence *the boy ate the hamburger* is perfectly acceptable, we may be able to identify the source of the problem. The components of the conceptual meaning of the noun *hamburger* must be significantly different from those of the noun *boy*, thereby preventing one, and not the other, from being used as the subject of the verb *ate*. The kind of noun that can be the subject of the verb *ate* must denote an entity that is capable of ‘eating’. The noun *hamburger* does not have this property and the noun *boy* does.

We can make this observation more generally applicable by trying to determine the crucial element or feature of meaning that any noun must have in order to be used as the subject of the verb *ate*. Such an element may be as general as ‘animate being’. We can then use this idea to describe part of the meaning of words as having either plus (+) or minus (–) that particular feature. So, the feature that the noun *boy* has is ‘+animate’ (= denotes an animate being) and the feature that the noun *hamburger* has is ‘–animate’ (= does not denote an animate being).

Similarly, when we euphemize taboo words, we face similar case which is given in the above paragraph. If we look at one example from Afaan Oromoo, people avoid the name of ‘cancer’ and euphemize as *ukkuba agaa* ‘disease of the stone’ the sentence is syntactically fine but semantically meaningless; because stone is inanimate which could not be sick. But here it is not only talking about the semantic feature that stone is not an animate that may has a cancer; it is a matter of semantic extension whereby the disease signified as stone hard to be cured. So, in the analysis of taboo words and their euphemisms we come across such like expressions.

2.2.10.4. Semantic fields

A semantic field is “the organization of related words and expressions into a system which shows their relationship to one another” (Trinh, 2007:21). For example, the semantic field of *kinship* terms: father, mother, brother, sister, uncle, aunt, etc. The semantic field of adjectives describing *human emotional* states: angry, sad, happy, exuberant, depressed, afraid, etc. This semantic field is reflected while we analyze taboo words and their euphemistic expressions. For example, in Afaan Oromoo, calling a pregnant woman by the term *ulfa* ‘pregnancy’ is taboo; So, people use euphemistic expressions *mata lama* ‘two heads’, *lubbuu lama* ‘two souls’, *garaatii k’abdi* ‘she has in her stomach’ etc which are the semantic field of the term ‘pregnancy’ and the euphemistic expressions which have similar meaning with pregnancy.

2.2.11. Multiple Senses of Lexical Items

Trinh (2007:34) discusses the multiple senses of lexical items. The first and foremost distinction made in multiple senses of a word is between its primary and secondary meanings.

2.2.11.1. Primary meaning of a word meaning

Primary meaning of a word (or, to be more precise, a lexical item) is the literal meaning or usage that the word will suggest to most people when it is said in isolation. For instance, the primary meaning of the English noun ‘wing’ is ‘either of the pair of feathered limbs that a bird uses to fly’. When we come to our case, in the interpretation of taboo words, there are words which have primary and secondary meaning. One of the meanings may be taboo, while the other meaning is normal (not taboo). For example, the term *tambo* in Bale Oromo has two meanings; but it is difficult to decide the first meaning in forward because the context in which the term uttered determines its meaning. However, the first meaning of this term is a local plant which people use as a cigarette while the other meaning is the female sexual organ. So, to distinguish the meaning, understanding the context or topic in which the communication takes place is very important.

2.2.11.2. Secondary meanings of a word

Secondary meanings of a word are the meanings besides its primary meaning. They are said to be not central but peripheral. In addition, secondary meanings of a word are

context bound whereas its primary meaning is not. In *išeen garaa irra jirti* ‘lit. she is on stomach’. In this sentence the word *garaa* does not refer to stomach; it refers to menstruation. Such a secondary meaning is derived from the context it is used. So, here the meaning of the word ‘*garaa*’ we have seen in primary meaning is changed in to secondary meaning ‘menstruation’. So, to identify, the meaning of the terms we have to focus on the context the communication takes place. For example, look at the term *tambo* in *išeen tambo t’uut’t’e* ‘she smoked cigarette’ and *tambo išii ukkuba* ‘her sexual organ is sick. So, someone can easily understand the meaning of the former and the latter which one is a cigarette and sexual organ.

2.2.12. Literal meaning versus figurative meaning

In the following we can distinguish all the possible meanings of the English noun *wing*, for example, those that are *literal* and those that are *figurative*. The literal meaning has a related meaning with the conceptual/denotative meaning while the figurative meaning has a relationship with connotative meaning that we have discussed in the type of meaning.

2.2.12.1. Literal meaning

The basic or usual meaning of a word is usually referred to as its literal meaning (Trinh, 2007). Look at some literal meanings identified via context in the *noun wing*:

- Part that projects from the side of an aircraft and supports it in the air: the two *wings* of an airplane;
- Part of a building that projects from the main part: the east/west *wing* of a house;
- Projecting part of the body of a motor vehicle above the wheel: The left *wing* of his car was damaged in the collision;
- Part of a political party that holds certain views or has a particular function: the radical *wing* of the Labor Party.

In the case of taboo words and their euphemistic expressions, the majority of euphemistic expressions have metaphoric meaning. For example, Hararghe and Wollega Oromo use the term *meešaa* instead of penis. However, the literal meaning of this term is ‘instrument/goods’ while its metaphoric meaning is a male organ.

2.2.12.2. The figurative meaning

The figurative meaning of a word is one which is different from its usual (literal) meaning and which create vivid mental images to readers or listeners. Figurative meanings were explained in detail under the figurative speeches that we used to indicate the strategy of euphemizing taboo words. Look at some figurative meanings of the noun *wing* (Trinh, 2007:35):

- We hope college life will help him to spread his wings a bit (extend his activities and interests)
- Having a new baby to look after has clipped her wings a bit (has prevented her from achieving her ambition)

Wing is an English word that has several closely related but slightly different meanings. It is said to be polysemous which will be discussed under the lexical relation.

2.2.13. Semantic Change and Euphemism

As far as the linguistic change is concerned, the role of euphemisms in this process is vital and significant. To Burkhardt (2010:362), euphemism is one of the factors of semantic change. Mayer et al (2005:138) confirm that taboo, does the same; they lead together, in some semantic areas, to an endless chain of replacements. The reason is that a new euphemism converts into taboo soon like its predecessors. Like the change in language, the process of euphemism change is consistent and unstable. They sometimes become more familiar to the speaker to be perceived like clichés, though the latter is "the product of a lazy mind, whereas euphemisms are the product of a timid mind." The connotative force of cliché is frequently lost to become threadbare. Moreover, euphemisms become more objectionable than the common words, and lose their reputation because of their bad connotations.

Allan (2001:164,168) emphasizes the role of euphemisms in language change. He assumes that euphemisms and dysphemisms motivate language change by promoting new euphemisms, or giving new meanings for old ones, and causing some exciting vocabulary to be abandoned. In English, to achieve this purpose, remodelling, acronym, phonetic similarity ...etc are the sources to do so. Creating a new synonym is not subject to the blocking principle mentioned above, like *Shoot! Sugar! Shivers!* and *Shucks!* which are euphemisms to denote shit, while they express anger or frustration.

Therefore, semantic change deals with the change in meaning or the change in the concepts associated with a word. Sometimes a word has a new definition different from the former definition known in the past as Langacker (2008:464) stated that every language is the product of change and continues to change as long as it is spoken. Change in referents is usually known as a semantic change or meaning change. According to Fromkin and Rodman (1983:509), there are three ways in which a lexical item may change semantically; its meaning may become broader, its meaning may become narrower, and its meaning may shifted. It can be concluded that the meaning of a word may be changed or shifted as it gets new sense. But different literatures show that the ways of semantic change is more than what was stated by Fromkin and Rodman (1983). When we euphemize taboo terms, the meaning of the euphemized expressions are changed. For Example, the meaning of the ‘penis’ is changed to *meešaa* ‘an instrument’ in Hararghe and Wolleg Oromo.

2.2.13.1. Types of Semantic Change in Euphemism

Palmer (1981:11-12) argues types of meaning change as following:

2.2.13.1.1. Generalization.

It happens when the meaning of a word is broaden to include new concepts. The range of its meaning increases so that the word can be used in various contexts with a broader meaning than its neutral one. Generalization often refers to all items in a class, rather than one specific item. For example, according to Tobing (2010:16) the original meaning of the word “take” means to carry or to move something from one place to another while, the word “take” in film making term means the act of photographing a scene or a part of a scene without interruption. In Afaan Oromoo, the general meaning of the expression *waliin c’iisuu* ‘sleeping together’ refers to individuals who are sleeping together for normal sleeping brotherly or sisterly while the same expression refers to the act of ‘sexual intercourse’ in other context.

2.2.13.1.2. Specialization

This is the opposite of generalization. It occurs when the meaning of word is narrowed into the same class. The range of its meaning is decreased so that a word can be used only in fewer contexts than before the change the meaning of its word is reshaped under the pressure of another word that had frequently co-occurred with it. For example, in the

sentence “Legion is a good *film* that will be released on June 2017”, the word “film” refers to a series of moving pictures recorded with sound that tells a story. However, in the sentence, “Be careful with this *film*”, it will be used to capture an image”, the word “film” in film making terms refers to a thin sheet or a strip of developed photographic negatives or transparencies (Topping 2010:17).

2.2.13.1.3. Pejoration

It is a process by which a word meaning is worsens or degenerates, coming to represent something less favorable than it originally did. For example, the word “blue” refers to a kind of colour and it has positive meaning, but when it is added with word “film” in final position, the compound word “blue film” means porn movie which has negative meaning. In Afaan Oromoo, the term *k’unnamtii* means ‘communication’ which refers to the exchange of information, but when it is added to the word ‘*saala*’ which mean ‘genital’ in final position, the compound word *k’uunnaamtii-saalaa* means sexual intercourse.’

2.2.13.1.4. Amelioration

It is a process by which the meaning of word improves or becomes elevated, coming to represent something more favorable than it originally refers to. For example, in the sentence “The police shoot three of robbers in front of bank”, the word “shoot” means to shoot something with a gun. It has terrifying sense of hurting or killing someone. However, in the sentence “The cameraman starts to shoot the object of film on medium long shot”, the word “shoot” in film making terms means making a film or photographing something. In these sentences, the word “shoot” does not have a terrible sense as it is in the former sentence. Similarly, amelioration has a great function in euphemism expressions; because we ameliorate taboo words to mild their unpleasantness for hearers. Look at these examples, *Tolaan du?e* ‘Tolaa died’ is harsher than *Tolaan bok’ote* ‘Tolaa took a rest’. The latter expression is ameliorated than the first one.

2.2.14. Semantic Relations and Euphemism

Euphemism is used by language speakers to avoid taboo matters that might lead to distress and discomfort for the speaker and the listener. As we have been explained before, euphemistic expressions are employed to soften and make speech milder and nicer; some structures of euphemism can blur and cover what is going on or what is being said about. These issues are seen in the semantic relations. According to Fromkin and

Rodaman (1983:156), words are semantically related to one another in a variety of ways. The words that describe these relations often end in the bound morpheme *-nym*. In line with this Aromo (2013:8) states that lexical semantics studies how and what the words of a language denote. Words may either be taken to denote things in the world or concepts depending on the particular approach to lexical semantics. Because the goal of lexical semantics is to study the relationship between the words and the mentally represented concepts they encode.

According to Yule (2006:105), not only can words be treated as ‘containers’ of meaning, or as fulfilling ‘roles’ in events, they can also have ‘relationships’ with each other. In everyday talk, we often explain the meanings of words in terms of their relationships. If we are asked the meaning of the word *conceal*, for example, we might simply say, “It’s the same as *hide*”, or give the meaning of *shallow* as “the opposite of *deep*” or *daffodil* as ‘flower’. In doing so, we are characterizing the meaning of each word, not in terms of its component features, but in terms of its relationship to other words. This approach is used in the semantic description of language and treated as the analysis of lexical relations. The lexical relations we have just exemplified are synonymy, antonymy and hyponymy. These semantic relations are reflected in the analysis of taboo words and their corresponding euphemistic expressions. Look at the following best known lexical relations illustrated by Yule (2006:104-108):

2.2.14.1. Synonymy

Synonymy, which means the similarity in meaning, is adopted to avoid a word holding bad associations. Arabs, as Ahmed (2013:67) describes, use alternative labels to refer to the same thing. Synonymy is used to express the same thing but in a milder way, compared with other semantic relations. Through synonyms, the substitutes take an opposite direction for using negative terms; they reveal the preferable rather than the existing state of affairs and are reminiscent of another deeply-rooted tradition in Arabic culture (Ahmed,2013).

As it was reported by Lavrova (2010:42), "euphemisms are emotionally, neutral words and expressions, used instead of synonymous structures that are perceived as impolite, rude or indecent." This statement brings to our attention that euphemisms are

synonymous. Ahmed (2013:170) assumes that a number of unpleasant occupations are renamed euphemistically because they are not prestigious, for example, in American society. In General English, a person who sells land or property is called land-agent man. While in American English, the same person is called a real-estate man, but realtor is given in British English to the same person, to be seen like any other regular jobs.

Lyons (1981:159) sees that descriptive synonyms, without having the same expressive or social meaning, like 'lavatory', 'toilet', 'loo', 'WC', etc, refer to the fact that it is unnecessary to use all these by all the speakers of a language, though they may well understand members of a set of synonyms. This idea is somehow shared by Thompson (1999: viii). To him, euphemisms are synonymous substitutes for a word or phrase of lower status. Briefly, being different in structure or form and similar in meaning, euphemisms are regarded as synonyms, taking into account the level of these expressions when used.

For example, when we express death, saying *du?e* 'died' is taboo in Afaan Oromoo, instead of this we euphemize as *bok'ote* 'took a rest'. Even if the two terms are semantically synonym, they have different meaning in different context.

2.2.14.2. Antonymy

Antonyms are two words having different (written and sound) forms with opposite in meaning. Therefore, this type of relation is used for the sake of replacing a taboo word by more polite words.

2.2.14.3. Hyponymy

Hyponymy is a relation in which the referent of a word is totally included in the referent of another word (Trinh, 2007). In relation to this, Yule (2006:105) also explained as, when the meaning of one form is included in the meaning of another, the relationship is described as hyponymy. According to Ahmed (2013), it is a semantic relation in which a word belongs to a lower rank or class, like red to clour and scarlet to red. According to my opinion, the alternative euphemistic expressions given for a single taboo term can be considered as hyponymy. Yule (2006:105) explains through using examples as pairs: *animal/dog*, *vegetable/carrot*, *flower/rose*. The concept of 'inclusion' involved in this

relationship is the idea that if an object is a *rose*, then it is necessarily a *flower*, so the meaning of *flower* is included in the meaning of *rose*. Or, *rose* is a hyponym of *flower*.

2.2.14.4. Prototypes

While the words *canary*, *cormorant*, *dove*, *duck*, *flamingo*, *parrot*, *pelican* and *robin* are all equally co-hyponyms of the superordinate *bird*, they are not all considered to be equally good examples of the category 'bird'. According to some researchers, the most characteristic instance of the category 'bird' is *robin*. The idea of 'the characteristic instance' of a category is known as the prototype. The concept of a prototype helps to explain the meaning of certain words, like *bird*, not in terms of component features (e.g. 'has feathers', 'has wings'), but in terms of resemblance to the clearest example. Thus, even native speakers of English might wonder if *ostrich* or *penguin* should be hyponyms of *bird* (technically they are), but have no trouble deciding about *sparrow* or *pigeon*. These last two are much closer to the prototype (Yule, 2006:106, Saeed, 2009:37-38, Cruse, 1986:22).

A theory of meaning has to predict how the meanings of individual words combine to produce the meaning of a phrase. Prototype theory of meaning lacks the ability to predict how to combine the meanings of words. For example, prototypes for the word *furniture*, we are quick to recognize *chair* as a better example than *bench* or *stool*. Given *clothing*, people recognize *shirts* quicker than *shoes*, and given *vegetable*, they accept *carrot* before *potato* or *tomato*. It is clear that there is some general pattern to the categorization process involved in prototypes and that it determines our interpretation of word meaning. However, this is one area where individual experience can lead to substantial variation in interpretation and people may disagree over the categorization of a word like *avocado* or *tomato* as fruit or vegetable. These words seem to be treated as co-hyponyms of both *fruit* and *vegetable* in different contexts.

Similarly, the euphemistic expressions which are given for a single taboo word is not equivalently express the meaning of the original meaning. This means that from the given expressions the one may more resemble with the intended meaning. For example, in Afaan Oromoo, we use the euphemistic expressions *waljaallatan* 'loved each other' *walhammatan* 'embraced each other', *waliin c'iisan* 'slept together' and *walk'uunnamtii*

saalaa raawwatan ‘did sexual intercourse’ instead of saying *walsalan* ‘fucked each other’. These euphemistic expressions are not much equally closer to the prototype ‘sexual intercourse’. The expression *walk’uunnamtii saalaa* resembles more or less closer to the prototype meaning of sexual intercourse.

2.2.14.5. Homophones

When two or more different (written) forms have the same pronunciation but have different meanings, they are described as homophones. Common examples are *bare/bear*, *meat/meet* and *to/too/two*. Fortunately, there are no homophones and homographs in Afaan Oromo because the phonemic nature of its orthography prevents their occurrence (Amanuel & Samuel 2012:36).

2.2.14.6. Homonyms

This semantic relation means a word has different meanings. For example, the word *bok’ote* refers to a person passed away and took a rest from work. By the same token, the word *mirga* implies three meanings the direction which is right, woman right and virginity. We use the term homonyms when one form (written or spoken) has two or more unrelated meanings but have separate histories and meanings which have accidentally come to have exactly the same form.

This deals with typical homonyms arising from lexical variation in Afaan Oromoo and of the related phenomena, namely polysemy and lexical ambiguity without which our account of homonymy would be incomplete. Though, typically homonymous lexical items are ubiquitous in Afaan Oromoo, the discussion that follows is limited to the ones that result in embarrassment and confusion among speakers of different varieties of Afaan Oromoo.

Look at the following phonological forms that have distinct meanings in different dialects: *bukkee* ‘beside’ vs. ‘hermaphrodite’ and *geeba* ‘cup’ versus ‘penis’. The word *bukkee* denotes hermaphrodite in Central, Eastern and Northern dialects, but in the Macca dialect, it encodes the sense ‘beside, by the side of’. Despite the offensive meaning associated to it by the majority of the speakers, Ethiopian Bible Society has used the word in the revised version of Onesimos’ Afaan Oromoo Bible (1997). For example, on

Mark 10:46 of this book, we find ‘...*namic*’i jaamaan tokko, karaa *bukkee* taa?ee in ka ata ture’ (Amanuel and Samuel, 2012). Similarly, the form *geeba* is used in the eastern and northern dialects of Afaan Oromo to denote the object ‘cup’, but in Macca dialect this same form denotes the male sexual organ. These kinds of terms which are taboos in Afaan Oromoo have been discussed in detail in analysis part.

2.2.14.7. Polysemy

When we encounter two or more words with the same form and related meanings, we have what is technically known as polysemy. It can be defined as one form (written or spoken) having multiple meanings that are all related by extension. The noun *mataa* ‘head’, for instance, seems to have related meanings when we speak of *mataa namaa* ‘the head of a person’, *mataa aabbataa* ‘the head of a company’, *mataa minjaalaa/siree* ‘head of a table or bed’, and *mataa raafuu* ‘a head of cabbage. If we take the anatomical referent as the basic one, the other meanings can be seen as derived from the basic one, either reflecting the general shape of the human head or, more abstractly, the relation of the head to the rest of the body.

Of course, it is possible for two forms to be distinguished via homonymy and for one of the forms also to have various uses via polysemy. The words *date* (a thing we can eat) and *date* (a point in time) is homonyms. However, the ‘point in time’ kind of *date* is polysemous in terms of a particular day and month (in a letter), an arranged meeting time (an appointment), a social meeting (with someone we like), and even a person (that person we like). So the question ‘*how was your date?*’ could have several different interpretations.

However, the distinction between homonymy and polysemy is not an easy one to make. Two lexemes are either identical in form or not, but relatedness of meaning is not a matter of yes or no; it is a matter of more or less.

CHAPTER THREE

3. PRESENTATION AND DESCRIPTION OF DATA

3.1. Introduction

The data for this study were gathered from native Oromo people who live in Oromia regional state, particularly in Bale, Hararghe and Wollega zones through focus group discussion, observation, unstructured interview and introspective methods. Like other societies, the Oromo people of these zones use language as a vehicle to communicate and define situations. The linguistic features of any language exhibit the dominant social and cultural values and beliefs it upholds. Those values and beliefs are the basis for the variation in the use of words and expressions. Taboo expressions are among these variations which speakers avoid to make their communication polite and culturally acceptable. Thus, in certain situations people may replace some taboo words or expressions which have negative connotations with positive ones that have a better impact on the hearers. Therefore, the Oromo people who live in Bale, Hararghe and Wollega use euphemistic expressions which are vital part of language that reflect many social aspects and attitudes in both formal and informal communication instead of taboo words or expressions.

The issue of deciding what sorts of words are considered as euphemistic is often subjected to speculations. An expression considered as euphemistic expression, actually depends on the receivers' or audiences' interpretations of the message. Therefore, in this research relevant data were analyzed depending on taboo expressions the people of Bale, Hararghe and Wollega Oromo avoid in their language use and replace with their corresponding euphemistic expressions.

Taboo subjects are the topics in which the words or the expressions are socially and culturally not to be spoken directly in public. Taboo subjects which Oromo society usually handle with the help of euphemistic expressions include: Taboos related to death, diseases, woman, sexual organ and sexuality, bodily excretions, physical defects and taboos related to names of kinship (husband, wife, and mother/father-in law).

3.2. Taboo Expressions and Euphemism Related to Death

Death is inevitable, but is a taboo in human life and social norm. It signifies termination of life and the final destination of its journey. It is a gate of exit from one life and entry into the other everlasting one. It is a good example of a mystery, since it is a phenomenon of which none of the living has any direct knowledge. In all societies and almost all languages, death is the most sensitive and fearful subject that people try to avoid mentioning. According to Allan and Burridge (1991:153) death is “a fear-based timeless taboo in which psychological, religious and social interdictions coexist”. In the Oromo culture, the family in which death occurs applies certain restrictions on clothing or food. Regarding this, Dirribi Demissie (2011:83) stated that “With regards to grief, close relatives of the dead shave their head and tie white thread on their neck. White thread symbolizes taint looking which is caused by serious grief the bereaved do not smear themselves”.

Oromo society has traditionally felt reluctant to deal with the topic of death using straightforward expressions. They prefer not to speak freely about death. This is a symptomatic of the overall discomfort with the subject of death as a whole. However, there are communicative situations in which one cannot evade the notion of death. In this case, language users try to soften the effect of what they wish to communicate. They deliberately avoid the embarrassing expressions of death and replace them with more moderate ones. To this end, they resort to soft words and expressions which mitigate the adverse connotations of the words related to death.

Since death is a natural phenomenon of everybody's life, it is an inevitable event. Like other societies, the Oromo people tend not to mention the word ‘death’ so overtly. It is a depressing, but ‘unavoidable’ occurrence and, deprives us from our wishes and our hopes so abruptly. According to the discussants’ information of the research areas, fear of death may refer to the superstitious belief. Culturally, it is considered that the use of the word ‘death’ would bring death and misfortune. This notion becomes a common belief that holds ‘death’ as a taboo issue in this society. This notion finally causes the invension and use of numerous euphemisms for ‘death’ and any other related aspects of it.

It is believed that death will stay as a taboo area in language as an active source of formation of euphemisms because, “Taboo can lead to a proliferation of euphemisms” as Blake (2010:252) cited in Abdulla (2012).

Even though death is a very shocking event in Oromo society, people take care of their speeches regarding death taboo and things related to it. Consequently, to avoid death related taboo expressions, the Oromo people of the research areas use different strategies of euphemistic expressions to make their communication softer and polite. In line with this, Yasser and Yeli (2012) stated the valid reasons for the prevalence of death related euphemisms as follows: (1) Avoidance of the taboo topic of death. The attitudes towards language consider taboos in a speech community are extremely strong, and its violations may be sanctioned by imputations of immorality, social ostracism, and even illness or death (2) Avoidance of embarrassment i.e., people in general cannot mention or refer to death directly without embarrassment. To avoid such embarrassment, death related euphemisms naturally sets in (3) Avoidance of unpleasant feelings i.e., the word death arouses unpleasant in all societies. Therefore, a wide variety of death related euphemisms which replace death related words and expressions in some other terms) and (4) Providing softening effect (i.e., death euphemism softens the harsh and sensitive reality of death).

Death is associated with many cultural, social, religious and nonreligious norms or attributions. Traditionally, relatives of a dead person are supposed to attend the whole funeral and condolence formalities that continue for few days. Therefore, it is the widest social gathering of the relatives and friends. They share grief with the family of the person who departed and attempt to ease their tensions even after funeral is accomplished.

During data collection, I observed that the religion of the individuals determine the euphemistic expressions they use to express death. The Christian and Muslim Oromo believe the life after death (resurrection) while followers of *Waak’effannaa* religion do not believe the concept of resurrection. Unlike Christians and Muslims, they do not believe the dead would rise and be judged for what they had done in the worldly life, but they believe that the ghost of the dead person stays alive (Dirribi Demissie, 2011:83).

Whatever the case, dealing with the detail of the differences and similarities of the two religions are not the current focus. I have raised the idea only to show that people's view towards their religion determines the expressions they use to explain about death. Respondents who are Muslim Oromo use *Rabbi or Allah* while *Waak'effata* Oromo use *Waak'a/Waak'ayyo* to call the name of God. Actually, the designation *Waak'effannaa* can also be applied to Christian Oromo and Muslim Oromo even though most of the Muslim Oromos prefer the name *Rabbii* to the name *Waak'a*. All of them are believers in God = *Waak'a* = Allah = *Rabbii*.

According to participants' justification, taboo words related to death and their euphemistic expressions differ depending on (a) age of the deceased person (b) areas of the study (c) and causes of that death.

In the following section how the people of Bale, Hararghe and Wollega Oromo avoid death taboos and the strategies they use to euphemize or avoid these taboos are analyzed according to their particular culture or norms.

3.2.1. Ways of Expressing Death Based on Age

In Afaan Oromoo, saying the word *du e* 'died' to express death is inappropriate. Due to its impoliteness it annoys the hearers. However, people use it to express the animal death rather than human death. As the result of this, the Oromo people of the study areas use other appropriate euphemistic expressions depending on the age of the deceased person.

According to the respondents' elaboration, I found that Bale, Hararghe and Wollega Oromo use euphemistic expressions to avoid taboo words based on the age of the deceased person. The euphemistic expressions which the Oromo people of the research areas use for child, youth and adult are guided by social contexts of their particular area. If somebody expresses death out of socially accepted ways, the family of the deceased person or other hearers may be offended by the speaker impoliteness. Therefore, an individual should take care of using expressions related to death based on the specific age of the deceased person.

The data of this research were presented by four levels. The first level is Afaan Oromoo data, the second level is glossing, the third level is the literal translation and fourth level

is the idiomatic translation. However, there were the data only presented by three levels when the literal and idiomatic translations have similar interpretation. According to participants' response, taboos related to death and their euphemistic expressions are analyzed below:

3.2.1.1. Euphemisms for Adult's Death

Adults are daily passing away from this world as a result of different factors. To express adult's death, Oromo people avoid impolite expressions and use polite ones. For example, expressing adult's death by the direct expression *abalu-tu du -e* 'Mr. X has died' is a taboo. Instead, the Bale Oromo prefer using the following euphemistic expressions:

(1)

a. *amiri⁴-n ta - e*
 Command-NOM happen-3SM: PFV
 'Lit⁵. the final command happend.'
 'He/she passed away.'

b. *ñaata iis-e/t⁶-e*
 food stop-3SM: PFV/3SF-PFV
 'Lit. he/she stopped eating food.'
 'He/she passed away.'

c. *areera⁷ unuu iis-e/t-e*
 milk sip:INF stop-3SM: PFV/3SF-PFV
 'Lit. He/she stopped sipping milk.'
 'He/she passed away.'

⁴ The term *amiri* is originally from Arabic, meaning 'command.

⁵ The third level below the glossing line provided is literal translation.

⁶ In Afaan Oromoo, *-t-* may also show **2SM/F** (i.e *ati/išeen/inni ñaata iis-t-e*)

⁷ *areeraa* is the actual reference of the word to milk from which butter is extracted but generally used for 'milk'

- d. *godaan-e/t-e*
 migrate-3SM: PFV/3SF-PFV
 ‘Lit. he/she migrated.’
 ‘He/she passed away.’
- e. *gara uгаа deem-e/t-e*
 to truth go-3SM: PFV/3SF-PFV
 ‘Lit. he/she went to the truth.’
 ‘He/she passed away.’

The expression in (1a) is borrowed from Arabic language and refers to the decision that God has taken towards the dead person. This metaphoric expression is common in Bale Oromo to express death. The expression also shows that death is the inevitable action which is determined only by God and not by the will of someone else. It also implies that death is an action which everybody accepts at the end of life. Bale Oromo also euphemize death by metaphoric expressions in (1b). Because, human beings eat food to live; otherwise he/she can't be alive. The literal meaning in (1b) shows the one who refuses to eat food due to illness or dissatisfaction, but in this context, it expresses the adult's death. As we know when someone is sick he/she cannot eat food as usual; that means he/she eats a little amount of food. However, when he/she died, he/she completely gives up eating.

They also interchangeably use the expression in (1c) to refer to an old man or woman who stopped drinking milk which he/she drinks regularly. Likewise a new baby comes to this world primarily begins life with the taste of milk, and depart also through that. Thus, a person who approaches death prefers drinking milk to eating food. However, to stop drinking milk is the sign of end of life because it is the last option for the treatment of a person. Besides, Bale Oromo use the metaphoric expression in (1d) to express death, because migration indicates the separation of people from their birth place. However, people do not migrate easily from their local areas to another except in the cases of the economic, social, political or environmental calamities. Whatever it is, they move to somewhere for a better quality of life. Similar to this, when someone dies, it is considered as he/she migrates from miserable life of this world to the heaven. This expression is

more frequently used by Christian and Muslim Oromos; because, they believe in the life after death. Furthermore, they use the expression in (1e) which has the nearest meaning with *godaane*. In this sentence, the term *ugaa* refers to ‘God’ who always speaks truth; this means, in this world, people do not speak truth to one another and cheat his/her friends, family, neighbor and so on. Thus, when someone dies, they consider as he/he departs from the falsely world to the truth one. To some extent, this expression minimizes the tension that people have towards going to hell, which is the place of endless suffering. According to the informants’⁸, this world is the place where truth is hidden or disrespected and lies are magnified; so, when somebody dies, he/she departs from this corrupted world to the place where truth exists.

Similarly, the Hararghe Oromo use the following euphemistic expressions to avoid adult’s death taboo expression *du?e/duu-t-e* ‘he/she died’:

(2)

a. *aakir⁹-am-e/t-e*

finish-PASS-3SM: PFV/3SF-PFV

‘Lit. He/she came to end.’

‘He/she passed away.’

b. *bok’ot-e/t-e*

rest-3SM: PFV/3SF-PFV

‘Lit. He/she took a rest.’

‘He/she passed away.’

The metaphorical expression in (2a) which Hararghe Oromo use to express adult’s death was not analyzed here due to the meaning of the expression is similar with the expression given in (1a) *amirii ta?e/taat-e* by Bale Oromo. The Hararghe Oromo use the metaphorical expression in (2b), *bok’ot-e/t-e* ‘he/she took a rest’ to express adult’s death. Literally, the word *bok’ot-e/t-e* refers to somebody who takes a rest after working a lot or walks a long journey. However, in this context, it refers to a person’s freedom from any

⁸ The participants are: Kalili Saddo, Usman Ibriham, Taye Wakjira, Mammo Hiko, Kunbi šunkulle, Warkalema Arega (in Bale)

⁹ Also an Arabic word which refers to death

difficulties through death. To live in this world, everybody should work hard. To accomplish this, he/she has no rest either psychologically or physically. So, when somebody dies, he/she takes a rest from these sufferings.

In Oromo society, it is heard when they say *duutiifi hirribni hangafaafi k'ut'usuu a* when translated to English 'death and sleep are the elder and the younger'. From this statement we can understand that people metaphorize death with sleep; while they sometimes consider *hirriba* 'sleep' as a rest. On the other hand, if someone says *bok'o uun barbaada* 'I want to take a rest', it does not represent that he wants to die. In Hararghe Oromo, the expression in (2b) is used less frequently than the expression in (2a).

Similarly, Wollega Oromo use euphemistic expressions to avoid the direct expression, *abalu du?e* 'Mr. X has died' to adult's death as follows:

(3)

- a. *bok'ot-e/t-e*
rest-3SM:PFV/3SF-PFV
'Lit. he/she took a rest'
'He/she passed away.'
- b. *aara gal-s-at-e/t-e [galfate/t-e]*
smoke enter-CAUS-MD-3SM:PFV/3SF-PFV
'Lit. 'he/she breathed out the final breath.'
'He/she passed away.'
- c. *obbaa-s-at-e/t-e [obbaafate/t-e]*
relieve oneself-CAUS-BEN-3SM: PFV/3SF-PFV
'Lit. he/she relieved.'
'He/she passed away.'
- d. *darb-e/i-t-e*
pass-3SM:PFV/EPN-3SF-PFV
'Lit. he/she passed.'
'He/she passed away.'

The Wollega Oromo use the metaphorical expression in (3a) to express adult's death. Even if the word *bok'ot-e/t-e* is not commonly used to express adult's death in Hararghe, both Hararghe and Wollega Oromo use the expression to make their communication more polite. Additionally, Wollega Oromo sometimes use the metaphoric expression in (3b) to refer to a person who gets relief from the enormous sufferings or difficulties of sickness through death; for this kind of person, they prefer death to live a long life. They also interchangeably use the expression in (3c). This expression literally refers to somebody who becomes free from any worries by accomplishing his/her duty. But, in this context, Wollega Oromo use it to refer that the deceased person is freed from any illness he/she was suffering from. They also use the metaphoric expression in (3d) which is similar to English euphemism to express that the person has passed away from the troublesome world to a peaceful and secured world. However, out of the current context, the word *darb-e/i-t-e* refers to someone passed away from somewhere to the next place or it expresses someone who is promoted in an exam. Wollega Oromo use the term *darbe* 'passed' with great care. If someone says somebody *darbi* 'pass' it is taboo; because they consider the word equivalent to death. As the result of this, the other hearers immediately say *diinni isaa/išee haa darbu* 'let his /her enemy passes'.

Generally, from the above explanations, I found that Bale, Hararghe and Wollega Oromo use different euphemistic expressions for adult's death, except Hararghe and Wollega Oromo use the word *bok'ot-e/t-e* in common. In this regard, if someone breaks the norm in these expressions, the departed person's family or others related to hearers are offended by the impolite or abusive expressions being used.

3.2.1.2. Euphemisms of Youth's Death

As in case of of adult's death, the Oromo people also use different euphemistic expressions for youth's death. In Bale Oromo, there is no variation of the euphemistic expressions between an adult's and youth's death; they use identical expressions in (3) may be due to sometimes people consider youth as an adult though Hararghe Oromo use the metaphoric expression in (4) to express the youth's death:

- (4) *k'at'ar-ni* *c'ab-e* [*k'at'arri c'abe*]
 unripe-NOM broke-3SM: PFV
 'Lit. the unripe fruit has broken.'
 'The young person passed away.'

The death of youth is more sorrowful than the death of the old; because it is untimely death. To express this premature death, Hararghe Oromo use the metaphoric expression in (4). If we cut unripe crop, it does not produce any fruit and stops the process of growing. Similarly, the youth is the age group which the family expects many things from him/her. But if someone passes away without contributing these expectations, the Hararghe Oromo would use the expression in (4). However, the literal meaning of the word *c'ab-e* 'broke' refers to something which is separated into pieces. But in this context, it refers to the youth's soul which is separated from his/her flesh. However, the expressions in (4) and (5a) may exist in other Ethiopian languages.

Similarly, Wollega Oromo use the following euphemistic expression to avoid the taboo (direct) expressions of youth's death.

- (5)
- a. *mii -am-e/t-e*
 harm-PASS-3SM: PFV/3SF-PFV
 'Lit. he/she was harm.'
 'He/she passed away.'
- b. *c'it-e/t-e*
 cut-3SM: PFV/3SF-PFV
 'Lit. he/she lived short.'
 'He/she passed away.'
- c. *karaa-tti* *haf-e/t-e*
 road-LOC absent-3SM: PFV/3SF-PFV
 'Lit. he/she did not arrive his/her destiny.'
 'He/she passed away.'

According to the informants' explanation, Wollega Oromo use the expression in (5a) to express the youth's death. The literal meaning of *mii -am-e/t-e* does not refer death, but it refers to somebody who is injured by something or somebody. But here, Wollega Oromo use the euphemistic expression in (5a) to express youth's death. Here, they use understatement strategy of euphemism to reduce the pain of the action for the psychology of hearer. Because this expression simply refers to any harm that everybody faces in his/her life than expressing death. They use this expression purposely to make their communication polite. Besides, this expression diminishes the sorrow of the deceased person's family by assuming that their teenager has not passed away but only harmed to join life after death. Additionally, Wollega Oromo use the euphemistic expressions in (5b) which has equivalent meaning with the expression given in (4) because youth are the backbone agents who involve in social, political and economic dynamics to bring sustainable development and transformation of the society. The literal meaning in (5c) is referring to somebody who quit journey; but in this context, this metaphoric expression refers to the person who has stopped to grow or left this world before reaching his/her goal. It could also mean the break before the full cycle: as the different there are stages in human life: birth, growth, marriage, give birth, oldage, and death.

From this discussion, I found out that Bale Oromo use similar euphemistic expression to express the adult's and youth's death while Hararghe and Wollega Oromo use different euphemistic expressions to express youth's death. Failure to use appropriate euphemistic expressions according to the age of the deceased person is considered as taboo or using euphemistic expressions which are not known among one of the research areas can create communication barrier. For example, *amiriin ta?e* 'the final command happend' is not known among the Wollega Oromo.

3.2.1.3. Euphemism For a Child Death

As described above, we have seen that Bale, Hararghe and Wollega Oromo use different euphemistic expressions to express adult's and youth's death. Similarly, they use different euphemisms to express child's death. According to the informants' explanation, the expressions that they use for child's death are analyzed one after the other.

Bale Oromo use the following expressions:

(6)

a. *deebi?-t-e* [*deebite*] (both male and female child is referred to by feminine)
return-3SF-PFV

‘Lit. she returned.’

‘He/she passed away.’

b. *Waak’-ni jaallat-e*

God-NOM love -3SM: PFV

‘Lit. God loved him/her.’

‘Passed away.’

c. *hammaat-t-e*

peril-3SF-PFV

‘Lit. he/she became peril.’

‘Passed away.’

According to the informants’ explanation, Bale Oromo use the metaphoric expression in (6a) refers to the child that came to this world and went back soon to her creator without accomplishing something in this world. To express child’s death they use feminine gender either male or female. So, here one would not be confused because of the expressions given as female gender. Sometimes, Bale Oromo also use the expression in (6b) to express child’s death which is a hyperbole expression to refer to how much God loved and hurried to pick up the child from the family to Himself. On the other hand, this expression has a power to strengthen the child’s family by referring that the child was taken by God not by evil spirit. Believing this, they may reduce their grief thinking that the child exists near God. Bale Oromo also interchangeably use the metaphoric expression in (6c) to express the periled child being separated from the family’s love rather than staying longer with them.

Similarly, Oromo of Hararghe use the following euphemistic expressions for child’s death as:

(7)

a. *deebiʔ-t-e*

return-3SF-PFV

‘Lit. he/she returned.’

‘He/she passed away.’

b. *šafii*¹⁰ *taa-t-e*

curative happen-3SF-PFV

‘Lit.he/she departed to God for the curative of her family.’

‘She passed away.’

Hararghe Oromo use the borrowed euphemistic expression in (7b) to refer to a child departed to God’s arm to require curative for her family. According to their view a child has no sin which hinders her from joining this place, God allows her to ask His mercy to her family regarding the last day’s judgment will be given.

Wollega Oromo also use the euphemistic expressions given in (8) for a child’s death as:

(8)

a. *harka rra-a baa-t-e* [*harka irrɾaa baate*]

hand on-ABL come out-3SF-PFV

‘Lit. she came out of hand.’

‘She passed away.’

b. *k’abaa hank’-at-t-e*

handle fail to reach-MD-3SF-PFV

‘Lit. she failed to reach the development stage to be embraced.’

‘Sh passed away.’

c. *bad-t-e* [*badde*]

disappear-3SF-PFV

‘Lit. she disappeared.’

‘She passed away.’

¹⁰ *šafii* is an Arabic word which expresses the child’s death and refers to ‘curative’

- d. *karaa-itti deebiʔ-t-e* [*karaatti deebite*]
 Road-LOC return-3SF-PFV
 ‘Lit. she returned back on the way.’
 ‘She passed away.’

Wollega Oromo use the euphemistic expressions in (8) depending on the cause of child’s death. For example, if the cause of the death is miscarriage, they will use the most common metaphoric euphemistic expression in (8a) which refers to mother’s misfortune of missing or failing to embrace her child. The literal meaning of *harka irraa baate* ‘came out of hand’ expresses the spontaneous drop of something from hand, but here it refers to the removal of fetus. They also interchangeably use the euphemistic expression in (8b) to express as the mother missed embracing and affection of her child, due to the untimely death. Also they use the metaphoric expressions in (8c) which refers to the child’s disappearance due to death. They also use the euphemistic expression in (8d) to refer to the started journey of a child which could not proceed. The semantic interpretation of the expression in (8d) and (7a) are similar.

