

ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSTY
COLLEGE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANTIES
FACULTY OF HUMANITIES
DEPARTMENT OF LINGUISTICS

LINGUISTIC AND SOCIAL ASPECTS OF THE ʔafo (AZMARI) ARGOT IN
TIGRAY

BY
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ARGOT IN TIGRAY**

**BY
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Symbols, Acronyms and Operational

Definitions

/j/ palatal, glide, voiced

/ə/ mid, central and unrounded

/ɟ/ palatal, affricative, voiced

/ħ/ pharyngeal, fricative, and voiceless

/ʃ/ palatal, fricative and voiceless

/ɲ/ palatal, nasal, voiced

/i/ high, front and unrounded

/ʔ/ glottal, stop and voiceless

/ʕ/ pharyngeal, fricative and voiceless

/tʃ/ palatal, affricative and voiceless

/tʃʔ/ palatal, affricative and ejective

/tʰ/ alveolar, stop and ejective

/kʰ/ velar, stop and ejective

/xʰ/ velar, fricative and ejective

/x/ velar, fricative and voiceless

∅ = empty or zero

→ = becomes

/ = at the environment

= word

-## = word initial

##- = word final

/-x/ = suffix

/x-/ = prefix

// = phonemic

2 = second person

AAAS=Azmari argot of Amharic speakers

AATS = Azmari argot of Tigrinya speakers

Amh. =Amharic

CV- = initial syllable

CV = consonant vowel

CVC = consonant vowel consonant

Ep = Epenthetic

F = female

Imp –imperfective marker

Intro=interrogative

M=male

Neg = negation

Pl = plural

Sg = singular

Tig. = Tigrinya

Argot is a secret language of special group.

Azmari is a person who can sing or praise people.

Deformation refers to distraction of words of language in order to make unintelligible communication.

Standard language is a language, which is spoken by the main society.

ʔaʃo is Azmari group or man of Tigrinya.

Abstract

This research focused on the linguistic features and social aspects of the ?afo argot. The objectives of this research are to describe the linguistic features of the ?afo argot and the social aspects of the ?afo argot and its speakers in order to explain why the ?afo people use it as secret language. To achieve these objectives, the researcher used purposive method sampling to select the informants. Elicitation, interview and participatory observation method were used to collect the data. The data have been recorded by using audio-tape recorder and video-camera. Qualitative as well as quantitative methods are employed to analyze the collected data.

The findings of this research are the following. There is underestimation between the ?afo and non-?afo groups. This underestimation is a reason for the ?afo group to be self-designated and to have secret language or argot. Second, the ?afo argot is derived from Tigrinya and Amharic words through form, semantic, form and semantic changes, using different semantic aspects and direct used terms of Tigrinya. In form change, the ?afo argot uses phonological deformations such as addition, metathesis, reduplication, substitution, deletion, vowel deformation and degemination as well as free variation and depalatalization of the sounds. In addition, suffixes and some prefixes of Tigrinya and Amharic, onomatopoeic words and changed terms from compound verbs to single words have been used in the formation of the argot. The ?afo argot also uses semantic load, instrumental nouns, paraphrastic descriptions, connotative and denotative meanings and naming whole and parts in the same word to solve inadequate of expressions. ?afo argot uses the phonological and syntactic structure as well as morphological expressions of Tigrinya.

Chapter One

Introduction

1.1. Background of the Study

Sociolinguistics is the empirical study of language in relation to society. There are numbers of specialists who investigate some aspects of the interaction of language and society. They have been studying about how language relates to social categories of various kinds, such as social class, age, sex, gender, ethnicity, speech situation, social network (family members, friends, colleagues, customers, neighbors and other regular or occasional interlocutors) as well as social aspects in general (Coulmas, 2005:1, 13, Chamber and Trudgill, 2004:64). Therefore, to be a member of a certain language group, usually, there is an association between language and culture. Historical circumstance, social hierarchy, patterns of internal and external interaction and ideology help to determine the construction of ethno-linguistic identity more than the basis of structural linguistic parameters (Wolfram 2007:77).

Throughout the world, people have invented secret languages and language games. They have been using these special languages as means of identifying with a special group, for fun or to prevent others from knowing what is being said (Fromkin, et al. , 2003:487-488).

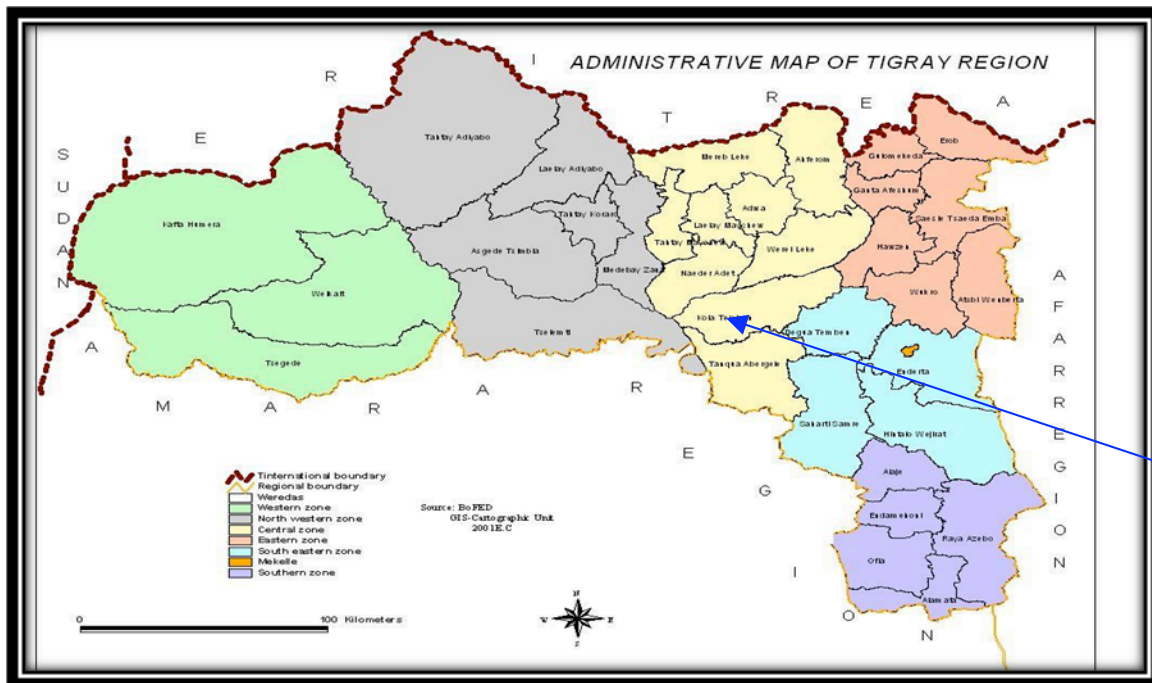
Society is classified into different groups according to various social factors such as types of occupation, generation, economic status, kinship, etc (Simeneh, 2005:137). In Tigray, there is one societal group of minstrel called Azmari in Amharic or ገጻጽ in their secret language. Leslau (1952) and Ashenafi (1975:41) indicated that the word Azmari is derived from the Ethiopian Semitic word *zmr* means “sing”, *zəmərə* “sang” and the noun form of this word is Azmari means “a person who sings a song”. According to Binyam (1995:13), Azmari people had been also called ገጻጻጽ “a person who praises” because a long time ago Azmari people had praised for emperors or princes, their events and heroes. They have cultural music played by a traditional instrument called *masink’o* which is made from the hair of horse’s tail, goat’s skin and wood (Nurhsen, 1986:5). As Ashenafi (1975:41) denoted, Azmari group of Amhara region particularly Debre-Markos have secret language (argot) which they use it to communicate with each other in the group. Bussmann (2004:5) defined argot as follows.

A secret language...used by beggars and thieves in medieval France, more broadly, argot may refer to any specialized vocabulary or set of expressions...used by a particular group or class and not widely understood by main stream society.

This definition is related with historical development of secret language of the criminal people in France. However, secret language is not only used by criminal people but also non-criminal people use it in Ethiopia. Simeneh (2005:141) describes the Azmari argot of Gondar as follows:

Communication through a secret argot allows Enzata [Azmari group] to share a sense of community and exclusivity.... it helps as a means of exchanging information they do not want outsiders [Bugä] to know.

From the above quote, argot is not only spoken by criminal people but it is spoken by non-criminal people like Azmari group. The main objective of this research is to survey the linguistic features and social aspects of the Azmari argot of Tigrinya speakers who are found in Temben- Begashexa of Tigray region. The ?äfo people are found in central zone of Tigray district of K'olatemben-Begashexa.



K'olatemben, Begashexa



Map of K'olatenben

As the above map of K'olatenben, Begashexa is found southern part of Ataklti, Western part of Simret, eastern part of Abbiy Addi town.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

The analysis of argot speakers and their secret language has both methodological and theoretical significance for sociolinguistic investigators. Methodologically, it is used as a means of penetrating the inner life of the speakers (special roles, problems, and other concerns) arising from their sociolinguistic background. Theoretically, it is also employed mainly to see the social functions of the argot and language structures (Stephenson and Scarpitti, 1968:384).

In Ethiopia, there are Azmari groups found in Amhara and Tigray regions. The Azmari groups of Amharic speakers and Tigrinya speakers have their own secret languages. Azmari argot of Amharic speakers is studied by Leslau (1952). When we come to Tigray region, however, Azmari argot of Tigrinya speakers which is called ?afjo argot was not study yet. Therefore, the researcher studied the phonology, vocabulary, morphology, syntax and social aspects of the Azmari secret language of Tigrinya speakers. Other secret languages may exist in Tigray, but

they are not included in this research. To this end, the following research questions were answered.

- What are linguistic features of the ?afo argot?
- What do the social properties of the ?afo argot speaking group and their secret language characterize?

1.3. Objective of the Study

The purpose of the research is to study the linguistic and social aspects of the ?afo argot of Tigrinya speakers, particularly in Temben-Begashexa.

Specifically, the study has been concerned:

- to discuss phonological, morphological and syntactic properties of the ?afo argot;
- to see how the formations of the ?afo argot come to being;
- to introduce the social aspects of the ?afo argot of the Tigrinya speakers and
- to see why ?afo people have their own secret language.

1.4. Significance of the Study

It is believed that this research may have the following significances.

- It may help readers who want to know the linguistic and social aspects of the ?afo argot.
- Investigators may use this study as a standing point to make other related investigations in this argot.
- It can be a base for researchers who want to participate in documenting and dictionary making of ?afo argot.
- It may be used as a sample to other investigators who want to investigate the same issue in different argots that have not studied yet.
- It may serve as an important material to save the linguistic and the social aspects of the ?afo group.
- It may be useful for researchers who are interested in comparing different argots with the ?afo argot of Tigrinya speakers.

1.5. Scope of the Study

The focus of this study is to describe the phonological, morphological, syntactic properties, word formations and social aspects of the Ṭaṣo argot of the Tigrinya speakers. Ṭaṣo (Azmari) are found in Tigray region particularly, in Wekro- Hayk Mesahl, Mekelle- around Serewat and Temben - Begashexa. Azmari so called Enzata also live outside Tigray region, in Gondar town of Amhara region (cf. Simeneh, 2010:138). However, to make the study more manageable, the researcher has focused on Azmari of Tigray particularly in Temben-Begashexa.

1.6. Limitation of the Study

The researcher faced with different problems when he was collecting data. The basic challenge of the researcher was the unwillingness of the informants to tell about their secret language. The researcher solved the problem by meeting the informants frequently and creating a close relationship with them. Then the researcher promised the informants not to tell about their secret language to anyone, and he will not train to anybody. Therefore, they were willing to tell the researcher about their argot. The unwillingness of the informants is a reason not to employ random sampling to select the informants.

Chapter Two

Review of Related Literature

2.1. Conceptual Frame Work

2.1.1. Definition of Non-standard Languages (Group Languages)

Language is the reflection of its speakers, and this is surely a piece of knowledge as old as human speech itself (Keller 1997:315). Thus, language acts are acts of identity. In relation to this, as language is a reflection of its speakers, argot is the reflections of its different speakers.

People use language to share their thoughts and feelings such as needs, ties, joys, affection, taste, etc with other people to exploit the subtle and concrete aspects of language, and to reveal and define their social relationships with the people they are talking (Fasold, 1984:1, Flexner; 1967:189). As language helps us to see abstract needs of its speakers and history, argots or secret languages and other group languages are also important to examine the interest and long history of its speakers. In relation to this, Sibata (1918:280) states that “observation of group languages [argot, slang, etc] would not only help us to understand the group, but would provide good material for use when considering the future of the Japanese languages”. As anyone can deduce from the Sibata (1918:280) idea, studying the group language helps to examine the identity of the group language speakers and to predicate the future of the standard languages and their historical development.