We have to understand that the Oromo of the research areas do not use similar euphemistic expressions for a child which has died as soon as delivered and which died after a few months/years. Therefore, the euphemistic expression they use for miscarried child is different from the child who was delivered on time, and then died soon after birth. On the other hand, if somebody uses the expressions of child’s death to express adult’s and youth’s death, it is considered as taboo. From this explanation we can conclude that even if we euphemized taboo expressions and cannot use them in appropriate context, they are considered as taboo. Therefore, euphemizing taboo words related to death and using in inappropriate context does not make our communication polite.

3.2.2. Ways of Announcing Somebody’s Death

Bale, Hararghe and Wollega Oromo consciously refrain from directly telling about the death of family members. In Oromo custom, telling about the news of someone's death especially to intimate friends and family members of the deceased person is horrific. It creates shock to hearers. Therefore, they attempt to tell carefully about it by people who

have a good social or a religious status. They prefer to tell about the death in circumlocution. Regarding to this there are roundway expressions which they use for this situation. For example, in the three study areas, the people use the following expressions:

(9)

a. *daf-ii koot-t-u, obboless-i kee Tolasaa-n t'ik'k'oo ib-am-e*
 hurry-2S:CONV come-2S-IMPR brother-NOM 2S:POSS Tolasaa-NOM little sick-
 PASS-3SM:PFV

'Please come soon; your brother Tolessa is a bit sick.' (Bale).

b. *abbaa-n kee hospitaala gal-e koot-t-u*
 father-NOM 2S:POSS hospital enter-3SM-PFV come:2S-IMPR

'Please come, your father has been taken to hospital.' (Hararghe)

c. *obboleessa kee Tolaa balaa-n mud-at-e-e garuu ool-e-e jir-a [ooleera]*
 brother 2S:POSS Tolaa accident-NOM face-MD-3SM:PFV-CONV but saved-
 3SM:PFV-CONV AUX-3SM:IPFV

'Your brother, Tolaa has had an accident, but he was safe. (Wollega)

d. *akkoo-n kee bok'ot-t-e koot-t-u*
 grandmother-NOM 2S:POSS rest-3SF- PFV come-2S-IMPR

'Lit. come, your grandmother took a rest.'

'Your grandmother passed away.' (Wollega)

According to the discussion with informants, the speaker in (9a), (9b) and (9c) and (9d) avoid directly telling about the death news and use the circumlocution method which is one of the strategies of euphemistic expression. Although the literal meaning of the expression in (9a-d) do not mean 'death' of someone, the regular use of such expressions have become euphemistic that function as precondition which used for telling the dead of close relatives. The Oromo people use these kinds of euphemistic strategy to save the hearer from sudden shock news. Especially if the hearer has heart failure, they take care of directly telling him/her about the death of his/her family member or intimate friend; because the hearer immediately be shocked and may die. As the result of this, the Oromo people give the reserve for hearers by approaching to the reality as expressed in (9a-d).

For example, when the hearer heard the expression in (9a), he/she expects that his/her brother may recover from the illness or may die because getting illness in this world is normal in life. Similarly, the expressions in (9b-c) also give a room for the healing of the father and brother of the hearers respectively. On the other hand, even if these expressions are fake, they are important for the family member who comes from a distance. If they hear at a distance, they cry until they reach the house of the deceased person and may get faint due to continuous cry.

When the death news of the young person is told, the Oromo society sometimes attach the death to an old man/woman rather than telling the fact as it is expressed in (10d); the assumption is that people have less anxiety towards the death of an old man or woman; because they think as the person has seen good and bad parts of life, and as he/she tasted and experienced everything throughout his/her long years.

In other words, I found out that in Oromo culture, telling the death of the child in public is taboo by itself. According to their belief, telling death of the child by exaggeration has its own effect which invites another death to their other children or the other child they will have. Therefore, the death of the child is not usually widely announced to society; even to their close relatives.

As we have already discussed, Bale, Hararghe and Wollega Oromo avoid taboo expressions related to death and use the appropriate euphemistic expressions which are suitable to express the death of a child, an adult and youth. Even using the euphemistic expressions which are appropriate to express adult's death is not suitable to express the child's and youth's death except Bale Oromo's who use the same expressions for the death of adult and youth. For example, in Wollega the euphemistic expressions *bok'ot-e/t-e* 'he/she took a rest', and *of baaf-at-e/t-e* 'he/she got relief' are appropriate to express the adult's death, but they are becoming taboo if we use them for child's death and vice versa.

If somebody breaks the norm of these euphemistic expressions of death, due to the impolite expression utilized other hearers may be offended and compel to conflict with the speaker. As the result of this, Afaan Oromoo speakers use euphemistic expressions

which are discussed above. Thus, the euphemistic expression of death needs a great concern according to particular place and age of departed persons.

Besides, when somebody tells the death of youth to his/her intimate friends, he/she should avoid telling directly and should tell indirectly by referring to an old man's/woman's death or serious illness or sudden accident rather than directly telling the fact because people would be shocked the moment they hear youth's death than that of elder.

3.2.3. Expression of Condolence to the Family of Deceased

As in other societies, the Oromo people have the practice of strengthening the family of the deceased. According to informants' response, the neighbors come and chat with the family to make them free from sorrow. When an individual comes to the home of the deceased person's family, he/she refrains from using inappropriate expressions and only allowed to use appropriate expressions depending on the age category of the person who died. The people express their condolence to the family after the funeral ceremony is over and the family returned to their home. The condolence expressions that Oromo people use to soothe this family is supposed to be expressed at the moment of entering into or getting out from the house of the deceased. These expressions are expressed in (10).

(a) Expressions of condolence for the death of youth and adult

According to the informants' explanation, the expressions of condolence are also different from each other depending on the age of the deceased person. Therefore, someone takes care to avoid impolite expressions while coming to the mourning family. In whatever the case, to strengthen the family of the deceased person using the expression, *Rabbi bakka isinii-f haa buus-u* 'May God replace for you' is forbidden in Oromo of the research areas; because their norm is not allowed to express human beings' death. If somebody uses this expression, it creates shame or conflict for the reason that they use it to express death of domestic animals.

Bale Oromo use the expressions in (10) to console the family of deceased person:

(10)

- a. *Rabbi* *isa-a/iše-e* *haa* *araar-am-u*
God/Allah:NOM he-GEN/she-GEN let reconcile-PASS-3SM:JUS
'May God/Allah forgive his/her sin.'
- b. *biyyee-n* *isa-tti/išee-tti* *haa* *salp'-at-t-u*
soil- NOM he-LOC/she-LOC let light-VBZR-3SF-JUS
'May the soil be light to him/her.'
- c. *sabrii* *isinii-f* *haa* *kenn-u*
patient you-DAT let give-3SM:JUS
'May God give you patience.'
- d. *gaaddis-i* *isa-a/iše-e* *isin-itti* *haa* *haf-u/t-u*
shadow-NOM he-GEN/she-GEN you-LOC let absent-3SM-JUS
'May his/her shadow live long with you.'
- e. *ekeraa-n* *isa-a/iše-e* *haa* *bok'ot-u/t-u*
ghost-NOM he-GEN/she-GEN let rest-3SM-JUS
'May his/her ghost get a rest.'
- f. *ekeraa-n* *isa-a/iše-e* *Jannata* *haa* *seen-u*
ghost-NOM he-GEN/she-GEN garden of Eden let enter-3SM:JUS
'May his/her ghost enter to garden of Eden.'

The expression in (10a) refers to the society's prayer for a deceased person as his/her sin never blocks his/her entrance into the eternal life. They believe that if God forgives his/her sin, He allows a rest place for his/her soul to stay in peace. Informants have also explained two points regarding this prayer. First, they believe that everybody is a sinner and cannot be out of it; so they believe that forgiveness is the only bridge that leads to the place where rest and peace exist. The second point is that the doubt they have towards forgiveness of God.

Similarly, the expression in (10b) expresses their wish that the soil they put on the grave of the dead person will not be heavy. According to the informants of the research areas in

the ancient time, when someone dies, people do not put stone on the grave of the dead person but soil. They believe that if somebody cannot come out of distress, the same ill fate will occur again in that family. Thus, when relatives or neighbors come to console that family, they say expression in (10c) to make the family feel better by the power of the patience that God provides them. Also, they use the expression in (10e) and (10f) to refer to the good wish they have towards the dead person's ghost; because they believe that the ghost of the deceased does not die.

The people of the research areas use these comforting expressions due to two reasons. Some expressions are directly attached with praying to God for the departed person, while the other expressions are related to appeasing his/her family. However, in whatever case the expressions provide sort of relief for the family who lost their relative. Thus, the society uses the expression 'may his/her soul enter the paradise'.

Besides, when the husband dies, the Bale Oromos use the following expressions to soothe his wife:

- (11) *Rabbi utubaa kee sii-f haa jab-eess-u*
 Allah:NOM pillar 2S:POSS you-DAT let strengthen-CAUS-3SM:JUS
 'Lit. may Allah strengthen your pillar.'
 'May Allah strengthen your husband.'

The literal meaning of the expression in (11) is that let Allah strengthen the pillar of somebody's house. However, in this context, the expression refers to a wife who lost her husband who is the pillar of her house. Thus, when husband dies, people console his wife saying *Rabbi utubaa kee siif haa jabeessu* 'may God strengthen the pillar of your house'. In this sentence, *utubaa* 'pillar' is metaphorized with *abbaa manaa* 'husband'. Pillars help a column that stands perpendicular to the ground and generally serves to support the beams of a roof. So, if there are no pillars, the house cannot stand for a long or it falls dawn. Similarly, in the family, the role of husband is great. But sometimes people say wife is the pillar while the husband is a head of the house. Whatever it is, husband is the pillar, and wife is the scaffolding that keeps the pillar upright. Without pillar the scaffolding is just there with nothing to support and without scaffolding, the pillar is not

- b. *jabaa- a obsa isinii-f haa keyn-u*
 strong-2PL:COP patience you-DAT let give-3SM:JUS
 ‘Be strong, may God give you patience!’
- c. *Rabbi isaa-f/išee-f jannata haa keyn-u*
 God he-DAT/she-DAT paradise let give-3SM: JUS
 ‘May God give him/her paradise.’
- d. *biyyee-n itti haa salp’-at-t-u*
 soil-NOM LOC let light-VBZR-3SF-JUS
 ‘May the soil be light to him/her.’

The metaphorical expression in (13) refers to the death of an old man/woman which is a normal one. Since an old person has seen the ups and downs of life, people consider the death as normal. However, the untimely death like the death of child and youth can trouble them.

Similarly, Wollega Oromo use the expressions in (14) to condole the family that lost an adult:

(14)

- a. *Waak’-ni isin haa jab-eess-u*
 God- NOM you:2PL:ABS let hearten-CAUS-3SM:JUS
 ‘May God hearten you!’
- b. *Waak’-ni lubbuu haa maar-u*
 God-NOM soul:ABS let save-3SM:JUS
 ‘May God rescue the soul!’
- c. *ekeraa-n isa-a/iše-e haa jannat-u*
 ghost-NOM he-GEN/she-GEN let paradise-3SM:JUS
 ‘May his/her ghost join the paradize!’
- d. *daa ii eebi a-a haa ug-u/t-u [ugdu]*
 mead vernonia amygdalina-GEN let drink-3SM: IPFV: JUS/3SF-JUS
 ‘May he/she drink the ‘mead of vernonia amygdalina.’

- e. *biyyoo-n isa-tti/išee-tti haa salp'-at-u*
 soil-NOM he-LOC/she-LOC let light-VBZR-3SM: JUS
 'May the soil be light to him/her.'

According to the informants, Wollega Oromo use the metaphoric expression in (15d) *eebi a-a* to compare the bitter of *vernonia amygdalina* with death while they use the expression *daa ii eebi a' haa ug-u/t-u* to express the good odor of *eebi a's* mead; because the mead which is fermented from *eebi a's* honey has attractive odor. Even if *eebi a'* has bitter taste, it helps to make a *daa ii* which has a good odor and taste. Similarly, they believe God changes the sourness of the death into sweet taste. The other expressions are analyzed in previous sections.

Here the point we have to bear in mind is that the expressions Oromo society uses to strengthen the family who lost an adult and youth are almost similar.

(b) Expressions of condolence for the death of a child

When a child dies the relatives and neighbors of the family condole them by using different polite expressions according to their particular norms. When visitors come and leave the house of the deceased family, saying *akkam jirtu* 'how are you?' and *nagaatti* 'goodby' are taboo. Instead, they can use one of the appropriate expressions in (15-17). For example, Bale Oromo use the following expressions:

(15)

- a. *ka gudd-at-tu Rabbi si-if haa kennu-u*
 REL grow-MD-3SM/F:IPFV God:NOM you-DAT let give:3SM:JUS
 'May God give you the one who grows up.'
- b. *ka aabba/aayya jet-t-u isini-if haa kenn-u*
 REL father/mother call-3SF-IPFV you-DAT let give-3SM:JUS
 'May God give you who call you dad/mum.'
- c. *ka haf-e isini-if haa bul-s -u [bul u]*
 REL absent-PFV you-DAT let pass night-CAUS-3SM:IPFV
 'May God bless the rest for you.'

In the areas under the study, the Oromo people use the expression in (15a) to express their wish God gives the child that can grow up. Additionally, Bale Oromo use the expression in (15b) to express their wish that the couple will have the healthy child, who calls her mother as ‘mum’ and father ‘dad’. If a family loses a child, they will also lose the privilege of being called dad and mom by that child. Sometimes the expressions in (15c) can apply for all age.

Likewise, the Hararghe Oromo use the following expressions to soothe the family who lost a child:

(16)

- a. *tan gudda-at-u isini-if haa keyn-u*
 REL grow-MD-IPFV you-DAT let give-3SM:JUS
 ‘May God give you the one who grows up.’
- b. *tan šafaa si-i haa go -u*
 who curative you-BEN let make-3SM: JUS
 ‘May God make a curative person.’

Hararghe Oromo use expressions in (16a-b) to condole the family who lost a child. They advise them to minimize their sorrow to be happy with the rest of children. The society uses the expressions to soothe the family from frustration. They use the expression in (16b) to express the child who went to God’s army to seek curative for her family and will escape from the last days of Judgment.

Similarly, Wollega Oromo use the following strengthening expressions for a child’s death:

(17)

- a. *kan gudd-at-u isinii-f haa kenn-u*
 REL grow-MD-3MS: IPFV you-DAT let give-3SM:IPFV:JUS
 ‘Let God give you who can grow up.’
- b. *kan haf-an haa gudd-at-an*
 REL remain-3PL let grow-MD-3PL:IPFV:JUS
 ‘May God grow the remaining one.’

c. *Waak'-ni kan haf-an sii-f haa irraanf-at-u*

God NOM REL remain-3PL you-DAT let forget-MD-3SM:IPFV:JUS
'May God keep the remaining safe.'

Generally, Bale, Wollega and Hararghe Oromo use the expression in (15a), (16a) and (17a), *kan guddatu Waak'ni siif haa kenn-u* in common to condole the family who lost their child. This expression shows the good wish they have towards the the rest of children or shows the prayer they present to God for the family of the deceased person in order not to face similar circumstances.

3.2.4. Causes of Death and Relative Euphemistic Expressions

Human beings die due to different causes like disease, accident, suicide and so forth. Death also occurs through the supernatural beings. When somebody dies, the Oromo people express the death depending on the causes. The euphemistic expressions people use at this time may differ depending on their particular religion. Since breaking this norm is taboo, they use expressions carefully in order to make their communication polite to avoid taboo expressions. As wrongly expressing death is taboo; wrongly expressing its causes is taboo too.

Euphemistic expressions that the Bale, Hararghe and Wollega Oromo use to express causes of the death related to thunder and suicide is analyzed as follows.

3.2.4.1. The euphemistic expressions of the term *bakakkaa* 'thunder' and the death caused by it

The spontaneous falling of thunder may damage human life, property and so forth. When death occurs by thunder, the Oromo people of the research areas use different euphemistic expressions depending on their particular areas. However, regarding this phenomenon, it is forbidden to say taboo expressions which they should refrain from speaking. In the areas under study, Oromo avoid calling the direct name of thunder as well as the death caused. As the result of this, they prefer to use euphemistic expressions for the name thunder and the death caused by it. Let us look at them as follow.

i. Ways of expressing the name of *bakakkaa* ‘thunder’

It is obvious that, nobody knows the schedule of thunder strikes or prevents it from falling and the disaster it causes on human life and resources. As the result of the disasters, it aggravates the society’s fear and restrain them from calling the direct name *bakakkaa*. So, they use the expressions in (18-19). The Bale Oromo substitute the following expressions:

(18)

- a. *waan Waak’a-a*
thing God-GEN
Lit. thing of God.’
‘Thunder’
- b. *waan sami-i*
thing sky-GEN
‘Lit. thing of sky.’
‘Thunder.’
- c. *waan rooba-a*
thing rain-GEN
‘Lit. thing of the rain.’
‘Thunder.’
- d. *finc’aan Waak’a-a*
urine God-GEN
‘Lit. God’s urine.’
‘Thunder.’
- e. *waan k’abbana-a*
thing cool-GEN
‘Lit. things of the cool.’
‘Thunder.’

According to informants¹¹ from Bale, if somebody directly calls the name *bakakkaa* ‘thunder’ without substituting the above euphemistic/polite expressions, they believe it will repeatedly falls and strikes the house or the family of the speaker. Therefore, the Bale Oromo use euphemistic expressions in (18) instead of calling the direct name of *bakakkaa* ‘thunder.’

The Bale Oromo use the expression in (18a) which is abstract to express the place from where a thunder falls down. According to them, the word *Waak’a* is homonym because at the same time it expresses both *Waak’a* ‘God’ and *Waaak’a* ‘sky’. For example, when they say *Waak’a uгаа* ‘true God’ and *duumessa Waak’aa* ‘the God’s cloud’, the two expressions refer to *Waak’a* ‘God’ and *samii* ‘sky’, respectively. Using such kind of system is circumlocution strategy. Additionally, due to a thunder falls down usually in rainy time, Bale Oromo use *waan roobaa* ‘the rain’s thing’ to euphemize the term *bakakkaa* by using abstract strategy of euphemism; they use this strategy because the expression *waan roobaa* is not a concrete thing.

In culture of the Oromo of the study areas, it is believed that the devil is the cause of lightening and falling of the thunder. According to the Bale Oromo’s belief, when the devil sticks out its tongue to God, immediately He throws down to strike the devil; at that moment, the devil runs away to a tree or in somebody’s house to hide from the injury. At this time, the thunder injures or kills the people who stand nearby a tree or a house. This myth may contradict with the scientific explanation for the cause of lightening. Regarding this, there is a popular proverb, *daafii seet’anaa bakakkaan nama aha* ‘due to the case of the devil, thunder strikes a human’.

Besides, Bale Oromo interchangeably use the expression in (18d) which is antonymous strategy to reduce the fear that people have towards thunder. Even though they know that thunder is a fire entity, they use the term *k’abbana* ‘cool’ to reduce its effect for the psychology of hearers.

¹¹ Kalil Saddoo, Usman Ibrahim, Taye Wakjira and Dejen Garedew, Tahir Junda (from Bale)

The Hararghe Oromo do not fear calling the direct name of *bakakkaa*; rather they fear the consequences that it brings. Among them, it is known by two things. The first one is the dangerous chill which can kill animals or dried out plants. The second is the fire which falls from sky when rain falls. Hence, they don't fear calling the name *bakakkaa*; rather they fear its consequences.

Wollega Oromo also avoid calling the direct name *bakakkaa* 'thunder' through using onomatopoeiac euphemistic expression strategy in (19); because the name *bakakkaa* 'thunder' derived from the loud sound at the time of falling. Besides, the onomatopoeiac strategy used in (19) derived from the sound of *ka'wwee* 'gun'. Whatever the case the Wollega Oromo substitute it as:

(19) *bakakkaa* 'thunder' *kakawwee* 'thunderd'

ii. Ways of expressing the falling down of *bakakkaa* 'thunder'

According to Bale Oromo informants, thunder usually falls down on big trees in the rainy season. As the result, people forbid standing under or nearby these trees. Even when somebody is injured by the cause of *bakakkaa*, Bale Oromo avoid directly saying *bakakkaa-n irra bu -e* 'the thunder fell down upon him/ her'. Therefore, instead of saying *bakakkaa-n ajjeese* 'killed by thunder', they use the euphemistic expressions:

(20)

a. *waan Rabbi-i itti bu -e*
 thing God-GEN LOC fall-3SM:PFV
 'Lit. it was God's thing that fallen on him/her.'
 'It was thunder that fell on him/her.'

b. *Waan k'abbana-a itti bu -e*
 thing cool-GEN LOC fall-3SM:PFV
 'Lit. the cool's thing that fell on him/her.'
 'It was thunder that fallen on him/her.'

While the Hararghe Oromo directly express as:

(21) *bakakkka-tu irra bu -e*
 Thunder-FOC LOC fall-3SM:PFV
 'It was a thunder that fell on him/her.'

Similarly, the Wollega Oromo use the euphemistic expresses in (22):

(22)

- a. *waak'a-tu nagaan gaaf-at-e*
God-FOC peace: ABS ask-MD-3SM:PFV
'Lit. God greeted him/her.'
'God has killed him/her.'
- b. *waak'a-tu itti gammad-e*
God-FOC LOC happy-3SM:PFV
'Lit. God pleased with him/her.'
'God has killed him/her.'

As informants of Wollega, the euphemistic expressions they use for falling of thunder have interpreted as follows: As everybody knows when someone is killed by somebody the family of the deceased person feels sad. However, the people use expression in (22a) which is an antonymous strategy of euphemism in order not to offend or criticize the work of God. According to their belief, if somebody says, *bakakkaa-tu irra bu'ee* 'it was thunder that fell on him/her', the same thing will occur again upon the speaker. Actually, the literal meaning of *waak'at-u nagaan gaafat-e* refers to greeting that God presents to somebody. But here, it does not mean God is greeting the person for peace but affects the person. So, in Wollega the expression in (22a) represents both thunder and God. Additionally, the expression in (22b), *Waak'a-tu itti gammad-e* 'God pleased with him/her' which is also has antonymous sense refers to God favored the person than others to greet her/him through thunder. The Oromo societies of the research areas advise the family who faced the accident of thunder, not to blame the God's action.

At the occasion of thunder fall, Oromo societies avoid some expressions and actions like shouting, crying which are considered as taboo; instead of this, the Bale Oromo use expressions in (23a-c) which imply the antonymous action of the happened thing.

(23)

- a. *aššuu!* 'gosh!'
b. *baga!* 'congratulations!'
c. *ilil...ilil* 'ululation.'

The people use these expressions which are actually used during expression of happiness; because if they blame action of God, they believe the thunder will fall again. Due to this reason, they use the positive expressions through the antonymous strategy of euphemism. Similarly, Wollega Oromo use:

(24)

- a. *baga baga* ‘congratulation! (twice)’
- b. *kun isaa-f t’ik’k’aa- a*
this he-DAT small-COP
‘This is minor to him.’
- c. *Ilil...ilil...* ‘ululation’

When they tell the events to other person, they use the expressions in (24b), *kun isaaf t’ik’k’aa- a* ‘this is minor to him’ and when they speak to God, they say, *kun siif t’ik’k’aa- a* ‘this minor for you’ because God can even cause more serious danger than this one or God’s action should be accepted.

According to Wollega Oromo, there is a ritual that is performed to save from harm repeatedly occurs by thunder. This ritual is called *seera bakakkaa* ‘law of thunder’ and it helps to harmonize God with nature through praying His mercy. All the family members that *bakakkaa* struck tie the leaf of a tree called *aannannoo* on their head and they also handle the leaf of a tree called *abbayyi* and *ulumaayii* in their hand and they move around the market nine times and say *yaa Waak’ nutti k’abbaneessi* ‘Oh! God neutralize from us’ which means give your peace to us. All these actions are performed to keep themselves from repeated falling of thunder.

3.2.4.2. Suicide and Euphemistic Expression

According to informants’ discussion, suicide is the other form of death which is uncommon. The Oromo society uses euphemistic expressions to avoid mentioning it. Regarding this, there is a proverb *ofinuu duuti maaliif of huuti?* which literally means ‘when she will die normally, why should she hang herself?’ committing suicide or hanging oneself is a bad act in Oromo societies, in two ways. Firstly, both Islam and Christian religion condemn suicidal action, and the performers of such actions are

supposed to be sent to hell by God forever. Secondly, it is socially considered as shocking behavior for the performer's family. Therefore, they employ euphemistic expressions or even hide the suicidal action completely by providing fake evidences for his/her death.

For example, when somebody hangs him/herself by *haada* 'rope', the Bale Oromo do not say *haadaa-n of ajjees-e/t-e* 'he/she killed him/herself by rope'; instead they use the euphemistic expressions which are not far but a little better from the direct expression.

(25)

uf *k'uc'-e/t-e*
 self hang-3SM:PFV/3SF-PFV
 'Lit. he/she hanged him/herself.'
 'She/she killed him/herself'

To some extent the expressions in (25) is appropriate for the psychology of hearers in comparison with the impolite expression of *haadaa-n of ajjeese* 'he killed himself by rope'; at least the expression conceal the rudeness when using *of ajjees-e* 'he killed himself. The literal meaning of *of k'uc-e/t-e* refers to the person who simply holds his/her neck tightly by his/her hand. Here they omit the direct expression *uf ajjees-e/t-e* 'killed him/her self.' Similarly, Oromo of Hararghe use the synonym expression in (26) which is still a taboo.

(26)

If *fannis-e/t-e*
 self hang-3SM: PFV/3SF-PFV
 'Lit. he/she hanged his/herself.'
 'He/she killed him/herself.'

Similarly, the Wollega Oromo use the euphemistic expression in (27):

(27)

haada *ak'-e/t-e* [*ak't'e*]
 rope go-3SM:PFV/3SF-PFV
 'Lit. he/she went to rope.'
 'He/she killed him/herself by rope.'

The literal meaning of the expression in (27) refers to somebody who went to rope which is a meaningless. However, they use to express the place where the person has gone to hang him/herself by rope.

3.2.4.3. Death in the battle and its euphemistic expression

Similarly, if someone died in the battle field, the Oromo of Wollega use different expressions for such death. They do not use the usual expressions, *bok'ot-e/t-e* 'he/she took a rest' and *darb-e/t-e* 'he/she passed away', etc. instead they use the expression in

- (28) *lammii isaa-f aarsaa ta -e*
 nation his-DAT scarification be-3SM:PFV
 'Lit. he sacrificed himself for his nation.'
 'He passed away for his nation.'

3.2.5. Taboo and euphemistic expressions related to addressing name of deceased

The Oromo societies of the research areas believe that mentioning a dead person along with a living one will inflict death on the living one. To avoid this, they resort to a shielding expression coincidentally with the euphemism of death probably to make the ghost of the deceased safe. According to the information gathered, directly addressing the name of the deceased person is taboo due to fear of offending the person's ghost. However, addressing the name of the dead person is inevitable; especially while his/her friends recall what he/she did before. To avoid this problem, the speaker should use appropriate expressions in (29-31) according to their particular culture prior to addressing the name.

For example, the Bale Oromo use the expressions in (29) prior to calling the dead person's name:

- (29)
 a. *nuyi lafa ara-a jir-ra, inni/išee-n lafa uгаа jir-a/t-i..*
 we earth false-GEN exist-1PL:PFV he/ she-NOM earth truth:GEN exist-
 3SM: PFV/3SF-PFV

'We are in the false world, but he/she exits in the true world ...'

- b. *nama ekeraa hamat-u, nu hin go -iin malee...*
 person:ABS ghost backbite-3SM:BEN:IPFV us NEG make-3S:JUS:NEG rather
 ‘May He not consider us people who backbite the dead...’

According to my informants, they use the expression in (29a) before calling the name of the deceased person for two reasons. The first reason is the fear they have towards the death and the second one is the doubt where they will exist after death. Besides, the expression why they use *lafa uгаа is* interpreted in (3e). Regarding to the expression in (29b) further explanation might be added, e.g. why naming a deceased is considered as backbiting, that *go uu* among metaphoric extensions may also mean ‘do, treat as, consider’ and the semantic range of *ekeraa*, that includes phantoms, the spirit of the dead, etc.

Whereas Oromo of Hararghe express the name after the following expressions:

(30)

- a. *Rabbi rahaamata haa go -u-uf malee...*
 God:NOM help let do-3SM:IPFV:JUS-DAT rather
 ‘May God help him/her...’
- b. *Rabbi itti haa tol-u malee...*
 God:NOM LOC let be kind-3SM:JUS rather
 ‘May God show His kind to him/her...’

The expressions in (30a-b) show that the good wish people have for the soul of the deceased person or they refer to the people’s prayer for help, mercy, and peace of the deceased.

Correspondingly, the Wollega Oromo use the following expressions to address the dead person’s name:

(31)

- a. *mak’aa na waam-e/t-e hin je ii-n malee ...*
 name me call-3SM:PFV/3SF:PFV NEG say-NEG:JUS rather
 ‘May he/she not say you called my name, ...’

- b. *biyyoo-n isa-itti/išee-tti haa salp’-at-u malee ...*
 soil-NOM he-LOC/she-LOC let light-VBZR-3SM:JUS rather
 ‘May the soil be light to him/her...’
- c. *isa/išee arrab-ni gogaa- a, kan koo arrab- ni jii aa- a...*
 he/she tongue-NOM dry- COP REL mine tongue-NOM wet-COP
 ‘His/her tongue of dried up but mine is wet...’

The expression in (31c) refers that the deceased person’s tongue is dried because he/she cannot drink water that living person needs.

As we have seen in (30-31), the Oromo of the research areas address the name of the person after the dots (...). After the speaker utters the expressions, he/she can call the name of deceased person and continue the point they want to discuss.

For example, let us assume the name of the deceased person is Borena, and his brother is Gudeta, and if somebody wants to address the name of Borena to others, he/she can call the name after he/she uses the expressions in (31a) *mak’aa na waam-e/t-e hin je ii-n malee, ... Booranaa-n obboleessa Guddataa-ti* ‘may he/she not say you called my name, Borena is Gudeta’s brother.’

Sometimes, either consciously or not, people compare the age, physical appearance, height and habit of the dead person with a living person which is taboo in Oromo. For example, if ‘A’ is the dead person and ‘B’ is alive, then if somebody wants to compare the resemblance of the two, there are expressions which people use antecedently to avoid the negative connotations and set of shielding expressions will accompany with euphemistic expressions to avoid the fear of the superstitious beliefs they have towards comparing the two persons. In respect of this they use the expression, *ayyaana haa c’aalu malee* ‘may have much grace or *waak’ni wal hin fakkeessiin malee* ‘B’n ‘A’tiin *fakkaata* ‘May God make them unlike ‘B’ resembles ‘A’’. The prior expressions are the prayer that people wish to present for person ‘B’, to protect from the same fate.

3.2.6. Pragmatic Features of Euphemistic Expressions of Death

The following are the pragmatic features of common euphemistic expressions of death in the Oromo society of the research areas.

(a) Showing politeness

Politeness is a kind of social phenomenon, an approach used in order to maintain the harmonious interpersonal relationship, and a kind of conventional social behavioral norm. It is a standardized behavior that everyone has to follow. When writing or talking about the death, people tend to use euphemistic expressions instead of using the word *duʔe* 'died' to avoid hurting others' feelings.

(b) Showing respect

When communicating with others, it is very necessary for every person to show respect for others by behaving with good manners. Using the proper euphemistic expressions of death could play a vital role in order to maintain and improve the interpersonal communications.

(c) Avoiding hurting others' feelings

Losing someone is an extremely harsh thing. Taboo words related to death are the most sensitive issues; so, when someone uses every words, he/she must be careful, or else, they will make the situation worse. That is because the deceased person will no longer be part of their life, and they will never see him/her again in this world.

(d) Showing emotion

The expressions that someone chooses to talk or write about someone's death somehow show his/her sentiment, passion and feeling towards the survivors and the dead. If the speakers or writers are the survivors' close friends, relatives... they tend to use various euphemistic expressions of death with optimistic meaning, such as *jannata seene* 'he entered into a paradise', *gara mootummaa Waak'aa seene* 'he entered into the Kingdom of Heaven', *darbe* 'passed away', in order to condole those relatives of the dead.

3.3. Taboo Related to Diseases and Corresponding Euphemisms

Diseases can be broadly defined as any illness or sickness that disrupts the normal function of the human body. Most of the time death is caused by diseases. In this world, when there were insufficient drugs, different kinds of diseases suffer and kill many

people. In connection with this, I observed out that the Oromo people of the research areas avoid calling the name of certain diseases for different reasons. Firstly, if either the sick person or his/her family hears while somebody calls the name of the disease, the sick person feels uncomfortable thinking the seriousness of that disease, that means, the name of the disease may terrorize the sick person or other hearers. Secondly, people believe that calling the name of the disease in front of the sick may exacerbate the pain. Third, thinking the physical, social, spiritual and economical destruction that diseases enhance. Thus, the people of Bale, Hararghe and Wollega Oromo avoid the name of serious diseases through using euphemistic expressions. Here, the point that we should understand is the Oromo people of the research areas do not fear to call the name of all diseases; there are some diseases which they prohibit to call overtly.

In the following, the taboo name of the diseases and their corresponding euphemistic expressions are presented. The definitions of these diseases are given depending on the concise oxford English dictionary of Smith (2001). Amongst the Oromo people of the research areas, calling the direct name of diseases listed from (1-21) are commonly known as taboo and people euphemize them while they want to address.

(1) *Abbaa seeruu* ‘chancroid’

The native speakers of Afaan Oromoo never call the name of chancroid; because among the Oromo society of the research areas, calling the name of this disease considered as taboo. However, because of medical treatment and the awareness that the government has been giving to the society, nowadays the disease is not widely spreading out.

I found out that the Oromo people of the research sites fear to call the name of the diseases and use euphemistic expressions instead. According to the informants, if someone says somebody has a disease of *abbaa seeruu* ‘chancroid’ before the sick person, it is considered as impolite expression; because the sick person may be disappointed. The thing that makes it taboo is the place where this disease infects; because chancroid always infects sexual reproductive organ. As it is already known, calling things related to sexual organ in public is shameful. Due to this, the sick person usually feels inferior and embarrassment to communicate freely about it. Thus, the Oromo people of the research areas use the following euphemisms:

(32)

- a. *ibee k'aama iira-a*
disease body male-GEN
'Lit. male's body disease'
'Chancroid.' (in Bale)
- b. *ukkuba k'aama saala-a*
disease body sexual-GEN
'Lit. reproductive organ disease'
'Chancroid.' (in Hararghe)
- c. *ukkuba iira-a*
disease male-GEN
'Lit. male's disease'
'Chancroid.' (in Wollega)

As informants'¹² explanation, Bale Oromo use the metonymic expression in (32a). Here they express the disease by whole body *k'aama iiraa* 'male's body' to refer to the specific organ that is infected by chancroid. On the other hand, Hararghe Oromo use the synecdoche euphemism strategy, which a part represents the whole. Because the specific body part which is sick in current is known; it is a male sexual organ. However, the exact sexual organ's disease (the type) is not prescribed. This makes the expression in (32b) general. Similarly, Wollega Oromo use the expression in (32c) which is a similar strategy of euphemism with expression in (32a). In the three areas, Oromo society attaches the euphemistic expressions to male's disease; because the disease is transmitted through sexual intercourse while the issue of sexual intercourse is usually suggested by males. Surprisingly, even if a woman exposed to *abbaa seeruu*, they say, *ukkuba iiraan k'abamte* 'she has infected by male's disease' assuming that the male initiates the idea of sexual intercourse than female.

¹² Kalil Saddo, Mammo Hiko, K'unbi Shunkulle, Workalema Aregawu, Sufiyan Abdella, Rihana Jemal and Najash Abdella (Bale and Hararghe)

On the other hand, they avoid the name of this disease because they believe that if the name of this disease is uttered, it will be transferred to the speaker in instant. As already explained, if somebody calls the name of *abbaa seeruu* in front of sick person, the disease becomes aggravated to the sick. Hence, everybody takes care not to utter the name of a chancroid disease.

Moreover, in Bale Oromo, if somebody violates this norm and calls the name of *abbaa seeruu* ‘chancroid’ in public, there will be a punishment imposed on the violator. Elders of the village force the person to bring the bull and cloth to the sick person. When this ritual is held, the violator should bite one of his/her fingers to show regret towards the impermissible expression he/she has spoken.

(2) *Nak’arsaa* ‘cancer’

Alarmingly cancer has caused suffering to many people all over the world. If somebody is exposed to a cancer once, he/she has a little chance to be cured. Due to this, people fear calling its name and use euphemistic expressions as follows:

(33)

a. *ibee aga-a*
disease stone-GEN
‘Lit. stone’s disease’
‘Cancer.’ (Bale)

b. *ibee ilbiisa-a*
disease insect-GEN
‘Lit. insect’s disease.’
‘Cancer.’ (Bale)

c. *kaansarii* ‘cancer’ (Hararghe)

d. *ukkuba allaattii*
disease eagle-GEN
‘Lit. an eagle’s disease.’
‘Cancer’ (Wollega)

People of the research areas have different concept about ‘cancer’. According to one of my interviewee¹³, from Bale zone, the reason people omit the direct name of cancer and replace it by the expression in (33a) is to refer to the desire they have to put the dangerous of the disease on stone not on human being. Besides, the Bale Oromo use the *ibee ilbiisaa* ‘insect’s disease’ to understate the disease. Similarly, Wollega Oromo use the expression in (33d) to deflate its dangerousness for the psychology of the sick person.

(3) *C’op’t’oo* ‘gonorrhea’

Gonorrhea is one of the diseases transmits through sexual intercourse and inflammation of genital mucous membrane, burning pain specially when urinating. Urine is discharged slowly in the form of drop of water. Due to the conquence of burning, it highly suffers the sick person. The Oromo people of the study areas use the euphemistic expressions in (34):

(34)

- a. *ibee dugda-a*
disease back-GEN
‘lit. disease of the back.’
‘Gonorrhea.’ (in Bale)
- b. *finc’aan gub-aa*
urine burn-ADJ
‘Lit. urine burner’
‘Gonorrhea.’ (in Hararghe)
- c. *ukkuba iira-a*
disease male-GEN
‘Lit. male disease.’
‘Gonorrhea.’ (in Wollega)

According to informants, the Bale Oromo associate this disease with ‘back’; because a male person has exposed to this disease usually bend in his back during urinating. So, in order to express this action, they use the metaphoric expression in (34a); because there is

¹³ Sheikh Umar Usman

a similar sign reflected between a person whose back is sick and infected by gonorrhoea. Similarly, Hararghe use the expression *finc'aan gubaa* because the disease burns the person's sexual organ while discharging urine. Wollega Oromo also use the metonymic expression in (34c), *ukkuba iiraa* 'male disease'. The reason why this interpretation is metonymic has been expressed in (32c).

(4) 'Eedsii' 'AIDS'

AIDS has been killing many people all over the world; because it has no medicine which completely cure the sick. Due to this, a big crisis may face the infected person. It separates husband and wife as well as the family members from one another. As the result of this, people avoid even to call its name and use the euphemistic expressions in (35) as follows:

(35)

- a. *ukkuba bara-a*
disease year-GEN
'Lit. disease of our time.'
'AIDS.' (in Bale, Hararghe and Wollagga)
- b. *ibee safaha-a*
disease warm-day-GEN
'Lit. serious disease.'
'AIDS.' (in Bale)
- c. *ukkuba jawwee*
disease python-GEN
'Lit. python's disease.'
'AIDS.' (in Hararghe)
- d. *ukkuba jaldeessa-a*
disease monkey-GEN
'Lit. monkey's disease.'
'AIDS.' (in Wollega)

- e. *ukkuba k'illeensa-a*
disease air-GEN
‘Lit. an air’s disease’
‘AIDS. (in Wollega)’

From the study, I found out that the name causes discomfort to sick person; because everybody associates the cause of this disease with unprotected sexual intercourse. As the result, Bale, Hararghe and Wollega Oromo commonly use indirect expression in (35a) to refer to the disease of our time which implies the disease did not exist before. Sometimes they also use the abbreviation HIV to lessen the fear that people have towards it. Besides, Bale Oromo use the metaphoric expression in (35b) to refer that how much the disease is tough. In the same way, Hararghe Oromo use the expression in (35c) for two reasons. Firstly, they use to refer to the disease to come from python and the secondly, they use to show the disease hurt people as python does. Similarly, Wollega Oromo use the expression in (35d) because they have heard as it was caused by monkey. Moreover, they use the metaphoric expression in (35e) *ukkuba k'illeensaa* ‘an air’s disease’ to refer to AIDS which has similar symptom with tuberculosis; because people do not fear tuberculosis as AIDS. Sometimes due to the similarity of the symptoms, they try to hide the name of AIDS.