In our language usage, we could not speak exactly the same as others could speak, since we all are different in different ways of our thinking, because of different economic, social, historical, psychological backgrounds, etc. This idea is supported by saying: “We can be sure that no two speakers have the same language, because no two speakers have the same experience of language” (Hudson, 1980:12), and in relation to social dialect, occupation, education, income, racial or ethnic origin, cultural background, caste, religion ... are the main determiner or factor of social dialect (Wardhaugh, 1992:103). In addition to this, Labov (1966:567) says that “linguistic behavior is highly normative or goal-directed”. Therefore, language is too much affected by the society’s norm.

When the difference among speakers becomes narrow, they develop group identity; every one of us wants to belong to a group of people, to be accepted by the other members of that group as one of them. Furthermore, every one of us needs to be recognized by outsiders as members of that group in relation to politeness, prestige, misunderstanding, analogy etc. So, we develop a

language which is one of the most powerful ways of maintaining and displaying membership in a group (Trask, 2010:1, Fasold, 1984:1, and Flexner, 1967:189).

According to Kellers (1997:320), in one language, people may come to the same organized group or into hierarchically ordered social groups (high, middle or low), economic status, cross cultural group, and specifically, to related family lineage, rank, occupation, age, sex, regional background and etc by different criteria. Different group or informal languages may be developed in one language speakers. Group or informal languages are defined by Sibata (1918:277) as follows:

The group languages are divided into argot, occupational language and slang. Group language is like slang of thieves and students created within the group and serves to strengthen the ties within the group. Note that group language is very much a manmade object with the truncation of words or the metathesis of sounds, the manner of altering word forms seems to be unrestricted.

From the above quote, we can understand that informal or group languages are like argot, slang and occupational language. In relation to this, informal (group) languages help express the feelings of different group of society that have common interest in social, economic, geographic, national, racial, religious, educational backgrounds etc (Flexner, 1967:197 and Leslau, 1964a and 1949b).

The first group language is dialect. It is a regional, temporal or social variety of a language, differing in phonology, morphology, and vocabulary from the standard language which is socially favored dialect (Hartmann and Strock, 1972:6, and Flexner 1967:191). However, dialect is different from secret language or argot because dialect is not used as way of expressing secret.

The second type of informal language or group language is slang. It is defined as a variety of speech characterized by newly coined and rapidly changed its vocabulary, but also used profession groups such as, pickpocket, cardsharp, street girls and boys and etc whose activities are not acceptable by others. They create slang to prevent their secret from outsider group, and they are usually youngsters (Hartman and Stork, 1972:210). Johnson (2006:47) also defines slang as:

Slang is a kind of language occurring chiefly in casual and playful speech, made up typically short-lived coinages and figures of speech that are deliberately used in place of standard terms for added raciness, humor, irreverence or other effect.

From the above idea, we can understand that slang is formed through coinage and figures, and it is used instead of the standard languages informally for various purposes. To sum up, slang is used by different speakers of the standard language for fun, disrespect etc. It also introduces new words to the language by changing old meaning to new meaning and sound changes to serve as secret language.

The third type of group language is jargon. It is a set of terms and expressions used by limited or individual profession or occupation group but not used and often not understood as a whole by the speech community (Hartmann, and Stork, 1972:121). Furthermore, Johnson (2006:47) said that jargon is technical terminology usually it is found in public institution such as university and graduate schools. Therefore, in relation to function, jargon is usually used to facilitate professional works rather than to keep secret as slang.

The fourth type of group language is cant. According to Hartmann and Stork (1972:31), cant is a jargon peculiar to a local, social or occupation, group, particularly the lower social strata. Alternatively the term cant means argot and lingo.

Moreover, “Cant is a jargon or a secret language... that deviates from the standard language... cant intentionally meant to be unintelligible to those who have no command of them” (Bussmann, 1996:85). Cant seems to be more nearer to argot in its formation. Argot is only used in this research rather than cant, jargon and lingo though they are interchangeable used terms.

2.1.2. What Does Argot Mean?

Argot is one type of informal languages, and it is named in different ways. It is also known as, secret language, disguising speech, lundling, and language game and play. However, these terms may be differed in different ways. As Gil (2002:1) pointed out, “Lundlings are also known as secret languages, language disguises, language genres, or backwards languages, involving rule-governed phonological manipulations of ordinary speech”. Argot is defined by different scholars in different ways. According to Chesterton (2010:212), argot is defined as follows:

The tendency for slang to be geographically or associated with a particular group of people is epitomized in ARGOT. Thus, it is a body of non-standard vocabulary used by a group bound by common interest, isolation, or their opposition to authority. The word “argot” is traditionally associated with those who live outside the law: thief itinerant [traveler] and etc....

From this quotation, we can say that argot is the language of special group which wants to communicate with each other by excluding the outsiders, and it is not necessarily the language of illegal people. Let us see again this definition in detail:

[If the group] ...tend to develop and extensive in-group variety of language, it is known as ‘argot’. An argot is colloquial and has the character of slang, but some of its vocabularies are technically jargon in that they are specialized and have no standard equivalence. Argot is both the cant and the jargon of any professional criminal group (Flexner 1967: 191,196).

Flexner (1967: 191,196) writes that argot is as a secret language, roughly corresponding to cant, and is used by beggars and thieves. As Flexner’s (1967: 191,196) expression, argot is the secret language of the criminal people. But it is not only taken as secret language of criminal people because it may serve other group of people such as Azmari, blacksmith etc who are not criminal people. However, historically, it may be taken as language of underworld or criminal people. According to Bussmann (1996:85), argot may refer to any specialized vocabulary or set of expressions (jargon) used by a particular group or class and not widely understood by mainstream society.

Hudson (1980:43) states that the source of complexity of the language variation (social dialect), social class is a source of secret language. Argot and cant are taken as the same words. But due to have constituency, the argot is only used in this research rather than cant. Argot and secret language are used in interchangeable terms

Argot serves for its speakers in different ways. Stephenson and Scarpitti (1968:384) noted that argot is used as expressions of solidarity, identification of in-group members, utilitarian symbolization of the complexities and subtleties of group life, exclusion of non-members, and maintenance of secret and veiled expressions of hostility.

2.1.3. Formation of Argot

Argot has similar syntax, phonology and discourse with standard language of the main stream of the community. Thus, the users of argot deformed the disguise speech from standard languages in different ways. In the formation of secret language (argot), there are different systems used to restrict communication to an “in-group” and exclude others.

To make argot incomprehensible speech, the users use standard language (like Tigrinya, Amharic, English...) words and transform them through various phonological and morphological procedures or by giving them new meaning out of changing their forms, or by borrowing from other languages of the neighbor communities (Leslau, 1964a:7, and 1949b, Chesterton, 2010:227, 1974:8). Therefore, the systems of argot formation such as phonological, morphological and semantic distortions as well as borrowing have been discussed below one by one as follows.

2.1.3.1. Phonological Distortion

Phonological distortion means distorted or deformed the normal or natural phonology of the languages. According to Laycock and Muhlhausler (1985:456), in secret language creation, at each a number of operations can be carried out, mainly lengthening, shortening, substitution, and metathesis or a combination of these (poly-systematic), such processes are common in the mechanical alterations of natural languages called ludlings or play-languages.

In historical linguistics, sound changes are typically classified according to whether they are conditioned or unconditioned. This means when a sound change occurs generally and is not dependent on the phonetic context in which boring sounds, it is unconditioned. If more restricted and affect only some sound's occurrence, those in particular contexts, it is conditioned (Campbell, 2004:18). In relation to this, in phonological deformation of argot, sounds change may or may not be conditioned or unconditioned.

Lengthening is mainly regular feature of argot phonological distortion. It consists of features such as addition and reduplication processes. Addition processes may be adding of extra materials: consonants, vowels, syllable, or syllables into the words of standard language. Usually, consonants are inserted among vowels because they are relatively easy to pronounce and to make disguise speech. Reduplication is also a repetition of speech sounds of the whole

words, or syllable or syllables (Leslau 1964b:8 and 1964a:54, 55, and Chesterton, 2010). Reduplication may operate with addition of external sounds.

The second phonological distortion is palatalization. When we see palatalization in argot, it is processed by palatalizing speech sounds which are not palatal sounds in nature. According to Biyazen (1991:32), pickpocket argot has palatalization feature as:

Amh.	Pickpocket slang	gloss
kəssəkəsə	kəʃʃəkəʃə	he hit
k'ənət't'əsə	k'inīt't'aʃ	cigarette

As mentioned in the above data, the pickpocket slang speakers change the /s/ sound to /ʃ/ such as *kəʃʃəkəʃə* “he hit” taken from Amharic word *kəssəkəsə*.

The third phonological distortion feature of argot is shortening. This feature is important in the formation of different secret language. According to Chesterton (2010:229), teenage speakers speak a Pitjantjatjara argot which they call “short way language” that found in central Australia. In this argot, the words are formed by dropping the initial syllable. Let us see some example of shortening of Pitjantjatjara argot (Ibid) in the following data.

Basic word	Pitjantjatjara argot	gloss
kutjara	tjara	two
rapita	pita	rabbit
pukurlarinyi	kurlarinyi	be happy

As the above data, the words of Pitjantjatjara argot are derived by deleting the initial sounds of the words. For instance, *tjara* is formed from *kutjara* through deletion of /ku/ sounds.

The fourth common principle for disguising words is a substitution of one sound by another sound or one syllable by another syllable. There is no definite pattern of that processes of substitution, but it may be on phonetic basis of homorganic sounds or homo-manner articulation such as one liquid for another liquid, or one labial for another labial. However, sometimes, some sounds may substitute any sounds (Leslau, 1964b:10 and 1964a:59).

The fifth phonological distortion of words is metathesis. According to Campbell (2004:39), metathesis in language is the transposition of sounds and, it is a change in which sound exchange positions with one another within a word. Metathesis is one of the major processes used in creating new vocabularies of the argot on the basis of the standard form through transposition of the sounds of standard language words from various positions to various positions individually or together. In addition to this, all speech sounds or syllables of the word may be moved into different positions (Chesterton, 2010:227, 22). When metathesis is practiced, the geminating feature of standard language may become to degemination feature. Let us see some examples of metathesis taken from pig – Latin language play (Laycock and Muhlhausler, 1985:450). “Cool ta the dillow namow flutterby” is derived from “look at the old woman butterfly” respectively with some additional changes.

The sixth phonological distortion of words is epenthesis, creation and simplification of clusters. The converse process of elision is epenthesis, in which a segment is inserted in a specific environment (Carr, 1993:41). Epenthesis may be process of clusters of consonant of standard language become single consonant by inserting an epenthetic vowel. On the other hand, sequenced vowels become to single vowel by inserting constant to simplify clusters to keep phonotactic rule of language. Moreover, according to Campbell (2004:35), in language, epenthesis or insertion inserts a sound into a word and simplification of clusters means a change in which a repeated sequence of sounds is simplified to a single occurrence. Argot may be created through non-cluster features of standard words become to clusters of consonants feature additionally (Mesrak, 2003:40). In addition this, insertion is defined as:

Not only can segments be deleted, sometimes they can be inserted instead. There seem to be two basic reasons for insertion: preventing clusters of consonants that violate syllable structure constraints in the language, and easing transitions between segments that have multiple incompatibilities. (Nathan, 2008: 81).

As the above quote, segments may be deleted and inserted in the words of language. In addition to this, deletion and insertion may function as the processes of the creating unintelligible words in the secret language.

2.1.3.2. Morphological Deformation

Affixes serve to derive words or to express grammatical meanings in standard languages. In contrast, morphological deformation means the affixes of the standard languages function to distort the communication between the “in-group” and the outsiders in secret language creation or argot. Leslau (1964a:9) states that various affixes are added, or distorted to the words of the standard language to construct a secret language (argot). Nyōbō kotoba, a Japanese secret among women of the court adds the polite prefix /o-/ and removing the final syllable of disyllabic words (Chesterton, 2010:232). In adding affixes of standard language, the secret language may use as deforming system, or to express morphological meanings and grammars as the standard language. But Nyōbō kotoba argot uses prefix [o-] to deform words of the argot from standard language.