(5) *dibee Sombaa* ‘tuberculosis’

It is an infectious disease mainly infecting the lungs where it causes tubercles characterized expectoration of mucus and sputum, fever, weight loss, and chest pain and transmitted through inhalation or ingestion of bacteria. Having the fear of these symptoms in mind, calling the name of tuberculosis in front of sick person is considered as taboo. For this reason, they use the euphemistic expressions as:

(36)

- a. *ibee hafuura-a*
disease breath-GEN
‘Lit. air disease.’
‘Tuberculosis.’ (in Bale, Hararghe and Wollega)

- b. *ukkuba allaattii*
 disease eagle:GEN
 ‘Lit. an eagle’s disease.’
 ‘Tuberculosis’ (in Wollega)

As explained before, the society uses the metaphoric expression in (36a) to express the way that tuberculosis is transmitted from person to person. According to Bale Oromo, if someone implicitly says, *abaluun ibee sombaa k’aba* ‘Mr. X has tuberculosis’ before the sick person, there will be punishment imposed on the offender. He/she should bring a cow with calf and four elders who reconcile the offender with offended person. From this punishment, we can understand that how much Bale Oromo is conscious to keep the psychology of the sick person and norm of their society. However, nowadays, this kind of punishment has disappeared by considering it as bad tradition; because, this action is scientifically illogical which we could not approve.

(6) *Roobbii* ‘ringworm’

Roobbii ‘ringworm’ is a contagious itching skin disease occurring in small circular patches around neck or face caused by fungi. To call it, the Bale Oromo use euphemistic expression in (37) while Hararghe and Wollega Oromo use the direct name.

(37)

- a. *ibee gogaa*
 disease skin:GEN
 ‘Lit. skin disease.’
 ‘Ringworm.’
- b. *bubbisa k’illeensa-a*
 blowing air-GEN
 ‘Lit. blowing of air’
 ‘Ringworm.’ (in Bale)

They use the expression in (37a) because it infects the skin of the sick while they use the expression in (37b) to express the doubt towards the cause of the disease is an air.

(7) *dullaa* ‘carbuncles’

This disease is caused by fungi and it creates a hard pimple on the skin of sick person or marked by soft, pulpy nodules. Due to the fear of the pain of this disease, Bale and Wollega prefer to express as:

(38)

- a. *ibee hantuuta-a*
disease rat-GEN
‘Lit. rat’s disease.’
‘Carbuncles.’ (in Bale)
- b. *ullaa* ‘carbuncles’(in Hararghe)
- c. *ukkuba saree*
disease dog-GEN
‘Lit. dog’s disease.’
‘Carbuncles.’ (in Wollega).

According to informants’, Bale Oromo use the expression in (38a) to refer to the cause of the disease is rat. On the other hand, Wollega Oromo use the expression in (38c) because of the disease frequently infects dog. In both expressions (38a) and (38c) they used metonymic euphemistic expression strategy; because the disease of these animals represents the carbuncles.

According to Bale Oromo, there is a way in which they remove the disease from their body and make to transmit to someone else. To do this, the infected person emits the pimple’s fluid of *ullaa* and put it on coin and then circulates it twice over his/her head, and throws it on the road. Finally, the person who unconsciously steps on for the first time will be exposed to the disease. Then, the infected person absolutely cures from that disease. Similarly, Wollega Oromo put pimple’s fluid on small pieces of stick and put it on the road to be cured as Bale Oromo. However, scientifically removing the disease from their body through this method is not proved.

(8) *Gifira* ‘measles’

Measles is a contagious acute viral disease with symptoms that include a bright red rash of small spots that spread to the whole body. Frequently, children are exposed to this disease than that of adults. Due to this, that name of the the disease is taboo; especially the family even does not call the name and use euphemistic as follows:

(39)

- a. *ibee maaritee*
disease merciful:GEN
‘Lit. merciful disease.’
‘Measles’ (in Bale)

- b. *ukkuba šiffēe*
disease spot:GEN
‘Lit. spot disease.’
‘measles’ (in Hararghe)

- c. *ukkuba maariyyee*
disease merciful:GEN
‘Lit. merciful disease.’
‘Measles’ (in Wollega)

As informants’, Bale and Wollega Oromo use the metaphoric expression in (39a) and (39c) to refer to the cure of the disease is instant. Similarly, Hararghe Oromo use the metaphoric expression in (39b) based on the symptom which looks spot and appears on the body of the sick person.

According to the belief of respondents of the research areas, when somebody is exposed to this disease, the family should keep the sick person from the noisy place, body contact and shadow of human being. Unless they perform these, it quickly kills the person.

(9) *K’urc’ii* ‘leprosy’

Leprosy mainly affects the skin and nerve. When its symptom is observed, people fear to see and hear about leprosy; because it is the dangerous disease. For this reason, the taboo name is replaced as:

(40)

- a. *ibee gogaa*
disease skin:GEN
'Lit. skin disease.'
'Leprosy.' (in Bale)
- b. *warra fayyaa*
'those healthy
'Lit.those healthy persons (in Hararghe)
'Leprosy.'
- c. *ukkuba guddaa*
disease big:ADJ
'Lit. a big disease.'
'Leprosy.' (in Wollega)
- d. *ak'na boon-s-aa*
body proud-CAUS-ADJ
'Lit. the one makes the body proud.'
'Leprosy.' (in Wollega)

According to the Bale Oromo discussants', the metaphoric expression in (40a) explains the disease which injures human skin. Besides, Hararghe Oromos use the expression in (40b) to reduce the tension of the sick person thinking that he/she is *fayyaa* 'health'. Even though the person is sick, they use the antonym word *fayya*. Similarly, Wollega Oromo use the hyperbole expression in (40c) to signify how much this disease is serious. Additionally, they use the metaphoric expression in (40d) to refer to the disease which forbids the sickly from accomplishing activities by hand; because the disease can cause deformity.

Due to fear of transmission of the disease, people isolate the sick from the society. The sick person does not equally participate in different social affairs, and even no one need to marry from that family. Surprisingly, the Bale Oromo believe that leprosy can be

transmitted by fart; due to this, the infected person should be kept away 40m from the others.

(10) *Albaatii* ‘diarrhea’

Diarrhea is a condition in which faeces discharged from bowels frequently and in a liquid form. It is dangerous disease which has serious pain; it never gives rest for sick person and highly decreases energy and finally it may cause death. Due to this, people forbid even calling its name and use the metaphoric expressions in (41). Additionally, calling the direct name of this disease causes shame and considered as impolite.

(41)

- a. *garaa kaa-s-aa*
stomach bulge-CAUS-ADJ
‘Lit. the one that bulges stomach.’
‘Diarrhea.’ (in Bale)
- b. *garaa yaa-s-aa*
stomach discharge-CAUS-ADJ
‘Lit. the one that discharges stomach.’
‘Diarrhea.’ (in Bale)
- c. *gad tees-sis-aa*
down sit-CAUS-ADJ
‘Lit. the one that makes sit-down.’
‘Diarrhea.’ (in Bale)
- d. *deem-sis-aa*
walk-CAUS-ADJ
‘Lit. the one that makes walk.’
‘Diarrhea.’ (in Hararghe)
- e. *tees-sis-aa*
sit-CAUS-ADJ
‘the one that makes sit down.’
‘Diarrhea.’ (in Hararghe)

- f. *garaa yaa-s-aa* ‘the one that discharges stomach’ (in Hararghe)
- g. *garaa kaa-s-aa* ‘the one that swells stomach’ (in Hararghe)
- h. *tees-sis-aa* ‘the one that makes sit down.’ (in Wollega)
- i. *garaa kaa-s-aa* ‘the one that swells stomach’ (in Wollega)
- j. *ded-deeb-is-aa*
RDP-return-CAUS-ADJ
‘Lit. the one that makes goes again and again’
‘Diarrhea.’ (in Wollega)
- k. *garaa mur-aa*
stomach cut-ADJ
‘Lit. the one that cut stomach’
‘Diarrhea.’ (in Wollega)

All the given euphemistic expressions in (41) are derived from the symptoms that diarrhea causes; however, they represent the direct name of *albaatii* ‘diarrhea’. Purposely I did not gloss the expressions in (41f-j); because they are glossed once in the preceding expressions in (41).

(11) *Golfaa* ‘typhoid’

It is an infectious bacteria fever with an eruption of red spots on the chest and abdomen and severe intestinal irritation. Sometimes the person who is infected by this disease talks as psychosis person especially in his/her dream. The people fear the sufferings that typhoid causes and do not mention even its name in public. Therefore, they euphemize it as:

(42)

- a. *ukkuba dad-darb-aa*
disease RDP-transmit-ADJ
‘lit. transmitted disease.’
‘Typhoid.’ (in Bale and Wollega)
- b. *ukkuba golfaa*
disease typhoid:GEN
‘Typhoid disease.’ (in Hararghe)

When someone dies by this disease, the society fears even to touch the dead body of the diseased person. As one of my interviewee¹⁴ from Wollega, to cure the the sick person, the family build a small hut in the forest, and then pick him/her at night to the hut. If the person hears hyena’s voice at night, the society believes that the disease is instantly removed from the sick person. After doing this, the following morning, they return the person to a house in secret.

(12) *Tuubuu* ‘elephantiasis’

Elephantiasis is a chronic disease in which parasitic worms obstruct the lymphatic system and causing enlargement of the body part especially limbs. People forbid marrying from this family; because they believe as it is the hereditary disease. Due to this, in the Oromo society of the research areas, if somebody calls the name *tuubuu* ‘elephantiasis’ before the sick person, it is considered as impolite and offends the sick person. Hence, they euphemize it as:

(43)

- a. *t’ill-eess-aa*
compress-CAUS-ADJ
‘Lit. the one that compresses.’
‘Elephantiasis.’ (in Bale).
- b. *bišaan guur-aa*
water absorb-ADJ
‘Lit. the one that absorbs water’
‘Elephantiasis.’ (in Bale).
- c. *ibee arba-a*
disease elephant-GEN
‘Lit. elephant ‘s disease.’
‘Elephantiasis.’ (in Bale
- d. *bob-bokok-ys-aa*
RDP-swell-CAUS-ADJ
‘Lit. the one that swells something.’
‘Elephantiasis. (in Hararghe).

¹⁴ Olani Tu o

- e. *abbaa bara-a*
 father year-GEN
 ‘Lit. the person of the era’
 ‘Elephantiasis. (in Wollega).
- f. *miila furfur-aa*
 leg inflate-ADJ
 ‘Inflated leg.’ (in Wollega).

All the metaphoric expressions given in (43) are derived from the symptoms that elephantiasis causes. The infected leg by this disease looks a pipe which is filled by pressure of gas; to refer to these symptoms Bale Oromo use the metaphoric expression in (43a-b). They also use the metaphoric expression in (44c) to describe the leg which is enlarged. Similarly, the Hararghe Oromo use the metaphoric expression in (43d) which has a similar semantic interpretation with the expression in (43a). On the other hand, Wollega Oromo use the metaphoric expression in (43e) to refer to the person that has got the chance to receive what the year brings; because in Oromo **society** when something happens on someone, they say *baratu isaitti fide* ‘it is the time that brought to him’.

(13) *dukkuba Sinbiraa* ‘cuntaneous leishmaniasis’

The disease infects somebody’s face or nose and results in serious wound. The society believes the disease comes from bat’s urine. As for the other diseases, they also use euphemistic expressions for this disease as:

(44)

- a. *ukkuba allaattii*
 disease eagle:GEN
 ‘Lit. the disease of an eagle’
 ‘Cuntaneous leishmaniasis.’ (in Bale)
- b. *waan(ta) sinbira-a*
 thing bird-GEN
 ‘Lit. bird’s thing’
 ‘Cuntaneous leishmaniasis.’ (Hararghe and Wollega)

Due to fear of transmission of the disease, Bale Oromo use circumlocution strategy of euphemism as in (44a) because they call by the name of an eagle instead of *sinbira* ‘bird’. When we see the lexical relation of bird and an eagle, bird is the hyponymy of an eagle because the possible meaning of eagle can be included in the term bird which is the superordinate; because hyponymy is a relation in which the referent of a word is totally included in the referent of another word. Hararghe and Wollega Oromo use the expression in (44b) which is abstract. On the other hand, the name *ukkuba sinbira* ‘cutaneous leishmaniasis’ which is explained here as taboo is the euphemistic expression that Hararghe Oromo use instead of *ukkuba tiruu* ‘cirrhosis disease’.

(45) *ukkuba sinbira-a*

disease bird-GEN

‘Lit. cutaneous leishmaniasis.’

‘Cirrhosis disease.’

(14) *Maraatuu* ‘psychosis’

The Oromo people abstain from calling a person who is a psychosis problem by the word *maraatuu*; because according to their belief, it aggravates pain of the disease to the sick person. So, they use the following synecdoche expressions.

(46)

a. *k’albi k’oom-am-aa*

cognition affect-PASS-ADJ

‘the one who is out of cognition.’ (in Bale)

b. *k’albi keessa-a fuu -am-aa*

cognition from-LOC:ABL take-PASS-ADJ

‘The one whose cognition is up set.’ (in Bale)

c. *k’albi šir go -e*

cognition unconscious make-3SM:PFV

‘The cognition is being out of conscious.’ (in Hararghe)

d. *owwaa-tu k’ab-e*

headache-FOC catch-PFV

‘Got a headache.’ (in Hararghe)

- e. *mataa-n sirrii miti*
 head-NOM right NEG:COP
 ‘The head is abnormal’ (in Wollega)
- f. *mataa tuk’-am-aa*
 head touch-PASS-ADJ
 ‘Lit. the head is touched.’
 ‘Mentally sick’ (in Wollega)

All the euphemistic expressions given in (46) derived from the symptoms of observed from a psychosis person. For example, mentally sick persons always have the habit of forgetting things; to express this action, Bale Oromo use the expression in (46a) which synecdoche strategy; because the term ‘cognition’ represents the whole body parts of the person and make him a psychosis person. People even do not call by the proper name of the person; they call by the name *sammuu tuk’amaa* to mean *maraatuu* ‘mad’. The expression in (46b) also synecdoche expression because the cognition of the person which is taken out from other body parts. This means the other body parts of the person is health except the abnormality of the mind. The expression in (46c) also refers to someone who is sometimes out of conscious. When the person’s head gets sick, people use the expression in (46d). The interpretation of the expressions in (46e-f) is similar with the interpretation given for expressions in (46a-b).

(15) *Wuc’iba* ‘goiter’

Goiter is the swelling of the neck resulting from enlargement of the thyroid gland. This disease spoils the beauty of the person. People substitute it as:

(47)

- a. *k’uufa morma-a*
 full neck-GEN
 ‘Lit. the satiation of the neck.’
 ‘Goiter’ (in Bale)
- b. *iddoo* ‘place.’ (Hararghe)
- c. *gu oo mormaa* (Lit.the satiation of the neck’ to mean ‘goiter’ (in Wollega)

The expressions in (47) are metaphoric expressions; because the expressions are derived from the shape of the disease seen on the neck of the sick person. Normally someone says *k'uufe* 'full' when a stomach is full of food, but the expression in (47a) refers to the satiation of the neck.

(16) *Lafaan martoo* 'epilepsy'

Epilepsy is a sudden recurrent episode of sensory disturbance, loss of consciousness. It causes to lose one's balance unintentionally for the short period of time. The sick person may fall abruptly on the ground, fire or water. As a result of this, people fear to call its name and replace it as follows:

(48)

- a. *waan lafa-a*
 thing earth-GEN
 'Lit. something of the earth.'
 'Epilepsy.' (in Bale)
- b. *gaggabdo* 'loss of consciousness.' (in Hararghe and Wollega)

Since the disease makes somebody fall on the ground, Bale Oromo use the expression in (48a) which is abstract because when we say *waan lafaa* 'something of the earth', that thing is not specified. Also Wollega and Hararghe Oromo use the metaphoric expression *gaggabdo* to refer to the sign of the disease which makes the sick person faint.

(17) *Kintaarotii* 'hemorrhoid'

This disease is often accompanied by intense itching and pain of anus. Bale and Hararghe Oromo directly call this disease while Wollega Oromo euphemize as:

(49)

- a. *kintaarotii* 'hemorrhoid' (in Bale and Hararghe)
- b. *ukkuba giiftii*
 disease queen:GEN
 'Lit. the queen's disease' (in Wollega)
 'Hemorrhoid'

According to Wollega Oromo, the term, *giiftii* has two meanings. First, it may be the spirit that people consider as a godless and offer sacrifice to pray for their cattle on the

occasion of ritual of *giifii*. Second, it refers to queen. But here they use the concept of the former one. In Wollega, if somebody does not respect carefully the norm of *giftii*, the spirit of *giftii* will punish the violator by the hemorrhoid disease.

(18) *dukkuba kalee* ‘kidney disease’

Kidney is a pair of organ in the abdominal cavity while kidney disease refers to the damaged kidney which cannot filter urine. The pain of this disease is serious; Bale Oromo do not call even its name and euphemize as follow:

(50)

a. *sabbata Waak’a-a*

girdle God-GEN

‘Lit. God’s girdle or rainbow.’

‘Kidney disease’ (in Bale)

b. *ibee kalee* ‘kidney disease’ (in Hararghe and Wollega)

(19) *Abbaa sangaa* ‘anthrax’

It is a serious bacteria disease which mostly infects domestic animals like cattle, sheep typically affecting the skin and lungs and able to be transmitted to humans through contact with infected animals and through consumption of meat of infected domestic animals. Even when it kills animals, their dead body should be buried deep in soil; because if someone suddenly steps on, the disease can be transmitted to the person; due to this, people immediately burn the dead body of the animal in fire. It causes skin ulcer and kill an infected person within a short period of time. Due to these effects, the Oromo societies of the research areas fear to utter it in front of the cattle and prefer to use the euphemistic expressions as below:

(51)

a. *ukkuba abbaa gooba-a*

disease father oxbow-GEN

‘Lit. oxbow disease.’

‘Anthrax’ (in Bale)

- b. *waan looni-i*
 thing cattle-GEN
 ‘Lit. something of the cattle.’
 ‘Anthrax’ (in Hararghe)

- c. *c’ita* ‘spontaneous and instant death’ (in Wollega)

Bale Oromo use the metaphoric expression in (51a) to refer to the symptom that disease creates up on the infected animal which resembles oxbow. Hararghe Oromo express through abstract euphemism strategy in (48b). Similarly, Wollega Oromo use the expression in (48c) to express spontaneous and instant death of the cattle or humanbeing by the disease.

(20) *Gollobaa* ‘typhus’

It is one of several similar diseases, characterized by high recurrent fever, caused by rickettsiae bacteria. It kills large number of animals overnight. Regarding this, there is a proverb known among Wollega Oromo, *sii uggum yaa gollobaa, anaafoo rafuun ni dorroba inni gur?uu soddomaa* which literally mean ‘I do not care of you thypus, that you have killed my animals, for me, the cabbage which has thiry thick green is coming’. They euphemize it as:

(52)

- a. *ukkuba abbaa gooba-a*
 disease father oxbow-GEN
 ‘Lit. oxbow disease.’
 ‘Typhus’ (in Bale) –which is similar with the euphemistic expression given in (51a) for anthrax.

- b. *waan loonii* ‘cattle’s thing (in Hararghe) same with (51b)

- c. *waan jabbii*
 thing calf:GEN
 ‘Lit. something of the calf.’
 ‘Typhus.’ (in Wollega).

3.4. Taboo and Euphemism Expressions Related to Woman

The Oromo have been living and are still living respecting one another. They are always concerned about the wellbeing of the whole social structures of their society including children, youth, elderly people, men and women without exclusion. In Oromo culture these social group possess their own respective norms that the whole society should respect. If someone fails to respect the norms, he/she will be blamed. In this section, taboos related to woman will be dealt with in detail. Taboo expressions attached with woman among the Bale, Hararge and Wollega Oromo are analyzed here-under.

3.4.1. Taboos related to the word *dubartii* ‘woman’

Oromo society of the research areas consider words or expressions that correspond to *dubartii* ‘woman’ as taboo when used improperly. In day to day discourse, there are many connotative meanings related to the word *dubartii* ‘woman’ which creates a sort of confusion and becomes taboo out of the appropriate context. The followings are typical ones:

As I have understood from the group discussion, calling a girl *dubartii* is taboo in Oromo culture. Although the word *dubartii* denotes feminine, it also has the following implied connotative meanings which are taboo:

- ❖ One who is already married; so, if somebody calls an Oromo girl *dubartii*, she will be offended and be hurried to quarrel
- ❖ One who does not have virginity

Therefore, instead of calling a girl *dubartii*, Oromo have alternative terms in (53) that are commonly used in the place of the taboo word.

(53)

- a. *durba* ‘girl’ (in Bale)
- b. *šamarree* ‘girl’ (in Bale)
- c. *dubra* ‘girl’ (in Hararghe)
- d. *muc’ayyoo* ‘girl’ (in Hararghe)
- e. *durba k’arree* ‘virginity girl’ (in Wollega)

- f. *durba duudaa* ‘untouched or who has never had sex (in Wollega)
- g. *muc’ayyoo* ‘little girl’ (in Wollega)

The point that we have to understand is the term *dubartii* ‘woman’ is not absolutely taboo except calling a girl as *dubartii*. However, informally people use the term to refer to feminine. So, the expressions in (53a-g) literally refer to the female or woman. When we address these expressions, we get acceptance in the Oromo societies of the research areas.

For example, the metaphoric expressions in (53e-f) clearly indicate that a girl who has virginity, unmarried and has never had any sexual contact. Even if the literal meaning of the metaphoric expression *durba duuda* is ‘a deaf girl’ but here it means a girl who has never had sexual intercourse with anyone yet. This means, her virginity is kept safe – it is as it was created, or she has taken care of her virginity. Similarly, in Hararghe, the expression in (53d) refers to just a ‘girl’ while the same term in (53g) in Wollega refers to a girl who is under aged for marriage and sexual relationship.

Besides, there are another alternative words in (54a-d) related to *dubartii* that can distort the meaning when used instead of the terms given in (53a-g).

(54)

- a. *intala*
- b. *altuu*
- c. *beera*
- d. *na oo*

Sometimes people call girl by the terms in (54a-d) without considering the connotative meaning they have simply to express feminine, but it is can thought as violating her girlhood right. The connotation meanings of these words are explained one by one as follows:

The expressions in (54) have different concepts among the research areas. For instance, among Bale Oromo, the word in (54a) refers to the aimless girl who wonders here and there as *ossoofattuu* ‘prostitute’. Also, in Bale, expressions in (54c & d) refer to a woman who is married and sometimes refer to a girl who lost her virginity before marriage. Due to this, calling a girl with such name may be considered as denying her

virginity. Similarly, in Hararghe Oromo, the word in (54c) implies woman who is married whereas in Wollega it refers to *jaartii* ‘old woman’. On the other hand, in Wollega the word in (54a) indicates that a girl who has brought up in somebody’s house and serves as a servant. Due to these reasons, girls are very disappointed and bitterly respond to such taboo expressions using their own responses. For example, in wollega, when somebody calls a virgin girl *intalaa*, she responds him/her off *ittani k’uuk’aa bar šanii* ‘be expel five years grievance’.

From aforementioned expressions, we can understand that if we call a girl erroneously or knowingly by words in (54a-d), we transgress the norm of the society, and the girls who are addressed this way will be offended; because it contradicts the cultural and social norms of the society. On the other hand, using words in (54a-d) to address girls have no problem and convey acceptable meaning, without confusion, in the right time and context. Contrary to this idea, sometimes we observe when a virgin girl herself and a male scold one another using these words especially during insulting or conflicts.

Moreover, there are words related to the word *dubartii* ‘woman’ and convey negative or taboo meaning. Among these, we are going to see the word *niitii* and *altuu*:

a. *niitii* ‘wife’

The word *niitii* ‘wife’ refers to a woman coupled with her husband. Though the term ‘*niitii*’ is equivalent to the English word ‘wife’, it has negative connotation in the Oromo society’s context. So, the Oromo societies of the research areas replace it with:

(55)

a. *haa a warra-a*
 mother family-GEN
 ‘Mother of the family.’

b. *haa a mana-a*
 mother house-GEN
 ‘Lit. mother of the house.’
 ‘Wife’

If an Oromo woman is called *niitii*, she will consider that she has been degraded. Because of this, an Oromo woman of Bale, Hararghe and Wollega is offended when someone, even her husband, calls her *niitii* ‘wife’ or *niitii abaluu* ‘somebody’s wife’. So, the society preferably calls a legal wife as in (55a-b) or *haa a warraa abaluu* ‘somebody’s wife’. Moreover, husbands have respected name for their wives; they call them by the first born child’s name. For example, if the son is Geme u, they call her as *haa a Gamma uu* ‘Gama u’s mother’.

b. *daltuu*

This word also denotes feminine, but the society understands it negatively. It is perceived as a taboo because they employ the term to identify animals’ gender. Like *hoolaa altuu* ‘ewe’, *harree altuu* ‘female donkey’, etc. Actually, it may refer to feminine as:

- (56) *al-t-uu*
 gives birth-3SF-VN
 ‘Birth giver.’

Inspite of referring to feminine marker, the term *altuu* implies the ability of woman that is only to give birth, or rearing children. Thus, using this word to refer to feminine lacks proper meaning and becomes taboo. Because this meaning denies the roles she plays in the community. In actual context of the Oromo society, there is taboo which is associated with the expression in (56) that people use to express a woman who has recently delivered a baby saying *alte* ‘she gave birth’. However, this expression itself has connotative meaning because the word *alte* is applied to animals. So, for humanbeing it is better to use *deesse* ‘she gave birth’. We will see the detail of this term under section taboo related to deliverance.

3.4.2. Taboos and Euphemism Related to Virginity

In Oromo culture, girls are expected to stay virgin till their marriage. Virginity has acceptance and meaningful to all Oromo society. The Oromo take virginity, or being virgin as a criterion to select girls for marriage. If a girl loses her virginity before marriage, the girl as well as her parents will be ashamed of it and be disrespected in the society. Due to this respect, even the word *durbummaa* ‘virginity’ is not mentioned directly among Oromo society in the research areas and expressed as:

- (57) *mirga durba-a*
right girl-GEN
'Lit. girl's dignity'
'Virginity'.

When we see the semantic interpretation of the metaphoric expressions in (57), in the Oromo society the term *mirga* is homonymy; because it has different meanings in different context of use. For example, *harka mirga ke* 'your right hand', *mirga argate* 'he won', *mirga ala namaa* 'human right', *mirga durbaa* 'girl's dignity' or 'virginity'. According to the informants of the study, the family or other people take care and respect a girl especially due to her virginity. As a result of this, it is considered as her attribute of right and proud. According to elders with whom I conducted group discussion, Hararghe Oromo strictly consider being out of virginity is a shame not only for her parents but also for her local community. From the given interpretation we can understand how much the Oromo society values virginity. For example, among Hararghe Oromo a male adolescent never tries to tease her for sexual intercourse and never touch her with his hands near her sex organ.

Therefore, it is believed that that old people have their own mechanism by which they can detect whether the girl has virginity or not. For instance, in Wollega, they identify by using spin while in Hararghe they check by putting *hiddii* 'special wild fruit' in her sexual organ or old people can easily recognize just by looking with their naked eyes.

As to Bale Oromo, if a girl gets married without virginity, she will be beaten and be torched with iron but they do not send her back to her family's home unlike wollega Oromo, who send her back to her family putting her on a donkey. Furthermore, some other bitter actions, or punishments such as tearing the clothes that she is wearing, make her pour *farso* 'local beer', or ordering her to host guest ... etc will be taken.

If a girl is found to be faithful to her husband and gives her virginity legally for him, there are respectful expressions. For such girl expressions like *durbummaa gattee* 'she lost her virginity and *uramt-e* 'penetrated' are forbidden; instead, the society uses expressions such as:

(58)

- a. *sabbata hiikk-at-t-e*
girdle lose-MD-3SF-PFV
'Lit. she loses her girdle.'
'She became a woman.' (in Bale)
- b. *mirga išii kenn-i-t-e-ef*
right her:GEN give-EP-3SF-PFV-DAT
'Lit. she gave her right'
'She gave her virginity to her husband.' (in Hararghe)
- c. *gulantaa ba²-t-e [baate]*
stage out-3SF-PFV
'Lit. she is promoted to the next stage.'
'She gave her virginity to her husband.' (in Wollega)
- d. *k'arree buuf-at-t-e*
unshaved hair drop-MD-3SF-PFV
'Lit. she no more shave hair of her back head (in Wollega)
'She gave her virginity to her husband.'

The euphemistic expressions given in (58a-d) indicate the reverence the societies of Oromo have for girls. For example, the expression in (58a) refers to a special girdle that a virginity girl ties round her waist which is different from the girdle that a married woman ties. This girdle helps as a belt to tie her body as well to symbolize her virginity. She will never tie this girdle until she gets married. Therefore, the euphemistic expression given in (58a) refers to being faithful to her husband; because the girl takes care of her virginity until their wedding day when she gives it to her husband. As already explained in (57) the expression in (58b) refers to the precious thing the girl gives her husband. The literal meaning of the metaphoric expression in (58c) shows being promoted to the next step or rank of something. But in this context, it refers to the virginity given for a husband during intercourse at proper time and place or it refers to as she has obeyed and fulfilled what the society and her husband expected of her. Similarly, the metaphoric expression in (58d) *k'arree* refers to the hair which she never shaves until she is engaged. She does not

refrain to shave all her hair; it is only the back part of her head which associated with her virginity. So, when we say *k'arree buufatte* it shows the tension she had towards her virginity before and that she has currently dropped the tension of its disappearance by others by giving her verginity to her husband.

According to the informants, in spite of the fact that the prevalent Oromo culture the new generation seems to put aside these societal norms and has begun to follow modernization. Consequently, the informants pointed out that due to this disrespect of the societal norm, they are some observed conflicts during the marriage.

To show whether the newly married girl is virgin, or not, there is a sign that is used in the Oromo society. That is, if she does not have virginity, they will break bread in the center and make it open and and show it to people, or send it to her parents. On the other hand, if she is virgin, they will leave it normal. If she is virgin, thereafter she will be loved and respected not only by her husband but also among his parent.

However, Oromo people of the study areas use the metaphoric taboo expressions in (59) without euphemizing them for a girl who has lost her virginity before marriage in inappropriate place and time usually giving it to her boyfriend.

(59)

- a. *konkaa* 'empty' (in Bale)
- b. *fafee* 'unabashed' (in Hararghe)
- c. *uraa* 'open'(in Wollega)
- d. *na een* 'woman' (in Wollega)

All of these words are offensive words. For example, people use the word in (59a) to refer to empty thing; so they consider the girl as incomplete. Additionally, the word *fafee* in (59b) refers to the woman who does not care about society's norm or shameless. Similarly, Wollega Oromo use the word in (59c) to refer to open thing. The term *banaa* 'open' is an antonymy of the word *duudaa* 'close' which they use to refer to a virginity as in (53f). Here the open thing is not something else; but it is her virginity which she lost before marriage.

As it is already said, in Oromo culture, performing sexual intercourse before marriage is forbidden, but kissing is permitted; the reason behind this permission is to make caution for virginity through enjoying love via kissing. This *ungii* ‘kissing’ has respect even saying *ungatte* ‘she kissed’ also seen as a taboo. Even if the expression is not taboo by itself, it becomes taboo for the sake of respect; instead, the Oromo people of the research areas use the following alternative expressions.

(60)

a. *jaall-at-t-e*

love-BEN-3FS-PFV

‘Lit. she loved’

‘Kissed’ (in Bale)

b. *goolii ak'-t'-e*

play go-3SF-PFV

‘Lit. she went to play’

‘She went to kiss.’ (in Hararghe)

c. *hammat-t-e*

hug-3SF-PFV

‘Lit. she hugged.’

‘Kissed’ (in Hararghe)

d. *k'abdoo teess-e*

friend sit-3SF:PFV

‘Lit. she sat down with her friend for kissing’ (in Wollega)

In Wollega Oromo context, when a girl sits with her boyfriend for kissing, her friends look after her at a short distance, and they carry a stick with them. This is because if the boy strives to do any harm to her virginity, she cries for help and they will defend her. Even if they beat him severely, culturally the boy never attacks them to defend himself. If he did that, it would be considered as he violates the social norm.

In the case of Hararghe Oromo, the boyfriend takes from her parent’s home, plays *šaggooyye* ‘special peer group’s dance’ with the girl and returns her himself respectfully

to her parents. He never tries to have sex with her. As one informant¹⁵, from Hararghe explained, “If the boyfriend sees her with another boy, he will attack, even he kills him. Whether her boyfriend marries or does not marry her, no adolescent will touch her unless she stops her relationship with him”.

3.4.3. Taboos and Euphemism Related to Pregnancy

In the Oromo society, a pregnant woman has a high reverence. In everywhere while she walks along the street and in market areas, everybody respects her. If they do not do this, it will be considered as failing to respect the norm of the society. According to the informants, people respect the pregnant woman thinking or believing that the fetus she carries may be wise or brilliant enough to govern the country. In the Oromo society of the research areas, many things related to pregnant women are considered as taboo. Even directly describing her pregnancy, delivery and labour are taboos. So, they use various euphemistic expressions instead of the term, *ulfa* ‘pregnancy’. For example, Oromo of Bale express as:

(61)

a. *k’uufa k’ab-t-i* [*k’abdi*]

full:VN have-3SF-IPFV

‘Lit. she is full.’

‘She is pregnant.’

b. *mataa lama*

head two

‘Lit. two heads.’

‘She is pregnant.’

c. *labbuu lama*

soul two

‘Lit. two souls.’

‘She is pregnant.’

¹⁵ Mr. Mumme Mohammed

- d. *garaa-tii k'ab-t-i [k'abdi]*
 belly-LOC have-3SF-IPFV
 'Lit. she has something in stomach.'
 'She is pregnant.'

The above substituted expressions have their own implication. People use the metaphoric expression in (61a) associating it with a full woman who ate much food that makes her belly bulge. But here, what is bulged her belly is not much food; but for the fetus inside her belly. Interchangeably, Bale Oromo also use the expression in (61b-c) which is metonymic; because here *mataa* and *lubbuu* represent two human beings (mother and fetus). She carries both her own head and soul of the fetus in her womb. Not only this, the semantic extension of the metonymic expression *mataa* 'head' implies different things. As we know, head is an important body part which controls the whole body part. Similarly, mother is also the head of the family; because she cares for everything in her family. Besides, like humans without soul it is dead, a family without mother is also nothing for anything. Therefore, it is to express that this society uses the two expressions in (61b-c). Similarly, they use the literal meaning of the expression given in (61d) to refer to something inside her belly. This is also metonymic strategy of euphemism because like a container of something it substitutes for the thing contained, her belly also contained the fetus. For example, if we take the terms *kettle* (the water in the kettle) is boiling or he drank *the cup* (the coffee, the tea, etc. in the cup), they express metonymy.

Hararghe Oromo use as:

(62)

- a. *da abbii k'ab-t-i [k'abdi]*
 exhaustion have-3SF-IPFV
 'Lit. she is exhausted.'
 'She is pregnant.'
- b. *garaa-tii k'ab-t-i [k'abdi]*
 belly-LOC have-3SF-IPFV
 'Lit. she has something in her belly.'
 'She is pregnant.'

- c. *itti tey-si*
 at sit-3SF:IPFV
 ‘Lit. she sits by it.’
 ‘She is pregnant.’
- d. *waan joollee-tu itti jir-a*
 thing child-FOC at exist-IPFV
 ‘Lit. she is concerned about a baby.’
 ‘She is pregnant.’

Similarly, Wollega Oromo use the expressions:

(63)

- a. *da abbii k’ab-t-i* [*k’abdi*]
 exhaustion have-3SF-IPFV
 ‘Lit. she is exhausted.’
 ‘She is pregnant.’
- b. *garaa-tti baat-t-i*
 belly-LOC carry-3SF-IPFV
 ‘She carries a baby in her womb.’

Besides, if she conceives for the first time, the people of the research areas would preferably use the expression in (64) and the expression in (66a-b) in common instead of the word *ulfa*:

(64)

- a. *garaa-tu taaʔ-e*
 belly-FOC sit-PFV
 ‘lit. her belly is sat.’
 ‘She conceived.’ (Bale)
- b. *garaa-tti haf-e*
 belly-LOC remain-PFV
 ‘lit. remain in belly.’
 ‘She conceived.’ (Bale, Hararghe and Wollega)

The metaphoric expression given in (62a) and (63a) which Oromo of Hararghe and Wollega use in common to refer to the tiredness which is one feature that pregnancy entails, but it is literally used to describe somebody who is exhausted because of working hard, or walking long distance. Similarly, the literal meaning in (62c) *itti tey-si* used by Hararghe Oromo shows a pregnant woman who does not participate in work as usual and spends most of her time sitting. The two metonymic expressions in (62b) and (63b) express something which she is carried in her belly or conceived for the first time and which is about to be given birth.

The expression in (64a) indicates that the woman's menstruation which is restrained to be discharged and remained inside. In this context, when somebody says *garaa-tti baat-ti* 'she carries in her womb' it is different from what she carries on hand, on head and on her shoulder. This is clearly expressing the baby she carries in her womb.

3.4.4. Taboo and Euphemism Related to Delivery

There are also expressions which are taken as taboos while and after delivery. Hence, these taboo words and their euphemistic expressions are presented.

3.4.4.1. Taboos and euphemism related to *c'iniinsuu* 'labour'

There are forbidden actions which are considered as taboo if performed in front of a woman who has already in labour. For instance, any man including her husband should not stand in front of her wearing his belt after the woman started to labour. It is believed that when he stands in front of her tying his belt, the labour will become very hard to her. Perhaps, if conditions compel him to stay with her, he has to untie his belt. It is assumed that as soon as he unties his belt, the pain of the labour will be minimized for her. Similarly, other women also never fasten their waist with girdle in front of the woman when she starts to labour. If they do not respect this norm, the society believes that the labour will be serious to her.

As one of my interviewee¹⁶ from Wollega around Horro Guduru, explains, "To reduce the pain of the woman, the society makes coffee and boils it in front of her, when she sees

¹⁶ Olani Tu o

this action, a baby will hurry to come out”. Here it is better to understand that there is no verbal taboo regarding labour, rather the action taboo.

3.4.4.2. Taboo and Euphemism Related to the word *dalte* ‘delivered’

On the other hand, after a pregnant woman has given birth, it is a taboo to describe her using the word *alte* ‘she born a baby’. As it was explained under the discussion in (56), the word often works to express the delivery of wild or domestic animals, not for a human being. So, the Oromo societies of the research areas use euphemistic expressions as the ones below. Bale Oromo use as:

(65)

- a. *deess-e*
deliver-3SF:PFV
‘She gave birth.’
- b. *hiik-am-t-e*
untie-PASS-3SF-PFV
‘Lit. she got relieved .’
‘She gave birth.’
- c. *ofkal-t-e*
survive-3SF-PFV
‘Lit. she is survived.’
‘She gave birth.’
- d. *miil-li(ti) wal-k’it’t-’aat-e*
leg-NOM RCP-equal-VBZR-PFV
‘lit. her legs has been equal.’
‘She gave birth.’

The Hararghe Oromo express as:

(66)

- a. *deess-e* ‘she gave birth.’
- b. *hiik-am-te* ‘she gave birth.’

- c. *adda baa-t-e*
 separate out-3SF-PFV
 ‘Lit. she is separated.’
 ‘She gave birth.’

Similarly, Wollega Oromo express as:

(67)

- a. *deess-e* ‘she gave birth.’
 b. *hiik-am-te* ‘she gave birth’
 c. *ofkal-t-e* ‘she gave birth.’
 d. *milli wal-k’it’t’aa-t-e* ‘her legs has been equal.’
 e. *lama taa-t-e*
 two be-3SF-PFV
 ‘lit. she became two.’
 ‘She gave birth.’

The Oromo people of the research areas use the expressions in (65a-b), (66a-b) and (67ab) in common to express the mother who gave birth. They use the metaphoric expression *hiik-am-t-e* to imply that a pregnant woman is restricted to do something what she wants; because she cannot take drinks of her interest, cannot run as she needs so, it is considered as she has been imprisoned during her pregnancy. Because of this, when she gets relief from this ‘imprisonment’, the people express saying her *hiik-am-t-e* which means she gave birth. Similarly, Bale and Wollega Oromo use the expression in (65c) and (67c), to refer to woman as she survived from all the labour that encounters a pregnant woman during the delivery. In the past, when a woman delivers at home there is no treatment of midwife; due to this, many women have been died on delivery. As a result, when a pregnant woman peacefully bears a child, the Oromo societies in the research areas use this expression. The expression given in (66c) which is used by Oromo of Hararghe refers to the separation of the mother and a baby through deliverance. Oromo of Bale and Wollega use the metonymic expression in (65d) and (67d) to refer to the freedom of sitting and walking that a woman gets after she delivers a baby; because when she sits, she cannot sit properly during pregnancy like the other time; she always leaves

her legs open out. There are also expressions which go with the above expressions which are of course used to congratulate a mother for the deliverance of a new baby.