2.1.3.3. Semantic Aspects

Some numbers of words of argot are used through various meaning types to express that huge terms or expressions of standard language. So, to solve inadequate words, the argot uses different procedures of semantic aspects out of changing the form of the words. In semantic aspects, the argot may use paraphrase, descriptions, transferred meaning and expressive connotation. In addition to this, the speakers of the argot may use expressing the name of the part for whole, or vice versa, pejorative meaning, and onomatopoeic expressions from standard language without changing the form of the words (Leslau, 1964a:60, and 1964b:1-12).

In semantic change of language, metaphor in semantic change involves extensions in the meaning of a word that semantic similarity or connection between the new sense and the original one, and semantic widening or is the range of meaning of a word can be used in more contexts than were appropriate for it before the change (Campbell, 2004:254). Therefore, this semantic feature of language may be similar with semantic change of argot. In relation to contextual meaning, expansion of meaning is logical semantic relationships between events (Halliday, 2003:127).

2.1.3.4. Loanwords

Loanword is a lexical item (a word) which has been borrowed from another language, a word which originally was not part of the vocabulary of the recipient language but was adopted from some other language and made part of the borrowing languages (Campbell, 2004:63). Loanwords

as features of language are also common features in secret language. As Leslau (1964a:64) states, “Nearly every argot has loanwords, and the borrower language depends on the nature of the argot and its geographic position.” That means argots borrow words from different languages which are spoken by the neighboring people.

In addition to this, argot may borrow words from slang and dialects of the community (Leslau, 1964a:59 and Mesrak, 2003:4). In borrowing words, the argot may take words directly or by changing the forms and meanings of the words by using different processes, (Mesrak, 2003:43). These processes may be by changing meaning or form of the borrowed words.

2.1.3.5. Unknown Origin of the Words

It should be noted that argots may have words whose origins are not known. Such a feature is reflected in m^wijət argot (Leslau, 1964a:62). Perhaps, those unknown origin of the words may be diachronically changed their nature totally. According to Yeshitla, 1986:34), in the slang language of Diredewa Amharic, it has terms taken as arbitrary terms or terms taken as unknown their origins like the following:

Slang	gloss	slang	gloss
dafda	addicted man	k’əʃət	beautiful
bəgəm	empty pocket	tarma	buttock
ɕəbbe	foolish		

Pachuco calo (argot of Spanish) shares many characteristics with other in-group argots around the world, such as word creation, taboo words, semantic extension, and metaphor, to name a few. Such speech characteristics might be considered universals for this type of speech variety, García (2005:806). From this point, the unknown origin of words may be due to the speakers’ word creation.

2.2. Pervious Works

There are different works done on different areas of secret languages. These works are both articles and B.A senior essays. Leslau attempted to study different argots of Ethiopia. These include “An Ethiopian Merchants' Argot” (1949a), “An Ethiopian Argot of People Possessed by a Spirit” (1949b), “An Ethiopian Minstrels’ Argot” (1952), and “An Ethiopian Argot of a Gurage Secret Society” (1964).

Leslau's (1949a) article tried to see the merchants' argot of Debremarkos (Gojjam) and Gondor. The merchants' argot is called k'ələməገታ, and as Leslau's (1949a) finding, k'ələməገታ is formed from Amharic word k'ələm. It has several loanwords from different languages such as Arabic, Cushitic and Semitic languages. According to Leslau (1949a), the words of this argot are derived from the above foreign languages words than Amharic words. The morphological structure of k'ələməገታ is Amharic. The argot also has words of doubtful origin. The formation systems of the k'ələməገታ argot are phonological, semantic and borrowing processes. Let us see some examples of k'ələməገታ argot formation (Leslau, 1949a:1).

Basic word	k'ələməገታ	gloss	process
nəggədə	tʃəggədə	trade	n→tʃ/-## and borrowing from Amharic
jazə	nazə	grasp	j→n/-## and borrowing from Amharic
wahid	wahid	eight	ħ→h/ word medial and borrowing from Arabic
harəto	harrətə	eat	ro→rrə/## and borrowing from Selti/Walani
gange	gango	horse	e→o/##- and borrowing from Oromo
t'əmi	t'ismi	butter	ə→i/ word medial and borrowing from Tigrinya

As mentioned in the above data, the speakers of the k'ələməገታ argot use borrowing words from Amharic, Arabic, Selti/Walani, Oromo and Tigrinya with substitution of some sounds.

In addition to this, Leslau (1949b) attempted to introduce all about the origin, types and nature of the zar. He also described that this argot is deformed from Amharic through different phonological processes as:

Word	argot's words	gloss	sound changed
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kufu	mufa	bad	k→m/-## and u→a/##-
gənzəb	mənʒəb	money	g→m/-## and z→ʒ/word medial

As we have seen the above data, there is a substitution of initial consonants of the Amharic words /k/ and /g/ by /m/. Moreover, the /u/ is substituted by /a/ in *mufa* “bad” and /z/ is replaced by /ʒ/ in *mənʒəb* “money” (Leslau, 1952:210). The argot also uses morphological deformation. Morphological deformation means using affixes of the standard languages (Tigrinya, Amharic, Arabic...) as tool to make incomprehensible communication between the argot speakers and the outsiders as stated below.

Word	argot’s word	gloss	sound changed
afɪntʃ’a	afuntʃ’ite	nose	Ø→it/##- and other vowel changes
addam	addamit	Adam	Ø→it/##- and other vowel changes

As mentioned in the above data, *afuntʃ’ite* is taken from *afɪntʃ’a*, and *addamit* from *addam* through addition of affective ending /te/ and /-it/ respectively (Leslau, 1952:208). In addition to this, the argot of people possessed by a spirit uses paraphrastic descriptions. In the argot of people possessed by a spirit, paraphrastic descriptions deals with the naming things or animals by describing their features as stated below:

Argot’s words	meaning	argot’s words	meaning
ʃ’əlləma ajfəri	door	gədəl ajfəri	water
dark neg.fear		heap neg.fear	
k’ənd sala	ox	mənət’ər	eye
horn sharp		eye-glass	

From the above data, we have understand that things or animals are named by describing their manner like *gədəl ajfəri* “it did not fear heap” means “water” because water moves nn,n

from mountain to down (Leslau, 1952:207). The argot of people possessed by a spirit borrowed words from different languages such as *farada* “mule” from Oromo word *farda* “hose” and *kāfir* “Christian” *kafir* from Arabic word.

Leslau (1964b) attempted to survey about culture of m^wijət group which is found in Gurage. m^wijət use Dobbi morphology. The phonological formation of m^wijət argot is through reduplication of the consonants such as *rikakkəbə-m* “find” from *rəkkəbə* “find” and *(atf')tf'inannə?ə-m* “kill” from *tf'nk'* Semitic root. It also uses addition of sounds like *frakka-m* “go” from *fəkka-m*, *grabba-m* “enter” from *gəbba-m* etc. Morphological process such as suffixation of /-jə/ and /-ja/ are suffixed to *b^wərrjə* “fowl, hen” from *bəərə-m* “fly”. And the argot borrows words like *atf'tf'inaggərə-m* “sell” from Sodo word *t'iggərjə-m* and *kəssəmmija* “brother” from Ennemor word *əssəm* “brother”.

Furthermore, Leslau (1952) introduced about Azmari group of Amharic speakers and their music performance. He collected data from Debremarkos (Gojjam), Gondor and Addis Ababa from three informants (two men and one woman). In addition to this, the Azmari of Debremarkos, Gondar and Addis Ababa speak almost similar argot. According to Leslau (1952:102), Azmari (minstrels) argot of Amharic speakers (AAAS) uses Amharic morphology as the following:

AAAS	gloss
tf'ibil'e	my horse
tf'ibilu	his horse
tf'ibila	her horse

As the above data, the Azmari argot of Amharic speakers (AAAS) uses the 1Sg /-e/, 3SgM /-u/ and 3SgF /-a/ possessive markers of Amharic. The argot also uses different phonological

formations. The words of the argot became /o/ word final from non-/o/ word final as stated below (Leslau, 1952:103):

Amh.	AAAS	gloss	sound changed
Kərs	kərso	belly	Ø→o/##-
s'et	sitto	woman	t→tt/##- and ^j e→i/word medial
k'əllət'ə	k'ilt'o	butter	Ø→o/##-

As the above data, the words of the argot changed their forms by ending the final part of the words. The argot also has words whose final part is /-tʃtʃo/ and /-tʃtʃa/ as stated below (Leslau, 1952:105):

Amh.	AAAS	gloss
wəha	watʃtʃo	water
t'əɕ	dətʃtʃo	local beer

As stated the above data, the word of argot are formed by ending /-tʃtʃo/ and /-tʃtʃa/ in watʃtʃo “water” taken from Amharic *wəha* “water”, *dətʃtʃo* “local beer” derived from Amharic word *t'əɕ*, *kutʃtʃo* “hand, finger” and *akitʃtʃa* “honey” their origins is obscured. Moreover, the words of the argot ended by /-na/ and other changes such as (Leslau, 1952:103):

Amh.	AAAS	gloss	sound changed
Af	afafna	mouth	VC→VCVCVC/## and Ø →na/##-
Das	d̄isind̄is	shed	CVC→CVCVCCVC/ ##
k'əj	k'ijink'i	red	CVC→CVCVCCV/##
and	andina	one	Ø →na/ ##-
innat	immina	mother	Ø →na/##- and nn→ mm/ word medial
abbat	abbina	father	Ø →na/ ## - and t→Ø/ ##-

From the above data elaborates, /-na/ suffix is added to the word final with others changes like reduplication /f/ in *afafna* “mouth”. *d̄isind̄is* “shed” is deformed from Amharic word *das* “shed” through reduplication of *das* or CVC to *d̄isind̄is* or CVCVCCVC. Deletion of /t/ is operated in

abbina “father” etc. Azmari argot of Amharic speakers also uses reordering of the consonants as follows:

Amh.	AAAS	gloss	sound changed
wət't'a	t'awwa	go out	wt't'→t'ww/##
biftʃa	tʃibba	alone	btʃtʃ→tʃbb/##
wəddək'ə	dəwwək'ə	fall	wdd→dww/-##

From the above data, we can understand that Azmari argot of Amharic speakers (AAAS) uses metathesis of consonants as well as change of geminated sounds. Furthermore, it uses addition of consonants such as /rə/, /n/, /-ma/ and /w/ as the following data:

Amh.	AAAS	gloss	sound changed
k'ədda	k'ərədda	draw water	Ø →rə/[second syllable of the word]-
sərra	sərənna	work	Ø →n/##- and change of geminated sound
bəllət't'ə	bələnnət'ə	exceed	Ø→nnə/word medial
addis	amaddis	new	Ø →ma/- word medial
ləffa	wələffa	toil	Ø →w/-##

As mentioned in the above data, someone can understand that /r/, /n/, /ma/ and /w/ are added in *k'ərədda* “draw water” from *k'ədda* Amharic, *sərənna* “work” from Amharic *sərra*, *amat't'a* “lack” from Amharic *at't'a*, *wələffa* “toil” from Amharic *ləffa* etc (Leslau, 1952:103-104) respectively. In addition to this, the argot uses substitutions of consonants as stated below:

Amh.	AAAS	gloss	sound changed
hullu	tullu	all	k→t/-##
səkkərə	wəkkərə	get drunk	s→w/-##

As stated in the above data, there is substitution of consonants between h/t, f/w, t/m, k/t and s/w. The other phonological formation of the Azmari argot of Amharic speakers (AAAS) is shortening of the original words; *ʃiməg'ə* “old man” from Amharic *ʃiməgille*. It also uses metaphoric expressions like *urus* or *irus* “master, king” and *birhan* “blood”. There are also terms which express the part and the whole such as *watʃfo* “water” and “rain”, *kutʃfo* “finger” and “hand”. Moreover, this argot borrows terms such as *gizna* “money” probably from Argoba *gizi* “money” and Gafat *gizza* “domestic animal, money” and *t'int'o* “goat” from Tigre *t'alit* “goat”.

Azmari argot of Amharic speakers (AAAS) use semantic deformations. Semantic deformation means the original word (of Amharic) is changed its meaning but no form or pronunciation

change. Numeral words of the Azmari argot of Amharic speakers (AAAS) argot are derived from Amharic words by changing their meaning without changing their form as stated below (Leslau, 1952:107).

Amh.	gloss	AAAS	gloss
arba	forty	arba	four
səba	seventy	səba	seven
səmanja	eighty	səmanja	eight
zət'əna	ninety	zət'əna	nine

From the above data, the words of Azmari argot of Amharic speakers are formed from Amharic words by changing their meaning. For instance, *səba* “seven” is formed from Amharic *səba* “seventy” by changing its meaning from seventy to seven.

The above article is done by Leslau (1952) in Azmari argot of Amharic speakers (AAAS) has some similarity and difference in words etymologies with the actual thesis that conducted as: linguistic and social aspects of ጥገገ (Azmari) argot in Tigray, eventhough they are conducted in different areas or regions and time. Their similarities may be because of that ጥገገ (Azmari) of Tigrinya speakers and Azmari of Amharic speakers have the same profession of playing ጥገገ and praising people as well as they are the speakers of the Semitic language group (Tigrinya and Amharic).

In contrast, Azmari argot of Tigrinya speakers and Azmari argot of Amharic speakers have too much difference in their morphological expressions because Azmari argot of Tigrinya speakers uses the Tigrinya morphology and Azmari argot of Amharic speakers uses the Amharic morphology. And there are too many words of Azmari argot of Tigrinya speakers and Azmari argot of Amharic speakers which have different representations in each of the argots. However, deep historical study is needed to investigate the sources of the similarities as well as the variations among the Azmari argot of Tigrinya speakers and Azmari argot of Amharic speakers. To see all similarity and difference of the argots, compare the data of actual study and Leslau’s (1952) article.

Over all, Leslau (1949a, 1949b, 1952, 1964a, and 1964b) tried to survey Ethiopian argots which are formed from Amharic and Dobbi. In Leslau’s (1949a, 1949b, 1952, 1964a, and 1964b) papers, “an Ethiopian minstrels’ (Azmaris’) argot” is much more relevant to this paper of

“Linguistic and Social Aspects of ṽaṽo (Azmarī) Argot in Tigray” because of both focus on Azmarī argot. However, Leslau (1952) did not see the ṽaṽo (Azmarī) argot of Tigrinya speakers. This research focused on the ṽaṽo (Azmarī) argot of Tigrinya speakers that has not been researched so far.

In addition to what Leslau tried to study on different areas of Azmarī people, Kawase (2005 and 2010) attempted to study on the Azmarī group. Kawase’s (2010) article mainly focuses on the Lalibala(woch) singing and begging, and the comments of different viewers on their performance in different occasions. Some parts of Kawase’s (2010) paper compares the performances of Azmarī and Lalibala(woch). Kawase said that the majority of vocabularies of Lalibala(woch)’s argot are deformations of Amharic words through substitution of a consonant, reduplication of the word, metathesis and augmentation of the word. This article of Kawase (2005 and 2010) does not have linguistic data.

Kawase’s (2005) paper is more relevant to this research in somehow than Kawase’s (2010) paper. The title of his paper is “Musical Performance and Self-designation of Ethiopian Minstrels: Azmarī”. It treats Azmarī’s folk category as well as genealogy and code of communication as self-imposed group markers that strictly distinguish the in-group. However, the sub-topic of Kawase’s (2005) paper seems to be general in all areas of Ethiopian Azmarī(woch). It focuses on the description of the Azmarī musical performance, the theme of Azmarī songs such as wax and gold of songs, how they use lyric and from whom they take, about the genealogical relationship of Azmarī (Enzanta) and non-Azmarī group (Buga), and their secret argot in Gondar.

The relevant sub-topic of Kawase’s (2005) paper with this research is “a secret of argot of Azmarī”. As Kawase (2005) said, Azmarī people communicate with each other using Azmarī language namely *Enzatəṽṽa* or *Enzatlank^{ṽṽ}a* by *Enzata* group. In addition to this, Enzanta group believes that *Enzatəṽṽa* or *Enzatlank^{ṽṽ}a* is a language, and Enzanta group do not like to share about their argot to outsiders or Buga (non-azmarī group). This paper indicates that argot is formed on the basis of Amharic, but it can vary slightly according to generation and place. So, Kawase’s paper is a very general survey of Azmarī argot of Amharic speakers.

The other article on argot is “‘Bird’s Talk’ in Oromo” by Kebede and Unseth (No date). In this article, it is attempted to introduce the sociolinguistics background of “Bird’s Talk” in Oromo disguise speech. It is formed from Oromo through insertion of consonants such as /s/ in *hosojjesedʿusuu* “work” from *hojjedʿuu* “work” and /g/ in *?egeebogo* “spear” from *?eeboo* “spear” terms of Oromo. It is also derived through transformations of syllable from final to initial and degemination and gemination features of the argot like *reedī* “field” from *diree* “field” and *naabidde* “food” from *biddena* “food”. In addition to this, the authors tried to introduce other Ethiopian argots such as Sidamo disguise speech and *jə-wof k’wank’wə*, *jə-gəra k’wank’wə*.

The next article is “An Argot of Addis Ababa Unattached Girls” by Teshome and Bender (1983). This article describes that the argot depends on Amharic. The authors introduced the social setting of unattached girls and the function of the argot, and its origin as well as linguistic structure. As Teshome and Bender (1983) introduced, the argot of the unattached girls of Addis Ababa is similar with Leslau’s argots studied because all them argots are derived from standard language through phonological distortions. However, the phonological deformation of the unattached girls’ argot is the substitution of /o/, /u/, and /i/ by (aj) and repetition of the final consonant of the words, such as *həjdəd* “he went” from *hedə*, *sajməm* “name” from *sīm* and *k’wəjlfəf* “he wicked” from *k’olləfə* Amharic terms.

In addition to the above articles, a number of B.A senior essays and thesis are done on Ethiopian informal languages. Senior essays of Nurhsen (1986), Binyam (1995), and Mengesh (1992) as well as M.A thesis of Tesfay (2009) focus on poem of Azmari group of different areas. Therefore, they are not related to this research. Mesrak (2003), Zeleke (1974), Yeshetela (1986), and Biyazen (1991) attempted to see different disguise speeches or argots, and are more relevant to this research. Let us see the review of these senior essays one by one.

The Mesrak’s (2003) work has attempted to deal with “‘k’ont’irijna’: an argot spoken by a group of young people in Yeka Area”. Mesrak tried to see about the origin of *k’ont’irijna*, its main purpose, users, simplicity and complexity, evolution and change, social background and linguistic feature. According to Mesrak (2003), *k’ont’irijna* words are formed from Amharic

through transposition of consonants and syllables, gemination and degemination, deletion, and borrowing from Oromo, Tigrinya, and foreign languages such as English and Greek. Let us see some words of k'ont'irijna argot (Mesrak', 2003:28-46) in the following data.

Basic words	k'ont'irijna	gloss	process
gin	nig	but	metathesis
sət't'ə	t'əsa	gave	metathesis and degemination
mutf'a	tf'uma	child	borrowing (from Oromo) and metathesis
k'us'ri	s'urik'i	number	” ” (from Tigrinya) and metathesis
fonk'a	k'onfa	love	” ” (from slang) and metathesis

From the above data, we can understand that the k'ont'irijna argot uses metathesis and borrowing process to derive its words.

Zelege's paper (1974) entitled “bə-addis abəba wət't'atofɬɬ jə-minnəggəru zəmən amət't'af ababalotɬɬ” “slang of Addis Ababa youngsters” has given the definition of slang, jargon, argot and dialect and their common features. Zelege (1975:17-32) also tried to see the speakers of slang and their terms as stated below:

Slang terms	gloss	types of slangs
asmərək'ənəɣɣ	I love him	slang of prostitute girls
zənbil ʔaf	wide mouth	slang of secondary school students
nək'ələ	it is depressed day	slang of chat chewing people
dude	five cent	slang of pickpocket people
bilk'at' jalləɣ	chemistry department	slang of Addis Ababa university students
k'əzəma	drinking	slang of drunk men

As mentioned in the above data, anyone can understand that different types of slangs are spoken by the youngsters in Addis Ababa. They are slangs of prostitute girls, secondary school students, chat chewing people, pickpocket people, university student as well as drunken men.

Yeshetela (1986) described the slang which is entitled “jə-diredəwa jə-amharic jə-arada k'wank'w'a” “the slang language of Diredewa Amharic”. Yeshetela (1986) tried to see the historical name of Diredewa, definition and characteristics of the slang. Yeshetela's (1986:17-28) paper also indicates the source of Diredewa slang through different phonological processes and borrowing as the follows:

Basic words	Slang terms	gloss	processes
t'ək'wami	t'ok'a	indicator	shortening and borrowing from Amharic
taxsi(type of car)	taksi	waiter	semantic change and borrowing from English

As it has been seen in the above data, there are different changes such as shorting, semantic change and borrowing to construct words of the slang. In addition to this, the author realized that there are onomatopoeic words in this slang- *wiw* “run, go” and *fur* “run” (1986:35). Besides, Yeshetela (1986:42-61) discussed terms of different slangs. Let us see some examples.

Amh.	gloss	Slang terms	gloss	type of slangs
muz	banana	muz	gentile organ of male	love and sex
deffaw	he stole him	dəfaw	he stole him	crime
mək'amija	chewing place	k'ima	chat shop	addicts
ʃok	writing tool	ʃok	cigarette	smoking

From the above data, we can understand that the slang speakers use semantic changes like *muz* “gentile organ of female” taken from Amharic *muz* means “banana”.

The other senior essay of argot is done by Biyazen (1991) entitled “jə-kisjo k'wank'wa at'ək'ak'əm(argot) bə- addis abəba kiflatə kətəməwotʃʃ bə-goʒʒam bərənda, bə-anbəsa gibbi-na bə-pijasa akəbabiwotʃʃ” “The usage of pickpocket argot in Addis Ababa districts around Gojjam Berenda, Anbbesa Gibi and Piyassa”. Biyazen (1991:22-28) attempted to discuss the definition of slang, idiom, cant, argot and their characteristics. And Biyazen (1991) also denoted that the “jə-kisjo k'wank'wa” “pickpocket argot” has derived from different languages through borrowing as stated below:

Basic words	Slang terms	gloss	processes
Die	dəjjəddə	he died	lengthening and borrowing from English
harriff (good)	irriŋfo	civilized	shortening and borrowing from Arabic
demi	dəjjəmə	went	lengthening and borrowing from Oromo

As the above data, the argot uses not only borrowing but also changing their forms like *dəjjəddə* “he died” is taken from English *die* by lengthening word and *diz* “ten” formed from French *dizz* by shortening or degemination it.

According to Biyazen (1991:30), this argot has been formed by augmentation from Amharic words such as *k'iddimdim* “Saturday” from *k'ədam* and *timmirmir* “student” from *təməri*, which are taken from Amharic words. It adds suffixes to the original words of the standard language

(Amharic) like *bokest* “afraid” from *boka* “mixed powder with water” and /-est/ English suffix and *k’aste* “pickpocket man” from *k’ast* “cultural war tool” through addition of /-e/ and meaning changes of the loanwords (1991:32).

This M.A thesis, however, is different from the above articles, B.A senior essays and M.A thesis by the following points:

1. This research was conducted on Tigray ?afo (Azmar), particularly in Temben- Begashexa. Others are done out of Tigray region.
2. Linguistic features of ?afo (Azmar) argot of Tigrinya speakers were described deeply and broadly.
3. It focused on the description phonology, morphology, syntax and vocabularies, and the social aspects of the speakers and the of ?afo (Azmar) argot.

Chapter Three

Methodology

3.1. Procedures of Data Collection

The processes of collecting the raw data were facilitated procedurally by the researcher himself in two fieldworks: one in September and second in November. First, the researcher met some ?afo people to get informants who have a good knowledge of the argot. After he selected the

informants, he first met one young informant from the ጥገጋ group to get some elicited words, phrases and sentences of the ጥገጋ argot.

The researcher made an appointment with other five informants for additional information. Then elicited method was employed to easily understand the same isolated words (elicited words), phrases and sentences of the ጥገጋ argot initially from the five elder informants and one young informant. Participatory observations in line with elicited method and recording through audio-tape recorder were also employed.

During the second fieldwork, the researcher collected data from fourteen informants through discussions and participatory observations. In addition to this, interview with guideline questions were also used. The researcher created situational contexts and was trying to communicate with the informants using the ጥገጋ argot to construct a natural communication. Here, video-camera and audio-tape recorder were used, and he tried to employ participatory observations to see how the informants use the argot, and what the social aspects of the group looks like from the very beginning till the end of the fieldwork.