3.4.4.3. Expressions of Congratulating a Delivered Woman

A woman who has recently given birth is always congratulated by nearby and distant relatives. For this occasion, the Oromo societies of the research areas use the following expressions to express their happiness to the woman. Oromo of Bale express this as:

(68)

- a. *ulumaa leenc'a-a c'iis-i*
rest lionness-GEN sleep-IMPR
'Have a good sleep, just like that of a lionness.'
- b. *baga hiik-am-t-e*
how lovely untie-PASS-2SF-PFV
'How lively you have a baby.'
- c. *baga miil-li(ti) kee wal k'it't'-aat-e*
how lovely leg-NOM 2S:POSS RCP equal-VBZR-PFV
'How lively you have a baby.'
- d. *dabal-e-e sii-f haa kenn-u*
add-3SM-CONV you-DAT let give-3SM:JUS
'May He give you more!'
- e. *gurra sii-f haa c'iniin-t-u*
ear you-DAT let bite-3SF-JUS
'May she bite your ear.' (wishing a baby to grow)

According to the information from the informants, when we look at the meaning of the metaphoric expression in (68a), they use it to refer to a lioness that gave birth to a cub never shows strange behavior which is different from her usual feeling of tiredness. Similarly, they wish the mother peaceful baby and with no exhaustion, or pain. In addition to this, as it is explained before, Bale Oromo use the expression (68b) to express the relief of the woman after she gives birth. The expression in (68e) again refers to the

wish for the growth of the new baby. In Oromo society, when people want to check the height of somebody (usually the young), adults make the person to bite the ear of someone else. Similarly, Oromo of Hararaghe use as:

(69)

- a. *ulumaa leenc'a-a c'iis-i* 'have a good sleep, just like that of a lioness.'
- b. *baga hiik-am-t-e* 'how lovely you have a baby'
- c. *baga miil-li kee wal k'it't'-aat-e* 'how lovely you have a baby'

Due to the gloss and semantic interpretation of the expressions in (69a-c) is given in (68), I did not repeat them here.

Oromo of Wollega use expressions:

(70)

- a. *ulumaa leenc'a-a c'iis-i* 'have a good sleep, just like that of a lioness.'
- b. *baga hiik-am-t-e* 'how lovely you have a baby.'
- c. *baga miil-li kee wal k'it't'-aat-e* 'how lovely you have a baby.'

- d. *siree cab-s-i-i kaʔ-i*
 bed break-CAUS-IMPR-CONV stand-IMPR
 'Lit. break the bed and get up.'
 'Be fat'.

- e. *yeebboo iit-i-i kaʔ-i*
 wall kick-IMPR-CONV stand-IMPR
 'Lit. get up kicking the wall.'
 'Be strong.'

- f. *dugd-i kee haa jaba-at-u*
 back-NOM 2S:POSS let strong-BEN- IMPR
 'May your back be strong.'

- g. *muc'aa-n haa gudd-at-t-u*
 baby-NOM let grow-MD-3SF-JUS
 'May God grow the baby.'

The expressions in (70a-c) have been explained before; so, the expression in (70d) has the implication to mean be fat until the bed unable to carry you. On the other hand, they use the expression in (70e) to say be strong enough until to kick and break the wall of the house. In most cases while and after delivery the woman's back will be delicate. When a woman gets delivery, her family, neighbor or distant relatives treat her giving different cultural food which makes her strong and compensate the energy she has lost. As a result of this, she will gradually be fat or strong enough. To express this, society uses the expressions in (70d-e). However, most of the time, a woman who delivered baby may face the problem of back weakness; due to this case, they use the expression in (70f) to describe the wish they have for her to have a strong back. Besides, the expression in (70g) expresses the uncertainty about the growth of a baby until it reaches some age level. Therefore, to encourage the mother of the baby, or to make her free from this doubt, they use the expression in (70g). It may also show some sort of blessing that gives hope for the baby will grow up.

3.4.4.4. Taboos and euphemism related to barren, abortion and miscarriage

The following are the other expressions related to a woman the society considers as taboo and their euphemism.

(a) *maseena* 'barren'

Speaking the word *maseena* 'barren' in front of the barren woman is forbidden; because the word is a derogatory; so instead of *maseena* the Oromo people express a barren woman indirectly as:

(71)

a. *ab-t-uu* [*abduu*]

lose-3SF-VN

'Infertile woman.'

b. *haa a ebalu*

mother somebody

'Mother of somebody' (Hararghe and Wollega).

- c. *ala kan Rabbi ork-e*
 child REL God deprive-PFV
 ‘Someone whom God deprived a baby’ (in Bale).

Sometimes people fear mentioning the word *maseena* ‘barren’ to the fear of being barren. Because they believe that if the woman is offended due to this informal expression and she cries, God will revenge the offender by making barren. Due to this, people refrain from calling her *maseena* ‘barren’ and prefer to use the euphemistic expressions given in (71a-c). The expression in (71a) is a polite word than *maseena* ‘barren’, because the the expression does not only refer to barren, but also people use this word to poor people. So, people prefer to call her by this expression considering it as a less taboo. In Oromo culture, child adoption is a common practice. Especially, a woman who is unable to give birth can adopt a child via this practice and she makes that child her own and forget her pain of being childless, and people call her by adopted child’s proper name as in (71b). For example, if the name of the adopted child is *Abdi*, they call her *haa a Abdii* ‘Abdi’s mother’ (in Hararge and Wellega). Similarly, Bale Oromo express as in (71c); however, still speaking this expression in front of her is taboo. Because, the expression shows that God prevented her to give birth. Hence God knows everything no one blames Him for what He does. When she thinks as such, she feels relief considering that the problem is not from her but from God. From this expression, we can also understand that the one who gives a baby to a woman is only God. According to the informants, the other reason that makes the word *maseena* a serious taboo is, the socitey associate the term with *gaangee* ‘mule’; because, mule cannot give offspring.

(b) Abortion

Aborting is a taboo in Oromo society. In Wollega Oromo let alone aborting, ejaculating sperm outside of the vagina is considered as taboo. According to one of my interviewee¹⁷ from Wollega Oromo (Horro Guduru), if the husband’s sperm is abruptly ejaculated outside the wife’s genital organ, she should pick it up and put it into her own sexual organ; if she fails to do so, it is taboo for her. If they are concerned this much for sperm, it is easy to understand how much they hate terminating pregnancy. Whatever it is, in

¹⁷ Olani Tu o

communication people do not utter *ulfa ofirraa baste* ‘she aborted pregnancy’ publicly they are expected to make it a little bit abstract as expression in (72).

- (72) *of-irra-a* *baa-s-t-e*
 self-LOC-ABL remove-CAUS-3SF-PFV
 ‘Lit. she removed out from herself.’
 ‘She aborted pregnancy’

As we can see from the expression in (72), they avoid the word *ulfa* ‘pregnancy’. When the word is omitted, it does not specifically refer to what she has removed out. However, people know what she has done it. The expression may acquire a new sense without losing its original meaning since the same word may have a set of different meanings. For example, *gatii ofirraa baaste* ‘she paid the debt on her’, *kop’ee ofirraa baaste* ‘she put off her shoes’, *uffata ofirraa baaste* ‘she took off her cloth’, *ulfa ofirraa baaste* ‘she aborted the pregnancy’, etc.

(c) Miscarriage

Miscarriage is the spontaneous expulsion of fetus before it is able to survive independently. The action is not a taboo by itself, but the way people express determines its tabooess. If they express *gatatte* which means ‘miscarriage’, it will create disappointment; because, it is inappropriate for humanbeing but for animals. Therefore, they replace it by the expression in (73) which is more an abstract.

- (73) *irra-a* *baʔ-e*
 LOC-ABL out-3SF: PFV
 ‘Lit. out from her.’
 ‘Miscarriaged.’

3.4.5. Taboo and Euphemism Related to Menstruation

There are taboos related to woman’s monthly menstrual cycle which is called *laguu dubartii* in Afaan Oromoo that is common among Bale, Hararge and Wellaga Oromo. People have different attitudes towards this menstrual cycle. This attitude is attributed to the cultural and religious attitudes of the people towards menstruation. While a woman is in her menstruation period, culturally people do not have good attitudes towards her; they consider her as impure. Because of this, she is prevented from doing some activities though menstruation is natural. But due to the cultural influence, they take care of

mentioning the word *laguu* ‘menstruation’ considering it as taboo. Therefore, they substitute to call it in indirect ways. If a woman is in her menstruation period, it is not expressed as *iigaa jirti* ‘she is bleeding’. Hereafter, based on the outlook and belief of the Oromo society of the research areas, some polite expressions are used to replace the the word *laguu* ‘menstruation’ as follows. Oromo of Bale use the expressions:

(74)

- a. *dugda irra jir-t-i*
back LOC exist-3SF-IPFV
‘Lit. she is on back.’
‘Menstruation.’
- b. *ayidii*¹⁸ *k’ab-t-i [k’abdi]*
menstruation have-3SF-IPFV
‘She has menstruation.’
- c. *geet-tuu- a*
matured-3SF-COP
‘Lit. she is matured.’
‘She reached to menstruate.’
- d. *garaa-tu irra jir-a*
stomach-FOC LOC exist-IPFV
‘Lit. the stomach is on her.’
‘She has begun to menstruate.’
- e. *daraaraa baatii:GEN*
flower month
‘lit. monthly flower.’
‘Menstruation.’

The synecdochic expression in (74a) associated with the severe pain that a woman feels on her back during her menstrual period. To refer to the pain she feels on her back, people associate the name to the back. Bale Oromo interchangeably use the word in (74b)

¹⁸ *ayidii* a borrowed word from an Arabic *hayd* which means ‘menses, menstruation’.

which is a borrowed term from Arabic and used by Muslim Oromos to diminish the tabooess of menstruation. When they used this borrowed word, they do not feel guilty though they use its direct name. The expression in (74c) is derived from the verb *gaʔuu* ‘mature’; the derived word *geettuu* refers to a girl who is ready to marry; because they believe a girl who started to menstruate is approaching for marriage relationship or a girl aged to see her menstruation able to give birth. The expression in (74d) is given by associating the bellyache which is one of the symptoms that women feel during menstruation. Finally, the metaphoric expression in (74e) is the direct translation of Amharic word *yewerabeba* which is semantic borrowing (calque). Bale Oromo use this expression to reduce the shame that the direct word enhances.

Similarly, Oromo of Hararghe use the following expressions:

(75)

- a. *sunnii*¹⁹ *k’ab-t-i* [*k’abdi*]
 menstruation have-3SF-PFV
 ‘She is on menstruation.’
- b. *daraaraa* *baatii* *irra* *jir-t-i*
 flower month:GEN LOC exist-3SF-IPFV
 ‘She is on monthly flower.’
- c. *laguu* *k’ab-t-i* [*k’abdi*]
 taboo have-3F-IPFV
 ‘Lit. she has taboo.’
 ‘She is on menstruation.’
- d. *tirika* *diimaa* *if-s-i-t-e* [*ibsite*]
 flashlight red light-CAUS-EP-3SF-PFV
 ‘Lit. she is lightning the red flashlight.’
 ‘She is on menstruation.’

The expression in (75c) refers to something which is forbidden to do or speak; but here it refers to menstruation which people prohibit to call even its name. On the other hand,

¹⁹*sunnii* is an Arabic borrowed word which means ‘menstruation’.

laguu can be used to mean ‘fast’ because like someone on fasting restrain from food and water, a menstruate woman also abstain from doing many activities including sexual intercourse. Similarly, as one of my interviewee²⁰, from Hararghe, Awaday said, “the metaphoric expression in (75d) shows the similarity of the traffic red light which symbolizes ‘stop’ likewise, a woman should stop sexual intercourse as soon as she sees it.” However, this expression is informally used by intimate friends as slang. Wollega Oromo use the following expressions:

(76)

- a. *laguu k’ab-t-i [k’abdi]*
 taboo have-3SF-IPFV
 ‘Lit. she has taboo.’
 ‘She is on menstruation.’
- b. *t’urii irra jir-t-i*
 dirty LOC there-3SF-PFV
 ‘Lit. she is on dirty.’
 ‘She is on menstruation.’
- c. *adafii k’ab-t-i [k’abdi]*
 menstruation have-3SF-IPFV
 ‘She is on menstruation.’
- d. *garaa-tu ukkub-a*
 stomach-FOC ill-3SF:COP
 ‘Lit. she has stomachache.’
 ‘She is on menstruation.’

Wollega Oromo use the metaphoric expression in (76b-c) to express ‘uncleanness’ of the woman during menstruation. The term *adafii* may here been borrowed from the Amharic term, *adef* ‘menstruation’ which has been possibly drived from *idif* which mean ‘dirt’. Interchangeably, they use the expression in (76d) to express the stomachache that the menstrual woman feels during her period.

²⁰ Naima Husen

3.5. Taboo and Euphemism Related to Sexual Organs and Sexuality

This section is devoted to euphemisms for taboo words or expressions in Oromo of the study areas that related to matters of sexual organs and sexuality. According to the informants, sex and sexuality are the strongest and most popular taboo in Oromo society. As Pinker (2007) cited in Njoroge (2014:21) argues, there are several reasons why sex is tabooed, even today. One partner might see the act as the beginning of a lifelong relationship, the other, as a night duty. One may infect the other with a disease. A baby may have been conceived whose welfare is not planned for the heat of passion.

The Oromo people are the largest ethnic group in Ethiopia; likewise cultural and dialectical variation are there in the society, there are also various expressions that people use to express sexual organ and sexuality. In the different zones of Oromia, different expressions are used regarding the names of sexual organs and their functions. Words or expressions which are polite and acceptable in one zone may be taboo and shameful or impolite in another zone. Therefore, in Oromo society, there is a restriction of mentioning the direct expressions concerning sexual organ and sexuality. Therefore, the Oromo society use euphemisms for taboo words related to these issues to avoid offending the most hypercritical segments of the society. In the Oromo society many names are given for sexual organ; this may show that how much the terms related to sexual organs are taboo, and people skip from calling the taboo one and replace it to avoid loss of face of someone.

In the following the name of sexual organs and their corresponding euphemisms used by the Oromo of the research areas discussed with the semantic and lexical processes used to euphemize taboo expressions. Besides, taboo words which have semantic extension between the research areas are explained within their contextual meaning. Finally, insulting expressions related to sexual organs and sexualities are discussed in detail.

3.5.1. Taboos and Euphemisms Related to Male Sexual Organ

Due to sensitivity of the genital organ being described, speakers resort to use of euphemistic expressions for it. When euphemistic expressions are used instead of sexual organ names, the accurate information which is supposed to be conveyed may be lost. So, euphemistic expressions tend to sacrifice precision in meaning to get acceptance in the

society. In this case, the speaker must be polite to save his/her face and that of the listeners. Bale Oromo prefer to replace male sexual organ as in Table 1.

Table 1: Male sexual organ taboo names and its euphemistic expressions in Bale

General taboo names	English translation	Euphemistic expressions
<i>tuffee</i> (for child) <i>k'unt'urroo</i> <i>k'unbaa</i> <i>wašalaa</i> (uncircumcised) <i>soodallaa</i> <i>kolaa</i> <i>k'olofa</i> <i>mit'irii</i> <i>yuuyyuu</i> (for child) <i>labooba</i> <i>bukkee</i> <i>tusee</i>	Penis	(77) a. <i>k'aama hormaata iira-a</i> organ reproductive male-GEN 'Male reproductive organ.' b. <i>abbaa ilma-a</i> father son-GEN 'Lit. owner of the son/father of the son.' 'Male sexual organ.' c. <i>abbaa Husen</i> father Husen 'Lit. Husen's father.' 'Male sexual organ.'(informal) d. <i>Maammoo</i> or <i>Wark'uu</i> (informal) e. <i>eegee</i> 'lit. tail' which means 'penis'

As we can observe from Table 1 above, Bale Oromo interchangeably use the metaphoric expression in (77a), which is also used by Hararghe and Wollega Oromo. This expression refers to the function of this sexual organ which reproduce a new baby; the term *horuu* means 'reproduce' and consequently people derived the word *hormaata* 'reproductive' from *horuu*, because after male's sperm is ejaculated, it is developed to a new baby. In this process the agent that distributes a seed into vagina is penis. Therefore, the society uses both the male and female sexual organs as devices that process the reproduction system. Similarly, the metaphoric expression in (77b) has been driven from the source domain of euphemism *abbaa* 'father' because *abbaa* has relation to his natural child. So, the expression (77b) has the relationship with the expression explained in (77a); because this expression refers to the outcome of the sexual intercourse which is a child. However, a prototype meaning of *abba ilmaa* is 'father of a son' while the second meaning is sexual intercourse which is copied from the primary meaning. Here, *abbaa ilmaa* also

seems the circumlocution expression because the father is explained in a round way. According to respondents' explanation, offspring is impossible without male seed; so they associate the sperm (seed) with father. The thing that makes someone the father of a son is not being a male but the seed which produces a child. Similarly, Bale Oromo sometimes use the expressions in (77c-d) which represent male sexual organ in addition to formally representing the masculine proper name. These informal expressions are especially used by male youth group. When somebody uses these names, others easily understand what the person wants to say differently from the usual implication depending on the context of their conversation. The metaphoric expression in (77e) refers to the shape of the organ which is to some extent similar to tail of animal; however, it is informal which we do not use in polite company. In the following sections, we look at the euphemistic expressions given by Hararghe Oromos.

Table 2: Shows male sexual organ taboo names and its euphemistic expressions in Hararghe.

General taboo names	English translation	Euphemistic expressions
<i>k'unt'urroo</i> <i>tuušoo</i> (for <i>child</i>) <i>mandaala</i> <i>jamalii</i> (for male <i>child</i>) <i>tuttuk'aa</i>	Penis	(78) a. <i>k'aama hormaata iiraa</i> 'males reproductive organ' b. <i>sadee-n</i> the three-3PL 'Lit. the three's.' 'The two testicles & penis.' c. <i>meešaa</i> 'lit. instrument' which means 'penis'

The literal meaning of the abstract expression in (78b) refers to something which is three in number but in this context it refers to the two oval organs (testicles) and penis. Here the referent of testicles is totally included in the referent of another word (penis). Similarly, the literal metaphorical expression in (78c) refers to a tool which people use to work something by it. But in this context, they use to refer to the function of penis during sexual intercourse. Besides, sometimes people use the term *meešaa* to refer to 'gun'

which they use to shoot their enemies. Similarly, the expression shows what a male organ does towards the vagina.

Similarly, Wollega Oromo use euphemistic expression to avoid the tabooed names of male sexual organ.

Table 3: Male sexual Organ taboo names and its euphemistic expressions in Wollega Oromo

General taboo names	English translation	Euphemistic expressions
<p><i>k'uunt'ee</i> <i>wašalaa(uncircumsed)</i> <i>seeruu</i> <i>geeba</i> <i>saallii</i> <i>rarroo</i> <i>k'ut'usee(for child)</i> <i>joojoo(for child)</i> <i>bantii</i></p>	<p>Penis</p>	<p>(79)</p> <p>a. <i>k'aama hormaata iiraa</i> 'male reproductive organ'</p> <p>b. <i>jall-aa</i> not straight-ADJ 'Lit. not straight' 'penis'</p> <p>c. <i>ak'na isa-a</i> body he-GEN 'lit. his body.' 'Penis'</p> <p>d. <i>k'ullaa isa-a</i> naked body he-GEN 'lit. his naked body.' 'Penis.'</p> <p>e. <i>k'odaa isa-a</i> materil he-GEN 'Lit. his material.' 'Penis.'</p>

As we have seen in the Table 3, Wollega Oromo use the metaphoric expression in (79b) to refer to the shape of a male organ; because, while we intentionally observe its shape, it is not straight. Due to this reason they use this metaphorical expression. They also interchangeably use the expression in (79c) and (79d) to refer to penis; especially a wife uses metonymic strategy to euphemize it. Because she uses a whole *ak'na isaa* 'his body' and *k'ullaa isaa* 'his naked body' to refer to the specific part of her husband's

sexual organ. Besides, Hararghe and Wollega Oromo interchangeably use the metaphorical expressions in (78c) and (79e) because these metaphoric expressions indicate the male sexual organ function with comparison of other materials that people use as it has been explained in (78c).

As we can observe from Tables (1, 2, 3), the society of the research areas use the euphemistic expressions in (77a), (78a), and (79a) in common. Hence Hararghe and Wollega Oromo use words like, *k'odaa* 'goods' and *meešaa* 'instrument', which has similar meaning. If somebody calls the name of sexual organ, it creates embarrassment or it will create disagreement between the speaker and the hearers.

3.5.2. Taboos and Euphemisms Related to Female Sexual Organ

The Oromo society of the research areas use the following euphemistic expressions instead of female sexual organ as explained in Tables (4), (5) and (6), below. I have observed that most of a female sexual organ (taboo names) are expressed by male to male talk or while someone needs to insult somebody else. Uttering the taboo names of female sexual organ is considered as one of face threatening terms.

Table 4: Taboo and Euphemism Related to Female Sexual Organ in Bale Oromo

General names	taboo	English translation	Euphemistic expressions
<i>tamboo</i>			
<i>bašoo</i>			(80)
<i>basurree</i>			a. <i>k'aama hormaata dubartii</i>
<i>bit't'oo</i>		vagina	body reproduction woman:GEN
<i>k'arana</i>			'Female reproductive organ.'
<i>k'int'iriii</i>			b. <i>daabboo</i> 'bread' (informal) to mean 'vagina' specially
<i>buk'ušaa</i>			for little daughter.
<i>t'eerii</i>			c. <i>Birk'ee</i> refers to feminine name means 'darling' which informally means 'vagina'

The literal meaning of the metaphoric expression in (80b), *daabboo* refers to the bread that we eat. However, in this context, it informally represents the female sexual organ which is typically used by young group. They use it considering as the body organ is a daily basic need of males. Due to this social meaning, if someone uncounsciously says to a female, *daabboo naaf kenni* ‘give me bread’ she may feel embarrassed. Sometimes Bale Oromo also informally use the metaphoric expression in (80c) to increase the value of female sexual organ; because the feminine name *Birk’e* may give you an idea about the meaning of ‘endearment’. So the expression shows that how much people consider this body organ as precious thing. However, when someone hears this expression, the first meaning comes to mind is the female proper name than the female sexual organ; but the context in which communication takes place determines the meaning.

Table 5: Taboo and Euphemism Related to Female sexual Organ in Hararghe Oromo

General taboo names	English translation	Euphemistic expression
<i>mut’t’ee</i> <i>bat’ašoo</i> <i>tamboo(for child)</i> <i>k’int’irii</i> <i>hudduu</i> <i>buk’aa</i> <i>aluu</i>	Vagina	(81) a. <i>k’aama hormaata dubartii</i> ‘Female’s reproductive organ.’ b. <i>k’aama finc’aanii</i> body urine:GEN ‘Lit. urine’s organ’ ‘Vagina.’ c. <i>daabboo</i> ‘bread’ (informal)

The circumlocution expression in (81b) refers to a female genital organ function through which is discharges urine. Sometimes they use this expression in hospital when someone is exposed to a disease related to this sexual organ and when is talked to a doctor about the case or symptom of the disease. Similarly, Wollega Oromo also use the euphemistic expressions explained in Table 6 below.

Table 6: Taboos and Euphemisms Related to Female sexual Organ in Wollega Oromo

General taboo names	English Translation	Their euphemistic expressions
<p><i>buk'aa</i> <i>fu ii</i> <i>šoöšoö</i> <i>bek'ee</i> <i>daaddoo</i> <i>k'int'irii(for child)</i> <i>bat'asi</i> <i>bat't'ee</i> <i>bit't'illee</i> <i>fagaara</i> <i>hudduu</i> <i>munnee</i> <i>mac'urree</i></p>	<p>Vagina</p>	<p>(82) a. <i>k'aama hormaata dubartii</i> 'female reproductive organ' b. <i>gadameessa</i> 'womb' c. <i>mat't'annee</i> 'the closer' d. <i>k'ullaa</i> <i>iše-e</i> naked-body she-GEN 'lit. her naked-body.' 'vagina' e. <i>k'odaa</i> <i>iše-e</i> material she-GEN 'Lit. her goods.' 'vagina' f. <i>daabboo</i> 'bread'</p>

The metonymic expression in (82b) has similar interpretation with 81a. The literal meaning of this word refers to the organ where a woman conceives a child but in this context, they use the metonymic strategy to refer to vagina in polite way. Similarly, the metaphoric expression in (82c) shows the structure or location of the organ which is attached to her body. The metonymic expression in (82d) which refers to the whole naked body part is used to replace the word vagina. The metaphoric in (82e) refers to the function of something that people use to do something with. Similarly, this body organ is considered as instrument that people use for sexual intercourse or to give birth.

In short, Bale, Hararghe and Wollega Oromos use different euphemistic expressions for the term vagina except *k'aama hormaata dubartii* 'female's reproductive organ' and *daabboo* 'bread' which they use in common.

3.5.3. Meaning Extension of Male and Femal Sexual Organ

In the previous sections, I interpreted the euphemistic expressions given for male and female sexual organ taboo names, but now I interpret both male and female sexual organs taboo names and euphemistic expressions which have meaning extension. In this section, the ‘meaning extension’ refers to the meaning of words in addition to the formal meaning they have. The names of sexual organs which are taboo in one place of the research area may not be taboo in other places of the research areas and vice versa. In Table 7, the normal meanings and connotative meanings of sexual organs are analyzed depending on the data obtained from the research areas.

Table 7: Names of sexual organs which have extended meaning out of their particular areas

No.	The name of sexual organ	The place where the term is taboo, and its meaning		The place where the term is normal, and its meaning	
		Place	Meaning	Place	Meaning
1	<i>tambo</i>	Bale	female sexual organ	Hararghe and Wollega	Tobacco leaf or processed tobacco
2	<i>bukkee</i>	Bale	hermaphrodite/impotent	Wollega	<i>cinaa/bira</i> ‘near or close to’
3	<i>t’eerii</i>	Bale	female sexual organ	Wollega and Hararghe	internal organs of stomach which we call <i>mar?immaan</i> ‘intestine’
4	<i>bašoo</i>	Bale	female sexual organ	Hararghe Wollega	Cat the nick name of <i>Bašatuu</i>
5	<i>sadeen</i> (euphemism)	Hararghe	penis and testicles	Wollega and Bale	things which are three in number (the three’s)
6	<i>seeruu</i>	Wollega	male sexual organ	Bale and Hararghe	protecting somebody by law
7	<i>kolaa</i>	Bale	testicles	Wollega & Hararghe	castrated male animal
8	<i>k’ola</i>	Hararghe	male sexual organ	Wollega and Bale	cover of something
9	<i>jallaa</i>	Wollega	male sexual organ	Bale, Hararghe & Wollega	not straight
10	<i>geeba</i>	Wollegga	male sexual	Bale	a cup made up of horn

			organ	Hararghe	Gourd
11	<i>wark'uu, maammoo and abba husen</i>	Bale	informal expression of male sexual organ or masculine name	Bale, Hararghe & Wollega	refers to the male's proper name/masculine gender
12	<i>abbaa ilmaa</i>	Bale	male sexual organ	Bale, Hararghe & Wollega	owner of the son
13	<i>birk'ee</i>	Bale	informal expression of female sexual organ	Wollega	refers to feminine personal name
14	<i>eegee</i>	Bale	male sexual organ	Wollega and Hararghe	animal's tail
15	<i>daabboo</i>	Bale, Hararghe and Wollega	Female sexual organ (informal)	Bale, Hararghe and Wollega	bread
16	<i>mut't'ee</i>	Hararghe	female sexual organ	Bale and Wollega	the tip of something
17	<i>bit't'oo</i>	Bale	female sexual organ	Hararghe	Listening
18	<i>bit't'illee</i>	Wollega	female sexual organ	Bale and Hararghe	a kind of bread which is not big in size
19	<i>Tusee</i>	Bale	male sexual organ	Wollega	refers to small ant
20	<i>Toffee</i>	Bale	male sexual organ	Wollega	small open through which something eject
21	<i>Saallii</i>	Wollega	male sexual organ	Bale	embarrassment
22	<i>k'arana</i>	Bale	Clitoris	Hararghe	the spike of crop like wheat
23	<i>Bantii</i>	Bale	virgin	Wollega	male sexual organ
24	<i>mi?oo</i>	Bale	Sperm	Wollega	refers to feminine
25	<i>bulaa</i>	Šawaa	Sperm	Bale, Hararghe and Wollega	the expression that people use while separated to each other at evening
26	<i>biilaa</i>	Hararghe	male sexual	Bale and	the barley's spike

			organ	Wollega	
27	<i>tuttuk'aa</i>	Hararghe	male sexual organ	Bale and Wollega	toucher
38	<i>Šoošoo</i>	Wollega	female sexual organ	Bale	Drum
29	<i>munnee</i>	Wollega	female sexual organ	Hararghe	Bee's sting
30	<i>mac'urree</i>	Wollega	female sexual organ	Bale	<i>marrimmaan</i> 'intestine'

Notice, some words/expressions may have both taboo and formal meaning in one particular area. For example, in Wollega Oromo the name *daabboo* and *bit't'iille* denotatively express 'bread' and connotatively refer to female sexual organ. Similarly, the term *jallaa* expresses something which is not straight while *Maammoo* and *Wark'uu* informally refer to 'masculine' while *Birk'ee* also refers to 'feminine' in Bale Oromo. Bale Oromo, too the word *eegee* 'tail' simultaneously implies two meanings: 'tail and male sexual organ'. Correspondingly, *abba ilmaa* refers to 'the owner of the son' and male genital organ.

3.5.4. Taboo and Euphemism Related to Sexual Act

In the preceding section, we have seen taboo names of sexual organs, denotative and connotative meaning they have out of the particular areas of the research sites. In this section, we will look at some sexual acts and their euphemistic expressions. According to the norm of Oromo society, one does not do sexual acts until he/she marries; because it is believed to be taboo. In addition to this, talking about sex and sexual relations, both legitimate and illegitimate, characterizes its speaker as a shameless and disrespectful person; because it is forbidden by moral values. The strongest taboo word is thought to be the one for sexual act *saluu* 'fuck'. It is taboo to a degree that it is not heard in any formal conversation, even it is hardly used among husbands and wives, and most of swearing words are coined or derived from this word.

As I have heard from the informants, a woman is not supposed to talk about sex freely in the presence of her opposite sex; even through euphemistic expressions of the restriction of the norm. The researcher observed that in most cases, female genitals are euphemized

for fear of being considered rude and are mostly used by male to male talk and very low female talk. However, from the respondents I observed that in the event of acquaintance male to female and vice-versa, talk can still use the terms freely. Sexual relation is stimulated the euphemistic expressions to reflect social consideration. So, likewise calling direct names of male and female sexual organs are taboo, expressing sexuality is also a taboo. As a result, an individual uses euphemistic expressions not to offend hearers. The act of sex is completely taboo or openly talking about it causes shame; so people are variably euphemized it. According to informants, if somebody misuses words related to sex act, the hearer gets offended, embarrassed or quarrels with the speaker. In the below Table 8, the taboo term *saluu* ‘fuck’ and its euphemistic expressions are given.

Table 8: Taboos and euphemism related to Sexual acts among the research areas

Taboo expressions	Euphemism expressions	Area
<p><i>sal-e</i> fuck-3SM:PFV ‘He fucked’ and Or <i>go -e</i> do-3SM:PFV ‘He did sex’</p>	<p>(83)</p> <p>a. <i>k’uunnamtii saalaa raaww-at-e/t-e</i> intercourse sex perform-VBZR-3SM:PFV/3SF-PFV ‘He/she performed sexual intercourse.’</p> <p>b. <i>hammat-e/t-e</i> hug -3SM:PFV/3SF-PFV ‘Lit. he/she embraced.’ ‘He/she did sex.’</p> <p>c. <i>fe ii foon-ii raaww-at-e/t-e</i> need flesh-GEN perform-VBZR-3SM:PFV/3SF-PFV ‘Lit. he/she performed the need of his/her flesh.’ ‘He/she did sex.’</p> <p>d. <i>waliin c’iis-an-(i)</i> together sleep-3PL-PFV ‘Lit. they slept together.’ ‘He/she did sex.’</p>	<p>Bale</p>
<p><i>sal-e</i> fuck-3SM:PFV ‘He fucked’, Or <i>go -e</i> do-3SM:PFV</p>	<p>(84)</p> <p>a. <i>k’uunnamtii saalaa raaww-at-an-(i)</i> intercourse sex perform-VBZR- 3PL-PFV ‘They performed sexual intercourse.’</p> <p>b. <i>itti ida -am-e/t-e</i> LOC add-PASS-3SM:PFV/3SF-PFV</p>	

<p>‘he did sex’</p> <p><i>kor-e</i> climb-3SM:PFV ‘he come up/climbed’</p>	<p>‘Lit. he/she added to her/him.’ ‘He/she did sex.’</p> <p>c. <i>waliin raf-an-(i)</i> together sleep-3PL-PFV ‘Lit. they slept together.’ ‘They did sex.’</p> <p>d. <i>aruuza seen-an-(i)</i> honeymoon enter-3PL-IFV ‘Lit. they entered into honeymoon.’ (for wedding day only) ‘They are doing sexual intercourse.’</p>	<p>Hararghe</p>
<p><i>sal-e</i> fuck-3SM:PFV ‘He fucked’, Or <i>go -e</i> do-3SM:PFV ‘he did sex’</p>	<p>(85)</p> <p>a. <i>k’uunnamtii saalaa goo -t-e [goote]</i> intercourse sex do-3SF-PFV ‘She did sexual intercourse.’</p> <p>b. <i>bira gees-t-e [geesse]</i> near reach-3SF-PFV ‘Lit. she reached near.’ ‘She did sex.’</p> <p>c. <i>wajjin c’iis-e/t-e</i> together sleep-3SM:PFV/3SF-PFV ‘Lit. he/she slept with.’ ‘He/she did sex.’</p> <p>d. <i>wal-arg-an- (i)</i> REC-see-3PL-PFV ‘Lit. they met each other.’ ‘They did sex.’</p> <p>e. <i>wajjin jir-u</i> together exist-3PL:IPFV ‘Lit. they are together.’ ‘They are doing sex.’</p> <p>f. <i>wal-baas-an- (i)</i> REC-take out-3P-PFV ‘Lit. they to take out each other’ ‘They knew each other for sex.’</p>	<p>Wollega</p>

	<p>g. <i>gulantaa irra jir-u</i> stage LOC exist -3PL:IPFV ‘Lit. they are on the stage (at wedding day only) ‘They are doing sexual intercourse.’</p> <p>h. <i>fe ii fooni-i raaww-at-an-(i)</i> need flesh-GEN perform-VBZR-3PL-PFV ‘Lit. they performed the need of their flesh.’ ‘They did sex.’</p>	
--	---	--

As we can observe from Table 8, the Oromo society of the research areas, using words like *go uu*, *koruu*, *yaabuu* in a public is a big taboo; because they are equivalent to *saluu* ‘fuck’. If these terms are expressed publically, the hearer immediately may hold his/her ears refusing to hear such words. Refusing to hear these words describe the extent to which words make shock and offend the hearers. Thus, to avoid feeling of the shame and shock, the societies of the research areas use euphemistic expressions. In communication, let alone these taboo words even using the euphemized expressions of sexuality need a great care.

For example, Bale, Hararghe and Wollega Oromo commonly use the metaphoric euphemistic expression in (83a), (84a) and (85a) instead of *sale* ‘fucked’. The literal semantics of the word *k’uunnamtii* is ‘communication’. But here, when we add the word *saala* at end of the word *k’uunnamtii*, it does not refer to the conversation that takes place between two individuals; the semantics of the expression shifts to sexual intercourse. So, sexual intercourse is companionship with communication. Similarly, in love affairs, if someone has fallen in love with somebody, he/she kisses or embraces the person. But, here the circumlocation expression given in (83b) does not refer to the greeting kiss as usual but it implies the sexual intercourse performed by individuals. Sometimes Bale and Wollega Oromo use the circumlocution in (83c) and (85h) to refer to an individual who gets satisfied with the need of his/her flesh. The word ‘flesh’ is a metonymic expression which represents sexual organs of the couples. Bale Oromo also interchangeably use the circumlocution expression in (83d). The literal meaning of this expression shows the normal sleeping that somebody sleeps with someone else brotherly or sisterly. But, in this

context, it does not refer to regular sleep they sleep together, but such sleeping implies the sexual intercourse they did. There is mutual reciprocity expressed by the usage of the reciprocal morpheme *wal/waliin* the effect of the sense of touch during sexual intercourse as the male and the female genitalia come into contact is clearly discernible.

The literal meaning of the metaphoric expression in (84b) refers to an object which is added to something. But in this context, Hararghe Oromo use it to express the contact of the couples during sexual intercourse. The expression in (84d) simply expresses those persons entered into honeymoon; but in this context, it shows the couples' sexual intercourse on wedding day. This expression is not functionable to express the sexual intercourse which is performed in another time except on the wedding day.

Similarly, Wollega Oromo use the euphemistic expression in (85b) and (85d) which are an abstract and metaphoric to refer to the subject of the action. In normal context, the two expressions refer to someone who has reached someone else and two persons who have seen each other, respectively; but they refer to the contact of penis and vagina at the moment of sexual intercourse. Additionally, Wollega Oromo use the circumlocution euphemistic expressions in (85e) and (85g) to express sexual intercourse performed on the wedding day in honeymoon. The two expressions have similar interpretation with the expression given by Hararghe Oromo in (84d).

On the other hand, sometimes, the young use the direct sexual act expressions while they swear or feel angry and want to insult somebody. And, intimate friends with the same age and gender do not so much bother to use euphemistic expressions of sexual act; they often use even the direct sexual act in their communication. From this idea, we can understand that social variables like age, gender and relationship can determine the usage of euphemistic expressions regarding sexual act in communication. Therefore, individuals who are with similar sex may directly communicate concern sexual act than individuals who are opposite sex, but there is still the impact of age differences among individuals who are the same sex. Consequently, due to age difference the young do not freely communicate about sex and sexual act with adults or elders.

Next to this, let us see expressions related to the name of sexual organs and sexual act that people use at the moment of insulting someone else as follows:

3.5.4.1. Insulting Expressions Related to Sexual Organs and Act

According to informants', social group that frequently uses the expression related to sex and sexual act for insulting are youth especially those who work in bus station and on a taxi. They frequently use insulting expressions which can offend hearers. They use these abusive expressions emotionally while they are annoyed at somebody. Most of these insulting taboo expressions are attached with sexual organ of *haa a* 'mother'. Look at the following insulting expressions used by males:

(86)

- a. *mut't'ee haa a kee sal-i*
 vagina mother 2SM:POSS fuck-IMPR
 'Fuck your mother's vagina!' (Hararghe)
- b. *sal-am-aa!*
 fuck-PASS-3SM:VN
 'Fucken guy!' (Hararghe)
- c. *hudduu haa a kee sal-i!*
 buttock mother 2SM:POSS fuck-IMPR
 'Fuck your mother's buttock!' (Wollega)
- d. *bek'ee haa a kee go -i!*
 vagina mother 2SM:POSS do-IMPR
 'Fuck your mothe's vagina!' (Wollega)
- e. *ilma haa a raaw-u*
 son mother fuck-IPFV:CP
 'Son of mother fucker!' (Hararghe and Wollega (Horroo Guduru))
- f. *haa a kee sal-i!*
 mother 2SM:POSS fuck-IMPR
 'Fuck yours mother!' (Bale, Hararghe and Wollega)

Most of insulting expressions in (86) are associated with sexual organ of insulted person's mother except the expression in (86b) which refers to the insulted person himself 'a fucken guy'. The expression in (86c) refers to the insulted person mother's vagina not her ass. That means the one that is to be fucken is not buttock but her vagina. So, *hudduu* is simultaneously used here to express both buttock and vagina. The expression in (86d) again signifies similar interpretation given in (86c) while the expressions in (86e-f) imply the insulted person should go to fuck his own mother's vagina. In similar context, they sometimes say *fagaara or bek'ee haa akee* without *sali* 'fuck'.

Similarly, females also use expressions related to male sexual organ or sexual act to insult each other as follows:

(87)

- a. *ak'-i-i jala k'ab-i*
 go-2S-CONV LOC hold-2S: IMPR
 'Go and give **it**!' (Wollega)
- b. *ak'-i-i yaab-at- -u! [yaabba -u]*
 go-2S-CONV climb-MD-2S- IMPR
 'Go and climb **it**!' (Wollega)
- c. *ak'-i-i irra taa -i !*
 go-2S-CONV LOC sit-2S:IMPR
 'Go and sit on **it**!' (Wollega)
- d. *si-tti haa gal-u!*
 you-LOC let enter-3SM: IMPR
 'Let it inter into you!' (Hararghe)

The Literal insulting expression given in (87a) refers to something which somebody puts under someone else. In this context, the thing which is put under someone is not something else but the insulted person's vagina, while the answer for question 'under what?' is could be '**it**'. In this context, the pronoun **it** refers to penis. Similarly,

expressions in (87b-c) literally refer to something what she is going to ‘climb and sit on’, respectively. But here ‘thing’ is not tree or something else to be climbed or sat on; but it refers to male sexual organ. On the other hand, the one who is going to climb or sit on that thing is the female reproductive organ’. Also *sitti haa galu* is a common expression in Hararghe, even a mother says, *salamtuu meezoo lamaa* ‘a fucken person of two five cents’ to her daughter.

3.5.4.2. Expression Used for Prostitutes

Prostitutes can be either men or women but in most cases women are the ones who are blamed for being a prostitute. Terms like *šaarmut’aa*, *sagaagaltuu*, *kašalabbee*, *ejjittuu* meaning ‘prostitute woman’ are taboo names which Bale, Hararghe and Wollega Oromo commonly use. Instead of these taboo expressions, Oromo people of the research areas politely replace other expressions which are metonymic as in (88):

- (88) *warra ak’na isaani-i gurgur-an- (i)*
 those:CP body they-GEN sell-3PL-PFV
 ‘Lit.those who sell their body’
 ‘Prostitutes’

The expression in (88) refers to vagina which prostitutes present for sell.