3.2. Population and Research Area

This research was conducted in district (woreda) Kolatemben kebele Begashxa. The estimated total population of woreda Kollatemben is 148,282 people with 73,873 male and 74,409 female. The research area of the study is sub-district (kebele) Begashxa found in central zone of Tigray, southern part of the woreda Kollatemben. This research studied ጥገጋ (Azmarī) group. However, the actual number of the Azmarī group in Begashxa is unknown due to lack statistical data that indicates the specific number of the group (source from statistical workers of Kolatemben kebele districts).

3.3. Sample Size

The researcher employed purposive method sampling to select informants. The purposes of the researcher were first, to collect reliable data from informants who have better knowledge then to collect data about the linguistic features of the argot, and second, to see the fluency and accuracy

of the speakers in their argot. In addition, he intended to see the social aspects of the ?afo argot as well as to get into the ?afo argot of the speakers smoothly as long as it is secret language.

The researcher met and persuaded three Azmari youngsters during his first fieldwork which was held in September 2003. Then, the youngsters informed the researcher that he had to go to one very aged man, and two women as well as two men total five informants in order to get sufficient information about the ?afo argot.

The researcher met two other young informants so as to get some information. However, at the very beginning, only one of the two young informants was willing to tell some words, phrases and sentences about the argot. Therefore, having some information of the young informants, the researcher tried to meet the five elder informants. In addition to this, when the researcher went to the elder informants' home, he introduced with five youngsters and four children by rewarding them different things and trying to communicate them using some selected expressions of their argot.

Totally, the researcher collected the data from five elders, five youngsters and four children, the researcher, however, was not concerned about the number among the three groups of informants intentionally. In addition to this, the researcher collected some data about the social aspects of the ?afo group from four informants of the non-?afo group through participatory observations in order to make cross checking the idea of ?afo group informants about the attitude of the main society towards the ?afo group and vice versa.

3.4. Data Gathering Instruments

The researcher used elicitation method, interview and participatory observation in the collections of the data. First, the researcher used elicitation method to collect data from the informants. Before the fieldwork, around 2000 words that indicate lexical and morphological features and 200 phrases and sentences were prepared through intermediary language (Tigrinya) of the researcher and informants but only about 400 words of the ?afo argot are found, which are stated in the appendix III . Then, the researcher collected the raw data by using tape recorder (walkman). The researcher used these words

and phrases as guidelines or standing points to collect different additional words, phrases, sentences as well as morphological information in semi-structured interview and semi-natural communication.

Second, the researcher used interview. He interviewed ten ?afo informants. Eighteen interview questions were prepared, and these questions are talking about the social aspects of the ?afo people. Then data were recorded contextually by using audiotape recorder and video camera.

Third, the researcher employed participatory observations. Participatory observations were used in the daily communications of the informants for thirty days in order to see when and where the ?afo people use their secret language and to observe the social aspects of ?afo people.

3.5. Method of Data Analysis

To analyze the collected data, the researcher mainly used descriptive (qualitative) approach to describe data about the linguistic properties and social aspects of the argot. In addition to this, he also employed the quantitative method to analyze some numerical and percentage data. International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) has been used to transcribe the linguistic data.

Chapter four

Data analysis and interpretation

4.1. The ?afo (Azmari) People and the ?afo (Azmari) Argot

The data are collected through participatory (anthropological) observations and interviews recorded by video-camera and tape recorder from the ?afo and non-?afo people. This chapter discusses the ?afo people and the ?afo argot as well as the function of the ?afo argot and its simple and complex forms.

4.1.1. The ?afo People

To see the relationship between Azmari and non-azmari people, and then to answer why the Azmari people have their own secret language, the researcher raised different questions. From the interview questions, the informants were asked to tell the name of the Azmari group that speaks Tigrinya. The informants then told to the researcher different names of the Azmari people who speak Tigrinya. In Azmari argot, Azmari people are called *?afo* which means “Azmari group as well as Azmari person”. The *?afo* term is formed in different ways, such as from Tigrinya *?afomminna* “type of folk song” by relating the profession of *?afo* people and shortening /-mminna/ final part of the word. *?afo* word may be taken from Tigrinya *?afmoj* which means “my leader (to name elder brother)”. It may also be formed from *?awfo* “a type of traditional herb taken by spiritual students in order to be active in reading”, and then “Azmari” term by itself means active or talkative, connotatively. In addition to this, Azmari group is also called *wat’a* which means “a person who sings or plays *tj’ira*” that is derived from Tigrinya verb *wat’iju* “he sang”. This word is used by the non-azmari groups as an insult because *wat’a* refers to a talkative person, and *wat’iju* could also mean “he talks too much” connotatively. This term might be related to the *?afo* people’s over praising habit of people to get income. Moreover, the *?afo* people are also named by the material name *tj’ira* in Tigrinya which means “hair taken from an animal’s tail especially horse” that helps to make one stringed violin that is called *tinkab* in *?afo* argot and *masink’o* in Amharic. Therefore, *tj’ira* serves to name the Azmari people as well as the *masink’o*.

The Azmari people are also named as *tj’ira wat’a*, “persons who can play one stringed violin” formed from *tj’ira* (noun) and *wat’iju* (verb). They are also called *Azmari* “a person who can hymn”. The noun *Azmari* is derived from the Geez verb *zəmərə* “he hymns” and *zmr* Semitic triradical root. Azmari group is also called *aləm atf’tj’əwatf* “musician” taken from the Amharic terms *aləm* “world” and *?atf’tj’əwatf* “a person who makes people play”. Sometimes, they are

named *hamen* “persons who are malicious gossip and backbiting”. However, as the informants, *hamen* people are not *?afo* people.

From the above discussions, we can deduce that some of the names given to the *?afo* people are derogatory, which indicate the belittling or underestimation by the non-*?afo* group. Furthermore, the researcher has checked out by three non-*?afo* informants that the *?afo* people are undermined by the main society due to their begging tradition. Whether or not they are invited the *?afo* people (men, women or children) can get in any ceremony to get money, grain, food and so on through playing *tf'ira* (by men) and praising through poem (by women). The informants from non-*?afo* groups say that getting into any ceremony without being invited is assumed unethical or immoral action by the main society. In addition to this, all the interviewee reported that making marriage alliance of the *?afo* with non-*?afo* people was strictly forbidden long time ago, but now there is some intermarriage between the two groups. Moreover, to check the underestimation of the *?afo* people by the main society, there is a very popular proverb in Tigrinya which says “*?igzabiher ja ?intihazinnis waddi x'əfi wat'a jixəwin*” means “when God becomes angry, he makes the son of a priest being *?afo* or *wet'a*”. This proverb indicates that Azmari people are not considered equal with non-azmari people. Regarding this idea, Ashenafi (1972:51) states:

Whatever is negative in the minds of the Ethiopian people is more emphasized in Azmari craftsmanship than in any other aspect of the culture. Consequently, an Ethiopian parent would feel disgraced if his son becomes an Azmari, though probably less so if he himself is one. And, generally speaking, no parent, even an Azmari, would normally permit his daughter to marry one.

From the above quotation, anyone can understand that Azmari is undermined group by the main society. According to the informants, non-azmari people are identified by different names such as *bugunə*¹ “non-*?afo* people” its origin is unknown. The other name is *gonno* which means

¹ *g^wana* means “alien” in Tigrinya.

“slave” formed from *gila* “servant” by substituting /l/ by /n/ and geminating /n/, and substituting of vowels by /o/. *t’isso* also means “blacksmith” that formed from the word *tf’is* “smoke”, it is smoked when blacksmiths do their metal work through fire. Furthermore, *bolox*² means “buda or blacksmith” its origin is obscured. *tf’iwa* “non-slave or extraordinary people” formed from *tf’iwa* through reduplication. Moreover, *baʕgo* “rural people, villagers” formed from *baʕgag* “dirty” and it is used as insult by the ʔaʕo to the non-ʔaʕo people and in relation to this, the researcher thinks that the Azmari people assume that they are more civilized group than the non-ʔaʕo people who live in the countryside. Finally, *kənnəb* means “Muslim” which is formed from Amharic verb *təkənanəbə* “he dressed well, especially in the Muslim culture” through germination of /n/, deletion of /tə/ and /na/ syllables, and change of the meaning.

The underestimation is not only by the non-azmari people towards the ʔaʕo people but in their turn, the ʔaʕo people also undermine the non- ʔaʕo people. The researcher asked the ʔaʕo informants to tell him with whom they make marriage alliance. Seven interviewees out of ten interviewees replied that the ʔaʕo make their marriage alliance with their own group. The three interviewees said that the ʔaʕo make their marriage with the other groups. Again, the researcher asked them how they view those some ʔaʕo who make marriage alliance with other groups. For this question, all the interviewees said that making marriage alliance with *tf’iwa* “extraordinary people” is good but it is not good to make marriage alliance with slaves, Muslims and blacksmiths. The response of informants for the question why they make their marriage alliance with their own group is that ʔaʕo people are special group or good in their forefather for them. In addition to this, one woman informant said that if an ʔaʕo man marries a non-ʔaʕo woman, the ʔaʕo women will insult her saying ‘baʕgo’ which means “uncivilized person” especially if she does not have praising skill.

² Buda means “blacksmith” in Tigrinya.

Although there is a sense of underestimation between the Ṭaṣo and the non-Ṭaṣo groups, the data obtained through interview questions revealed that, the two groups invite each other in any ceremony and social activities because of it might be the the two groups are joining to school and they may get some awareness about negative attitude towards each other. Moreover, both groups communicate with each other in Tigrinya if the Ṭaṣo group does not have secret.

In general, we can conclude that the Ṭaṣo group has developed its secret language due to the fact that the two groups (Ṭaṣo and non-Ṭaṣo) underestimate each other. However, this difference does not lead them not to cooperate and work together in different social ceremonies and other activities. The social stratification or self-designation is reflected in the linguistic variable and the group becomes the owner of their special language. This idea is supported by Labov (1972:118) as he says the following:

Social stratification and its consequences is only one type of social process which is reflected in linguistic structures. The interaction of the ethnic groups in New York City- Jews, Italians, blacks, and Puerto Ricans is also reflected in these and other linguistic variables. Segregation of black and white may be seen in aspects of linguistic behavior quite distinct from the phonological systems.

From the above quote, we can understand that social variations result linguistic variations like Azmari or Ṭaṣo argot that is different from the Tigrinya.

The researcher asked the informants to tell him what economic activities they practice. They responded that the economy of the Ṭaṣo people is depending on agriculture and collecting money through playing ṫṫ'ira and praising people (by men) as well as praising people through poem (by women). As informants, today, the Ṭaṣo people have their farm land but long times ago it is not known. All groups of the Ṭaṣo people participate in the economic activities. They get money, goats, honey, grain, butter, milk, 'dilih', flour, enjera, local beer or t'ella and so on through playing ṫṫ'ira during marriage, baptizing, and other ceremonies and social activities. In autumn, the Ṭaṣo men also play ṫṫ'ira to facilitate social works such as mowing grain.

The researcher asked the informants to tell him where they most often go for playing *tj'ira* and praising people. They denoted that they move from Begashexa (home land) to different areas of Tigray like Yechla, Samre, T'ank'wamlash, Abergele and Amhara particularly to Sek'ot'a and so on.

The researcher asked the informants to tell him what language(s) they speak as their 1st and 2nd language. Ten interviewees said that *?afo* people speak Tigrinya and Amharic. five interviewees said that *?afo* people speak and listen Xamt'anga. Their mobility to Agew place and Amhara areas to play *tj'ira* and praising people to get money may help them to speak and to listen Amharic and some of them listen and rarely speak Xamt'anga. The researcher observed switching of codes such as from Tigrinya to Xamt'anga, and from Tigrinya to Amharic have taken place frequently.

In addition to this, the researcher asked the informants which language they use in singing, conversation and others. They denoted that in general, Tigrinya is used for communication in all daily activities of the *?afo* people and to play *tj'ira* and praise people but sometimes *?afo* people sing in Amharic even in Tigray and other places. As informants said, *?afo* people use Amharic to play *tj'ira* when they are going to some Agew and Amhara areas.

The mobility of the *?afo* should be the reason for the introduction of Amharic words like *?andika* “one”, *?arattika* “four”, *siddistika* “six” and *simmintika* “eight” etc to the *?afo* argot. The *?afo* people rarely speak and listen the Xamt'anga. It is, therefore, rare or no finds the words of the Xamt'anga in the *?afo* argot. The informants said Agew people can speak and understand Amharic, Tigrinya and Xamt'anga, and as a result the *?afo* people are not obligated to speak Xamt'anga.