3.5.4.3. Expression Related to Rape

According to Njoroge (2014:37), rape is forcefully manipulated sexual contact by a stranger, friend or acquaintance. It is an act of aggression and power combined with some form of sex. According to informants, there are various degrees of rape depending on age, relationship and circumstances. As far as age is concerned older woman may have forceful copulation with younger men and older men may also have sex with underage girls who are not in a position to make independent decision whether to have sex or not. When somebody forcefully rapes a girl’s virginity even using the euphemized expression in (83a), (84a) and (85a) *k’uunnamtii saalaa raawwaate* that we have discussed in previous section for sexual intercourse is not appropriate here. Therefore, instead of the expression people replace with the word in (89).

- (89) *gudeed-e*
 thigh-3SM:PFV
 ‘He rapped.’

Generally, talking about sexual organs in Oromo society is taboo; the subject of sex and sexuality is also sensitive to the extent that the speakers cannot freely talk about it even using euphemistic expressions.

3.5.4.4. Homosexuality

Homosexuality is not explicitly known or practiced in Oromo society; because it is extremely social taboo. Additionally, according to the constitution law of Ethiopia, practicing homosexuality is strictly forbidden. But the concept of homosexuality especially a gay is existed implicitly as a change of natural use of the bodies into that which is against nature while lesbianism is total unpracticed. Those who practice this act are looked at as spoilt people. Thus this act is seen as an abomination and due to such labeling, the act, if practiced is very secretive. Among Christians Oromo, people refer to Bible to condemn such acts- homosexuality is a subject of taboo in the Old Testament in the book of Leviticus 18:22. *Ati akka nama dubartii wajjin c'isutti iira wajjin hin c'iisiin! Kun waanta c'iggaasisaa* a 'you shall not lie with mankind, as with womankind: it is abomination'. If a man also lies with mankind, as he lies with a woman, both of them have committed on abomination; they shall surely be put to death; their blood shall be upon them. From the Bible verses, it is clear that, homosexuality is an abomination and it is punishable by death. In Oromo culture, homosexuality is treated with a lot of contempt and disbelief. From the study, the researcher found out that homosexuality is considered as an immoral practice and ungodly. Even the equivalent term which refers to homosexuality is not existed in Afaan Oromoo; however, to describe the act of homosexuality people sometimes use the term *ga ee* to refer a homosexual man (gay) and *wal ga eessuu* to refers to the performed act.

As my observation, among Oromo of the research areas, there is no positive politeness when it comes to homosexuality. They use almost abusive language; because of the negative attitudes they have towards it. As a result of this, there is no way to make homosexuality polite through euphemisms. I found out that in the older days the act of homosexuality was not common. Thus, the English lexicon word homosexual does not have an equivalent word in Oromo society. However, in the recent years, it is on the increase due to the influence of foreign culture.

3.6. Taboos and Euphemisms Related to Body Parts

There are culturally inappropriate expressions associated with human body parts which Oromo people forbid to speak in public. Some taboo expressions related to body parts are linked with impairment while the others are normal body parts which attribute connotative meaning.

3.6.1. Taboos and Euphemisms Related to Impaired Body Parts

Human beings may be born with physical defects or may miss it after birth due to different causes. According to respondents' explanation, whatever it causes, people respect and treat those physically impaired to maintain their psychological state. As a result, people forbid calling the direct expressions related to physical defect thinking that the expression offend or demoralize those individuals. Everywhere, people encourage, help, respect, care and refrain from laughing at those people. In Oromo society, there is one proverb, *kan ilkaan al uu, kormi ari?ee hin al uu* which means 'what our teeth beget to us, a bull cannot beget, if mate and copulate with a cow'. From this proverb we comprehend that people fear to laugh at someone who faces bad situation in life; because, they believe as God pay back similar result to a laugher. Thus, people favor to call impaired body parts' indirectly using different strategies of euphemistic expressions not to offend those who are physically impaired or other hearers.

As informants' elaboration, the reason why people fear calling the impaired body parts' name is not only for the sake of respecting individuals that are physically impaired but also the fear of being exposed to a similar problem. Culturally, they belief that if somebody criticizes or laughs at physically impaired person, he/she and his/her family member will face similar problem. Due to this, they refrain from uttering inappropriate expressions related to this topic. For example, in the Oromo society, it is a taboo to call terms like *jaamaa* 'blind', *duudaa* 'deaf', *naafa* 'lame', and *kan hin dubbanne* 'dumb' in front of a physically impaired person. In Tables (9), (10), (11), (12) and (13) the impaired body parts' names which are taboo among Oromo society of the research areas and their corresponding euphemistic expressions are elaborated according to respondents' explanations.

(a) *Jaamaa* ‘blind’ and *ballaa* ‘one-eyed’

The Oromo people never express visually impaired person by the term *jaamaa* ‘blind’. They also do not use the term *ballaa* which means whose eye ball’s position has problem or one-eyed person. Look at table 9, to understand taboo names and the euphemistic expressions given for the word ‘*jaamaa* and *ballaa*’.

Table 9: Taboos and euphemisms related to *jaamaa* ‘blind’ and *ballaa* ‘one-eyed’

No.	Taboo names for impaired body parts	Euphemistic expressions: for taboo words in the study areas		
		Bale	Hararghe	Wollega
1	<i>jaamaa</i> ‘blind’	<p>(90)</p> <p>a. <i>ija-tu isa-tti/išee-tti barak-at-e</i> eye-FOC he-LOC/she-LOC excess-MD-PFV ‘Lit. the eye is excess to him/her’. ‘He/she is blind.’</p> <p>b. <i>ijaa-n hin arg-u/i-t-u</i> eye-INST NEG see-3SM:PFV/EP-3SF-PFV ‘He/she cannot see’</p> <p>c. <i>ulee-n deem-aa/t-uu</i> stick-INST walk-3SM:VN/3SF-VN ‘the one who walks by rod’</p> <p>d. <i>k’aroo ab-eessa/eettii</i> eye miss-3SM:ADJ/3SF:ADJ ‘He/she is visually impaired’</p> <p>e. <i>ija-tu isa-tti/išee-tti gudd-at-e</i> eye-FOC he-LOC/she-LOC big-VBZR-PFV ‘Lit. his/her eye is too big to him/her’ ‘He/she is blind.’</p> <p>f. <i>ija-tu angala -e</i> eye-FOC liquid-3SM:PFV ‘Lit. the eye is splash’ ‘The blind eye.’</p>	<p>a. <i>basiira</i> ‘visually impaired’</p> <p>b. <i>k’aroo ab-eessa/ttii</i> ‘He/she is visually impaired.’</p>	<p>a. <i>k’aroo ab-eessa/ttii</i> ‘He/she is visually impaired.’</p>
1.1	<i>ballaa</i> ‘one-eyed’	<p>(91)</p> <p>a. <i>tokkoo-n hin arg-u/i-t-u</i> one-INST NEG see-3SM:IPFV/EP-3SF-IPFV ‘He/she cannot see by one of his/her eye’</p> <p>b. <i>kalaabsuu</i> ‘the eye sees in oblique.’</p> <p>c. <i>ija-tu isa-tti/išee-tti ulfaat-a</i> eye-FOC he-LOC/she-LOC heavy-3SM:-IPFV ‘Seeing is heavy to him/her’</p>	<p>a. <i>šalaala</i> ‘the eye cannot see well’</p>	<p>a. <i>suuloo</i> ‘the one who cannot see well’ b. <i>kalaabsuu</i> ‘the eye sees in oblique’ c. <i>šalaala</i> ‘the eye cannot see well’</p>

According to Oromo culture, saying *inni/išeen jaamaa a* ‘he/she is blind’ is taboo; instead of this Bale Oromo use the expressions which are ironic as in (90a) and (90e). Even if visually impaired person’s eyeball is small, Bale Oromo use the ‘big eye’ which is antonymous expression of ‘small eye’ which means ‘blind’ for the psychological make up of the individual. On the other hand, the expression used by Bale Oromo in (90b) indicates that the person is mentally fine except visual impairment. They use the euphemistic expression to avoid the negative attitudes that people have towards the talent of those persons.

Again Bale Oromo, interchangeably use the expression in (90c) which is an abstract and refers to visually impaired person. The literal meaning of this expression shows that a person walks by holding a rod; but in this context, it represents visually impaired person who walks by checking ways with this rod. Bale, Hararghe and Wollega Oromo also express by the expression in (90d), (90b) and (90a), respectively to refer to a person who is normal except the absence of eyes.

(b) *naafa* ‘lame’

Lame is a person who disabled in leg or hand. The Oromo people do not call the term *naafa* ‘lame’ in front of physically lame parson. Instead, they use different euphemistic expressions as in Table 10.

Table 10: Taboos and euphemisms related to *naafa* ‘lame’

No	Taboo names for impaired body parts	Euphemistic expressions: for taboo words in the study areas		
		Bale	Hararghe	Wollega
1	<p><i>naafa</i> ‘lame’ 1.1. <i>miila</i> ‘leg’</p>	<p>(92) a. <i>mii aa miila-a</i> hurt leg-GEN ‘Lit. hurt leg.’ ‘lame.’</p>	<p>a. <i>miila but-aa/tuu</i> leg halt-3SM:VN/3SF:VN ‘lit. one who halts’ ‘lame.’ b. <i>hokkol-aa/tuu</i> cripple-3SM:ADJ/3SF:ADJ ‘The one who cripples.’</p>	<p>a. <i>hokkol-aa/tuu</i> cripple-3SM:ADJ/3SF:ADJ ‘the one who cripples’ b. <i>sirri hin ejjet-u/t-u</i> correct NEG step-3SM :IPFV:NEG/3SF:IPFV:NEG ‘H/she cannot walk well’</p>
	<p>1.2. <i>harka</i> ‘hand’</p>	<p>(93) a. <i>mii aa harka-a</i> hurt hand- GEN ‘Lit. hurt hand.’ ‘lame.’</p>	<p>a. <i>harkaa-n hin hojjat-u/t-u</i> hand-INST NEG work-3SM :IPFV:NEG/ 3SF-IPFV:NEG ‘Lit. he/she cannot work by hand.’ ‘lame.’</p>	<p>a. <i>harka bušaa?-aa</i> hand weak-3SM:ADJ lit. weak hand .’ ‘handicap’</p>

In Oromo, especially to express a person who is lame by nature, people do not use the term *naafa* ‘lame’; instead, they substitute softer expressions which are circumlocutional as in (92a), (92a) and (92a) in Bale, Hararghe and Wallega Oromo, respectively. On the other hand, for a person his leg is impaired by weapons at the battle, people forbid saying ‘lame person’; instead they prefer to express him as *jagna* ‘brave’, *goota* ‘hero’ and *mootii diinaa* ‘king of the enemy’.

The euphemistic expressions given above instead of *jaamaa* ‘blind’ and *naafa* ‘lame’ show us how much the Oromo people are concerned to use alternative polite expressions to respect and maintain the psychology of physically impaired person.

(c) *dinkii* ‘dwarf’

In Oromo society, calling a very short person by the term *dinkii* ‘dwarf’ may offend the the dwarf person or it may create conflict between the speaker and that person; because, the victim can be morally touched.

Table 11: Taboo and euphemisms related to *dinkii* ‘dwarf’

Impaired body part	Place and euphemism		
	Bale	Hararghe	Wollega
<i>dinkii</i> ‘dwarf’	(94) a. <i>gurc’u</i> ‘short’ b. <i>farra lafa-a</i> enemy earth-GEN ‘Lit. earth’s enemy.’ ‘Dwarf.’ c. <i>ganaan-oo</i> giant -3SM:VN ‘Lit. the giant.’ ‘Dwarf.’	a. <i>Gabaab-du</i> short-3SF ‘the shortest one’	a. <i>leemman-nee</i> bamboo-3SF:VN ‘Lit. the one who is bamboo or the tallest one’ ‘Dwarf.’

As we can observe from Table 11, Bale Oromo purposely use the antonymous expression in (94c) to maintain the psychology of dwarf person. Similarly, Hararghe Oromo use the metaphoric expression in (94a) to categorize him/her under the persons who have a

normal short height. The metaphoric expression which wollega Oromo use in (94a) is derived from the long thin tree called *leemmana*. The term has similar interpretation with the expression given by Bale and Hararghe Oromo in (94a); however, here, they use the expression which is antonymous to make the communication polite. In addition to this, Oromo of Bale use the ironic expression in (94b) *farra-lafaa* ‘earth’s opponent’. According to the respondents, mythically people believe that short people are very dynamic; they are so tactiful to solve whatever problems they may face. Accordingly short people are assumed to be wise.

(d) *duudaa* ‘deaf’

The Oromo society does not call a person who has hearing impairment by the term *duudaa* ‘deaf’ because it is taboo and considered as offensive. The impairment may be partial or total. Whatever it is, the Oromo people prefer to use different euphemistic expressions instead of the direct term to make their communication polite.

Table 12: Taboo and euphemisms related to *duudaa* ‘deaf’

No.	Impaired body part	Place and the given euphemistic Expressions		
		Bale	Hararghe	Wollega
1	<p><i>duudaa</i> ‘deaf’ 1.1. partially impaired ear</p>	<p>(95) a. <i>gurraa-n hin hubat-u</i> ear- INST NEG understand-3SM:IPFV:NEG ‘He/she has hearing difficulty.’</p>	<p>a. <i>gurraa-n hin haleel-u/t-u</i> ear-INST NEG perfect-3SM:IPFV:NEG/3SF-IPFV:NEG ‘He/she is imperfect in hearing.’</p>	<p>a. <i>gurra-tu išee-tti ulfaat-a</i> ear-FOC she-LOC heavy- IPFV ‘Her ear is heavy to her’ b. <i>gurr-i isa dabar-s-a</i> ear-NOM 3SM:POSS miss-CAUS-3SM:IPFV ‘His ear hardly hears.’ c. <i>gurra jab-aat-a</i> ear hard-VBZR-3SM:IPFV ‘Hearing is hard to him’</p>
	<p>1.2. totally deaf</p>	<p>(96) a. <i>gurraa-n hin aga - u/eessu</i> Ear-INST NEG hear-3SM:IPFV: NEG/3SF:IPFV:NEG ‘He/she cannot hear.’</p>	<p>a. <i>egala</i> ‘hearing impaired’</p>	<p>a. <i>gurraa-n hin aga - u/eessu</i> ear-INST NEG hear-3SM:IPFV:NEG/3SF:IPFV:NEG ‘He/she cannot be hear’</p>

When we encounter two or more words with the same form and related meanings, we have what is technically known as polysemy. It can be defined as a form having multiple meanings that are all related by extension. Similarly, the expressions in (95 and 96) the noun *gurra* ‘ear’, have related meanings when we euphemize half or totally deaf person. For example, the expressions in (95a) and (95b) refer to a person who cannot hear clearly what is said. Wollega Oromo use the expression in (95b) for partially impaired person; because, the person misses or hears partially. The expression *gurra jabaataa* also signifies the difficulty of hearing. Literally, the meaning of *gurra jabaata* refers to ‘hard ear’ which we used here to refer to partially deaf person.

(e) Taboos and euphemisms related to impairment of lip, tongue and back

The society of the research areas also does not call a person who has impairment of lip, tongue and back. Instead, to make their communication polite and not to offend the person, they euphemize terms related to these impairments. Look at Table 13 which shows about taboos and euphemisms related to the explained impairments.

Table 13: Taboo terms related to deformed lip, stammer and hunchback and their euphemistic expressions

Impaired body part	Place and the given euphemistic expressions		
	Bale	Hararghe	Wollega
<i>hi ii</i> <i>šarafaa</i> 'deformed lip'	(97) a. <i>fark'uu</i> 'deformed lip' b. <i>hi ii hank'-uu</i> lip deform-INF 'Deformed lip.'	a. <i>ummee</i> 'deformed lip'	a. <i>fark'uu</i> 'deformed lip'
<i>giingee</i> 'stammer'	(98) a. <i>k'aama dubbii-tu mii -am-a k'ab-a</i> body speech:GEN-FOC damage-PASS-3SM:VN have-IPFV 'His/her speech organ is hurt.'	a. <i>dubbii hin haleel-u</i> speech NEG perfect-3SM:IPFV:NEG 'He is not eloquent in speech.'	a. <i>arraba hi -am-aa tangué tie-PASS-3SM:VN</i> 'tied tongue'
<i>k'uuruu</i> 'hunchback'	(99) a. <i>k'uutaa</i> 'bend down'	a. <i>tulluu k'ab-a</i> mountain has-3SM:IPFV 'Lit. he has a mountain.' 'hunchback'	<i>goop'oo</i> 'hunchback'

The expression in (97) which is used among the three research areas showed us words for deformed lip. Actually, people use the term *fark'uu* to refer to something which is broken from the part. That means they use the metaphoric expression strategy to refer to deformed lip. Similarly, they use the expression in (98) to refer to 'stammer' by attaching to tongue which is active to articulate speech rather than calling the taboo term. They also use the expressions in (99) which are metaphoric instead of hunchback; because the expressions are related to the shape of the person which bends down or looks mountain. Generally, the expressions given in (97-99) are not uttered directly to the impaired person, but they use expressions to tell about the person to the third party.

To sum up, human beings' impairments are not only the names explained in the above Tables. These are impaired body parts which Oromo people are sensitive to euphemize in their daily communication. According to informants, using euphemistic expressions to express these impairments increase the respect and tolerance among the people.

3.6.2. Taboos and Euphemism Expressions Related to Normal Body Parts

In previous sections, we have discussed taboo expressions associated with sexual organs and impairments, but under this section, we will deal with some normal body parts which have negative connotation in addition to the normal meaning they have. Look at some of them as follows:

(a) *hudduu* 'buttock'

Buttock is one of the two round fleshy parts of human body that form the bottom. This body part's name has meaning extension. People associate it with female sexual organ. Thus, instead of calling the word, people prefer to use the expressions in (100) which are circumlocution.

(100)

- a. *tee uma* 'lit. seat' (Bale)
- b. *taa?aa* 'seat' (Wollega)

(b) *munnee* 'anus'

This is the opening part at the end of the alimentary canal through which solid waste matter leaves the body. If the direct name of this body part is uttered, it will create

embarrassment. As a result, people prefer to call it by the metaphoric expression in (101a) and onomatopoeic expression in (101b) which are still taboo but less impolite.

(101)

- a. *uraa hudduu*
open buttock
'buttock's hole'.
- b. *t'ii't'uu* 'anus.'

(c) *fagaara* 'ass'

Literally *fagaara* has a similar meaning with buttock. However, sometimes due to the extension meaning people attach it to female sexual organ and use similar expressions given for buttock in (100).

(d) *Sangaa-raadaa/Saal-lamee* 'hermaphrodite'

This name refers to a person having both male and female sexual organs. The society calls such a person by omission mechanisms as follows:

(102)

- a. *bukkee* (Bale)
- b. *kormaa-jaddaal* (Hararghe)
- c. *luut'ii* (Wollega)

The three substituted expressions in (102) refer to hermaphrodite; the expressions are a little bit polite in comparison to the direct name. Remember, the term *bukkee* has two meanings in Bale, the first is male sexual organ which is inactive for sex and the second one is hermaphrodite.

(e) *c'id'aan* 'testicles'

Directly expressing the term *c'i 'aan* in public creates shame in Oromo society. Therefore, to avoid this embarrassment, Bale and Hararghe Oromo substitute the metaphoric expressions in (103) while Wollega Oromo call it directly.

(103)

- a. *korojoo* 'lit. sack' which means testicles' (in Bale)
- b. *lamee-n*
two-3PL
'Lit. the two's' (in Hararghe)

‘Testicles’

c. *c’i aan* ‘testicle’ (Wollega)

Bale Oromo use the metaphoric expression in (103a) to indicate the similarity of sack and testicle; because like we carry goods by sack, testicles also contain the two oval organs that produce sperm which Hararghe Oromo use the the expression in (103b) to explain these two oval organs that are enclosed in the scrotum near the penis.

3.7. Taboos and Euphemisms Related to Excretion

Although different cultures have different impressions towards bodily excretions, the concept of euphemizing excretions in polite way is almost universal in all languages. We are expected to conceal all bodily functions to ourselves. They cannot to be seen, heard, smelled, touched or talked about. According to informants, if someone discharges waste at inappropriate place, the action will be considered as taboo; as well as, directly expressing the act of ‘defecation’ is taboo. Therefore, using euphemistic expression is very essential to make the communication more polite.

Allan and Burridge (1991) provide some lists of bodily excretion like shit, vomit, menstrual blood, bleached breath, snot and farts, pus, sperm, urine, spit, breast milk and tears. As Pinker (2007) cited in Njoroge (2014:42) tries to explain, the most disgusting substances are also the most dangerous vector for diseases. For instance, faeces are a route to transmits viruses, bacteria and protozoa that cause different diseases. In addition, blood, vomit, mucus, pus and sexual fluid are routes of diseases from one to another. There is a strong opposition to drinking or eating bodily effluvia among human kind; even just thinking about them generates factors to disgust which might explain why the terms are seen as taboo.

Besides, Allan and Burridge (2006:2) state that the language one uses when referring to these tabooed parts and functions of the effluvia is usually figurative. According to these authors’ explanation, for instance, in English we say, ‘lose your lunch’ instead of ‘vomiting’. This is a sweet talking idiom and figuratively used to avoid mentioning bodily effluvia.

The interpretation of taboo words and euphemistic expressions of bodily effluvia are described depending on the data obtained from Bale, Hararghe and Wollega Oromo participants. In the research areas uttering bodily excretions like stool, fart, vomit, sperm, placenta, urine and others are considered as taboo. However, these terms are not taboo by themselves; their tabooess may be revealed in the form of acts or words. As informants, simply using the taboo words or actions related to excretions without appropriate euphemistic expressions can create embarrassment. So, taboo terms related to excretion and their euphemistic expressions are analyzed below:

3.7.1. Taboos and euphemisms related to *udaan* ‘faeces’ and *haguu* ‘defecating’

Defecation is the process of eliminating solid or semi-solid waste through the lower opening of the digestive tract. Directly expressing the act of defecation is distasteful among Oromo; therefore, people are fastidious about defecation and generally wish to perform the act in seclusion and in a designated location. I have found out that the community treats as a taboo for an adult to discharge stool inside the house or at the doorstep and in water. A person who defecates in water is considered as mischievous person; because people encounter disastrous effect that could befall anybody who use this polluted water. People are aware of the fact that polluted water can lead to waterborne diseases. In Table 14 below, look at the expressions related to *udaan* ‘faeces’ and *haguu* ‘defecation’ and their corresponding euphemistic expressions.

Table 14: Taboo and euphemisms related to *udaan* ‘faeces’ and *haguu* ‘defecating’

No	Excretion taboo terms	Areas and Euphemistic Expressions		
		Bale	Hararghe	Wollega
1	(104) <i>udaan</i> ‘faeces’	a. <i>bobbaa</i> ‘stool’ b. <i>boolii</i> ‘waste’	a. <i>sagaraa</i> ‘the one in the bowels’ b. <i>boolii</i> ‘waste’	a. <i>bobbaa</i> ‘stool’ b. <i>sagaraa</i> ‘the one in the bowels’
1.1	(105) <i>udaan hag-e/de</i> ‘he/she excreted faeces’	a. <i>gadi taa -e/teess-e</i> down sit-3SM:PFV/sit-3SF:PFV ‘Lit. he/she sat down.’ ‘He/she excreted faeces.’ b. <i>ala bah-e/ba²-t-e [baate]</i> outside go out-3SM:PFV/go out-3SF-PFV ‘Lit. he/she has gone outside.’ ‘He/she has gone to excrete faeces.’ c. <i>mana boolii deem-e/t-e</i> house waste go-3SM:PFV/3SF:PFV ‘Lit. he/she has gone to waste house.’ ‘He/she has gone to the toilet.’ d. <i>mana finc’aani-i deem-e/te</i> house urine-GEN go-3SM:PFV/3MF:PFV ‘Lit. he/she has gone to urinate house’ ‘He/she has gone to excrete faeces.’ e. <i>hurufa taa -e/teess-e</i> forest sit-3SM:PFV/sit-3SF:PFV ‘He/she sat in the forest.’	a. <i>mana boolii deem-e/t-e</i> house waste go-3SM:PFV/3SF:PFV ‘Lit. he/she has gone to waste house.’ ‘He/she has gone to excrete faeces.’ b. <i>k’ulk’ull-aa -e/oof-t-e’</i> clean-VBZR-3SM-PFV/VBZR-3SF-PFV ‘Lit. He/she has purified.’ ‘He/she has excreted faeces.’ c. <i>sagaraa deem-e/t-e</i> the one in the bowels go-3SM:PFV/3SF:PFV ‘Lit. he/she went for the one in the bowels.’ ‘He/she has gone to excrete faeces.’	a. <i>mana finc’aan-ii deem-e/t-e</i> house urine-LOC go-3SM:PFV/3SF:PFV ‘Lit. he/she has gone urine house.’ ‘He/she has gone to excrete faeces.’ b. <i>ala bah-e/baa-t-e</i> outside go out-3SM:PFV/go out-3SF-PFV ‘Lit. he/she has gone outside.’ ‘He/she has gone to excrete faeces.’ c. <i>bobba -e /t-e</i> excrete-3SM:PFV/3SF:PFV ‘He/she excreted.’ d. <i>mana boolii deem-e/t-e</i> house waste go-3SM:PFV/3SF:PFV ‘Lit. he/she has gone to waste house.’ ‘He/she has gone to the toilet.’

The Oromo society uses various terms to avoid the term *udaan* which urges face threatening. As indicated in Table 14, Oromo of Bale use the the word *bobbaa* which means stool instead of saying the taboo term *udaan* because, when we compare the terms, the former is less taboo. Similarly, Hararghe and Wollega Oromo use the expressions in (104a) and (104b), respectively. Here, the phrase *sagaraa* ‘the one in the bowels’ can indicate a bit abstract or literally it refers to something inside the bowels without specifying the referent. But in this context, the given expression does not express other body parts; it expresses about unwanted material which is discharged from bowels through anus. In addition, Hararghe Oromo use the expression in (105c). The phrase ‘the one’ that refers to ‘faeces’ which is used to avoid the direct expression, *udaan haguu deem-e/te* ‘he/she went to excrete faeces’.

Because if somebody says in public, *abaluun udaan hag-e/de* ‘somebody excreted faeces’, the hearer will be annoyed at the speaker; because the expression is impolite in Oromo society. So, to avoid this, Oromo of Bale use the metaphoric expression in (105a) to express that the person sat down to excrete. Literally, the expression refers to somebody who sat down to take a rest or to do something; but in this context, the expression is to refer to somebody who sat down to defecate. Amazingly, there is no problem when someone directly utters *udaan lukkuu* ‘hen’s faeces’, *udaan saree* ‘dog’s faeces’ and so forth; but it is taboo when it is used to express humanbeings’ faeces.

Similarly, Bale and Wollega Oromos use the phrase given in (105b) to express defecation. This circumlocutional expression literally refers to someone who goes outside to do something; but in this context, it refers to someone who goes outside or toilet to defecate not anywhere else. For example, if someone hears this expression, he/she easily understands that the person has gone to a toilet but not anywhere else. Due to this common understanding, no one asks in detail the place where and why the person went out.

Besides, Bale and Wollega Oromo interchangeably use the expression in (105c) and (105a) respectively instead of saying the taboo expression *mana udanii deem-e/te* ‘he she

went to faeces house’. As one of my interviewee²¹, from Wollga, the word ‘*boolii*’ which is derived from the word *boolla* ‘hole’; this hole also refers to the hole of a toilet which people excrete into. Bale Oromo use the metonymic expressions in (105c) and (105d) while Hararghe and Wollega use the expression in (105a) to refer to a person who goes a toilet for defecation. Additionally, the circumlocation expression, *mana finc’nii deeme-e/te*, literally refers to somebody who went to urine house; however, in this context, it refers to a person who went to a toilet either to defecate or urinate. As we have seen from the given expression, the Oromo people always use the word ‘urine’ to express ‘faeces’. Literally, this expression explains as he/she went to urinate; but here the expression reflects the extended meaning which refers to the one who went to a toilet for defecation. Finally, Bale Oromo use the expression given in (105e) to express the person has gone to defecate. The word *hurufa* refers to ‘forest’ the place where the person went to excrete there. This is to mean that the person does not go to a forest to cut tree or to do something else, but for excretion. In similar manner, Hararge Oromo use the expression in (105b) to express a person who excrets. The direct meaning of this expression implies somebody who cleans him/herself or takes a shower in the bath room. In similar way, Oromo of Wollega use the expression in (105c) to explain the person who has excreted faeces, while literal meaning of the expression refers to someone who looks after cattle.

3.7.2. *uufuu* ‘farting’

Farting is the release of gaseous thing from the lower intestinal tract through the anus. It is often accompanied by a whistling or rasping noise caused by vibration of the anal sphincter. In the Oromo of the research areas, it is socially unacceptable to flatulent in public; because it is considered as a rude act or taboo. It is due to the foul smell of the discharged of fart. Farting can largely be controlled by voluntarily tightening the anal sphincter. However, it is also suddenly discharged out of the control of the person. When someone suddenly discharges farting among people, the action cause embarrassment or reduces dignity of the person.

In Oromo society it is said that farting is a private. As the result, people of the research areas prohibit even calling the name and euphemize as indicated in Table 15.

²¹ erinet Wakoya

Table 15: Taboos and euphemism related to fart and farting

No	Farting taboo expression	Place and Euphemistic Expressions		
		Bale	Hararghe	Wollega
2	(106) <i>uufuu</i> 'fart'	<p>a. <i>deeffuu dugda-a</i> belch back-GEN 'Lit. the back belch.' 'Fart.'</p> <p>b. <i>k'illeensa garaa</i> air stomach:GEN 'Lit.the stomach's air.' 'Fart.'</p>	<p>a. <i>k'uu</i> 'sound of farting' b. <i>uufuu</i> 'fart'</p>	<p>a. <i>afuura garaa</i> breath stomach: GEN 'Lit.the stomach breath' 'Fart.'</p> <p>b. <i>waan ijoollee</i> thing child:GEN 'lit. the child's thing.' 'Fart.'</p>
2.1	(107) <i>uuf-e/te</i> 'he/shefarted'	<p>a. <i>deeffuu dugda-a baas-e/t-e</i> belch back-GEN out-3SM:PFV/3SF:PFV 'Lit. he/she emitted the back belch.' 'He/she has farted.'</p> <p>b. <i>afuura baaf-at-e/t-e</i> breath out-MD-3SM:PFV/3SF-PFV 'Lit, he/she emitted the breath.' 'He/she is farted.'</p> <p>c. <i>k'illeensa-tu seen-e</i> (for child) air-FOC enter-PFV 'Lit. an air has entered.' 'Passing wind.'</p>	<p>a. <i>libaantaa</i>²² <i>ul-e/t-e</i> insence fumigate-3SM:PFV/ 3SF-PFV 'Lit. he/she fumigated insence' 'He/she has farted.'</p> <p>b. <i>afuura baas-e/t-e</i> breath out-3SM:PFV/3SF-PFV 'Lit. he/she exhales breath.' 'He/she is farted.'</p>	<p>a. <i>afuura jalaa-n baas-e/t-e</i> breath under-LOC out-3SM:PFV/ 3SF-PR 'Lit. he/she emitted breath through underside.' 'He/she has farted.'</p> <p>b. <i>šittoo ul-e/t-e</i> perfume fumigate-3SM:PFV/3SF-PFV 'Lit. he/she fumigated the perfume' 'He/she has farted.'</p> <p>c. <i>aara baas-e/t-e</i> smoke out-3SM:PFV/3SF-PFV 'Lit. he/she out the smoke.' 'He/she has farted.'</p>

²² *Libaantaa* is a tree which Hararghe Oromos use as insence.

In Oromo society, farting before in-laws, seniors and elders is too taboo. Regarding this Oromo people have a proverb which says *k'oree ok'k'ee keessaafi uufuu gabaa keessaa Rabbi nama haa baasu* 'may God save you from the thorn in the mud, and farting in the market'. This proverb shows us about two things. The first one is, if somebody farts in market and specifically known by others that he/she has farted, it causes shame upon him/her, the second, if a farted person is not known and only the diffusion of the smell is disturbing the people, it is also difficult to identify the person who farted. People compare the thorn in mud with farting in the market because both are unconscious action; while the second effect is compared with the pain that thorn causes. To indicate these two reasons people use the proverb.

Instead of saying *uufuu*, Bale Oromo favor to substitute it by the expressions in (106a) and (106b) respectively while Hararghe and Wollega use the expression in (106a). The expression in (106a) which Bale Oromo use is syntactically well but semantically it creates confusion; because, human being never be belch by back. However, they use vague expression which is to refer to the place where fart comes; because they think the source of fart is from the back. Additionally, Bale Oromo use the literal expression in (107b) which refers to somebody's 'breathing through mouth' but here, it refers to the breath which is discharged through anus that indicates 'farting'. This substitution is metaphorical because it explains by comparing 'fart' with 'breath' which nobody can see and touch. In addition to this, they use the expression in (107c) while they sense the smell of fart and children are around them but do not know the child who is farted. Even if fart comes out from inside, they use as it comes from outside because the smell comes from outside and enters into somebody's nose.

In similar way, Hararghe Oromo express farting by the sound in (106a) *k'uu* which is driven from fart's sound itself which is called Onomatopoeia. Sometimes they also use the direct expression in (106b). Besides, Hararghe Oromo use the antonymous expression in (107a) to express the smell of farting which is bad smell by replacing *libaantaa* which has good odour that people use instead of incense. This expression has similar interpretation with the metaphoric expression given in (107b) by Wollega Oromo.

Wollega Oromo also use the metaphoric expression in (112a) to express fart which comes from person's anus. Besides, they use the metaphoric expression *aara baas-e* which people sometimes use for car expelling smoke, but here they use to refer to fart which come out from stomach through anus.

3.7.3. Vomiting

What goes down may come up, particularly food in stomach may on occasion be discharged vigorously upwards through esophagus and mouth. It presumably develops as a productive mechanism against poison or other causes. For example, it includes gastritis which in turn includes those who are not directly linked to digestive tract function like motion, sickness and brain tumor. Babies also regurgitate milk frequently, but this is generally considered to be normal and convenient for a baby among the Oromo. In Oromo society, expressing vomiting directly is forbidden especially for adults. Look at the following Table 16 in which taboos and euphemisms related to vomiting are expressed.

Table 16: Taboo and euphemisms related to vomit

No	Vomiting taboo expression	Euphemistic Expressions for taboo words in the study areas		
		Bale	Hararghe	Wollega
4	(108) <i>hook'k'isa</i> 'vomit'	<i>deek'k'uu</i> 'belch'	<i>lohaa</i> 'creeper'	a. <i>šaataa</i> 'informal name of vomiting' b. <i>ol lolaa</i> 'something which fights up'
4.1	(109) <i>hook'k'is-e/te</i> 'he/she is vomited'	a. <i>hin sif-n-e</i> NEG digest- NEG-PFV 'It was not digested' b. <i>deek'k'-if-at-e/t-e</i> belch-REF-MD-3SM-PFV/3SF- PRFV 'He/she has vomitted' c. <i>k'araša-at-e</i> (for a child) vomit-REF-PFV 'Vomited' d. <i>ol-tuk'-e</i> LOC-touch-PFV 'it touches up'	<i>k'ook'k'-if-at-e/t-e</i> vomit-REF-MD-3SM:PFV/3SF- PFV 'he/she is vomitted'	a. <i>ol guur-a</i> LOC gather-IPFV 'Lit. it gathers up.' 'vomiting' a. <i>ol deeb-is-a</i> LOC return-CAUS-3SM:IPFV 'Lit. it returns up.' 'vomiting' c. <i>diddig-e/t-e</i> [<i>diddigde</i>] vomit-3SM:PFV/3SF-PFV 'He/she has vomited' d. <i>bulgaaf-at-e/t-e</i> (for a child) vomit-REF-3SM:PFV/3SF-PFV 'He/she has vomited.'

For instance, Hararghe and Wollega use the informal expressions *šaataa* and *lohaa* to express vomit rather than calling its direct name. They also express its occurrence in the polite way. For example, Bale Oromo use the expression in (109a) to refer to the food which was taken in has come out. Besides, Bale Oromo use the expression (110d) to express the starting of vomiting while they use the expression (109b) by relating with the sound heard at the moment of vomiting. Similarly, Wollega Oromo use the expressions in (109a-c) to refer to vomiting which comes up from inside through mouth while terms in (109c) in Bale and the expression in (109d) in Wollega refer to child's vomiting. Therefore, people use these euphemistic expressions for vomit and its act so as not to offend others especially while somebody is eating. However, the child's vomiting is not this much considered as taboo like adults.

3.7.4. *bulaa* 'sperm'

The sperm is not taboo by itself, but the way people express may make it taboo or not. The word 'sperm' is derived from Greek word 'sperma' which means 'seed, semen'. In Oromo society, sometimes educated persons use the English word to conceal about the topic they talk about and to diminish the embarrassment that the word *bulaa* provokes. So, uttering the term 'sperm' is not this much taboo; due to this, they call it *ispeermii* by adjusting according to their own pronunciation in the three areas of research sites and use its metaphoric expressions given as in Table 17. Similarly, Bale and Hararghe Oromo use the borrowed Arabic term *miniyyii*²³ for the term sperm. Similarly, Bale and Wollega Oromos use the word *mi oo* which is derived from *mi aa* 'sweet' to express the feeling of excitement that both female and male feel at the moment of ejaculation. Moreover, Bale and Wollega Oromo use the metaphoric expression, *biša'an iiraa* 'male's water' or *finc'aan iiraa* 'male's urine' to express the sperm. Bale Oromo use interchangeably the word, *jiisaa* 'wet maker' to express the moisture which smooth the friction being created at the moment of sexual intercourse.

Similarly, Hararghe Oromo use the metaphoric expression *al a* 'child bearing' to refer to the function of the sperm. Here, the word shows that the child bearer is not something

²³*miniyyii* is an Arabic word which expresses the sperm

else but the sperm ejaculated in female sexual organ. On the other hand, Hararghe Oromo express by the term *janaabda*²⁴ the sperm unconsciously ejaculated in dreaming.

Oromo of Hararghe and Wollega use the metaphoric expression, *sañii kormaa* ‘male’s seed’ and *k’ac’cee* ‘gene’ by comparing similarity of seed’s grain and sperm. Likewise, the sowed seed grows up, and gives fruit; similarly, the male’s seed ejaculated in the womb of a woman also changes into a fetus. The expression, *k’ac’cee* literally refers to generation but here it implies that the sperm which is a grant for the continuity of next generation. In short, the taboo expressions that the Oromo of the research areas avoid and the euphemistic expressions used instead listed in Table 17 below.

²⁴ *janaabda* is also an Arabic word which express the sperm ejaculated in dreaming.

Table 17: Taboo and euphemisms related to sperm

No	Sperm taboo expression	Euphemistic expressions of taboo words in study areas		
		Bale	Hararghe	Wollega
5	(110) <i>bulaa</i> 'sperm'	<p>a. <i>miniyyii</i> 'in Arabic word which means 'sperm'</p> <p>b. <i>miʔoo</i> 'sweet'</p> <p>c. <i>bišaan iira-a</i> water male-GEN 'Lit. male's water.' 'Sperm.'</p> <p>d. <i>finc'aan iira-a</i> urine male-GEN 'Lit. 'male's urine' 'sperm'</p> <p>e. <i>jiisaa</i> 'the one which makes wet'</p> <p>f. <i>c'inaa a dubartii</i> 'woman's rip'</p>	<p>a. <i>al a</i> 'child bearing'</p> <p>b. <i>sañii korma-a</i> seed male-GEN 'Lit. male's seed' 'Sperm'</p> <p>c. <i>šahawaa</i></p> <p>d. <i>miniyyii</i></p> <p>e. <i>finc'aan iira-a</i> urine male-GEN 'Lit. male's urine' 'sperm'</p> <p>f. <i>janaabda</i> (the sperm ejaculated in dreaming)</p>	<p>a. <i>sañii-kormaa</i> 'male's seed'</p> <p>b. <i>k'accee</i> 'gene'</p> <p>c. <i>bišaan kormaa</i> water male:GEN 'Lit. male's water.' 'Sperm.'</p> <p>d. <i>finc'aan iira-a</i> 'male's urine'</p> <p>e. <i>c'op'a iiraa</i> 'male's drop'</p> <p>f. <i>miʔoo</i> 'sweet'</p>

On the other hand, *gadi nak'e* which refers to 'orgasm' is conceptualized as the final stage of the sexual encounter or the end point of the journey during the intercourse. All in all, orgasm is treated as a face threatening term and cannot be mentioned in public. I realized that the term is used mostly by youth, especially among those who are in the same age. On the other hand, the adults and an old group of both sexes are not comfortable talking about the term orgasms as they are more conservative. This is due to the sensitivity of the term. Among Oromo society of the research areas saying *gadi nak'e* 'poured it down' for orgasm is an offensive; so to refer to orgasm, they substitute by the metaphoric expressions in (111a-d).

(111)

a. *buus-e*

drope-3SM:PFV

'Lit. dropped down,'

'Ejaculated.'

b. *angalaʔ-s-e* [*angalaase*]

spill-CAUS-3SM:PFV

'Lit. he split or poured.'

'Ejaculated.'

c. *fit'-e*

finish-3SM:PFV

'Lit. finished.'

'Ejaculated.'

d. *fac'aʔ-s-e* [*fac'aase*]

sow-CAUS-3SM:PFV

'Lit. sowed'.

'Ejaculated.'

3.7.5. Taboos and Euphemism Related to *hobbaatii* ‘placenta’ and *oota* ‘aminotic-fluid’

The Oromo of the research areas do not call the placenta and aminotic fluid. They prefer to euphemize expressions related to them as indicated in Table 18.

Table 18: Taboos and euphemisms related to *hobbaatii* and *oota*

No	General taboo expression	Euphemistic Expressions of taboo words in study areas		
		Bale	Hararghe	Wollega
6	(112) <i>hobbaatii</i> ‘placenta’	a. <i>daha lammaffaa</i> delivery second ‘Lit. second delivery’ ‘placenta’ b. <i>c’iniinsuu lammaffaa</i> labour’ second ‘lit. second labour’ ‘placenta’ c. <i>ofkaltii</i> ‘rescue’	a. <i>ofkaltii</i> ‘rescue’	a. <i>hobbaatii</i> ‘Placenta’ b. <i>ofkaltii</i> ‘rescue’
7	(113) <i>oota</i> ‘aminotic-fluid’	a. <i>bišaan fuula-a</i> water face-GEN ‘Lit. water of face’ ‘Placenta.’ b. <i>bišaan sammuu</i> water brain:GEN ‘Lit. brain’s water’ ‘Placenta.’ c. <i>bubbee</i> ‘wind’	d. <i>bišaan fuula-a</i> water face-GEN ‘Lit. water of face’ ‘Placenta.’	a. <i>bubbee</i> ‘wind’

After delivery of a baby, a woman may be suffered from placenta. For this reason, Oromo society uses the metaphoric expression *c’iniinsuu* and *daha lammaffaa* ‘second labour and second delivery’. The reason why they use the second labour is that placenta creates another problem which may expose the mother even to death after she gave birth. As the result, they also use the expression *ofkaltii* ‘rescue’ because it determines the continuity of a delivering woman’s life.

Besides, people do not directly call the amniotic fluid which is discharged from woman's womb prior to the coming of the baby at the moment of delivery. Bale Oromo also substitute the metaphoric expression *bišaan fuulaa* or *bišaan sammuu* which literally means 'water of face or water of brain, respectively. Similarly, Hararghe and Wollega Oromo call it by the term *bubbee* 'wind' to refer to the harsh time that a woman faces at moment of the delivery.

According to the Oromo culture, after placenta has come out from a woman's womb, it should be buried in the ground. Burying placenta outside of the home is considered as taboo. For example, in Bale Oromo placenta should be buried by the husband but by wife in Wollega. The burial direction of placenta differs depending on the sex of the new baby. If the new baby is male, the placenta is buried on the right side of their home whereas they do that on the left side for female. Interchanging the left and right positions is taboo by itself.

Burying the placenta on the left side for female signify her future life which will be outside of that family due to marriage. Placenta should be buried in deep hole, if not it is believed to create untimely growing up of the teeth which will be a serious pain for that baby. So, the Oromo people of the research area are also sensitive to taboo action related to placenta.

3.8. Taboos and Euphemisms Related to Name

In Oromo, there are taboos associated with names that people are forbidden from calling due to different reasons. The first reason may be for the sake of respect while the other reason is fear. For example, they avoid the direct name of father-/mother-in-law, wife, husband and other relatives allied through marriage relationship for the sake of respect. Under this section, we will look at the names associated with marriage.

3.8.1. Taboo Names Related to Marriage Relationship

In Oromo culture, there are different kinds of marriage relationships. However, in this study, I have focused only on the marriage relationship arranged by couple's family. In this case, the girl who will be a wife of the boy shall be chosen by a boy's family. To do this, the boy's family focuses on the background of the girl's family. For example, they

consider the honor that family has in that particular society or neighbour, class of her family and wellbeing of the family from different transmitted diseases.

Culturally, while elders process this issue, there are things which they consider as taboo and prohibit themselves from seeing, acting and speaking from the beginning day to the wedding day. For example, if elders suddenly see a woman coming ahead carrying empty pot, a single person walking on the street, the snake crossing path, extinguishing of fire and so on they consider them as taboo. However, in this research, I did not focus on its cultural part but on its linguistic taboos part especially issues considered as taboo at the wedding day and the life after the wedding day. In this section, taboos related to naming the bride, sexual intercourse in the honeymoon, ways of avoiding the name of wife, husband, mother-/father-in-laws and other relatives' names are analyzed as follows.

3.8.1.1. Naming the Bride

After the bride came to the bridegroom's family, the ceremony of naming took place. Because calling the bride by her previous name is taboo for the boy's family and relatives. The naming ceremony is accomplished by the boy's family. Culturally, different things are needed for the occasion of naming ceremony. However, in the present study, dealing the detail of the ceremony is not my focus. Different optional names are given by a mother-in-law, father-in-law and other relatives. From the given alternative names, only one is approved depending on the will of the bride. Usually, the bride confirms the alternative name which is given by her mother-in-law.

According to Wollega Oromo, if the bridegroom is the first born son for that family, the name which will be given for the bride of the first son is different from the brides will marry to his second, third...brothers. For the first born son's wife, his family, would rename her by *Duree* 'the prior one', *Soorettii* 'the richest one', *Šeek'k'attuu* 'the comfortable one', *Ayyaantuu* 'the chanceful one' and the like. On the other hand, when the second boy marries, the family also renames his wife as *Hortuu* 'breeder, *Baattuu* 'carrier and *Guuttuu* 'filler'.

The given names have their own interpretations. For example, the name *Duree* refers to the first person included into the family to share either pleasure or terrible life of that family. Similarly, the name *Soorettii* also refers to the prosper life the family wishes for

their future. According to their belief, this name also refers to the wealth and health came with her. Besides, the name *Šeek’k’attuu* refers to a wife has good personality or whose behavior is comfortable. Similarly, the name *Ayyaantu* refers to good fortune the family wish for the couple’s future life in all aspects.

On the other hand, the interpretation given to the younger wife’s name has also significant implication. For example, the name *Hortuu* ‘breeder’ refers to all the fruitful life including the children they are going to have. Similarly, the name *Baattuu* ‘carrier’ also refers to the patience a wife has to carry the burden of the family. Because, they need a woman who is responsible for her husband, as well as for themselves in all happiness or miserable circumstances. Similarly, if the first son’s wife has some drawbacks, the family renames the wife which married to the next boy as *Guuttuu* ‘the filler’ believing that she will fill all the drawbacks or the gaps appeared on the wife of the first son.

On the other hand, if perhaps divorced case is occurred and he gets married for the second time, the family renames the second wife by *Dandeessuu* ‘tolerant’ believing as she is the one who handles hardships of life patiently. Additionally, they may rename her as *Raggaatuu* ‘the confirmed one’ in order to avoid the doubt of divorcing. They may also rename her by *K’abbanee* ‘the cool one’; especially they prefer this name if the former wife was mischievous. Believing to compensate the bad behavior of the former wife, they favor calling her by *K’abbanee* which means cool. However, from the given alternative names only one will be confirmed and become formal name in that family. Among the Oromo of Wollega, renaming the bride out of the mentioned context is considered as taboo. Besides, calling by her former name is also considered as they deny to respect and love her. Next to renaming ceremony, the bride and bridegroom proceed to meet each other (perform sexual intercourse). However, the expressions they use for the sexual intercourse at the wedding day, a little bit differed from the usual one. There are taboo expressions related to sexual intercourse which people ban from uttering.

3.8.1.2. Taboos and Euphemisms Related to Sexual Intercourse in Honeymoon

After renaming ceremony is completed, the time is given for the bride and bridegroom for sexual intercourse. However, as I have got information from Bale, there are

preconditions which will be rearranged especially by the mother-in-law. Foreexample, before they perform sexual intercourse, she cut the bride's hand's nail, rearrange her hair and so on. These are done to keep the safety of the boy. Cutting her nail is to protect from any damage may be inflicted by the bride during sexual intercourse; because it is believed that she has not experience of sex before. Due to this, she may struggle and harm him by her nail. Performing sexual intercourse before insuring all these preconditions are unrecommended.

After sexual intercourse, everybody is sensitive to hear whether the bride is virgin or not. On this occasion, there are specific expressions that the Oromo people use and avoid to express her virginity. For a bride who gave her virginity to her husband, expressing her by *uramte* 'penetrated' is taboo. Instead, Oromo of Bale express as in (114):

(114) *warroom-s-at-e* [*warroomfat-e*]

wife -CAUS-MD-3SM: PFV

'He made her his own wife.'

Similarly, the Oromo of Hararghe express as:

(115) *kabaja išee irra-a fu -at-e*

honor her LOC-ABL take-MD-3SF:PFV

'Lit. he took her honor.'

'He took her virginity.'

In similar way, Oromo of Wollega use expressions in (116):

(116)

a. *k'arree bu²-s-at-t-e* [*buufatte*]

virginity drop-CAUS-MD-3SF-PFV

'Lit. she dropped her virginity.'

'She became a woman.'

b. *sabbata hiik-at-t-e* [*hiikkatte*]

girdle loose-MD-3SF-PFV

'Lit. she loosed her girdle.'

'She became a wife.'

c. *durbummaa irra-a fu -at-e*
 virgin LOC-ABL take-MD-3SM:PFV
 ‘He took her virginity.’

d. *gulaantaa guut-t-e*
 formality complete-3SF-PFV
 ‘Lit. she completed the formality.’
 ‘She gave her virginity.’

The euphemistic expressions in (114), (115) and (116) are unique from the euphemistic expressions given for sexual intercourse performed out of the occasion of wedding day. For example, they use the expression in (83d) *waliin c’iisaan* to euphemize sexual intercourse, but here the expressions *waliin c’iisan* ‘they slept together’ is becoming inappropriate to express sex performed for the first time in honeymoon. In the research areas honeymoon is known in different name. It is known as ‘*aruuzaa*’ in Hararghe and ‘*c’aagulaa*’ in Wollega. After a bridegroom took her virginity, there is a song which performed regarding her virginity; it is called *barsa-bahee* and *hansoosillee* in Bale and Wollega, respectively. For example, in Wollega, if the bride is virgin, the bridegroom’s family sends the news to her family, at this time they say *hansoosillee wareen deebitee*...which means here the good news returned to us our girl is virgin. The term *waree* is an Amharic word which means ‘news’. The expressions in (116a-d) are interpreted in (58a-d).

3.8.1.3. Taboos and Euphemisms related to *Aruuzaa* ‘honeymoon’ in Hararghe Oromo

In Hararghe, there are expressions considered as taboo in honeymoon which are unique or not practised in Bale and Wollega Oromo. In Hararghe, the bride and bridegroom will stay a week in *aruuzaa* ‘honeymoon’ after wedding day. In honeymoon, there are actions and expressions which are considered as taboo. Knowing these acts and expressions are important to save from doing or speaking them directly. As a result of this, they prohibit doing these acts and replace the terms by other term/expressions. Therefore, somebody can

call the bridegroom and bride substituting as the expression in (117) and (118), respectively:

- (117) *ol-aan-a-a*
up-high-3SM-VN
'Lit. the higher'.
'Bridegroom's name.'

Individuals who came to the honeymoon should refrain calling his previous name; because they have high respect to him. The one who breaks this norm will be punished according to the decision of judges elected to follow up this issue.

Similarly, calling the name of a bride is taboo; so people would substitute her name as expression in (118):

- (118) *ol-aan-t-uu*
up-high-3SF-VN
'lit. higher one'
'Bride's name.'

If someone abruptly calls a bride's name while they stay temporarily in the honeymoon, he/she will be sanctioned as per the norm coined by judges. Additionally, in the honeymoon uttering terms like *bišaan* 'water' and *jimaa* 'chat' in honeymoon are taboo. So, everyone substitutes the two terms as:

(119) *bišaan* 'water' *areera* 'cheese'.

(120) *jimaa* 'chat' *rahaanaa*²⁵.

Besides, if unfortunately someone puts his/her hand on his/her nose or face, it is considered as taboo because people in the honeymoon may raise question like, 'what kind of bad smell have you smelt here?'. Entering honeymoon without saying, *olaanaan bakkatti*, *olaantuun bakkatti* which means 'a bride or bridegroom should take your seat'

²⁵ *Rahaana* is a tree which has good odour and people use as incense.

is also taboo. Therefore, after everybody says these statements, he/she can enter and greet both bride and bridegroom.

According to this regulation, if somebody violates the norm of honeymoon, the judges may punish the violator by one of the following means:

- (a) paying money
- (b) dancing
- (c) kissing the one he/she likes
- (d) present his/her cloth for bidding
- (e) exhibit sport
- (f) cry with one eye

According to the participants'²⁶, in Hararghe Oromo all these activities are practiced for the sake of entertaining people. However, breaking and refusing to accept the given decision make someone an ignorant in that particular community. He/she can't participate in any social affairs and no one asks his daughter for marriage relationship. Even if someone dies from the family, the society do not participate the funeral. From this explanation, we understand that apart from entertainment, this tradition has a significant role to increase the relationship people have in their social life.

3.8.1.4. Taboos Related to Name Calling and Substitution Mechanisms

After the couple started to live together, they never call the name of each other, their father-/mother-in-law and other relatives from both sides. In Oromo, calling the direct names of these individuals is considered as taboo. If the husband or the wife breaks this norm, the father-/mother-in-law and other relatives are offended; even they reject or consider as mischeivious person. Thus, to avoid this taboo the wife and husband use different substitution mechanisms as follows:

3.8.1.4.1. Taboo Name to be Avoided by the Wife

Due to prohibition of the society, the following individual names should be avoided and substituted by a wife.

²⁶ *Sufiyan Abdella, Rihana Jemal & Najash Abdella*

(a) Substitutes Used for Her Husband's Name

According to the norm of Oromo societies of research areas, calling her husband's name is taboo for a wife. To avoid this, she uses the following substitution techniques:

i. Using pronouns

Instead of calling her husband's name, she may use interchangeably the pronoun *isin* 'you', *isaan* 'they' and *keeña* 'ours'. For example, look at the expressions in (121):

(121)

- a. *isin* *maal hojj-at-t-u?*
you:2PL what work-VBZR-2PL-IPFV
'What are **you** doing?'

Literally *isin* 'you' (plural) or honorific you, but she uses for honorific. She uses the expression in (121a) when she directly talks with her husband. When she talks about him with the others, she uses the expression in (121b).

- b. *isaan* *uf-an-(i)-i?*
they come-3PL-PFV-INTRG
'Did **they** come?'

Literally, *isaan* 'they' (plural) or honorific you but she uses for honorific.

ii. Using belongingness specifies

The wife also uses the belongingness specifier. She uses *keeña* 'ours' as:

(122)

- a. *keenna/keeña* *koott-a-a*
ours come-2PL-IMPR
'**ours** come!'

Literally *keeña* 'ours' (plural) or honorific but she uses for honorific. The expression *keenna* and *keeña* are used by Bale and Wollega Oromo respectively.

iii. Using of *abbaa* 'father of' plus child's name

If they have a child, she calls her husband by her first born child's name; if they currently have not a child, she calls him by a child they are going to have. For example, if the first

born child's name is *Abdi*, she calls her husband as **Abbaa** Abdi as the expression in (123).

- (123) *abbaa Abdi-i*
father Abdi-GEN (name)
'Abdi's father' (where **Abdi** is male).

iv. Using of physical trait of the husband preceded by *abbaa*

She calls her husband's name by his horse's physical trait preceded by *abbaa* which means 'owner of'.

- (124)
- a. *boora* 'brown' *abbaa boora*
father brown
'Owner of the brown horse'
- b. *daala a* 'ashen' *abbaa daala a*
father ashen
'Owner of the ashen horse'
- c. *diimaa* 'red' *abbaa diimaa*
'father red
'Owner of the red horse'.

Besides, the use of derivatives from names under social taboo and of phonetically similar sounds in identical or nearly identical environments as those in the names under the taboo is prohibited. This brings the wife and her relatives under great anxiety because even ordinary lexical items that have any such resemblance are also taboo. For example, if we take the name *Bik'ila* which derives from *bik'ila* (plant shoots), all derivatives from this word and all the words with similar sound sequences should be avoided. Consequently, words like: *Bik'iluu* 'to sprout', *Bik'ile* 'sprouted', *Bik'iltuu* 'may refer to feminine' and *Bik'iloota* 'plants' are words considered as taboo. Due to this, she changes the initial sound of the name as *sikilaa* which is meaningless or gives synonymous meaning as *Margaa* which means 'grass'. In relation to this, Mbaya (2002:230) expresses the word *mark'aa* meaning 'porridge' has the sound similar to /g/ of *margaa* in the same environment; as consequence of this, it is also avoided. Its derivatives *mark'e* 'he prepared porridge' and *mark'ite* 'she prepared porridge' should not be used either.

v. Using the name of ox plus *abbaa*

If they have not a child, the wife may use the name of her husband's ox with which he ploughs plus *abbaa* as in (125).

(125)

a. *abbaa gurree*

father black:GEN

'The owner of a black ox.'

vi. Using strong behavior plus *abbaa*

Sometimes the wife calls her husband's name by using his strong side or behavior as:

(126)

a. *abbaa k'urt'aa*

father nervous:GEN

'The one who is nervous.'

b. *abbaa dilbii*

father much grain:GEN

'The one who has much grain.'

vii. Using physical traits plus *abbaa*

Sometimes she may use his physical traits plus *abba* as in (127):

(127)

a. *abbaa kaarruu*

father gap teethed:GEN

'The gap teethed.'

b. *abbaa simboo*

father grace:GEN

'The one who is graceful.'

According to my informants', these days a wife does not use carefully all these substitutions to call her husband except in some rural areas, due to the influence modern way of life.

(b) Substitutes the wife uses for her father-in-laws' name

She refrains from addressing the name of her father-in-law and substitutes by the following techniques:

i. She calls as her husband calls his father

She may call her father-in-law following the way her husband calls his father. She may use one of the following alternatives:

(128) *abbaa* 'father' and sometimes *abbaa* plus *faa* *abbaafaa* 'our father'

ii. She uses honour specifier pronouns

Instead of her father-in-law's name, she interchangeably substitutes pronouns in

(129)

- a. *isaan* 'they'
- b. *isin* 'you'

She uses the pronoun *isaan* 'they' while she is talking about her father-in-law to somebody and uses the pronoun *isin* 'you' at the moment she is speaking directly to him. Besides, the wife should avoid synonymous name of her father-in-law which is called *moggoo* in Afaan Oromoo. In this case, she uses another mechanism. For example, in Wollega when she encounters such a problem, she uses different techniques. If her father-in-law's name is *Olaanii*, she avoids all names which are *olaanii* and the morphemes close to *olaanii*. She calls other *Olaanii* names by using *moggoo-faa* which refers to similar names of two people whereas the morpheme *-faa* refers to the honor. In addition to this, as explained before, she cannot call similar names even morphemes nearer to it or derivatives of her father-in-law's name. For example, in case of the name **Olaanii**, she avoids the names like *Olii*, *Oliik'aa*, *Olyaad* and others due to the similarity of the syllable at the beginning of the name *Olaanii*.

iii. She uses synonymous words

In similar way, in Bale Oromo, when a wife faces similar names with her father-in-law', she substitutes the name by synonym words or change the initial sound. For example, if her father-in-law's name is *Tolaa*, she may substitute by its synonymous *Bilisaa* because the meaning *Tola* and *Bilisa* mean 'free' which we call in Amharic 'nesa or nesamet'. Sometimes in Bale she may change the initial sound of the name. For example, she changes the sounds 'o and aa' in *Tolaa* by sound 'u and uu' in *Tulluu*. This means she

replaces ‘o’ to ‘u’ and ‘aa’ to ‘uu’. With respect to this, (see Wondwosen Tesfaye, 1991:76).

iv. She uses abbaa plus child’s name

In Hararghe she uses *abbaa* ‘father’ plus his first child’s name. For example, if the first born son name is *Gamma uu*, she says, *abbaa Gamma uu* ‘Gammaa uu’s father’ while she calls the son, *Gamma uu* directly which is taboo in Wollega.

(c) Substitutes Used for Mother in-Law’s Name

She may follow the way her husband calls his mother. For instance, she calls as follows:

i. *aayyoo/aayyaa/ayyoo-faa/ayyoo-ko-faa* ‘Mother or my mother’

She can use interchangeably from the given options. For example, *aayyaa* is used in Bale While *aayyoo* is used by Hararghe and Wollega. But they have similar meaning. Look at the expression in (130):

(130)

a. *aayyaa, maal taat-an-(i)?* (in Bale)

mother what happen-2PL-PFV

‘Mother, what is up?’

b. *aayyo, yoom uft-an-(i)?* (in Hararge and Wollega)

mother when come-2PL-PFV

‘Mother, when did you come?’

c. *aayyo-kofaa waam-i!*

mother-my:ASSO call-2S:IMPR

‘Call my mother!’

ii. She also uses the pronoun *isin* ‘you’ and *isaan* ‘they’

(131)

a. *isin maal taat-an-(i)?*

you what heppen-2PL-PFV

‘What happens to you?’

Literally you (plural) but here it is used as honorific expression.

(132) *isaan eessa jir-u?*

they where there-3PL: INTRG

‘Where are they?’ Literally they (plural) but in this context, it refers to honorific.

Here, we should understand that she uses similar substitution for her step-mother and for her husband’s uncle’s wives.

(d) Substitutes Used for Husband’s Grandmother’s and Grandfather’s Names

A wife does not call the name of her husband’s grandmother and grandfather’s name. She avoids by substituting as:

(133) *akkoo* ‘grandmother’

(134) *akaakoo/akaakayyuu* ‘grandfather’.

(e) Substitutes Used for husband’s Sisters’ name

A wife does not call the direct name of her husband’s sisters including his cousin (for daughters) since it is considered as taboo. As a result, in the all research areas they use the expression in (135a) whereas the expression in (135b) is only used in Wollega.

(135)

a. *sayyuu*

b. *jaalako*

For example, *sayyuu/jaalako waami* ‘call my *sayyuu/jalakoo!*’

c. Substitutes Used for husband’s brothers’ names

For example, she avoids their name as:

(136)

a. *abbaa k’albi*

father caution: GEN

‘The cautious one.’

b. *abbaa kaarruu*

father gap toothed:GEN

‘The gap toothed one.’

In Hararghe, she calls her husband’s younger brother’s name as in (137):

(137) *dumaašii*

d. Substitutes used for husband's uncles and aunts

She calls her husband's uncle as:

(138) *abbaa* 'plus first born son. For instance, *abbaa Gamma is* 'Gamma is's father' and so forth. Similarly, she calls her husband's uncle's wives with the expression in (139).

(139) *aayyoo/aayyaa* 'mother' or by first born son's name as: *aayyoo Gamma iis* 'Gamma is's mother'.

In the same way, she may call her husband's aunt by adding the honor specifier morpheme '-faa' as in (140):

(140) *adaadaa-faa/adaadoo-faa* 'my aunt(s)'

However, the expressions that the wife uses to avoid the taboo name of her husband's relatives can be determined depending on the age of the individuals. For example, sometimes she may call babies by their direct name without substitution.

3.8.1.4.2. Taboo Name to be Substituted by Husband

Taboo names which the husband avoids and substitutes are explained as follows.

(a) Substitutes used for the name of his wife

In Oromo culture, especially in the past, the husband avoids calling the name of his wife; because the norm does not allow him. Thus, he shall use substitutions as follows:

i. Using possessive belongingness marker

A husband may call his wife by using possessive noun marker, *kiyya/koo* which means 'my' as:

(141)

a. *haa a mana-a kiyya*
mother house-GEN mine
'My house wife' (in Bale)

b. *Inaayee* 'my only one' (in Bale)

c. *haa a warra-a tiyya*

mother partner-GEN mine
'My partner' (in Hararghe)

- d. *jaar-tii ko*
old-3SF mine
'My older woman.'(in Wollega)

(b) Substitutes used for the name of father-in-law

In order to not threaten the honour of his father-in-law, he follows the way his wife calls her father as in (142).

(142)

- a. *abbaa/abbaa-faa* 'father'

(c) Substitutes used for the name of mother-in-law

The husband never calls the name of his mother-in-law. He substitutes the name as:

- (143) *aayyaa/aayyoo ko-faa* 'mother/my mother'.

(d) Substitutes he used for wife's sisters' name

He also does not call the name of his wife's sisters' name. For example, in Wollega, he substitutes as:

(144)

- a. *soddaa* 'my-in-law (in Bale and Hararghe)
b. *jaalako* 'my lovely' (in Wollega)

(e) Substitutes he uses for wife's brothers' name

He substitutes the name of his wife's brothers' name by using pronouns *isin* 'you' or *isaan* 'they'

(145)

- a. *isaan eessa deem-an-i?*
they where go-3PL-PFV:INTRG
'Where did they go?'

Here, the pronoun **they** used as honor marker not plural.

- b. *isin yoom uf-t-u?*
you when come-2PL-IPFV:INTRG
'When will **you** come?', you refers to honor.

CHAPTER FOUR

4. DISCUSSION AND FINDINGS

4.1. Introduction

In this chapter, the main purpose is to explain the results of the findings with reference to the basic research questions formulated under the statement of the problem. Thus, it provides explanations and interpretations of the results. Moreover, this part is devoted to categorize and describe the linguistic taboos, describe the contextual meaning of euphemized terms, strategies of euphemistic expression, similarities and differences of linguistic taboos and euphemistic expressions, factors which determine taboos, and euphemistic expressions usage among Bale, Hararghe and Wollega Oromo and therein indicate implications of studying linguistic taboos and euphemisms.

The data which were extensively analyzed in this dissertation revealed that in their daily communication, Oromo society are highly intertwined with their language, norm and culture. In Afaan Oromoo, there are many taboo words that people avoid to utter them in public in order to not offend or to save someone's face loss. The major discussion of the findings with reference to the basic research questions is delineated and presented as follows:

4.2. Categories of Taboos and Euphemistic Expressions usage in Oromo

The study has indentified the major category of linguistic taboos related to death, disease, woman (pregnancy, menstruation, delivery and virginity), sex (sexual organs and sexual acts), some human being's normal and impaired body parts, bodily excretion, kinship names (father/mother-in law, husband and wife) that have been found to exist among the societies of the study areas. These tabooed categories are similarly known among the Oromo societies of the research areas. Together with these tabooed categories, the practices of the appropriate euphemistic expressions to avoid these tabooed subjects have been observed too.

The study has also found out that the influence of context of use which makes a certain word taboo or not. Most of the time I observed that when people only consider and recognize taboo words related to sex and sexual organs as taboo which the reality is not.

The very important idea that we should understand is, in Oromo society of the research areas, not only taboo words are taboos, but also there are non-taboo words/expressions which have got tabooed meanings depending on a given context. In similar way, the context of use also determines the corresponding euphemisms of these taboo words. For example, the name which is not taboo for everyone becomes taboo if a wife or husband calls father-/mother-in-laws with their proper name. Therefore, as it has been already explained in the framework of this study, the contexts of situation in which words used determine their meaning. As the result, taboo words and their euphemism are principally determined by the choice of expression within a given context: both world spoken of and the world spoken in (Allan and Burrige, 1991:4). So, we cannot properly judge taboo or euphemistic expressions without this information, because of which illustration dictionaries of euphemisms are never entirely successful.

According to speech act theory, when people communicate with one another, in addition to the exchange of information, they perform various acts coincidentally (Searle, 1979:1). For example, an illocutionary act is the speaker's intentional purpose or force to convey the message through the medium of language. So, in the interpretation of euphemisms this theory seems valid because the euphemized expressions themselves may comprise intricate meaning depending on the context and intension of the speakers. The expression *iiga k'abdi* which is considered as taboo in such use may not be taboo in another context. For example, if a certain woman suddenly cuts her hand by knife, and someone says *iiga k'abdi* 'she is bleeding', it does not imply taboo meaning. The woman herself does not also bother herself to hide just like her menstruation. From these descriptions we can understand that the context and intension in which the communication takes place determine the tabooeness of the expressions and shift its semantic meaning. Thus, meanings get interpreted in communicative situations in relation to the speaker and the hearer.

Without the practical context of use, even if some euphemized expressions are syntactically acceptable, they are semantically confusing someone especially who is non native Oromo. For example, the expression *garaa irra jirti* 'she is on stomach' used by Bale Oromo instead of *iiga k'abdi* 'she has blood' refer to a menstruate woman.

However, the meaning of the expression confuses a person who comes from Wollega and Hararghe. The reason is that the expression implies a woman who stands on someone's stomach which is of course illogical.

The other thing that I found from this study is that the factor that makes most expressions taboo is both linguistic aspects and social aspects of the language use. For example, without social meaning, the expression *siree c'absii kaʔi* 'may you stand up by breaking the bed' which people use to congratulate a woman who gave birth is not taboo by itself. This means that, 'social meaning' establish and regulate social relations to maintain social roles. Here, the literal meaning of *siree c'absii kaʔi* does not explain what the person wants to say; because the denotative meaning of this expression is not the intension of the speaker. The expression has another connotative meaning *furda u* 'be fat'. Because, if a woman who gave birth becomes fat, her fatness may become too heavy to the bed and can break it. As we have seen in theoretical framework of the study, from these expressions we understand that the pragmatic approach to euphemism related to 'context of situations' can determine the meaning of expressions. The difference in meaning due to the context of use and dialects are normal in language use, but if the meaning is taboo, it may cause shame, offense, conflict and disagreement between interlocutors.

The study has found that among the research areas, rather than taboo words, many euphemistic expressions which are given for a single taboo word depending on the specific context make the meaning of the referent more complicated. Because the physical environment of discourse is obvious sources of contextual assumptions that may help in identifying the speaker's meaning. The hearer's choice of context makes a difference in the interpretation process. Once a hearer knows what contextual assumptions need to be used, the intended implications follow by straightforward logical deduction. Therefore, from these descriptions, we can understand that identifying taboo words and interpreting the semantic meaning of their euphemistic expressions need a deep knowledge and skill of using them appropriately according to the particular context of Oromo society of the research areas. Due to the lack of this knowledge in their daily

communication, people express taboo words directly or replace them by inappropriate euphemistic expressions or another alternative taboo expression.

In general, this study found out that taboo words in Oromo society can be categorized into two broad categories: Context-specific and general taboo which is in line with Qanbar (2011) classification of taboo of Yemeni's society.

The taboo words under context-specific category are divided into two subcategories as non-taboo words and words related to the hearer's physical or social defects.

Non-taboo words are words which have a neutral or non-taboo meaning in everyday speech. But they got tabooed implication in a given context like insulting. According to Hongxu and Guisen (1990) observation, in most cases language taboos are often associated with vulgarity, obscenity, insults, rudeness, offensiveness and sacredness. Hence, it can be seen why the use of swearwords and insults are considered as a sort of taboo words. Nonetheless, words which have been prohibited would also become the kind of words people use to express their feelings of dissatisfaction towards some situations, people or something. It seems as if taboo words enable the speaker to express his/her frustrations but yet at the same time, they are disallowed because such words are offensive. This creates a case of dichotomy for the users. It can be noticed that when people are frustrated, they are forced to use such taboo words. For example, in insulting situation, people use taboo words as *booyyee* 'pig' to rid off their frustration. Taboo words related to the hearer's physical or social defects are any words with connotations to the hearer representing for physical or social defect because of they are not comply with the particular society's norm. Mentioning *jaamaa* 'blind' in front of a blind person and others are considered tabooed terms related to physical or social defects. Thus, the very important point when discussing taboos and euphemism in general is that the emotive aspects of the words are context dependent.

Additionally, general taboo topic includes unmentionable words which someone is obliged to euphemize to make his/her speech non-offensive. The absolutely forbidden words may be divided into the next subcategories: Words or terms referring to the private sexual organs of the human body and their functions. In Oromo society of the research

areas especially women are sensitive when they refer to sexual body parts. They avoid mentioning them directly and resort to euphemistic expressions when avoidance is impossible. Although a large number of euphemistic expressions for talking about sex and sexual organs are there, the speakers cannot talk about them openly and blamelessly, especially with the opposite sex.

The other general taboo topic is excretion. According to Samadi (2014) all bodily excretion categories illustrate that most taboo words occur because people do not want to make direct references to specific actions such as excreting waste from the anus, passing urine, or dying and so on. This kind of phenomenon occurs not just because the action itself sounds crude to the hearer, and in some instances, the word can be nauseating (figuratively) for the hearer but because these words can conjure unpleasant images. Moreover, the proper name of father/mother in-laws or other relatives are unmentionable for both wife and husband.

4.3. Strategies of Euphemizing Linguistic Taboos and Their Semantic interpretations

The study has found out that Oromo society uses euphemistic expressions to mild, vague, roundabout, indirect, polite, less distasteful, inoffensive, agreeable, tactful, and less explicit to have comparatively favorable implications or less unpleasant associations whereas the substituted taboo words/expressions are characterized as harsh, blunt, direct, distasteful, painful, unpleasant, indelicate, offensive, or frightening. They do this to overcome the problems come through violation of taboos and in order not to be exposed for the loss of someone's face. In line with this, Scott (1990:152) argues that "from the psychological point of view we tend to invoke euphemisms, and are encouraged by others to invoke euphemistic forms or expressions, as a means of skirting around issues and ideas which, otherwise, would be problematic and/or discomfiting to address by more direct means".

For establishing euphemism as a verbal strategy and analyzing its implications in relation to politeness and face concerns, it is necessary to adopt a more comprehensive view than the one generally followed in the study of linguistic interdiction. In fact, euphemism is considered as a purely lexical phenomenon employed to substitute words and expressions

deemed unfit for polite linguistic usage. Clearly, euphemism responds to the desire to avoid certain taboos that can negatively affect conventional norms of tact as well as the speaker's and addressee's social images. This is the case in the allusion to certain taboo concepts deemed unfit for polite conversation.

The study revealed that in Oromo society of the research areas, to euphemize taboo expressions, different strategies are used. Mostly they employ figure of speech which consists in the substitution of expression of comparatively favorable implication or less unpleasant associations, instead of the harsh or more offensive one that would more precisely designate what is intended. Based on what has been analyzed so far, euphemizing process, through some particular linguistic devices, attempts to maintain the face wants of interlocutors and not to transgress the depicted cultural boundaries. Language users acquire sufficient means of censoring their behavior and their tongue by virtue of being aware of taboo as well as permitted cultural domains.

Indeed, Oromo societies of the study areas avoid using taboos in their connection with each others, and tend to replace these expressions with certain mechanisms. Through their daily interaction, in order to avoid taboos and to protect their faces and politeness, they euphemize through certain strategies including metaphor, metonymy (whole- for- a part), synecdoche (part-for-a whole), antonymy, overstatement, understatement, circumlocution, abstraction, onomatopoeia, borrowing, phonemic replacement and so on. However, the frequency of these strategies used in communication is not the same. In the current study, metaphoric, metonymic, antonymic, hyperbolic, understatement and circumlocution expressions are more frequently used than the others.

Next to this let us look at how taboo words are euphemized through euphemism strategies and their semantic interpretations. When we euphemize taboo words, semantic shift is reflected. From the perspective of semantic shift, words which revolve around the same topic differ in connotation and appear in different context. This example is given by Allan and Burridge (2006:47), in their discussion of cross-varietal synonymy, which refers to words that are basically synonymous in denotation but differ in their connotation. As a result, the semantic of taboo words and their corresponding

euphemistic expressions are basically synonymous in denotation but differ in level of their politeness. Hereunder the strategies of euphemism and the meaning of euphemized expressions are discussed.

As we have already seen in the analysis part, the data prove that the Oromo society of the study areas use the metaphoric expression strategy more frequently to avoid taboo words. Next to this, some metaphorical expressions and their semantic interpretation were given. For example, to express death, instead of saying 'he/she has died', they use the expression, *ñaaata iis-e/te* 'he/she stopped to eat food' and *areera unuu iis-e/te* 'he/she ceased sipping milk'. To live, *ñaaata* 'food' is obligatory. This is because it needed by human body for energy, for repairing and building cells and for preventing disease and healing it. So, when someone permanently stops to intake it, it ends in the death of the person. However, somebody may refuse to eat food due to sickness or satisfaction, but for these cases they do not use the term *iis-e/te* 'he/she stopped'; they use *ñaaata did-e/de* 'he/she refused food'. Because of the latter expression implies the temporal refusal of eating food. Besides, when someone dies, he/she stops many things but to express death, people do not use other things that a deceased person stops. There are two or more words with the same form and related meanings, technically known as polysemy that has multiple meanings which are related by extension. But these related meanings cannot refer to death. For example, they do not say *hojii iis-e/te* 'he/she stopped to work', *mana iis-e/te* 'he/she stopped to live in house' and so forth to refer to the death of someone. In this case, the literal meaning of the expression is changed and it acquires totally different meanings from the literal one. This may lead us to conclude that semantic shift occurs when a new word becomes attached to a new sense.

When a wife dies, people hearten her husband by the expression *ibiddi siif haa o?u* 'let the fire be heat up to you' which is metaphoric expression; because, the term *ibidda* 'fire' is very important thing for human being. Without fire cooking and heating is impossible. Similarly, a house without wife is nothing; because here the word 'heat' does not refers to heat of fire, but all contributions a wife has in house. She cleans and arranges materials in the house and makes them beautiful, she carries and cares a baby and so on. Regarding to

this, in Oromo society, when someone marries, there is a blessing *abiddi si haa o?u* ‘let the fire heat to you’ which implies the love of husband and wife.

Metonymic expression is also one strategy of euphemism that Oromo societies of the research areas use to avoid taboo words. For example, the expression *mata lama* literally means ‘two heads’ which they use to utter pregnancy. The expression is not arbitrary chosen. Heads have very much to do with it. The mother has a head, and unborn baby has a head; that makes two heads. The meaning transfer involves when this expression was coined by the creative first inventor consisted in the imaginative shift of not using the word *ulfa* (in any form), to refer to the phenomenon for reasons of shyness, shame or something else, but choosing one aspect of the situation, viz. the two heads inside the focused area (the condition of that woman) to refer to pregnancy. Any other aspect might have been chosen, in that respect the choice is arbitrary: He might have chosen *lubbuu*, which has a similar reason, as in fact someone else does. This usage has been spread to other users of Oromo, and gradually a diachronic change occurred: a composite expression with a derivable meaning got a new unpredictable meaning and entered into the lexicon of the language users as a euphemism for pregnancy. Similarly, the society uses the expression *garaatii k’abdi* ‘she has something in her belly’ to refer to pregnancy. However, there are many things which belly contains, but in this context, the considered thing is not the other body parts that belly contains but the unborn baby. The thing inside woman’s belly is not specified, it is generally described by the container (belly) to express unborn baby. For this reason we can say the strategy is metonymic.

Besides, a wife addresses her husband’s sexual organ as *k’ullaa isaa* ‘his naked body’ which is also metonymic strategy. The literal (denotative) meaning of this expression refers to the body parts which are naked in general but in this context, the connotative meaning or semantic shift implies her husband’s sexual organ which he never allows to be naked. Here the important issue that we have to understand is, in fact when a woman calls *k’ullaa isaa*, his body is not bare; but she uses even at the moment he wears his clothes. Actually, there are our body parts which we do not care of their bareness and which could not create embarrassment if others see. For example, from our body parts, if our face, hand, arm, leg are bare, they cannot create any shame or their bareness could

not refer to sexual organ. Therefore, when someone hears the metonymic expression *kullaa isaa/išee*, the first thing which comes to the mind of hearer is not the nakedness of the other body parts but sexual organ. What helps the person to know the meaning is the ad hoc concept he/she has. The lexical pragmatic approach, ad hoc concepts are not given linguistically, but they are made in specific contexts in response to specific expectations of relevance. People can incorporate different information from long term memory in the encyclopedic entries to form distinct concepts for a single word/expression. For example, if someone says a certain woman *kullaan kee mulʔate* ‘your naked body has been seen’, immediately she is quick to cover her sexual organ than thinking about her other naked body parts.

At the same time two strategies of euphemism may be used. To euphemize the taboo term ‘penis’ both metaphoric and metonymic expression may be utilized. They may substitute the word *meešaa* instead of penis. Literally, the semantic of this term can be any instruments which people use to do something by it. Metaphorically, this expression also refers to a male sexual organ (*meešaa*) which he uses as instrument to perform sexual intercourse. In addition to this, sometimes, in Oromo society, people use the term *meešaa* to refer to *kawwee* ‘gun’. As it is already known, people use ‘gun’ in war time to shoot their enemies but here the semantic extension or the conceptual meaning of *meešaa* ‘gun’ covers the war (shooting each other) of a man putting the one that goes to war (penis) into the lady’s organ. On the other hand, the expression *meešaa* is metonymic; because there are ample of instruments which we call generally *meešaa* but in the context of talking about sex, it refers to a male sexual organ; not other items. Here, the meaning of *meešaa* has widened to mean more than its original meaning. The word initially meant ‘any instrument’ but with time the meaning included *kawwee* ‘gun’ and presently, the word can also be used to mean ‘penis’. The word which originally had only one meaning now may have three meanings. However, the word which was used to mean ‘instrument’ has acquired a new meaning when used metaphorically to replace the taboo word penis. Whatever it is, to identify which kind of *meešaa* (gun, penis or other instruments) the context in which the communication takes place determine the meaning of the term.

In the realm of cognitive linguistics, metaphors are “devices that allow us to understand one domain of experience in terms of another” (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980: 117). The Conceptual metaphor theory proposed by Lakoff & Johnson (1980) is a commonly used cognitive model in cognitive linguistics. Within the cognitive tradition, metaphor is thus understood as a device with the capacity to structure our conceptual system, providing at the same time a particular understanding of the world and a way of making sense of our experiences. In relation to this, to euphemize sexual intercourse, conceptual metaphor is very essential. The conceptual categories are: *k'uunnamtii* ‘communication’, *hojii* ‘work’ and *hariiroo* ‘companionship’. Let us have a look at them below.