Regarding the *?afo* argot usage, the *?afo* people do not use the *?afo* argot in their daily activities to communicate with each other except for special purposes. Every *?afo* person can speak *?afo*

argot. But, there is difference in fluency among the Ṣaṣo people in the Ṣaṣo argot. From the researcher's observations during direct elicitation of linguistic data from informants, elders have better knowledge of the Ṣaṣo argot than the youngsters especially in the complex usage of the argot. The youngsters also have better knowledge than the children, and these who move from place to place to get income have better knowledge of the Ṣaṣo argot than the people who do not move from place to place

Despite the difference of fluency, all the Ṣaṣo people communicate with each other in their argot, but they communicate in Tigrinya with outsiders. Moreover, talking in Ṣaṣo argot before guests is might be impolite and might make guests offended.

The researcher asked the informants another question about what should someone fulfill to be considered Ṣaṣo. According to the respondents, the criteria are:

- a) should be genetically Ṣaṣo
- b) should be married to Ṣaṣo and
- c) should speak the Ṣaṣo argot.

To some extent, there is intermarriage between the Ṣaṣo and non- Ṣaṣo groups recently. The mixed people who are born from the Ṣaṣo and non-Ṣaṣo parents speak the Ṣaṣo argot because they are learning from their Ṣaṣo father or Ṣaṣo mother. And the non-Ṣaṣo wife or the non-Ṣaṣo husband can learn from his Ṣaṣo wife or her Ṣaṣo husband, especially if they acquire skill of playing ṭṣ'ira and praising people by poem. However, having the skill of playing ṭṣ'ira cannot be a guarantee to be speaker of the Ṣaṣo argot as well as the member of the group. In relation to this, one informant said that the Ṣaṣo does not permit to teach these experienced

In reference to music, that the kings of Ethiopia were descended from Menelik, reputed son of Solomon and the Queen of Sheba (herself allegedly an Ethiopian monarch), finds an echo in the claim that Ethiopian psalmody as sung today preserves Hebrew Chant as practiced in the time of Solomon.

This quote supports the idea of the Ato Aredom (informant) playing *ṭj'ira* is introduced with the introduction old testament because playing *ṭj'ira* functions in escorting ark of the Tabernacle, liturgy so on. Therefore, *ṭafo* people with their profession might come with Minilik I to escort the church of Saint Marry of Axum. We can also understand from the above quotation taken from the Bible that *ṭj'ira* served to escort ark of the Tabernacle.

In Ethiopia, playing *ṭj'ira* religious context had been serving to church with the arrival of Christianity. Through time, the secular of music of Azmari had been developed especially to entertain imperial court (Ashenafi, 1975: 48, 50 cited in Tesfay, 2009:11), Mesafint, governments or emperors' battle such as Tewodros II (Tesfay, 1975:17, 22). Moreover, according to Mengesha (1992:17), Azmari people expanded during the 19th century clearly in Ethiopia especially in the reign of the emperor Tewodros. But before that time, leaders or governments had spiritual music in general and playing *ṭj'ira* had served at churches.

4.1.2. The *ṭafo* Argot

According to the two aged informants, the name of the *ṭafo* argot is called *lank^wəṅṅa* which means “language” derived from the Tigrinya term *k^wank^wəṅṅa* that means “idiomatic language or a person who have idiomatic speaking” through substitution of /k^w/ by /l/. This name is given because of the idiomatic nature of the argot. But the eight informants call their argot *k^wank^wəṅṅa* directly taken from Tigrinya. Four informants also said the *ṭafo* argot is additionally named *ṭafo tələza* “*ṭafo* speech”. *tələza* “speech” derived from *ləzəba* “discussion” in Tigrinya by reordering of /b/ from final consonant of the word to initial consonant of the word and substitution of bilabial /b/ by alveolar /t/.

The researcher asked the informants to tell him the function of the ?afo argot and for what purpose they use it. All the interviewees responded that the main purpose of using the ?afo argot is to keep secret when the ?afo people do not want their idea to be heard by the non-?afo people in their communication. Specifically, this argot is also used for the following:

- To backbite and to insult non- azmari people
- To escape from enemy and to prevent theft
- To report or inform about a certain situation they observe
- To express their feeling or suspect
- To ask their member what they do not know

The researcher has also asked the Azmari informants to respond on where they use their argot (rural area, urban area, public place, home domain and others). They reflected that ?afo argot is used in different daily activities of ?afo people if the situation requires them to communicate in their secret language.

The ?afo people use the ?afo argot in different social ceremonies such as marriage and baptizing. According to the informants, when two or more ?afo people are in any ceremony, and if non-?afo people talk about the ?afo's skill of playing tʃ'ira or other, they who hear the information communicate with their friends in ?afo argot. Besides, when two or more ?afo people (men) are in social ceremony, and when one of them feels tired in playing tʃ'ira , he tells his friend in ?afo argot to stop playing tʃ'ira and to escape from the ceremony because the audience could not simply allow them to stop the playing tʃ'ira.

In addition to farming, the ?afo people get their income from playing tʃ'ira and praising people by moving from place to place in search of any ceremony. When the ?afo people go from place to place, they might not know the name of the people of the new area. But to play tʃ'ira and

praise the people and to get income, they have to know the names, forefathers, wealth, hero etc of the praised people. Then, one migrated ጥገኛ group is expected to ask to non-ጥገኛ about the background of the individuals to be praised. After getting informed, the ጥገኛ man/woman shares information with his/her friends in their argot about the background of the praised persons not heard by a third party.

Finally, the ጥገኛ people use their argot in different settings in towns. For instance, in cafe, if two ጥገኛ persons (men) want to drink local liquor in the presence of many non-ጥገኛ, the ጥገኛ use their argot to talk about how much they want to drink, what type of liquor they are favorable to drink, to express their feeling about the beauty of the waiters of the cafe.

There are simple and complex forms in the ጥገኛ argot usage. The simple forms of the ጥገኛ argot mean that the forms are easy to understand them by the outsiders and the forms are very similar to Tigrinya or Amharic. In contrast, the complex forms of the ጥገኛ argot are also very obscured or difficult to understand them by outsiders, and they are not too much familiar to Tigrinya words. The simple and some of the complex form of the ጥገኛ argot are used by all ጥገኛ people, but the some complex forms are used by people who have good knowledge of ጥገኛ argot especially elders. The researcher asked his informants if all ጥገኛ people can speak and understand the complex forms of ጥገኛ argot, and he tried to communicate using some complex terms with youngsters and children of ጥገኛ argot speakers. But the answers and the results of the dialogue show that some of the informants could speak and understand but some of them confuse them. The informants denoted they use complex forms of the ጥገኛ argot to exclude non-ጥገኛ people and to protect their secret from the nearest Tigrinya or Amharic words.

The researcher collected some examples of similar and less similar forms of this argot. Their complexity is determined by the ጥገኛ argot speakers, and as a result, these very similar to Tigrinya are simple, but those very different to Tigrinya are complex.

Tig.	Similar form of the ገላጾ argot	less similar form of the ገላጾ argot	gloss
tʃ'əwəta	tʃ'ərwəta	ləwəta	playing
gumher	gurama	wurama	hyena
bəliፍu	bafiju	x'afiju	big eater
fərrah	fərnaḥ	ʃax'unam	afraid
gəwəz	ləwəz	ləwət	youngster
məwhət'i	mawat'o	ገamut'	sauce

Based on the above data, we can distinguish the simple forms that similar to the Tigrinya words and the complex forms that are different from Tigrinya. And listeners may guess the sources of the simple forms of the ገላጾ argot from Tigrinya words easily. As the above data, the similar and less similar forms of the ገላጾ argot are derived through different phonological processes such as dual deformation processes in one word, using two different deformation systems in a word and using two different words taken as sources (from Tigrinya, Amharic,...).

Dual deformation systems mean distorting the word of Tigrinya or Amharic word double time. The first distortion or deformation is taken as simple form of the argot. However, simple form may be guessed by outsiders easily. Therefore, the similar form is distorted again in order to create less similar form that is not known simply. For example, *ləwəz* “youngster, strong” is the simple form of the ገላጾ argot because the outsider can estimate its resource from Tigrinya *gəwəz* “youngster, strong”. Moreover, *ləwəz* “youngster, strong” is easily deducted by the listener; *ləwəz* “youngster, strong” is formed from Tigrinya word *gəwəz* “youngster, strong” through substitution of /g/ by /l/. To make this word less similar form, *ləwəz* is also deformed to *ləwət* by substituting the final consonant /z/ by /t/. Therefore, we can say that there is dual deformation on Tigrinya word *gəwəz* “youngster, strong”, the first is to derive similar word and second to form less similar word. To clarify, let us see *bafiju* “he ate” in the argot. *bafiju* is taken from *bəliፍu* through substitution of /əliፍu/ by /afiju/ to construct the similar form. And *bafiju* is also changed to *x'afi* through substitution of /b/ consonant by /x'/ speech sound to make more unintelligible word by outsiders. And *gurama* “hyena, big eater” might be formed from Tigrinya *gumher* “big eater” through transposition of /r/ consonant from final part of the word to the

second consonant position of the word, deletion of /h/ consonant, substitution and addition of vowels, and using connotative meaning. *gurama* is also deformed to *wurama* through substitution of /g/ consonant by /w/ speech sound. This process may lead the terms of the ʔaʃo argot to be unknown in their etymology.

On the other hand, the similar and less similar forms of the ʔaʃo argot are deformed by using two different deformation systems in a word of Tigrinya. For instance, *tf'ərwəta* “playing” is formed from Tigrinya *tf'əwəta* through addition of /r/ speech sound. To the native speakers of Tigrinya, *tf'ərwəta* “playing” may simply be known what it means. So, it may be taken as similar form of the argot. And *ləwəta* “playing” is taken from Tigrinya *tf'əwəta* through substitution of /tʃ/ consonant by /l/ speech sound. It may be taken as less similar form. *tf'ərwəta* and *ləwəta* are taken from Tigrinya word *tf'əwəta* by using two different deformations systems which are addition and substitution. However, it may be different on the selection of similar and less similar forms of the ʔaʃo argot up on the outsiders or listeners.

Finally, the similar and less similar forms are derived from using two different basic words taken as sources. This means simple form of the ʔaʃo argot is taken from one word of Tigrinya clearly. The less similar form may be obscured its origin. For instance, *fərnaħ* “afraid” is taken from Tigrinya *fərraħ* “afraid” and it is easily understood by the outsiders. This word is taken as similar form of the argot. *ʃax'unam* “afraid” is different in its origin from Tigrinya word *fərraħ* “afraid” and its origin is hidden. It is taken as less similar form of the argot. In addition to this, *mawat'o* is derived from Tigrinya word *məwħət'i* “instrument that cause to be swallowed” or *wət'* “sauce”, it is simple form of the ʔaʃo argot than *ʔamut'* “sauce” that obscured its origin and it is complex form of the argot. As the informants said, the reason behind to use similar and less similar lexical forms is their afraid of being heard by the outsiders.

4.2. Description of the Linguistic Features of the ʔaʃo Argot

In this section, the terms, phrases and sentences of the ?afo argot are gathered through elicitation, participatory observation and interview. The result shows that the words of ?afo argot are derived from Tigrinya and Amharic words through form (phonological and morphological) as well as form and semantic deformations. To solve inadequate number of expressions, the ?afo argot also uses different semantic aspects and takes directly from Tigrinya and Amharic words. In Addition to this, the ?afo argot shares phonological, morphological and syntactic structure of Tigrinya.

4.2.1. Phonological Deformation

Phonological deformation means distortion of words form of Tigrinya, Amharic or other in order to create incomprehensible communication. Formation of the secret language is formed from standard language through sound changes systematically or unconditionally. Thus, this may lead to language diversification. Labov (1972:276) supported this idea as follows:

On the whole, linguists still seem to be confronted with the principle the diversification of language is due to the systematic and destructive effects of sound change (usually laid to the principle of least effort) and the breakdown in communications between isolated groups.

From the above idea, the sound changes may be conditioned or unconditioned and it causes diversification of languages as well as creation of secret languages. The ?afo argot uses different phonological deformations such as addition, reduplication, reduplication with addition, substitution, metathesis and deletion from Tigrinya and Amharic words.