Sexual intercourse is communication and work; here the conceptual metaphors that illustrate sexual intercourse as communication and work are: *k'uunnamtii saalaa raaww-at-e/t-e* ‘he/she performed sexual intercourse’, *wal-arg-an* ‘they saw each other’, *gulantaa irra jir-u* ‘they are on the stage’ and *fe ii foon-ii raaww-at-an* ‘he/she performed the need of his/her flesh.’ For instance, in the sentence, *k'uunnamtii saalaa raaww-at-e/t-e*, the literal meaning of *k'uunnamtii* ‘communication’ refers to the action of communicating or the exchanging of information between the sender and receiver. But here it does not express the verbal communication that has happened between the sender and receiver but it implies a contact of male and female sexual organs during intercourse. Besides, in this sentence, the term *raaww-at-e/t-e* ‘he/she performed’ shows someone who worked, carried out and fulfill something. But here, the task or action which has been performed is not something else but sexual intercourse. When we say *k'uunnamtii saalaa raaww-at-e/t-e* it refers to someone who performed sexual intercourse; therefore, sexual intercourse is both communication and work.

Besides, sexual intercourse is companionship which is the most common conceptual metaphor making up sexual intercourse companionship like *wal-arg-an* ‘they saw each other’, *bira gah-e/gees-e* ‘he/she reached near each other’, *waliin c'iis-e/t-e* ‘he/she slept with’, *wajjin jir-u* ‘they are together’, *wal-baas-an* ‘they knew each other for sex’. Morphologically the expression marked by the reciprocal morpheme {*wal-*}, as in the expression *wal-arg-an* ‘they saw each other.’ The effects of the sense which sees each other during sexual intercourse are the male and the female genitalia which see each other

are clearly discernible. However, the two individuals who see each other are not identified. But here the two individuals are the male and female sexual organs which are abstractly described.

Moreover, the Oromo societies of the research areas use many antonymic expressions strategy in order to mild taboo expressions. Look at some antonymic expressions with their semantic interpretations. For example, Bale Oromo use the expression *k'abbana* 'cool' instead of the word *bakakkaa* 'thunder' which is antonymic strategy; because thunder has the entity of fire which burn things. To reduce the consequences it brings, people surrogate by *k'abbana*. On the other hand, people associate this term *k'abbana* with *nagaa* 'peace'. So, when they pray to God they say *yaa Waak' k'abbana ke nuu buusi* which means 'God may give us your peace'. In addition, Oromo society lives in social; for example, they take from or give fire to their neighbor but when someone asks fire saying, *ibiddi jiraa?* 'Is there a fire?' it is considered as taboo; because they associate a fire with a conflict, war, anger and something like that. Instead of this, they replace it by '*k'abbanni jiraa?*' which literally means 'is there a cool?' to ask the availability of a fire.

Moreover, understatement is one strategy of euphemism which reduces the tabooed expressions. For example, to express cancer, Bale Oromo do not use the direct name; instead, they use *ibee ilbiisaa* 'insect's disease'. Literally the meaning of the expression is the disease which is transferred by *ilbiisa* 'insect'. But the reality is not this; it is to understate the seriousness of the disease; because cancer is a dangerous disease which is alarmingly killing many people in the world. Due to this, everyone fears this disease even to call its name. As we know, insect is the smallest animal. As result, people purposely replace by the term 'insect' to understate its bigness. Therefore, this strategy of euphemism (understatement) may include the other strategies; because the reason why we bother to euphemize taboo words is to reduce or understate their tabooess. From this study we can also observe that the purpose of using different strategies of euphemism is to understate or deflate the impolite expressions which offend or embarrass the hearer. For example, regarding the taboos related to physical impairments, we euphemize taboo

terms through euphemism strategies to understate the offensive expressions for the moral of physically impaired person or other hearer or the speaker him/herself.

On the other hand, like other strategies, overstatement is one way of euphemism strategy to make taboo expressions polite. For example, to call a dwarf person, Wollega Oromo use the term *leemmanoo* which is derived from name *leemmana* which means 'bamboo'. Though the person is too short, people express by overstating the reality of his/her height associating with bamboo. This expression also can be antonymic because in terms of height, the replaced term is quite opposite of a dwarf person. If we compare bamboo tree with a dwarf person, it is incomparable because let alone a dwarf person, even a tall person cannot be equal with this tree.

Abstraction is also one strategy of euphemism. As we can observe from the study, many taboo words/expressions are euphemized through this strategy. Mostly, when we use the abstract strategy, we use *waan* which literally means 'thing' as in *waan Waak'aa* 'God's thing' to refer to thunder. In this expression, the term *waan* makes the meaning of the expression more abstract because we do not know concretely the thing or the referent wanted to be explained. This is because there are many things which belong to God. Whatever it is, in this context, the expression refers to a thunder which only falls by order of God. They use this kind of strategy in order to conceal something which is considered as taboo.

In this study, there are many words which are borrowed from other languages; especially Arabic words which are borrowed by Bale and Hararghe Oromo to reduce the offensiveness of taboo expressions. This happens due to the fact that the Muslim Oromos live in these zones. When I say this, I am not saying their Muslimness obliged them to create this strategy; but to express the borrowed term from Arabic language in case of religion. In euphemizing process using borrowed term is normal. For example, it is heard when people use the English word 'sex' to express sexual intercourse; however, when they do this, they adjust as their own pronunciation and say *seeksii go e* which means 'he did sex'. This expression is not as harsh as the term *sale* 'fucked'. Especially, young people use this term in front of illiterates to conceal the tabooess of the term *sale*; because, they do not know its semantics. On the other hand, literate persons also

communicate to each other through borrowed expressions; especially when they talk about sex; because they fear not to violate social norms. Due to the power of social norm, they seek the other mechanism to utter the word without violating and offending hearers or not to be offended by themselves.

Onomatopoeia is one strategy of euphemism. For example, the morpheme *k'uu* represents the sound of 'fart' that someone uses to express a farted person through onomatopoeia strategy. On the other hand, onomatopoeia does not only help us to euphemize taboo terms but also to name taboo terms. For example, the taboo names of female sexual organ may seem to be named by this strategy. For instance, the term *buk'aa*, *bek'ee*, and *fu ii* which refer to 'vagina' derived from the sounds *buk'*, *bek'* and *fuc'*, respectively created while the couples did sexual intercourse, due to the friction.

Circumlocution is also the best technique of euphemism. For example, instead of taboo name 'penis', people use the expression *abbaa (i)joollee* which literally refers to 'the father of the children' which is circumlocution strategy of euphemism; because, the term *abbaa* 'father' indirectly represented a male sexual organ. As we know, without the presence of a 'father' (male seed), a mother cannot give birth; for thus, a child is called by his/her father's name. So, the owner or the source of a child is penis which is represented as 'a father'.

The study has also found that at the same time some expressions can be euphemized by two or more strategies of euphemism. For example, the expression *bira gahe* literally means 'he reached beside' while the extended meaning is 'he did sex'. This expression can be metaphor and circumlocution. The metaphorical literal meaning refers to someone who reaches somewhere or someone else. However, here the one who reaches somewhere else is 'penis' while the target place to be reached is 'vagina'. Besides, the expression is circumlocution; because, the expression *sale* 'did sex' described in a round way. Because circumlocution refers to the roundabout, verbose way of speaking or writing to express an idea. The phrases *bira gahe* 'reached beside' and *waliin c'iisan* 'slept together' are not only euphemistic but periphrastic.

4.4. Similarities and differences of taboos and their euphemistic expression among the study areas

The other most important ideas this study has revealed was, most taboo words/expressions which are commonly taboos among the Oromo of the research sites have quite different euphemistic expressions except few similar euphemistic expressions used in common. Besides, not in different areas of the research, but also in similar areas people use euphemistic expressions in different ways due to different causes. In each particular area, they use many euphemistic expressions for a single taboo word. As it has been explained earlier, some words which are known as taboo in Wollega may not be known as such in Bale or Hararghe and vice versa or absolutely meaningless. In Wollega, the taboo term hermaphrodite expressed by *luut'ii* which is unknown as such in Bale and Hararghe. The same taboo term (hermaphrodite) in Hararghe known by another term *kormaa jaddal* while this expression is strange in Bale and Wollega. This kind of differences may create semantic confusion among the Oromo of the research areas. Regarding this you can look at examples given on taboos related to sexual organs which are semantically shifted as explained in (Table 7).

When using language (taboo or euphemisms), background information is needed to interpret the meaning of an utterance. The background information is represented in the form of concepts that are stored in the mind and it must be uniform to both the speakers and the hearers in order to enable the hearers to reach the intended speaker's meaning. However, when background information of the communicants which is needed to interpret the meaning of an utterance differs from one another, semantic differences of taboo or euphemism may be created. As we can conclude from the finding of the study, the difference of context in use, dialect or geographical location of the research areas and the influence of borrowed terms through religion or other case may cause difference of meaning.

As it has been explained above, some differences of the euphemistic expressions are caused by borrowed words. For instance, in Bale Oromo, the term *amiram-e/te* which means 'he/she passed away' is totally not known in Wollega Oromo. This term is borrowed from Arabic language and Bale Oromo use to express death; however, the

literal meaning of the borrowed term is ‘the final decision of God’ that is taken on human being through death. As a result of the major Wollega Oromo is Christians, they do not know this Arabic term. Therefore, religion may be one factor for that different euphemism used among study areas. Whatever it is, these kinds of expressions pose communication barriers between communicants who come from different dialect backgrounds and cause offense, shame and disagreement between the speaker and the hearer.

Regarding the taboo terms related to sexual organs, sexual acts and their corresponding euphemistic expressions, Bale, Hararghe and Wollega Oromo use distinctive taboo words and euphemistic expressions except a few tabooed terms and euphemistic expressions used in common. To refer to ‘penis’, they use, common taboo terms like *wašalaa*, *k’uunt’ee* and *k’unt’urroo* while they also use common names like *k’int’irrii*, *hudduu* and *buk’uśaa* for ‘vagina’. The rest taboo terms they use to express male and female sexual organs are dissimilar from one another (see Tables, 1, 2 & 3). Besides, the Oromo societies of the research areas use different euphemistic expressions for sexual organs except *k’aama hormaataa saalaa* ‘sexual reproductive organ’ they use in common.

In general, regarding the differences and similarities of taboo words and euphemisms, in Oromo society of the study areas, it seems that most tabooed subjects are known similarly while their corresponding euphemisms are quite different from one another.

4.5. Factors Determining Taboos and Euphemism Expressions

This study has found out factors that determine the avoidance of taboo words and usage of their corresponding euphemistic expressions. Besides, taboo words and the degree of their tabooeness are subject to the socio-cultural factors. Socio-cultural forces which allow people to come in contact under different circumstances, contribute to the shift in meaning of words in a language. Socio-cultural reality is a very ample source of extralinguistic motivations for diachronic semantic change, as the contexts sometimes vary dramatically in the course of time. Thus, new meanings may be “officially” attached to the already existing lexical items, the full comprehension of which is totally dependent (Aroma, 2013:40).

From the analyzed data we can understand that taboo words do not necessarily offend hearers in similar way. The reason is words which may shock someone or group may not necessarily shock others; this happens due to different factors that make the degrees of tabooed subjects distinct. In this study, taboo terms related to genital organs, sexuality, excretion and death are strongly tabooed than the other tabooed themes.

As the finding of this research shows, the major determinants of socio-cultural variables that influence the usage of taboo words and their corresponding euphemistic expressions are social and situational factors. In other words, it tends to gain a useful understanding of the socio-psychological functions of Oromo taboos and the socio-cultural factors affecting their use and the motivations underlying them. It also tries to prove that the social context, in which taboos are used or avoided, is governed by certain socio-cultural factors.

Social-factors such as: age, gender, context of use, respect, place (geographical location), religion and the like determine the meaning of taboo words. In line with this, Hongxu and Guisen (1990) attempted to analyze and discuss the creation, observance, and socio-cultural influences of linguistic taboos of Chinese. They viewed taboos as a socio-cultural phenomenon associated with superstition, custom, and hierarchical power. For them, taboos fall under two categories: macro-linguistic and micro-linguistic. By the former, it is meant all the words that are observed by almost all speakers in a speech community to be despicable and filthy such as sex and death. By micro-linguistic taboos, it is meant that certain words are perceived as taboos in relation to a specific context. For the analysis of the Chinese taboos, they proposed a framework which includes a “macro-context” (that is, societal factors) and “micro-context”, which includes situational factors such as register and interlocutors.

As the study has found out, age plays a significant role to avoid/use taboo or euphemism. For example, as it has been explained before, the expressions that we use while telling someone’s death news and hearten the deceased family are differed depending on the age of the deceased person. Thus, in the three study areas, to express the death of a child, youth and an adult, people use different expressions according to age of the person. The euphemistic expressions which are appropriate to refer to adult’s death are taboo if we

use to express child's or youth's death, and vice versa. In this regard, one might confirm that death is a universal topic as well as culture specific since each society has its own beliefs. Furthermore, a young people are ashamed to talk about sex and sexuality before elders; but talking about these tabooed subjects are somehow easier for persons who are in the same age. Also, one should note that teenagers have created a rich vocabulary which they use between each other, but it differs according to their age. Therefore, impact of age is very apparent since this study has drawn us to conclude that younger generations have more positive towards the use of taboos, whereas elders tend to look after their polite speech. This means the old people use shifted meanings of taboo word (euphemism) whereas the young people use the taboo words directly.

Gender also put vital effect to use or avoid taboos and euphemistic expressions. In the Oromo society of the research areas, it is more acceptable to hear a taboo term from a male than from female. For example, two individuals who are opposite sex may be ashamed to talk about sex and sexual acts freely to each other than individuals who are similar sex. In the Oromo societies of research areas, women have a less tendency to apply taboo language as compared to men and women, subjecting themselves to be what the society expects them to be, prefer to use refined and polished language instead. Therefore, women tend to use more polished refined words than men do. This practice could have been induced by the confines of society which desires that women act as femininely as possible. In contrast, men being leaders of the house and have been perceived by society over the years to be masculine even if they use vulgar language, a privilege which women are denied as (Lakoff 1975 cited in Samadi, 2014).

Additionally, the context in which the communication takes place is the major determinant for usage of euphemistic expressions or to shift or change their meaning. This is due to the fact that the lexical pragmatic approach aims at analyzing the meaning of words through context. There is need to study these changes in the meaning of words so as to understand why there is often a breakdown in communication. On the one hand, expressions used as euphemistic in a given context, may convey taboo or non-taboo meanings in another context. Whatever it is, we can identify the meaning of the expressions depending on the context in which they are spoken.

Furthermore, in context of honor and fear, Oromo people consider certain expressions as taboo and obliged to euphemize. For example, due to honor, calling the name of father/mother-in laws is taboo. Also some tabooed expressions are avoided due to fear. For example, due to mythological belief or fear people have towards fall of thunder, they prohibit calling the word *bakakka*. In line with this, Allan and Burridge (1991:153) have explained that, death is a fear-based taboo and motivated by these fears: (a) fear of the loss of loved ones, (b) fear of the corruption and disintegration of the body, (c) death is the end of life, and there is fear of what follows, (d) fear of malevolent spirits, or of the souls of the death. That is why, a large number of euphemistic expressions used instead of 'death' during communication, stem from the fear of losing beloved ones and everlasting separation. To veil this fear, euphemisms attempt at rejoicing, normalizing and displacing other's viewpoints of the distressing situations.

Moreover, the existence of different norms and dialectics among the Oromia Regional zones determine the usage of euphemistic expressions. As far as the existence of differences among study areas, taboos and euphemistic expressions are avoided or used according to their own particular areas. When speakers of one area of the study mingle with other area of culture, they automatically choose words to suit their current situations involving the relationship of the two cultures due social aspects.

The level of intimacy exists between communicants may also allow or disallow to euphemize taboo words strongly or speak them directly. In contrary to this, individuals who are not intimate may not use taboo words directly. Brown and Levinson (1987) have shown that the relationship of two participants can affect the degree of politeness they have for each other during conversations. The authors have indicated that in some cases, the closer the intimacy of two participants, the less polite their conversation to each other. This could be interpreted as saying that the more the interlocutors are intimate, the more they would feel free to use taboo words.

To sum up, it is apparent that Oromo society use or avoid taboo words differently depending on the many conditions, whatever they are, we have to understand that they believe that common taboos are forbidden linguistically in a public setting. As it has explained in (1.8.1.1), in the framework of the study, language has a crucial connection

with the cultural and social contexts in a specific society. As a social, cultural and language phenomenon, euphemism is inseparable from its context of situation, and it is not only determined by speakers meaning, but also to a great extent, context-determined. When we schematize the relation of euphemism to its context of situation we have to follow questions like: Who is saying what to whom, under what circumstances, under what conditions, with what intended and with what result (Andrews, 2001:133).

4.6. Consequences of Violating Taboos and Euphemistic Expressions

The Oromo societies of the study areas extremely respect taboos in their daily communication; because, they guide and rule one another through the principle of the social taboos. Thus, in their daily communication, they take care of from misuse of taboo words and euphemistic expressions. If someone fails to use the appropriate expressions, it puts influence on their norm, language and identity. And the broken taboo word may also offend the hearer or the speaker him/herself. When this happens, it may disrupt the harmony of individuals and causes interpersonal conflicts between the person who carelessly converses the tabooed topic or fails to use properly according to the particular norm. When somebody violates social taboos, he/she will be cursed, hated, rejected, undermined or isolated from the associations they have in common. Some refer to such individuals even as: *afaan ok'k'ee* 'mud speech'. For example, using inappropriate euphemistic expressions in the occasion of condolence may cause frustration and discomfort upon the family of the deceased person.

In the Oromo society of the study areas, people do not violate taboos; because it is believed that a misfortune would happen to them. For example, they believe as wives would give birth to children with a scaly skin disease, cause the death of the husband or endanger the agricultural production (Mbaya, 2002:234). The principal victim of taboo violation is not necessarily the disobedient himself. Violations of taboo are very rare. When violation occurs, it is usually in reference and not in address, more by accident than by a deliberate act of non-conformity to this social norm. If violation occurs by accident, people will literally spit it out, thus symbolically atoning for the impropriety. In presence of the husband, violation, which is regarded as a wanton insult, can result in physical violence or even in divorce.

According to Hararghe Oromo, if somebody does not respect the norms of honeymoon, the elected judges would punish him/her. If a person refuses to take the judgment, the society ignores him/her from social life. From this description, we can understand that how much taboo enhances social relationship. From this statement we can conclude that people value their social norm than the constitutions declared by the government. For example, to stop deforestation, government establishes different rules and regulations, but it is nowadays being seen when people violate this rule. However, in Oromo culture, cutting a tree without substituting is taboo and is equally considered as a one who kills a child. This shows us how much people consider their social norm. Therefore, violating social taboo is considered as violating the nature. Therefore, to save him/herself, someone knows about social taboos. According to Brown and Levinson (1987), to explain the use of euphemisms, they believe that there are social, linguistic and contextual factors that govern speaker's lexical choices. So, the theory of face and politeness go side by side in expressing euphemistic usage.

4.7. Implication of Taboos and Euphemistic Expressions

Even if studying and analyzing taboos and euphemistic expressions are back-breaking task, the undertaken study has many contributions in preparation of Afaan Oromoo student's text book, standardization, lexicography works and so on. Thus, the current study is believed to remind how to speak, live, act and work in accordance with social norm; this means it plays great role in language use situation for it helps someone to match with a particular norm of the society. Every taboo word and euphemistic expression is ascertained in the particular society's norm which determines the wrongness or correctness of the spoken expressions.

So that no one can be out of these societal norms which link a certain individual with another individual or society. Therefore, linguistic taboo is very important to strengthen the relationship among the societies; because if someone acts or speaks as per the particular society's norm, he/she lives in harmony with them. To do this, the present dissertation contributes many things to the readers. For example, it explains about taboo word and euphemism, guides how to euphemize taboo expressions through strategies of euphemism. In line with, while talking about importance of euphemistic expressions, as

Enright (1985:13) cited in Linfoot-Ham (2005:228) explains as, “Without euphemism, the rotation of the world would have stopped rubbing and would have been flooded with feud.” The use of euphemism in this regard, lubricates language thereby minimizing the possibility of conflict.

Besides, this study also adds something of value to strengthen the connection between different social groups i.e. it directs how to respect one another. For example, in marriage relationship, it guides how certain wife and husband respects each other or their father-/mother-in laws or other relatives. It may also help to inform youngsters how to respect their elders or it gives direction how to call a certain disease’s name in front of the sick person.

In addition to the points explained above, knowing properly about taboo words and their euphemistic expressions have many advantages in different perspectives of our daily lives. Let us see few of them as follow:

It has a significant role for individuals who want to involve in any text writing or student’s text book. For example, Afaan Oromoo student’s text book is distributed to different Oromia regional zones by the order of Oromia educational bureau, at this moment a great censorship is needed to make the books free from the drawbacks that come through wrong usage of taboo words or their inappropriate euphemistic expression formed due to dialect variations or the impact of contextual intended meaning. For example, at any grade of Afaan Oromoo student’s text book, we have frequently seen the word *šaakala* on every page has an activity. Actually, the writer(s) use the word to meant ‘exercise/activity’; however, this word has connotative meaning which means ‘doing sex’ in Jimma zone. Additionally, in classroom, a teacher may say, *akkuma wal ‘bukkee’ teessanitti mariya aa* in English which means ‘discuss with the one beside you’. In this sentence, the term *bukkee* pollutes the meaning of the sentence. Additionally, in biology student’s text book which has been written in Afaan Oromoo or biology classroom, raise about the name of human reproductive organ which may offend the student or teacher is inevitable; so the writers should properly censor their terminologies which make tabooed terms more polite in all over the Oromia regional zones to save somebody’s face loss.

Taboo words and their proper euphemistic expressions are also useful for lexicographers. A person who needs to prepare Afaan Oromoo euphemism dictionary, he/she should first know how to use appropriate euphemistic expression which is suitable or has a normal meaning among Oromo societies in general according to a practical context; because, context and euphemisms have a relationship, in which euphemisms support the intended context and context supports euphemisms. Each expression should be assessed according to a given situation. So, it is very essential to see the link between the word and its context to talk about euphemisms. As Jackova (2010:15) explains, context provides extra information, apart from dictionaries of euphemisms. The effort to maintain a face is needed in every social interaction where context is crucial. There exist rules, which should be observed by a speaker to save his/her own face and to be considerate of the face of his interlocutor. Moreover, if someone used words wrongly in that dictionary, it spoils the value of that dictionary as whole. Therefore, the lexicographers should take care for each words used in their dictionary.

Also this study is very important for Afaan Oromoo standardization work and social media or mass media, be it in electronic or printing. If taboo word is wrongly used or reported in media, it creates a big problem between mass of Oromo community. For example, in different social media, we hear or read in Afaan Oromoo the announcement, *rakkinoota 'tamboo' t'ut'uun fidu* which means 'effects of smoking 'cigarette'', in this context, the word '*tamboo*' replaces 'cigarette'; but among Bale and Arsi Oromo it refers to 'vagina'.

Generally, from this chapter, someone can understand about taboo categories and their euphemistic expressions, strategies of euphemism, differences and similarities of taboos and euphemisms among research areas, effects of breaking social taboos, implications of taboo and euphemism in the society and so forth.

CHAPTER FIVE

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1. Conclusion

This dissertation was conducted with the central aim of describing a thematic analysis of linguistic taboos and their corresponding euphemistic expressions in Oromo society of Bale, Hararghe and Wollega zones. In order to achieve this purpose, the following basic questions were raised.

1. How do Bale, Hararghe and Wollega Oromo categorize taboo words/expressions and euphemize them through euphemism strategies in everyday use?
2. What are the differences and similarities of taboos or euphemistic expressions used among the Oromos of the selected areas?
3. How do we interpret the semantics of taboo words and their euphemistic expressions in the research areas?
4. What are the variables determine taboo words and their euphemistic expressions?
5. What are the consequences of breaking taboo words enhance in the society of research areas?
6. Why do the Oromo people of the research areas required to use euphemism instead of taboo words?

To answer these research questions, data were gathered through instruments such as, focus group discussion, unstructured interview, observation, and introspective method. Based on the data obtained through these instruments, the following major conclusions were drawn:

The study has investigated linguistic taboos related to death, diseases, woman (virginity, pregnancy, menstruation, delivery), sex, sexual acts, name of sexual organs, body parts (normal and impaired), excretions and names related to marriage relationship existed in the Oromo society of the study areas. These taboo words/expressions are deeprooted in the culture, religion, norms and beliefs of their particular societies. Therefore, in daily communication, these taboo expressions are taken as ridiculous, vulgar or obscene and

speaking them directly enhances many problems. Regarding this, Ripa'ah (2015) stated that mentioning taboo words in public could cause anxiety, embarrassment, and shame, besides resulting quarrel between the speaker and the listeners or in the extreme case, the war between villages. So, this statement shows us how much tabooed words is a serious issue and do need care.

In daily communication, using tabooed words have an influence on the users. Because taboo arise out of social constraints on the individual's behavior where it can cause discomfort, harm or injury (Allan & Burridge, 2006:1). Some particular topics are constrained or thoroughly censored out mainly because they evoke fear, shame or disgust in participants. If someone does not know the meaning of these taboo words and conventional use of them in conversation, he/she may face sever conflict; because, they cause misunderstanding, insulting, shame, anger and so on. Therefore, knowing about taboo terms with their corresponding euphemistic expressions protect us from the listed problems.

Also the study has found out that the degrees of tabooed subjects are not equally offensive or offend the hearers whilst they are spoken in public. I have observed that taboo themes related to sex and sexual acts, death and bodily excretions are highly taboos while the other taboo themes are moderately tabooed. During group discussion, I have seen that while discussants were shocked to discuss freely about these highly tabooed themes; especially about sexual organs and sexuality.

In short, in the Oromo society of the research areas, taboos can be divided as: non-taboo/neutral words which carry taboo meaning in specific context and unmentionable taboo terms which are absolutely unacceptable to be uttered in public.

As a result of this, the Oromo people of the research areas employ euphemistic expressions to lessen or avoid tabooed words/expressions in order not to offend the speaker and hearer. Indeed, they avoid taboos and tend to replace them with certain mechanisms. Therefore, in their daily interaction, to avoid taboos and to protect their faces and politeness they create certain strategies. Thus, euphemistic expressions offer possibilities to gain insights into cultural and psychological aspects of language use,

including sensibilities, and how to communicate about these issues linguistically to minimize the risk of offence. Therefore, what also emerged from the analysis is that the use of taboos exists side by side with euphemism depending on the context of communication.

The pragmatic approach to euphemism which seeks to account for the operation of context of situation, speech act theory, face and politeness theory which is suitable to analyze semantic shift of expressions are employed as frameworks of the study. The study shows that context is very important for the interpretation of the meaning of taboo lexemes and their corresponding euphemisms. The contextual knowledge of the hearer enables to differentiate the various meanings of a word and eventually settle on the speaker's intended meaning.

To avoid verbal taboos, the Oromo society of the research areas utilize euphemistic expression strategies through metaphor, metonymy, synecdoche, circumlocution, overstatement, understatement, antonymy, borrowed terms, onomatopoeia, phonemic replacement, and so on. These strategies of euphemism make impolite expressions polite and avoid interpersonal conflicts. This means that, it is essential to note euphemistic expression strategies in building social relations which involves the dimensions of solidarity. To resort to lexical euphemism and discursive strategies of verbal mitigation tends to avoid or, at least, reduce the potential conflict that certain speech acts may involve in a given communicative context. In this regard, euphemism functions as a powerful linguistic tool to smooth communication and preserve interpersonal relationships in non-hostile verbal encounters.

In public mentioning sexual organs and sexuality topics are the most sensitive and fearful subject. Thus, most people feel reluctant when dealing with sex topic. I have observed this reality while informants were shocked to discuss on this tabooed subject than the other tabooed subjects. Although Afaan Oromoo has a large number of taboo words for sexuality or sex related issues, speakers cannot speak about such topics openly; they resort to a set of shielding expressions to grant the hearer's face safety and not to harm their relationships. Especially expressions *saluu*, *go uu* 'fuck' *wal-saluu* 'fucking each other' are exceedingly taboo.

Furthermore, death is another taboo topic since it relates humans with another mysterious life which they fear. So, they prefer to replace by more acceptable expressions than speaking directly. Henceforth, the study of linguistic taboo and cultural phenomena provides us with more knowledgeable information about the socio-cultural and religious norms of the society under investigation.

Some diseases' are also considered as taboo and people preferred to call through euphemism. The reasons behind prohibiting the names of these diseases are: firstly, if the names of these diseases are called in front of the sick person, they believe that the pain of the disease will be aggravated, secondly, the fear of the transmission of the disease to the speaker.

In all study areas woman socialize in an environment where sexual discrimination is sanctioned by society. In the Oromo society of the research areas, there are major tabooed topics related to woman including virginity, menstruation, pregnancy and delivery. Virginity, as one of the most sensitive issues in women's life, symbolizes the honor of the girl and her family.

In all research areas, explicitly calling impaired body parts' are also taboo. Thus, to maintain the psychology of physically impaired person, people express in a round ways. The reason is, fear of being exposed to a similar problem. Culturally, if somebody directly calls the impaired body part's name, he/she will face similar problem in near future. As a result of this, they euphemize words related to this topic (see Tables, 9, 10, 11, 12 and 13).

Bodily defecations are also extremely tabooed subject. They are not taboo by themselves, but the way we express them determine their tabooess. For example, if we express their act directly, it makes our communication impolite. To avoid this problem, people use euphemistic expressions (see Tables, 14, 15, 16, 17 and 18).

In the Oromo society, there is avoidance of personal name and use other alternatives instead. The wife/husband avoids the name of each other and their father-/mother-in-law's name. To call her husband, a wife substitutes personal pronouns *isin* 'you', *isaan*

‘they’ and *keeña* ‘ours’ or she may use belongingness, physical traits of his horse, first born child’s proper name, his physical traits plus *abbaa* ‘father’ and something like that.

Among the study areas, the similarities and differences of linguistic taboos and euphemistic expressions are reflected according to the dialect they are affiliated to. Regarding this, one person’s euphemism may be another person’s dysphemism or taboo. This means that, the expression which is a euphemism in Bale or Hararghe Oromo becomes a taboo in Wollega and vice versa. However, what also emerged from the analysis is that among of the research areas, rather than differences of taboo words, the differences of euphemistic expressions are high; because, each area uses plenty of euphemistic expressions even for single taboo word.

One should note that the connotative meaning or extended meanings are enhancing communication barrier. This means, in Oromo society of the research areas, all taboo words do not create communication barrier but embarrassment; because, in communication, people can understand or agree one another through using these tabooed expressions. That means, they can understand the meaning of a tabooed word within its shame.

On the other hand, tabooed words or euphemistic expressions are differed from one another due to the socio-cultural factor such as age, gender, geography, intimacy and the context of use. Moreover, a speaker may use different euphemistic expressions to the same reference in different conversational environments or places. The speakers also use different euphemistic expressions to the same reference even in the same particular area.

Finally, it should be made clear that taboo words and their corresponding euphemistic expressions used among the research areas have the next different features. First, in all research areas, taboo words or euphemisms are similarly known as taboo or euphemistic expression, second, taboo words or euphemistic expressions show meaning shift (extension), third, taboo words/euphemistic expressions which are known as taboo or euphemism in one of the research sites, do not known as such or have different meanings in another site. Finally non-taboo or neutral words may be taboo in a given context.

5.2. Recommendations

Depending on the given analysis and interpretations as well as the conclusion, I put forth the following recommendations:

- a. Since linguistic taboos are sensitive topic in society, individuals worry to conduct research on this topic due to the doubt of getting sufficient data; so, this attitude should be changed and further study should be conducted on tabooed subjects and euphemistic expressions that exist in all zones of Oromia Region.
- b. When the issues of taboo terms are raised, most people consider that taboo terms are words which are only related to sex and sexual organs. However, everyone should know that taboo terms are beyond these categories and include the other tabooed themes.
- c. Taboo can incorporate both linguistic and cultural taboos; however, this study has mainly focused only on linguistic taboos; thus the cultural taboos in the Oromo society should be studied.
- d. Even though respecting social taboos have great significance to construct good social, political, or economic relationship, all concerned bodies must compile and document different themes of linguistic taboos that exist in the Oromo society with their appropriate euphemistic expressions according to their particular areas.
- e. Stakeholders who work on Afaan Oromoo lexicography, curriculum/syllabus design, and standardization committee should give a due attention to this critical issue since it plays great role in media, communication and education. In addition to this, if a 'dictionary of Afaan Oromoo euphemism' is prepared, it may easily address awareness about euphemistic expression usage.
- f. Higher institutions like universities and Oromia zonal and district culture and tourism bureaus primarily give consideration to this issue and should motivate others by allocating sufficient budget and time for further study. In Universities, Afaan Oromoo department instructors or other concerned bodies easily get informants (students) who come from different zones of Oromia Region, from different Afaan Oromoo dialect backgrounds to conduct a research on taboo words and their euphemisms.

- g. In the process of euphemizing taboo terms, the semantics of taboo terms or their euphemism may shift from its original meaning and the meaning becomes more positive or negative than it was originally. Thus, cognitive semantic approach of linguistic taboos and euphemism research based need to be conducted to know the effects of the semantic change.
- h. Even though it seems the present generation has the lack of knowledge about social taboos in general and linguistic taboos in particular, they must be conscious of taboo and learn how to use euphemistic expressions in accordance with the context of the particular society's norm.
- i. The family should teach their children at early stage about taboo and the consequences its violation brings.

References

- Abdulla, R. M. 2012. A Sociopragmatic Analysis of Euphemism in British English and Sorani Kurdish: A Comparative Study. Unpublished MA Thesis .University of Sulaimani.
- Adams, R. M. 1985. Soft soap and nitty-gritty. In D. J. Enright (Ed.), *Fair of Speech: The Uses of Euphemism*, (pp. 44-55). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Ahmed, M. S. 2014. Taboo Words and Euphemism in English and Arabic: A Contrastive Study. Unpublished PhD Thesis. University of Pune.
- Akindele, F and Adegbite, W. 1999. *The Sociology and Politics of English in Nigeria*. Ile-Ife: Obafemi Awolowo University Press.
- Akmajian, A., Richard A.D., Ann.K. F .& Robert M.H. 2010. *Linguistics (6th): An Introduction to Language and Communication*. New Delhi: Prentice Hall.
- Aliakbari, M. and Raesi. H. 2015. A Sociolinguistic Study of Linguistic Taboos in the Iranian Society. *International Journal of Educational Investigations*. Vol.2, No.3: 91-104, 2015.
- Alix, G.H.2012. The Correlation between Euphemistic Usage and Two Sociolinguistic Variables (Gender and Age). Unpublished BA thesis. University of Yaoundei.
- Al-Khatib, M. 1995. A Sociolinguistic view of linguistic taboo in Jordanian Arabic. *Journal of multi-lingual and Multicultural Development*, 16, 6, 443-457.
- Allan, K. & K. Burridge.1991. *Euphemism and Dysphemism. Language Used as Shield and Weapon*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Allan, K. & K. Burridge. 2006. *Forbidden Words: Taboo and the Censoring of Language* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Allan, Keith.2001. *Natural language semantics*. New York: Blackwell publisher.
- Amanuel Raga and Samuel Adola. 2012. Homonymy as a barrier to mutual intelligibility among speakers of various dialects of Afan Oromo. *Journal of Language and Culture Vol. 3(2)*, pp. 32-43. Available online at <http://www.academicjournals.org/JLC>
- Anderson, L.G. and Hirsch, R. 1985. "A Project on Swearing: A Comparison between American English and Swedish". *Swearing*, pp. 79-87. University of Goteborg.
- Anderson , L. and Trudgill , Peter. 1990. *Bad Language* . Oxford : Basil Blackwell.

- Andrews, L. 2001. *Linguistics for L2 Teachers*: New Jersey. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.
- Apte, M.L. 1994. Taboo Word. *The Encyclopedia of Language and Linguistics*, 9, 4512-4514. Oxford: Pergamon Press.
- Aris, N. 2013. *Taboo Expressions Used in Live Free or Die Hard 4 Movies*. Sekolah Tinggi Keguruan Dan Ilmu Pendidikan Persatuan Guru Republik Indonesia: JOMBANG.
- Aromo, K. A. 2013. Semantic Shift in Lumarama: A Lexical Pragmatics Approach. MA Unpublished MA thesis. University of Nairobi.
- Asmarom Legesse. 1973. *Gada: There Approaches to the Study of African Society*. New York: The Free Press.
- Babou-Sekkal, M. 2012. A Sociolinguistic Analysis of Use and Perception of Insults: Tlemcen Speech Community. Unpublished MA theses. Tlemcen University.
- Bakhtair, M. 2011. Assessing the offensiveness of taboo Words in Persian. *The Journal of International Social Research*, 4, 19, 15-22.
- Bakhtiar, M. 2012. Communicative Function of Euphemism in Persian. *The Journal of International Social Research*: www.sosyalarastirmalar.com (accessed: 18-8-2015).
- Baye Yimam. 1986. *The Phrase Structure of Ethiopian Oromo*. The Degree of PhD in Linguistics, School of Oriental and African University of London.
- Bender, M. Lionel and Mulugeta Eteffa. 1976. Galla. In M.L. Bender, J.D. Bowen, R.L. Cooper and C.A. Ferguson (eds.), *Language in Ethiopia*, 130-148. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Blake, B. J. 2010. *Secret Languages: Codes, Tricks, Spies, Thieves and Symbols*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Brown, P. & Levinson, S. 1978. Universals in Language Usage: Politeness Phenomena. In Goody, E. (ed.) *Questions and politeness: Strategies in social Interaction*: 56-289. Cambridge: CUP.
- Brown, P. & Levinson, S. 1987. *Politeness: Some Universals in Language Usage*. Cambridge: CUP.
- Burchfield, R. 1986. An Outline History of Euphemisms in English. In D. J. Enright (ed), *Fair of Speech. The Uses of Euphemism*. New York: Oxford University Press, 13-31.

- Burkhardt, A. 2010. 'Euphemism and Truth', in Armin Burkhardt and Brigitte Nerlich (Eds.) *Tropical Truth(S): The Epistemology of Metaphor and Other Tropes*. Berlin: De Gruyter. pp. 355-372.
- Central Statistics Authority. 2007. *Population and Housing Census of Ethiopia. Summary and Statistical Report of the 2007 Population and Housing Census of Ethiopia: Population Size by Age and Sex*. Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia Population Census Commission. December 2007, Addis Ababa.
- Chaika, E. 1982. *Language the Social Mirror*. USA. Newbury house Publisher. Inc.
- Cook, James. 1893. Captain Cook's Journal During his First Voyage round the World made in H. M. Bark Endeavour, 1768–71. A literal transcription of the original MSS ed. Captain W. J. L. Wharton. London: Elliot Stock.
- Creswell, J. W. 2003. *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Method Approaches*. 2nd ed. London: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Cruse, D. A. 1986. *Lexical Semantics*, Cambridge University Press
- Culpeper, J. 2011. *Impoliteness: Using Language to Cause Offence*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Curtis, Valerie A. 2007. Dirt, Disgust and Disease: A Natural History of Hygiene, 61 *Journal Epidemial Community Health*
- Dawson, C. 2002. *Practical Research Methods: A user-friendly guide to mastering research techniques and projects*. United Kingdom: Magdalen Road, Oxford OX4 1RE.
- Dewaele, J. 2010. *Emotions in Multiple Languages*. UK, Hampshire: Palgrave.
- Dirribi Demissie. 2011. *Oromo Wisdom in Black Civilization*. Finfinne Printing & Publishing S.C.
- Dornyei, Z. 2007. *Research Method in Applied linguistics: Quantitative and Mixed Methodologies*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Elicer, C. 2005. Euphemistic Strategies in Politeness and Face Concerns. *Universidad de Alicante*, 13, 77-86.
- Enright, D. J. 1985. Mother or maid? An introduction, In Enright, D. J. (ed.) *Fair of Speech the uses of euphemism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Fairman, Ch.M. 2009. *Fuck: Word Taboo and Protecting Our First Amendment Liberties*. Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data.