4. 2.1.1. Addition Speech Sounds

According to Leslau (1964b:55), “words can be augmented by addition of an external element”. These additions of the external elements may be single or group of speech sounds. For instance, /r/ is an alveolar, trill, voiced consonant, which is added in several words of the ?afo argot. It can be added in monosyllabic, bisyllabic, trisyllabic words or more and in different positions of the words. When /r/ is added to the word of the language, it shows two properties. There are a numbers of the ?afo argot words, when /r/ is added to the words; there is no change of other

consonants or vowels of the words. In the other ʔaʃo argot words, when /r/ is added to the words, some consonants or vowels of the words will be changed into other consonants or vowels.

In the following data, /r/ is added without changing any other consonants. When /r/ is added to the word, the number of syllables of the words does not increase. Rather, the light forms of syllable of the words whose initial part of the word CV becomes heavy form of syllable of the words CVC.

Tig.	ʔaʃo argot	gloss	Tig.	ʔaʃo argot	gloss
wədəx'ə	wərdix'u ³	he failed down	fətəħə	fərtihna	we divorced/untied
dəfəʔə	dərfiʔu	he pushed	bəzəħə	bərzihu	it became much
gəzəʔə	gərziʔa	she bought	t'əfəʔə	t'ərfəʔə	it is disappeared
xəfətə	xərfitu	he opened	t'əx'əmə	t'ərx'ami	important
s'əbəbə	s'ərbibu	it came narrow	ħazənə	ħarzinu	he became sad
nəbəfə	nərbifu	he wept	s'əwəfə	s'ərwifə	she called
k'ədəħə	k'ərdihna	we hauled	sədədə	sərdidu	he sent
gəfəħə	gərfiħ	broad	səfamə	sərɣimu	he greeted

Rule Ø → r/ [CV of the word initial] - and CV- → CVC-/ [CV of the word initial]

As mentioned in the above data, the first column indicates the words of the standard language (Tigrinya). The ʔaʃo argot column is the derived words of the ʔaʃo argot from the standard language Tigrinya and in the gloss column the meanings of the words of the standard languages as well as the ʔaʃo argot is given. All the above words of the ʔaʃo argot are formed from Tigrinya by adding /r/ sound. From the above data, we can observe that the number of syllables of words does not change in the ʔaʃo argot. Rather the initial light form of the syllable- /CV-/ becomes heavy form of syllable-/CVC-/. Besides, /r/ is inserted into the empty coda of the first syllable of the words. /r/ is also added into Amharic words. For example, /r/ is added to Amharic words in the derivation of the ʔaʃo argot words as:

Amh.	ʔaʃo argot	gloss
wəddədə	wərdidu	he liked
t'əbbək'ə	t'ərbix'u	he kept
dəkkəmə	dərkimu ⁴	he got tired

³ wərdix'u also means it became cheaper in price.

⁴ dərkəmə also means very thinnest flour

Based on the above data, we can deduce that the ጥገታ argot words are also formed from Amharic words by degeminating the geminating consonants of the words.

/r/ is also added with some systematic changes of consonants of the words of the languages. From these changes, while /r/ is added to words whose consonants consist of alveolar, fricative and ejective speech sound /sʼ/, /sʼ/ becomes /tʼ/. The numbers of syllable of the words in the ጥገታ argot are similar with the Tigrinya words. But the light form /CV/ of the initial syllable of the words is changed to heavy form /CVC/ of syllables as we have seen in addition of /r/ without any consonants change as listed below.

Tig.	ጥገታ argot	gloss	Tig.	ጥገታ argot	gloss
wəsʼəጥ	wərtʼiጥu	he got out	sʼənəጥጥ	tʼərnihጥ	she waited
ጥasʼəwጥ	ጥartʼiwu	he closed	bəsʼəጥጥ	bərtʼihጥ	it was arrived
təጥhasʼəbጥ	təጥhartʼiba	she was washed			

Rule Ø → r/ [CV of the word initial] -, sʼ → tʼ/ r and
CV- → CVC-/ [CV of the word initial]-

From the above examples, we can deduce that when /r/ is added to the words whose consonants consist of /sʼ/, then /sʼ/ becomes /tʼ/. It is known that /sʼ/ and /tʼ/ have common feature of ejective manner. Hence, the change is only manner of articulation from fricative to stop.

There is dissimilation process in words of the ጥገታ argot which have /r/ consonant. Dissimilation is taken as the loss of a certain feature specification which is triggered by the presence of the identical feature in the environment (Marlett, 2001:107).

Tig.	ጥገታ argot	gloss
nəbərə	nərbətʼə	it was
ጥhafərə	ጥharfənə	he is ashamed of

Rule Ø → r/ [CV of the word initial]-, r → tʼ (n)/[r of the word final]-

As we can see from the above data, when /r/ is inserted into the words, the position of /r/ consonant of the word is dissimilated into /tʼ/ or /n/ speech sounds and /r/ is added in the coda of the first syllable. For instance, the ጥገታ argot word *nərbətʼə* “it was” is derived from Tigrinya *nəbərə* that the consonant /r/ is substituted by /tʼ/ and the addition of /r/ is inserted in the coda of

the first syllable of the word. The ʔaʃo argot word *ħarfənə* “he is ashamed of” is also formed from Tigrinya *ħafərə* where the consonant /r/ is replaced by /n/ and the addition of /r/ is placed in the coda of the first syllable of the words. We can also understand that the CV structure in the word initial turns into CVC structure because of the addition of the /r/ to the coda of the CV of the word initial.

/r/ can also added with other types of additional speech sounds to the words as stated below:

Tig./Amh	ʔaʃo argot	gloss	sound changed
<i>gəbba</i>	<i>gərbitu</i>	he got in	$\emptyset \rightarrow \text{rt/-bb}$ and $\text{bb} \rightarrow \text{b/r-t}$
<i>təbaʔasə</i>	<i>təbəraʔisu</i>	he fought with	$\emptyset \rightarrow \text{ər/}$

As the above data elaborates, we can understand that /r/ operates with the other addition of sounds. For instance, *gərbitu* “he got in” taken from Amharic word *gəbba* by adding /t/ and /r/ speech sounds as well as degemination of /bb/ to /b/. And *gəbba* Amharic structure is restructured to Tigrinya structure *gərbitu*. *təbəraʔisu* “he fought” is derived from Tigrinya *təbaʔasə* by adding mid, central and unrounded vowel /ə/ and /r/ speech sound.

/r/ is also inserted in geminated words and with addition of /i/ used as epenthetic vowel in the Amharic words as the in following:

Amh.	ʔaʃo argot	gloss
<i>səddəbə</i>	<i>səriiddəbə</i>	he insulted
<i>wəddədə</i>	<i>wəriiddədə</i>	he liked/loved
<i>səddədə</i>	<i>səriiddədə</i>	he sent away
<i>təfəጅጅə</i>	<i>təfəriጅጅəʔə</i>	it was finished

Rule $\emptyset \rightarrow \text{ri}$ /-[geminated consonants]

From the above examples, we can understand that /r/ is inserted before geminated consonants of Amharic words. /i/ is also used as epenthetic vowel because ʔaʃo argot does not allow consonant clusters. When /r/ is added into geminated words, the numbers of the consonants of the words syllable increase. For instance, *səddəbə* is changed to *səriiddəbə* from CVCCVCV to CVCVCCVCV.

In other instances, velar, stop and voiced speech sound /g/ is also used in the formation of the ʔaʃo argot words by adding it to Tigrinya words as the following examples.

Tig.	ʔaʃo argot	gloss	Tig.	ʔaʃo argot	gloss
wələdə	wəlgida	she gave birth	wəsədə	wəsgidu	he brought
mələsə	məlgisu	he answered	dələjə	dəlgiju	he wanted
fələhə	fəlgihu	it is boiled	mələʔə	məlgizu	he filled
məsələ	məsgilu	it seemed			

Rule Ø → g / [CV of the second syllable] - and CV-→CVC-/ [syllable of the word initial]

As it has been indicated in the above data, /g/ is added to CV of the second syllable of the word and the consonant of the onset of the second syllable of the words become coda of the first syllable of the words. And their first syllable changes from CV- to CVC- due to the addition of /g/. For instance, CVCVCV syllable structure of Tigrinya word *wələdə* becomes CVCCVCV syllable structure of the ʔaʃo argot word *wəlgida*, and the second onset syllable of the word /l/ becomes the first coda syllable of the word. It should be noted that some of these verbs have Ethiopic Semitic roots. Moreover, /g/ is added after /l/ and /s/ sounds as the above data.

When /g/ is added to words whose consonants include /sʔ/, /sʔ/ becomes /tʔ/. But the syllable structure of the words is similar with the above examples. These include *tʔəlgizu* “he disliked” is formed from *sʔələʔə*, and *bəlgitʔu* “he becomes better” is derived from *bələsʔə*. These terms are derived from Tigrinya words. We can derive the following rule from these examples. **Rule sʔ → tʔ / [g/ of the word]**

/m/ is also added to the ʔaʃo argot words taken from Tigrinya and Amharic words. These include *ʔilimbo* “linseed” formed from Amharic *təlba* through substitution of the vowel /a/ by /o/ and addition of /m/, and *xʔurumbit* “leather, skin” is derived from Tigrinya term *xʔorbət* through addition of /m/ and vowels change. Thus, we can have the following rule:

Rule Ø → m / -b

From this rule, we can estimate that /m/ sound was /n/ sound but later /n/ sound became /m/ sound because of the influence of the bilabial sound /b/.

The addition of /n/ is also added into different Tigrinya words to form vocabularies of ?afo argot.

The addition of /n/ in ?afo argot verb is common as shown below:

Tig.	?afo argot	gloss
ħarəsə	ħarnisu	he ploughed
dərəx'ə	dərnix'u	it became solid
fərəħə	fərnihu	he feared

Rule Ø → n/r-

The above examples of ?afo argot words are verbs derived from Tigrinya trisyllabic words.

When /n/ is added, there is no change of vowels and consonants. But the nature of the initial syllables of the words becomes CVC from CV, and then the initial consonants (on set) of the second syllable of the words come back to the coda of the initial syllable of the words. For instance, the CVCCVCV syllable structure of the ?afo argot word *ħarnisu* is derived from CVCVCV syllable structure of Tigrinya word *ħarəsə*.

/n/ is also inserted into the ?afo argot terms along with to additional changes as stated below:

Tig./Amh.	?afo argot	gloss	sound changed
fəsəjə	fənziju	farted	s → z/n- and /n/ addition
?adərəgə	dərnəgə	made	?a → Ø/-word and /n/ addition
daguffa	dīgussina	small millet	Ø → n/ [CV of the word initial] -” ” ” and s → /j/-n

As we can understand from the above data, the changes like *fənziju* “farted” is derived from Tigrinya *fəsəjə* through voicing /s/ to /z/. The change from voiceless to voiced speech sound is displayed probably because of the addition of voiced /n/. The ?afo argot words *dərnəgə* “made” is derived from Amharic *?adərəgə* with deletion of /?a/ syllable by restructuring to Tigrinya. /n/ is also added in *dīgussina*⁵ “small millet” formed from Tigrinya *daguffa* by consisting of the double /n/ and substituting the initial syllable /a/ by /i/. In this word, /j/ is changed to /s/ that means the change is from palatal to alveolar place of articulation may be because of assimilation

⁵ Millet may also be termed *dīgussiguf* from ?afo children conversation

of palatal /ʃ/ with alveolar /n/ to alveolar /s/ in case of Tigrinya. The /n/ is also added to noun *bərnəxa* “desert” which is formed from Tigrinya *bərəxa*.

Other addition of sound is /t'/ as in *ħalfət'ə* “passed” taken from Tigrinya *ħalfəḥ*, and /t/ as in *təngi*⁶ “tomorrow” which is formed from Amharic and some dialects of Tigrinya *nəga* through addition of /i/ and movement of /n/.

We have almost seen the addition of voiced consonants such as /r/, /g/, /m/ and /n/, and rarely ejective and voiceless consonants such as /t'/ and /t/ respectively. In general, we can conclude that adding consonants is easy to pronounce and to make disguise speech than vowels (Lesalu, 1964; Chesterton, 2010).