- Feda Negesse. 2015. Classification of Oromo Dialects: A Computational Approach. *International Journal of Computational Linguistics (IJCL)* 6(1), 1-10.
- Fernandez, E.C.2006. The language of Death:Euphemisms and Conceptual Metaphorization in Victorian Obistuaries. *SKY Journal of Linguistics* 19 (2006).101-130
- Fromkin, V. and Rodman, R. 1883. *An Introduction to Language*. 9th ed. New York. Blackwell Publishers.
- Gadaa Malbaa. 1988. *Oromia*. Khartoum, Sudan.
- Gadaa Malbaa. 2004. *The Oromo People and Their Economic Activity*. Retrived on November 15, 2009, from: <http://www.gadaa.com/store.html>
- Gao, Ch. 2013.A Sociolinguistic Study of English Taboo Language. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, Vol. 3, No. 12, pp. 2310-2314
- Gemechu Megersa.1993. Knowledge, Identity and the Colonizing Structure the Case of the Oromo in East and Northeast Africa. Unpublished Ph.D Thesis. University Of London School Of Oriental and African Studies.
- Ghounane, N. 2013. A Sociolinguistic View of Taboo Language and Euphemisms in the Algerian Society: Attitudes and Beliefs in Tlemcen Speech Community. Unpublishd MA thesis. Tlemcen University.
- Goddard, A. and Patterson, L. M. 2000. *Language and Gender*. London: Routledge.
- Goffmann, E. 1967. *Interaction Ritual: Essays on Face-to-Face Behavior*. New York: Double Day.
- Goodenough, H. 1957. Cultural anthropology and Linguistics. In P. L. Garvin (ed.), *Report of the Seventh Round Table meeting on Linguistics and Language Study*. Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, PP 167-171.
- Grady, W. Dobrovolsky, M. Aronoff, M. (1997) *Contemporary Linguistics*. St. Martin's Press, Inc. New York. U.S.A
- Gragg, G. 1982. *Oromo Dictionary*, Bender et al. (eds.), and East Lansing: The African Studies Center, Michigan State University.
- Grice, P. 1995. *Studies in the Way of Words*. New York: Harvard University Press.
- Hasegawa, H. 2005. *Euphemism in English and Japanese: A Pragmatic Contrastive Study*. A Phd Thesis. University Of Tasmania.
- He, G. 2009. English and Chinese Cultural Connotation of Colour Words in Comparison.

- Asian Social Science*, Vol, 5, pp. 160-163
- Helmi, T. A.W. 2008. A study of taboo words and euphemistic expressions of Ali G film. The State of Islamic University of Malang. Unpublished MA thesis.
- Holder, B. 2008. *Dictionary of Euphemisms*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Hongxu, H. & Guisen, T.1990. A Sociolinguistic View of Linguistic Taboo in Chinese. *International Journal of Society and Language*, 81, 63-81.
- Hudson, R. A. 1996. *Sociolinguistics (2nd ed)*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Hughes, G. 2006. *An Encyclopedia of Swearing: The Social History of Oaths, Profanity, Foul Language, and Ethnic Slurs in the English-speaking World*. New York: M.E. Sharpe, Inc.
- Hough, C. 2012. *Risk Factor and Cultural Conceptions of Sexual and gender-Based Violence Among of Horn of African Refugesin Nairobi*. www.Refugepoint.org
- Hurford and Heasley. 2007. *Semantics: A Course book (2nd Ed)*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Ikram Al-Azzeh. 2010. The Use of Euphemisms by Jordanian Speakers of Arabic. Unpublished MA thesis, Middle East University. Amman- Jordan.
- Jackova, M. 2010. Euphemisms in Today's English. BA thesis. Tomas Bata University.
- Jay, Timothy. 2000. *Why We Curse: A Neuro-Psycho-Social Theory of Speech*. Amsterdam, The Netherlands: John Benjamins B.V.
- Kebede Hordofa. 1984. Basic Orthographic Problems in Oromo. In *The 8th International Conference of Ethiopian Studies*, November, 1984: Institute of Ethiopian Studies, Addis Ababa University, pp 352 – 366
- Kebede Hordofa. 2009. Towards the Genetic Classification of the Afaan Oromoo Dialects. Unpublished PhD Dissertation. University of Oslo.
- Keturi, S. and Lehmonen.T. 2012. A Study of Taboo Content in Finnish EFL Textbooks for Upper Secondary School. MA thesis. University of Jyväskylä.
- Kumar, R. 2011. *Research Methodology: A Step-by-Step Guide for Beginners (3rd ed)*. UK: Sage Publications Ltd.
- Laili Azkiyah. 2008. A Study of Euphemism Found in Political Articles in the National Section of The Jakarta Post. Unpublished MA thesis. State Islamic University of Malang.

- Lakoff, R. 1975. *Language and woman's Place*. New York: Harper and Row.
- Lakoff, G. & Johnson, M. 1980. *The Metaphors we live by*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Langacker, Ronald W. 2008. *Cognitive Grammar: A Basic Introduction*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Lavrova, N. 2010. Word-Building Strategies in Modern English Contamination. Decrypted. Norderstedt: Grin Verlag.
- Leech, G. 1981. *Semantics. The Study of Meaning*. (2nd ed.) Middlesex: Penguin Book Ltd.
- Leech, G. 1983. *Principles of Pragmatics*. New York: Longman.
- Leech, G. 2014. *Taboo and Euphemism in the Religious Language. The Pragmatics of Politeness*. Oxford University Press.
- Linfoot-Ham, K. 2005. The Linguistics of Euphemism: A Diachronic Study of Euphemism Formation. *Journal of Language and Linguistics* Vol. 4 No. 2, 227-263.
- Lobner, S. 2002. *Understanding Semantics*. London: Arnold.
- Lyons, J. 1981. *Language And Linguistics: An Introduction*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Mahdi, Hamid Muudee. 1995. *Oromo-English Dictionary*. Atlanta, Georgia
- Mahmoud, Z. 2015. Using Euphemism and Impolite Language among University Students. MA Unpublished Thesis. Sudan University of Science and Technology.
- Mazidah, A. 2007. A Study on Euphemism Used in Newsweek Magazine. Unpublished MA Thesis. State Islamic University of Malang: Malang.
- Mbaya, M. 2002. Linguistic Taboo in African Marriage Context: A Study of the Oromo Laguu. *Journal of African Studies* 11(2): 224-235.
- Mekonnen Hunde. 2002. Lexical Standardization in Oromo. Unpublished MA Thesis. Addis Ababa University.
- Meyer, P. G. et al. 2005. *Synchronic English Linguistics: An Introduction*. Germany: Narr Francke.
- Mocanu, M. 2017. *International Letters of Social and Humanistic Sciences*. Vol. 75, pp 1-9.
- Montagu, Ashley. 1967. *The Anatomy of Swearing*. New York and London: Collier-Macmillan.

- Munfaati, F. 2008. Euphemism Used in Political Articles in Reuters.Com. Unpublished MA Thesis. The State Islamic University Of Malang.
- Morton, M. 2003. *The Lover's Tongue: A Merry Romp Through the Language of Love and Sex*. Toronto: Insomniac Press.
- Muho, H. A. and Salam N. Bakir. 2014. Taboo Words and Expressions in English. Salahaddin University. *Vol.18, No.5, 2014, pp.189-200*.
- Mwanambuyu, Ch. 2011. A Socio-Pragmatic Analysis of Silozi Euphemisms. Unpublishe MA Thesis. University of Zambia.
- Mwihaki, A. 2004. Meaning as Use: A Functional View of Semantics and Pragmatics. *Swahili Forum 11. PP. 127-139*
- Neaman, J. and Silver, C. G. 1983. *Kind Words: A Thesaurus of Euphemism*. New York: Mc Graw-Hill Book Company.
- Ningjue, Z. 2010. Taboo Language on the Internet: An Analysis of Gender Differences in Using Taboo Language. Unpublished BA thesis. Kristianstad University.
- Njoroge R.N. 2014. Euphemisms and Taboo Words: A Case of Kikuyu's Kabete Dialect. MA thesis. University Of Nairobi.
- O'Grady, William & Michael B. 1996. *Contemporary linguistics*. Longman person education:Uk.
- Osterbo, M. T. 2009. *Wayyuu-Women's Respect and Rights among the Arsi-Oromo*. Betaniendeaconal university college Bergen, Norway. *Proceedings of the 16th International Conference of Ethiopian Studies*, pp.1049-1060.
- Palmer, F.R. 1981. *Semantics, a new on line*. Cambridge: Cambridge University press.
- Pang Chor Ying, J. 2009. *Scalar Acceptability in the Use of Linguistic Taboos: A Case Study of Speakers of English in Hong Kong*. Unpublished M.A. Dissertation, Hong Kong: Baptist University.
- Pei, M.A. 1954. *A Dictionary of Linguistics*. Columbia University: Britannica.
- Pei, M. 1949. *The Story of Language*. Philadelphia and New York: J. B. Lippincott Company.
- Pinker, Steven .2007. *Stuff of Thought*. London, England: Penguin Books.
- Pyles, Th. & Algeo J. 1970. *English: An Introduction to Language*. Harcourt, Brace and World.

- Qanbar, N. 2011. A Sociolinguistic Study of the Linguistic Taboos in the Yemeni Society. *MJAL* 3:2 Summer.pp.86-101.
- Rawson, H.1981. *A Dictionary of Euphemisms and other Doubletalk*. New York: Crown Publishers, Inc.
- Reimer, R. 1976. *Introduction to Semantics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Reiner, N. 2010. *Introducing Semantics*. Cambridge: Cambridge university press.
- Ripa'ah, G. 2015. *A Linguistic Taboo in Sasak Community: A Case Study at Kekalik Village*. Mataram University
- Roberts & Turgeon. 1989. *About Language: A Reader for Writers*. 2nd ed. Boston: Houghton Mufflin Company.
- Rusman, K. 2000. *Political Euphemism in News Media*. The State University of Malang. Malang.Thesis: Unpublished.
- Sadiqi, F. 2003. *Women, Gender and Language in Morocco*. Leiden, Boston: Brill.
- Samadi, Z. 2014. Macro and Micro contextual Taboo Words in Iranian Pre and Post Revolution Movies. Unpublished MA thesis. University Of Malaya Kuala Lumpur
- Samuel Legesse.2010. Common Mistakes in using the Oromo writing system: A study on billboards of Adama. Unpublished MA these. Addis Ababa University
- Saeed, J.I.2009. *Semantics (3rd ed)*. Wilay-Blackwell.
- Sari, Y. 2007. Euphemism analysis “American pie 5” script: An approach of meaning relation and semantic change. Unpublished MA thesis. State Islamic University “Syarief Hidayatullah” Jakarta, 2008.
- Scott, J.C. 1990. *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts*. New Haven, Yale University Press.
- Searle, J. R. 1979. *Expression and Meaning: Studies in the Theory of Speech Acts*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Seliger, H.W. & Shohamy, E. 1989. *Second Language Research Methods*. OUP: Oxford.
- Sista, R. 2010. *An analysis of Semantic Change in Euphemistic Terms in the Scripts “Jennifer’s body” Movie*. Unpublished MA thesis. The State Islamic University Syarif Hidayatullah.
- Soler, B.P. 2011. Swearing and Translation: A Study of the Insults in the Films of Quentin Tarantino. Universitat De Valencia.

- Smith, T. 2001. *Concise Oxford English Dictionary (10th ed)*. Oxford University Press.
- Steiner, F. 1956. *Taboo*. London: Cohen & West Ltd <http://mojaafryka.weebly.com/taboo.html>. retrieved: 15-08-2012.
- Steiner, F. 1967. *Taboo*. Penguin books, Harmondsworth: UK.
- Tadesse Berisso. 2013. *African Philosophy in Ethiopia: The Riddles of the Number Nine in Guji-Oromo Culture*. Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication.
- Tesso Ujulu. 1999. Some of the Consequences of the Christian Mission Methods and Contextual Evangelism among the Oromo of Ethiopia with special focus on the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus (1880-1974). Unpublished MA Thesis in Theology at the University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg.
- Thompson, W. 1999. *Dictionary of Slang and Unconventional English*. Delhi: W. R. Goyal Publishers & Distributors.
- Trinh, G. 2007. *English Semantics*. Nhà Xuaát Baùn Ñaïi Hoïc Quóac Gia Tp Hoà Chí Minh.
- Troike, S. M. 2003. *The Ethnography of Communication: An Introduction*. 3rd ed. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing Ltd.
- Tolemariam Fufa. 2009. *A typology of Verbal Derivation in Ethiopian Afro-Asiatic Languages*. Published Doctorial Dissertation, LOT, Janskerkhof 13, Netherlands.
- Tobing, Septika S. 2012. *Semantic Change and Meaning Shift Analysis on Film Making Terms*. Unpublished BA thesis. Diponegoro University, Semarang.
- Treis, Y. 2005. "Avoiding Their Names, Avoiding Their Eyes: How Kambaata Women Respect Their In-Laws." *Anthropological Linguistics* 47(3):292-320.
- Troike, Saville M. 1982. *The Ethnography of Communication*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell Ltd.
- Trudgill, P. 1974. *The social differentiation of English in Norwich*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Trudgill, P. 1986. *Dialects in contact*. Blackwell, Oxford, UK.
- Trudgill, P. 2000. *Sociolinguistics (4th ed)*. *An Introduction to Language and Society*. London: Oxford University Press.
- Tse, A. Y. 2011. Linguistic Word Taboos in Chinese Culture. *British Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences* . September 2011, Vol. 1 (2). Pp.134-145 . University Malaysia Pahang, Malaysia.

- Taylor, John.R.2002. *Cognitive Grammar* (3rd ed). New York. CUP.
- Ullmann, S. (1970).*Semantics: An Introduction to the Science of Meaning*. Oxford: Basil.
- Wardhaugh, R. 1986. *An introduction to Sociolinguistics*. New York: Basil Blackwell Inc
- Wardhaugh, R. 1998. *An Introduction to Sociolinguistics*. 3rd edition. Oxford Blackwell Ltd.
- Wardhaugh, R. 2010. *An Introduction to Sociolinguistics*. 6th ed.USA: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Warren, B .1992. What Euphemism tells us About the Interpretation of Words. *Studia Linguistica*. Vol.46/2/ PP. 128-172.
- Wondesan Tesfaye. 1991. *Barruulee Qormaata Waaltina Afaan Oromoo*. Biiroo Aadaafi Beeksisa Oromiyaa. Wirtuu: Jildii- 4, *laguu*, 71-85.
- Xian, Ch. H. 2011. Taboo Language in Singapore.Nanyang Technology University. Unpublished MA thesis.
- Yakabu, U.J. 2012. A Sociolinguistic Study of Taboos in Idoma. *Nasarawa State University.. Nasara Journal of Humanities Vol. 5 No.1, June, 2012*
- Yasser, A.Gomaa. &Yeli Sh. 2012. Soft-boiled Speech: A Contrastive Analysis of Death Euphemisms in Egyptian Arabic and Chinese. *Global Journal of Human social Science*. Volume 12 Issue 8 Version 1.0 May 2012.
- Yule, G. 1996. *The Study of Language*. Cambridge: CUP.
- Yule, G.2006. *The Study of Language*.3rd Ed.CUP.

APPENDIX -A

Focus Group Discussion Guide Questions

The objective of this focus group discussion is to investigate linguistic taboos which are forbidden to speak in public and their corresponding euphemistic expressions according to the Oromo of your particular area. The guiding questions aim to gather and examine the actual usage of taboos and their euphemistic expressions. In this focus group discussion, your participation will be determining the result of this research. Thus, you are kindly requested to actively participate in the group with sincerely and thoughtfully on the tabooed themse given in the following.

Thank you in advance

There are linguistic taboo categories which people prohibited themselves from speaking in public and prefer to substitute them not to offend hearers. So, please discuss depending on the following guideline questions or you can add other points which are related to the similar topic according to your particular society.

1. Taboos and euphemisms related to Death

1. Do people speak freely whatever they like on death? Do they fear death or not? Would you justify your answer? If they fear it, what are the reason(s) that make them to be fear?
2. When somebody died and you want to tell to his/her close relatives, how could you tell them? Which expressions are considered as taboos and euphemistic expressions?
3. If someone directly tells to somebody saying 'Mr. X has died', does it have any effect on the family of the deceased person or speaker due to the direct expression used? If your answer is 'yes' discuss its euphemistic expressions with their meanings?
4. Do Oromo people of your particular area use similar/different expressions to express the death of baby/child, youth and adult? If they use different expressions, identify the taboo expressions and their corresponding appropriate euphemistic expressions with their meaning?

5. Discuss how the people of your particular area express the natural death, death caused by thunder and suicidal; do not forget to explain their euphemistic expressions?
6. Do you explain the words/expressions which are taboos while people soothing the deceased family? Would you discuss in group the appropriate euphemistic expressions which avoid these taboos/offensive words/expressions depending on the cause of the death?
7. According to your particular culture/norm, do people fear calling the name of the deceased person? If your answer is 'yes', what is the reason behind? So, how could they prefer to call it without offending the hearer? discuss in group
8. Would you discuss how your particular society expresses death of the wife or husband?

2. Taboos Related to Disease and their Euphemistic expressions

9. According to your particular area, do calling some diseases' name is taboo? If your answer is 'yes', would you identify these diseases' name with their euphemistic expressions' meaning?
10. Do you explain why do people avoid calling the direct name of these diseases? Is there any societal sanction given to the individual who calls them directly?

3. Taboos Related to Woman (the term 'woman' itself, pregnancy, delivery, menstruation)

11. Is/are there derogatory word/s which may offend unmarried girl if we call her by that word? If your answer is 'yes', what is/are it/they? Discuss the reasons behind it/them?
12. Does calling a married woman by a word *niitii* 'wife' is taboo? If your answer is 'yes', why? Would you discuss the alternative/appropriate expressions to call her?
13. Does calling a divorced woman by the term *gursummaa* is taboo? If your answer is 'yes', why? Would you explain better expression(s) to call her?
14. Does expressing the female gender by the term *altuu* 'birth giver' has connotation? If your answer is 'yes', why? Would you discuss the best expressions we use instead of it?

15. According to your particular society, does calling a pregnant woman by the term *ulfa* 'pregnant' is taboo? If so, would you explain the words/expressions replaced this taboo word to make the communication polite? Don't forget to interpret them!
16. To congratulate a mother gave birth, which term is taboo, and which expressions are appropriate to replace it?
17. When menstruation comes to woman;
 - a. Which word/s or expression(s) is/are taboo(s)
 - b. Which expressions are used as euphemistic?
18. How do the people of your area call a woman who cannot give birth? Is there a word which offends her? If there is, what are better words to say?
19. Abortion is taboo; so, how the society of your particular area expresses its action euphemistically?
20. Does directly calling the term 'prostitute' in front of a prostitute woman/girl is taboo? If your answer is 'yes', why? How can we call her in polite way?
21. What kinds of actions are forbidden while a pregnant woman started to labour?
22. If a woman conceived from her close relative, are there any norms to be violated? How people of your area express her or the child begotten as such?

4. Taboo Related to Body or Sexual Organs and Sexual Acts

23. Can you list the taboo terms/names related to male sexual organ and its euphemistic expressions according to your area? How males and females are euphemizing it? Is there any difference or same? What are the semantic meanings of the euphemized expressions?
24. According to your area, can you list the taboo terms/names related to female sexual organ? How do the people of your area avoid/substitute these taboo names?
25. How do you explain the taboo term 'testicle' euphemistically?
26. While two individuals (male and female) do sex, how someone expresses this deed? Would you elaborate taboo expressions and their euphemistic expressions?
27. Would you identify and discuss the other normal body part (s) which refer (s) to female's sexual organ? How can we call them euphemistically?

28. If somebody did sex forcefully with a girl not aged for sexual intercourse, how the society euphemistically express this action?
29. For the sexual intercourse formally performed on the wedding day, does using the expression *išee ure* ‘penetrated her’ is appropriate? If you say yes/no, why? Explain it.
30. If we express a girl who gave her virgin formally to her husband by *durbummaa gatte* (lit. she lost her virgin), what does she feel? Would you discuss the polite expressions which could not offend her/hearers?
31. Would you explain the expressions that are attached with sexual organs/sexual acts which people use in insulting context?

5. Taboos Related to physical impairments

32. According to your particular area, do calling the direct name of impaired body parts in front of the impaired person is taboo? If your answer is ‘yes’, what are the reasons behind the prohibition of calling their direct name? Discuss in a group!
33. Do calling the following terms taboo? If your answer is ‘yes’, explain their appropriate euphemistic expressions according to your particular area?
- a. *jaamaa* ‘blind’
 - b. *naafa* ‘lame’
 - c. *duudaa* ‘deaf’
 - d. *dinkii* ‘dwarf’
 - e. *giingee* ‘stammer’
 - f. *goop’oo* ‘hunchback’
 - g. *hi ii citaa* ‘deformed lip’
 - h. Add if any are there?
34. Is there any problem that someone may face culturally if he/she laughs at physically impaired persons? Discuss in group

6. Taboo Related to Bodily Excretion/Defecation

35. Can we directly call the term *udaan* ‘stool’ or its action as *abaluun mana udaanii haguu deemee* ‘somebody has gone to the toilet to excrete’? If your answer is ‘no’, why? How people avoid such taboo expressions?

36. Is calling the direct term *uufuu* 'fart' or expressing its action is taboo? If your answer is 'yes', would you discuss how people call it indirectly?
37. Would you discuss taboo terms related to *bulaa* 'sperm' and its euphemistic expressions according to your particular area? What are the semantic meanings of the euphemized expressions/terms?
38. How do the people of your particular area call *hobbaatii* 'placenta'?
39. If the meal somebody has consumed comes out through his/her mouth from stomach, can we say that 'he/she has vomited'? Is it acceptable in your particular society? If 'not' why? How can you euphemize it?

7. Taboo Names Related to Marriage Relationship

40. According to your particular area, how a wife/husband calls her/his own husband/wife to avoid his/her direct name?
41. How he/she avoids the direct name of his/her father/mother-in-law?
42. Is there any punishment to be given for a wife or husband who directly calls the name of her/his father/mother- in-law directly?
43. What are the attitudes of the society towards a girl who lost her virgin before marriage? Explain taboo terms they use to call her? Could you discuss the words/expressions that Hararghe Oromo considered as taboo in honeymoon?
44. Would you explain the euphemistic expressions which people use to express sexual intercourse performed on wedding day? Do these expressions differ from the usual expressions of sexual intercourse?

APPENDIX -B

Unstructured interview questions

1. What does taboo mean in your (particular) society?
2. What kind of taboos do you know in your particular area?
3. How do people of your area avoid tabooed word/expressions?
4. What kind of tabooed subject(s) are highly taboo and which is/are moderately taboo?
5. Which are the variables that determine the usage of taboo and their euphemistic expressions?
6. According to your opinion, what is the reason that pushes someone to use taboo word/expression?
7. How do you express the death of somebody? Which expressions are taboos/euphemistic?
8. How do you call a person who dies suddenly by thunder/suicidal?
9. How do you hearten the family of the deceased person?
10. How do you call male and female sexual organs name?
11. In what context do you prefer to discuss about taboo topic namely sex?
12. What are the expressions that do you prefer to call a pregnant woman?
13. What are expressions that do you use to call a menstruation/menstrual woman?
14. Who are using taboo words more? Male or female? Justify your answer?
15. What are the punishments given for a person who breaks the usage of taboo words according to your particular society?
16. According to your point of view, what are the contributions of studying taboos and their euphemistic expressions for the society?

DABALEE-A

Qabxiilee Maree Garee

Kaayyoon marii garee kanaa akkaataa haala qabatamaa hawaasni naanoo keessanii jechoota/ibsoota laguu(taboo) yoo ifaan ifatti/kallattiin dubbatan nama mufachiisuu danda'aniifi karaa ibsoota toloo bakka buusuun danda'amu waliind mari'achuufi. Kana malees, rakkoolee aadaan kun cabuun dhufuu danda'anis kaasuu ni dandeessu. Kanaaf, waantota gurguddoo hawaasni nannoo keessanii lagatu tokko tokkoon kaastanii sodaafi saalfii malee akka waliin mari'attanii qorannaa kana milkessitaniif kabajaan isin gaafadha. Qabxiileen armaan gadii akka ka'umsaafi qajeelfamaatti gargaaramuudhaan qabxiilee biroo dabalataan kaasuu ni dandeessu.

Duraan dursaa Galatoomaa!

1. Laguu du' aan walqabateefi bakka buusa ibsa toloo isaanii

Hawaasni Oromoo, naannoo adda addaa keessatti waa'ee du'aa ilaalchisee jechootni/ibsootni dubbachuurraa lagatamanii jecha/ibsa biraan bakka buufaman ni jiru. Mee kan naannoo keessanii irratti mari'adhaa. Qabxiilee armaan gadii irratti hundaa'uun yaada keessan wal jijjiiraa

1. Namni waa'ee du'aa irratti akkuma barbaade dubbataa? yoo du'a kan sodaatan ta'e sababni duubaan jiru maali?
2. Yoo namni/firri nama tokko du'e, yemmuu itti himamu, maal jechuufatu lagatama yookaan filatama?
3. Osoo namni tokko 'abaluun du'e' jedhee kallattiin hime rakkoo qaqqabsiisa? eeyyee kan jettu yoo ta'e, ibsoota bakka buusa toloo hiika isaanii waliin mariyadhaa?
4. Du'a, daa'ima dhalattee guyyaa muraasa boodde duute ibsuufi fi du'a ijoollee yookiin ga'eessa akkasumas manguddoo du'e tokko ibsuuf gargaaramnu akka naannookeetti haala tokkoon moo haala garaagaraan ibsama? Garaagari kan jettu yoo ta'e ibsoota laguufi ibsoota toloo bakka bu'uu danda'an hiika isaanii waliin irratti maridhaa?

5. Akkaataa ibsoota toloo hawaasni naannookeetii nama dhukkubasatee yookaan balaa bakakkaatiin akkasumas of ajjeese ibsuuf fayyadamu adda addatti hiika isaanii waliin ibsi?
6. Jechoota yeroo mana maatii warra gaddaa deeman hin jedhamne ibsuu ni dandeessaa? Mee sababa du'i sun itti qaqqabee irratti hundaa'uun ibsoota maatii sana jajjabeessuuf hawasni gargaaramu addatti ibsaa.
7. Akka naannoo keessanitti maqaa nama du'e tokko dhahuun/waamuun ni sodaatamaa? eeyyee yoo kan jettan yoo ta'e, sababni isaa maali? bifa kamiin yoo himame immoo fudhatama qabaata?
8. Nama haati manaa/abbaan manaa jalaa duuteen/du'een hawaasni naannookeetii akkamiin ibsa yookaan ishee/isa ajjabeessa akkasumas maal jechuu fa'a immoo lagata?

2. Laguu maqaa dhukkubootaafi ibsa toloo isaanii

9. Akka naannoo keetti maqaalee dhukkoobota tokko tokko hawaasni kallattiin waamuu irraa lagatu ni jiraa? Jira yoo ta'e maqaalee dhukkuboota kanaa adda baasuun, Ibsoota bakka buusaanii saalfii/mufanna hambisan irratti ibsa waliif kennaa?
10. Sababoota maqaa kallattii dhukkuba kanaa waamuu irraa of qusataniif maalii? mariyadhaa

3. Jechoota Laguu Dubartii waliin walqabatan (jecha 'dubartii' jedhu matuma isaa, ulfa, dahumsa, marsaa laguufi ciniinsuu)

Hawaasa Oromoo naannooke keessatti jechoonni yookiin ibsoonni dubartii waliin walqabatani yoo dubbataman nama salfachiisan/qaanessan irratti mari'adha. Qabxiilee gadiirratti xiyyeeffachuudhaan kan beektu biroos dabaluu ni dandeessu!

11. Durba hin heerumneen jechi/jechootni yoo ittiin waamne ishee mufachiisu ni jiraa? deebiin kee 'eeyyee' yoo ta'e jecha/jechoota kana sababa isaanii waliin himaa?
12. Dubartii heerumte tookkoon *niitii* 'wife' jedhanii waamuun qaniidhaa? 'eeyyee' kan yoo ta'e jette maaliif? ibsoota mufachuu irraa ishee hambisan kan biroorrattis mariyadha!

13. Dubartii abbaa manaa jalaa baate jirtu tokkoon ‘gursummaa’ jedhanii waamuun salfiidhaa? eyyee yoo kan jettan t’e maaliif? ibsoota caalaa fooyya’aa/oo irratti mariyaadhaamee!
14. Saala dhalaa himuuf jecha ‘dhaltuu’ jedhu fayyadamuun rakkoo qabaa? yoo qaba ta’e maali? mufii kana hambisuuf jechoota biraa beektan irratti mariyadhaamee!
15. Dubartii daa’ima garaadhaa qabdu tokkoon ‘ulfa’ jennee kallattiin waamuun safuu cabsu qabaa? Qaba jetta yoo ta’e, safuun cabu maali? Jechoota toloo akkamii fa’a bakka buufne waamuu dandeenya? Hiika isaanii waliin ibsaa !
16. Dubartii daa’ima garaadhaa lafa gooteen ‘dhalte’ jennaa? Hin jennu yoo ta’e, maaliifi? jechoota safuu eegan akkamfaan ibsinaree?
17. Dubartii marsaa lagu qabduun
 - a. jechoota/ibsoota akkamii fa’a jechuutu lagu/qaaniidha?
 - b. Jechoota/ibsoota toloo lagu/qaanii kana hambisan maal fa’i?
18. Dubartii da’uu hin dandeenyeen yoo jecha ‘maseena’jedhuun ibsine ni mufatti? eeyyee kan jettu yoo taate, jechoota akkamii fa’aan yoo waamne mufannaarraa bilisa taati?
19. Ulfa baasuun (abortion) safuudha; ulfa ba’e kana hawaasni akkamiin ibsa?
20. Dubartii sagaagaltuu tokkoon jecha akkamiin yoo ibsine mufattii yookiin hin mufattu?
21. Yemmuu dubartiin ciniinsifattu jechoota biratti dubbatamuu hin qabne akkasumas gochoota ta’uu qabaniifi hin qabne kan beektan ibsaa?
22. Dubartii firaaf ulfoofte waliin walqabatee haala safuu naannooke waliin wal qabsiisuun daa’ima haala akkanaa argamte akkamiin ibsamti?
- 4. Lagu qaama namaa/qaama saalaafi walqunnamtii saalaan walqabate**
23. Akka naannoo keessanitti maqaa qaama saala dhiiraa qaani ta’aniifi maqaalee qaani kana hambisuuf bakka bbufaman hiika isaanii waliin ibsi? garaagarummaan akkaataa dubarrifi dhiirri itti waamu adda adda moo tokko?
24. Maqaa qaama saala dubartiis kan lagatamuufi bakka buufamee ittiin himamu/ibsamu irratti mariyadhaa!
25. Jecha qaani ‘cidhaan’ jedhu ibsa bakka buusa akkamiifaatiin ibsiti? mariyadhaa

26. Yeemuu dhiirri fi dubartiin tokko waal quunnamtii saalaa raawwatan, jechoota akkamii fa'a jechuuutu lagatama? yookiin immoo filatama?
27. Qaama namaa kan qaama hormaataan alatti, qaama hormaata dhalaa waliin hidhata qabatee lagatamu isa/isaan kami? irratti mariyadhaa, akkamiinis waamna?
28. Shamarree umuriin ishee quunnamtii saalaaf hin geenye tokko, yoo dhiirri tokko humnaan gudeede akkamiinis ibsamaa?
29. Walquunnamtii saalaa guyyaa jalqabaaaf abbaa manaafi haadha manaa giddutti godhamu ilaalchise, durbumma dubaree sanaa balleffaamuu isaa ibsuuf ibsa 'ishee ure' jedhu fayyadamuun rakkoo qabaa? eeyyee yoo jettan maaliif? ibsaa
30. Gocha gaaffii 7ffaa irratti ka'eef, ibsa 'durbummaa gatte' jedhu yoo fayyadamne maaltu isheetti dhaga'amaa? akkamiin ibsuutu qaaniidha yookiin qaani miti?
31. Ibsoota qaama saalaa/quunnamtii qaama saalaa waliin walqabatani kan namootni arrabsoof fayyadaman ibsaamee?

5. Laguu hir'ina qaama namaa waliin walqabatani ka'an

32. Hir'ina qaama namaa waliin walqabatee qabxiilee armaan gadii irratti mariyadhaa? Akka hawaasa naannoo keetti maqaalee qaama hir'uu kan kallattiin abbaa sana fuulduratti/biratti dubbachuun rakkoo qabaa? eeyyee yoo jette sababni isaan maqaalee qaama hir'uu kanaa kallattiin waamu lagataniif maaliif? mariyadha
33. Akkaataa hawaasa Oromoo naannokeetti jecha/jechoota hir'ina qaamaa dubbachuun laguu ta'anii armaan gadiitti dhihaataniifi ibsa toloo isaanii ibsaa?
 - a. jaamaa
 - b. naafa
 - c. duudaa
 - d. dinkii
 - e. giingee
 - f. goophoo
 - g. hidhii citaa/sharaafaa
 - h. kan biroos kan jiraatan yoo ta'e
34. Akka naannokeetti nama miidhaa qaamaa qabu tokkotti yoo kolfame, akka aadaatti maltu nama kolfe sanarraan ga'a jedhama? Mariyadhaa

6. Safuu Waantota Qaama Namaa Keessaa Ba'aniin Wal Qabate

35. Jecha 'udaan' jedhu yookiin gocha isaa ibsuuuf 'abaluun mana udaanii haguu deeme' jenna? Hin jennu yoo ta'e maaliif? Maal jechuutu filatamaa ture?
36. Akkaataa hawaasni naannookeetii karaa alkallattii ta'een jecha 'dhuufuu' jedhuuf gocha isaa ittiin ibsu mariyadhaa!
37. Jecha bulaa 'sperm' jedhu kallattiin dubbachuun qaani dhaa? eeyyee kan jettu yoo ta'e, ibsa alkallattii hawaasni itti fayyadamu hiika isaanii waliin ibsaa!
38. Ibsoota hawaasni naannookeetii ittiin 'hobbaatii' waamu gargaaramu ibsi?
39. Nama tokko waan nyaate garaa isaa keessaa deebi'ee afaaniin yoo ba'e 'hooqqise' jenna? Yoo jennes hawaasa kessatti fudhatama qabaa? Hin fudhatamu yoo ta'e ibsoota bakka buu'anii fudhatamaa taasisan ibsaamee?

7. Laguu Maqaa Waliin walqabate

Hawaasa Oromoo keessatti kabaja, amantaa yookaan sodaa irraa kan ka'e maqaan Waaqaa, namaa yookiin bineensota tokko tokkoo karaa alkallattiin waamama.

7.1. Maqaa gaa'ila waliin walqabate

Akka aadaa Oromoo naannoo keetti akkaataa haati manaafi abbaan manaa maqaa abiiyyuufi amaatii yookiin immoo firoottan isaanii biroo ittiin waman irratti mariyadhaa! qabxilee armaan gadii irratti xiyyeeffadhaa.

40. Akkataa haati manaafi abbaan manaa maqaa walii walii isaanii lagatanii/kabajanii maqaa/jecha biroon walwaaman kan naannoo keessanii ibsaa!
41. Haaluma walfakkatuun akkataa isheen/inni maqaa abiiyyuufi amaatii isaanii lagatanii alkallattiin waaman ibsaa?
42. Adabni abbaa manaafi haadha manaa maqaa abiiyyuu/amaatii kallattiin waamaniif kennamuu jiraa? yoo jiraate ibsaa
43. Ilaalchi hawaasni dubara durbummaa dura ishee heerumaan ballessiteef qaban maal fakkaata? ibsoota qaani akkamii fa'an ibsamti ? Itti dabaluuunis, jechoota caagulaa (honeymoon) keessatti Oromoon Harargee waamuu lagataniif akkataa itti bakka buusanii ibsaan irratti mariyadhaa!
44. Ibsoota quunnamtii saalaa guyyyaa gaafa cidhaa godhamu ittin ibsamu irratti mariyadhaa!

DABALEE- B

Afgaaffii alcaasawaa

1. Hawaasa naannooke biratti lagu (taboo) jechuun maali?
2. Gosoota lagu kan akkaamii fa'itu naannoo keetti beekama?
3. Lagu hawaasa keessa jiran kana, akkamiin hawaasni naannooketti miliqsee dubbataa?
4. Lagu naannoo keessatti beekaman keessaa kamtu baay'ee qaanii ta'ee lagatama, isa kamtu hamma tokko qaanii ta'ee lagatama?
5. Waantota fayyadama jechoota laguufi bakka buusa isaanii dangessan maal fa'i jatee yaaddaa?
6. Sababni jechootni lagu ta'an deebi'amanii akka kallattiin dubbataman isaan taasisu maali?
7. Akka naannoo keessanitti akkamiin du'a daa'ima, dardaraafi ga'eessa tokko ibsitu? jechoota/ibsoota akkamii fa'atu qaaniiidha? isaan kamtu immoo isa/isaan qaanii kana bakka bu'a mariyadhaa!
8. Nama sababa bakakkaan yookiin ofiin of ajjeese/du'een akkamiin ibsita?
9. Umurii irratti hundaa'uun akka naannoo keetti, akkaataa hawaasni maatii gaddi sababa du'aan isaan qaqqabe ittiin jajjabeessan ibsaa?
10. Akka naannookeetti, maqaa qaama saala dhalaafi dhiiraa isaan qaanii ta'aniifi ittiin waamamu ibsaa?
11. Haala qabatamaa akkamii keessatti waa'ee walqunnamtii saalaa haasa'uu filattaa?
12. Ibsoota akkamiin dubartii ulfa waamtu?
13. Ibsoota akkamiin dubartii marsaan lagu irra jiru waamtaa?
14. Dhiira moo dubartitu irra caalaatti jechoota qaanii dubbataa?
15. Akka naannoo keetti nama lagu hawaasa cabsee argamerra adabni/qqoqqobbiin kan
16. namu maali?
17. Faayidaan jechota laguufi bakka buusa isaanii isa gaarii qo'achuun hawaasaaf qabu maali?

APPENDIX_C

List of informants and their biography

No	Informant's name	Sex	Age	Occupation	Place	Religion
1	Abdella Mohammed	M	23	University student	Hararghe	Muslim
2	Abdi Gurmesa	M	30	Gov't employer	Wollega	Protestant
3	Abubakar	M	49	Gov't employer	Hararghe	Muslim
4	Adanech Tesfaye	F	21	University student	Bale	Orthodox
5	Alemu Kajela	M	57	E.W.C.T.B worker	Wollega	Protestant
6	Aliyi Mohammad	M	28	Teacher	Hararghe	Muslim
7	Amanu Oli	M	56	E.W.C.T.B worker	Wollega	Protestant
8	Asadu Muttaki	M	38	W.H.C.T.B.worker	Hararghe	Muslim
9	Ayub Mohammad	M	30	farmer	''	''
10	Belay	M	57	Teacher	Wollega	Protestant
11	erinet Wakoya	M	56	E.W.C.T.B worker	Wollega	Wakeffataa
12	Dastu Kedir	F	19	University student	Hararghe	Muslim
13	Dejenu Garedeu	M	65	farmer	Bale	Orthodox
14	Diriba Mammoo	M	26	E.W.C.T.B. worker	Wollega	Protestant
15	Feruza Ibriham	F	35	House wife	Hararghe	Muslim
16	Fozia Husen	F	24	University student	Bale	Muslim
17	Geta ew Silashi	M	31	W.H.C.T.B.worker	Hararghe	Orthodox
18	Hasan Aliyi	M	23	University student	Bale	Muslim
19	Helen Tesemma	F	17	Student	Hararghe	Orthodox
20	Hin ibu ibba	M	27	E.W.C.T.B. worker	Wollega	Protestant
21	Hundaye	F	22	University student	''	''
22	Itenu Sakata	F	24	''	''	Protestant
23	Juriš Junadin	M	26	farmer	Hararghe	Muslim
24	Juwar Ahmad	M	28	''	''	''
25	Kalifa Abdella	M	70	farmer	''	''
26	Kalili Saddo	M	70	farmer	Bale	Muslim
27	Kariya Ali	F	26	E.H.C.T.B. worker	Hararghe	''

28	Kunbi Šunkulle	M	67	teacher	Bale	”
29	Magarsa Dubbale	M	26	H.G.W.C.T.B..worker	Wollega	Protestant
30	Mammo Hiko	M	70	Teacher	Bale	”
31	Mohammad			farmer	”	”
32	Mumme Mohammad	M	55	farmer	”	”
33	Mumme Didda	M	70	Gov’t employer	Hararghe	”
34	Musa Abdella	M	38	farmer	”	Muslim
35	Naima Abdurhaman	F	25	E.H.C.T.B. worker	”	”
36	Naima Husen	F	32	housewife	”	”
37	Najaš Abdella	M	26	”	”	”
38	Negera Ejigu	M	26	W.H.C.T.B.worker	”	Protestant
39	Olani Tu o	M	73	Gov’t employer	Wollega	Wakeffataa
40	Ramadan Heyiden	M	62	Gov’t employer	Hararghe	Muslim
41	Rihana Jemal	F	25	E.H.C.T.B. worker	”	”
42	Sh/ Umar Usman	M	60	farmer	Bale	Muslim
43	Sufiyan Abdella	M	30	E.H.C.T.B. worker	Hararghe	Muslim
44	Suluhman Musa	M	30	farmer	”	”
45	Tahir Junda	M	60	”	Bale	Muslim
46	Takala Ganfure	M	52	H.G.W.C.T.B.worker	Wollega	Wakeffataa
47	Taye Wak’jira	M	45	farmer	Bale	Orthodox
48	Tilahun	M	70	”	”	”
49	Tolasa	M	18	University student	Wollega	Orthodox
50	Usman Ibrahim	M	55	farmer	Bale	Muslim
51	Wark’alema Arega	M	65	teacher	”	Orthodox
52	Zerihun Ababa	M	28	E.H.C.T.B. worker	Wollega	Orthodox
53	Ziyad Adem	M	39	farmer	Hararghe	Muslim

Keys:

- ❖ E.H.C.T.B. =Eastern Hararghe Culture and Tourism Bureaus
- ❖ W.H.C.T.B. = Western Hararghe Culture and Tourism Bureaus
- ❖ H.G.W.C.T.B. = Horro Guduru Wollega Culture and Tourism Bureaus
- ❖ E.W.C.T.B. =Eastern Wollega Culture and Tourism Bureaus