4. 2.1.2. Syllable Addition

The addition of syllable is exhibited in the ʔafo argot terms derived from Tigrinya words as shown in the following data:

Tig.	ʔafo argot	gloss	sound changed
<i>mifuz</i>	<i>x'urmuz</i>	sweet, delicious	Ø → x'u/ -## and iʃ → Ø/-[first syllable]
<i>ħamli</i>	<i>ħimilto</i>	vegetable	Ø → to/##- and a → i/-[initial syllable]
<i>rim</i>	<i>dirim</i>	place, country	Ø → di/-##

As we have seen in the above examples, *x'urmuz* “sweet, delicious” is derived from Tigrinya *mifuz* by deleting /iʃ/ and adding /x'u/. *ħimilto* “vegetable” is formed from Tigrinya *ħamli* by adding /-to/ syllable and substituting /a/ by /i/, and deleting /i/ vowel. *dirim* “place, country” is derived from Tigrinya word *rim* “one’s share (land)” by adding /di/ syllable.

4. 2.1.3. Addition and Metathesis

The subject pronouns of the ʔafo argot are derived from Tigrinya subject pronouns through mtathesis of /ns/ to /sn/ and addition of /k/ consonant as revealed in the following examples:

⁶ *təng* means tomorrow in Azmari argot of Amharic speakers (Leslau, 1952: 104).

Tig,	ʔafo argot	gloss	Tig.	ʔafo argot	gloss
nɪsxa	sɪnkɪxa	you(SgM)	nɪsxi	sɪnkɪxi	you(SgF)
nɪsxum	sɪnkɪxum	you(Pl)	nɪsom	sɪnkom	they(M/N)
nɪsən	sɪnkən	they(F)	nɪsa	sɪnka	she
nɪsu	sɪnku	he			

Rule nɪs → sɪn /-## and Ø → k/ [subject pronouns]

As it has been shown in the above data, *sɪnkɪxa* “you (SgM)” is taken from Tigrinya *nɪsxa* “you (SgM)” through metathesis of /nɪs/ to /sɪn/ and addition of /k/. /ɪ/ is epenthetic sound of the consonant clusters of the ʔafo argot and Tigrinya. And *sɪnka* “she” is also formed from the Tigrinya word *nɪsa* “she” by reordering /ns/ to /sn/ and adding /k/ sound. The pronouns “we” and “I” are respectively represented by *nɪhna* and *ʔanə* in Tigrinya differently from the ʔafo argot pronouns *sɪnkɪna* “we” and *sɪnkəj* “I”. Therefore, the ʔafo argot word *sɪnkɪna* “we” seems to be in analogy formed to Tigrinya 2nd and 3rd subject pronouns Tigrinya stem /nɪs/ by generalizing it as the stem of the all subject pronouns, and addition of /k/ as well as 1Pl marker /-na/. Similarly, *sɪnkəj*⁷ “I” is taken from Tigrinya 2nd and 3rd subject pronouns stem /nɪs/ by generalizing the stem as it is stem of all subject pronouns and addition of /k/ and /əj/ first pronoun marker. The other types of metathesis and addition are included in the ʔafo argot terms as stated below:

Tig.	ʔafo argot	gloss	sound changed
wəʕalə	wəlʕit’u	he passed the day	ʕl → lʕ/ [word medial] and addition of /t’/
ʕɪmbɪra	x’irumbɪʕ	chickpea	ʕr → rʕ/-##- and addition of /x’ɪ/

Here, the ʔafo argot word *wəlʕit’u* “he passed the day” is derived from Tigrinya word *wəʕilu* through metathesis of /ʕl/ consonants to /lʕ/ consonants and addition of /t’/ speech sound. In

⁷ *sɪnk’ɛ* means “I” in the Azmari argot of the Amharic speakers (Leslau, 1952:108).

addition to this, *x'irumbif* “chickpea” is formed from Tigrinya word *ʃimbira* by moving the initial consonant /ʃ/ to the final position of the word and the final consonant /r/ of the word to initial position of the word, and addition of /x'i/ syllable to the beginning of the word.

4. 2.1.4. Reduplication

“Reduplication is a process which copies all or part of the phonological representation of a stem” (Spencer, 2007:4). Reduplication is a common process in languages. Argot also has reduplication process in its formation. The *ʔaʃo* argot consists of partial reduplication, change of vowels and addition of new speech sounds as follows:

Tig.	ʔaʃo argot	gloss	Tig.	ʔaʃo argot	gloss
ɕəbəna	ɕibinbin	coffee pot	kətəma	kitimtim	town
kiristinna	kiristintin	baptism	hidimo	hidimdim	type of house

Rule CV(C)CV → CVCCVC/##-

Therefore, we can understand from the above data, the final syllable CV(C)CV of the Tigrinya words is reduplicated to CVCCVC and the vowels of the words became /i/. For instance, *ɕibinbin* “coffee pot” is formed from *ɕəbəna* by repeating the final syllables /bəna/ to /binbin/ and vowel changes, and the final vowels of the words are deleted. In addition to this, CVC of the word final is copied to /CVCCVC/ of the word final in the *ʔaʃo* argot as the following:

Tig.	ʔaʃo argot	gloss	Tig.	ʔaʃo argot	gloss
hamat	himitmīt	mother in law	guʃiʃ	guʃiʃʃiʃ	type of ‘tella’
maḥbər	miḥbirbir	religious ceremony	səjt’an	sijt’int’in	devil, Satan

Rule CVC → CVCCVC/ ##-

As it is stated in the above data, the final syllable /CVC/ of the Tigrinya words became /CVCCVC/. For example, *himitmīt* “mother in law” derived from *hamat* by reduplicating the final syllable /mat/ to /mītmit/. And *sijt’int’in* “devil, Satan” taken from *səjt’an* by repeating the final syllable /t’an/ to /t’int’in/.

4. 2.1.5. Reduplication and Addition

Reduplication and addition are used together in the formation of the ʔaʃo argot. Partial reduplication and addition of consonants such as /n/ and rarely /m/ as well as some substitution or changes of vowels are included in the ʔaʃo argot as stated below:

Amh./Tig.	ʔaʃo argot	gloss
sira	sirinsir	job
k ^w ada	kudunkud	water container
kuta	kutinkut	toga(white cotton loose garment)
tʃ ⁱ w	tʃ ⁱ wintʃ ⁱ w	urbane, or a person who is not slave”
dik ^w a	dix ^u undux ^u	type of t’əlla”

Rule Ø → n/##- and CVCV → CVCVCCVC

In the above data, the reduplication and addition simultaneously work together. The consonants of the Tigrinya and Amharic words are reduplicated completely and /n/ is added to the final part of the words. These include *sirinsir* “job” derived from Amharic term *sira* by repeating the *sira* to *sirisir* and adding /n/ to the final part *sira* as well as vowels change, and turned into *sirinsir*.

And *tʃⁱwintʃⁱw* “urbane” is taken from Tigrinya and Amharic word *tʃⁱwa* by copied it to *tʃⁱwtʃⁱw* and addition of /n/ to word final *tʃⁱwa*. The CVCV reduplication and /n/ addition of the words became CVCVCCVC.

Furthermore, the ʔaʃo argot uses the complete reduplication of CVC or CVCVC words with addition of /n/ to CVCVCCVC words as the following:

Amh./Tig.	ʔaʃo argot	gloss
k’il	k’ilink’il ⁸	gourd
guʔ	guʔinguf	green pepper
s’iraj	s’irins’ir	type of tella

Rule Ø → n/##- and CVC or CVCVC → CVCVCCVC/##

From the above examples, /n/ is inserted into the Tigrinya and Amharic words final and the /CVC/ words are reduplicated to /CVCVCCVC/. In here, we can see that there is a complete reduplication and addition of /n/ as well as the vowels change. For instance, the ʔaʃo argot word

⁸ k’ilntk'al means “euphorbia” in Tigre (Leslau, 1992: 597)

k'īlīnk'īl “gourd” is taken from Amharic word *k'īl* through addition of /n/ sound and complete reduplication of *k'īl*. Similarly, the words of the ጥገታ argot *guḥinguf* “green pepper” and *s'īrīns'īr* “type of t'ella” are formed from Tigrinya words *gu?* and *s'īraj* through complete reduplications of the words and addition of /n/ to the words final. The other complete reduplicated word of the ጥገታ argot is *rīngi?gi?* “yoghurt” taken from Tigrinya word *rīg?o*. Finally, the ጥገታ argot uses partial reduplication of the final part of the word as well as addition of /n/ sound as:

Amh./Tig.	ጥገታ argot	gloss
t'īk'ur	t'īnk'urk'ur	black
tʃ'əguri	tʃ'ingurgur	hair

Rule Ø→n/ [CV of the word initial- and CVC→CVCCVC/##-

As the above examples elaborate, we can understand that the ጥገታ argot used partial reduplication of the Amharic and Tigrinya words and addition of /n/ to coda of the first syllable. For instance, *t'īnk'urk'ur* “black” formed from Amharic word *t'īk'ur* by reduplicating /k'ur/ to /k'urk'ur/ and adding /n/ to first syllable /t'ī/ that changed to /t'īn/. *t'īnt'o* “goat” is also derived from Tigrinya *t'el* through repetition of the first consonant and addition of /n/ or substitution of /l/ by /n/.

As we have seen in the above examples, mainly, there is an addition of /n/ and change of the vowels in the reduplicated sounds but /mə-/ is also added to the reduplicated word *məḥrəxuruxəj* “my friend” that formed from *ḥarkəj* “my friend” Tigrinya term.

4. 2.1.6. Substitution

4. 2.1.6.1. One to One Syllable Substitution

There is a one to one syllable substitution in the ጥገታ argot to the words of the standard languages. Leslau (1964b:59) notes that some substituted consonants are in phonetic relation to

the original consonant in m^wijət argot. In relation to this, in ʔaʃo argot especially, one syllable whose consonant is coronal consonants such as /l/, /t/, /t'/ and labial /m/ and central vowel /ə/ are substituting the syllable whose consonant is dorsal speech sounds such as /k'/, /k/, and /ʔ/ and back vowels /o/ and /u/ like the following:

Tig.	ʔaʃo argot	gloss	sound changed
ʔuk ^w i	t'ək ^w i	bad, wicked	ʔu → t'ə/-##
k'ojmu	ləjmu	stood up	k'o → lə/-##
kojnu	təjnu	become, happened	ko → tə/-##

Rule [dorsal Consonants] → [Coronal (labial) consonants]/-##

Rule [back vowel] → [mid central vowel]/ [CV of the word initial]

From the above data, substitution of initial syllable is included in the ʔaʃo argot word t'ək^wi⁹ “wicked, evil” formed from Tigrinya ʔuk^wi “evil, wicked” by replacing /ʔu/ by /t'ə/ syllable. /ʔ/ is not coronal. Rather, it is nearest to dorsal sounds. As the above rules and data indicate, the dorsal consonants are changed to the coronal or labial consonants, and the back vowels are changed to mid vowels. The other type of substitution of one to one syllable of initial part of the Amharic and Tigrinya words is taken place systematically or rule governed as:

Amh./Tig.	ʔaʃo argot	gloss	sound changed
tinnif	mənif ¹⁰	small	tɨ → mə/ -##
moɲɲ	ləɲɲi	foolish	mo → lə/ -##
himbəʃʃa	labiʃʃa	flat bread	hɨm → la/ -##
ʔamarɲɲa	ʔamark ^w a	Amharic	ɲɲ → k ^w /## -
wiha	watʃʃo	water	hə → ʃʃo/## -
girim	gərtə	good	tə → ɨm/## -

From the above data, there are substitutions of phonemes of the word initial by other sounds. For instance, the ʔaʃo argot word mənif “small” and ləɲɲi “foolish” are taken from Amharic words tinnif and moɲɲ through substitution of /tɨ/ by /mə/ as well as /mo/ by /lə/ respectively. labiʃʃa

⁹ ɨrk^wi means “foot” in Kemantney (Zealealem, 2000:153)

¹⁰ / . mənɨs means “small” in the Azmari argot of Amharic.

“flat bread” is derived from Tigrinya *ħimbəffa* or from Amharic *ʔambəffa* by replacing /ħim/ or /ʔam/ by /la/ syllable and vowels substitutions. In ʔafo secret language, there is not only the substitution of initial syllables but substitution of final syllable like *ʔamark^wa* “Amharic” formed from Amharic word *ʔamarገገa* by substituting /ገገa/ by /k^wa/ syllable. And *wətfʔo* “water” formed from Amharic *wəħa* by substituting of /hə/ by /tfʔo/ (cf Leslau, 1952), and *gərtə*¹¹ “good” also formed from Tigrinya term *girim* “good” by substituting /im/ by /tə/. The other type of speech sounds substitution are *ʔamutʔ*¹² “salt” is probably formed from *ʔamole* “a type of salt which has square structure (bar salt)” by substituting /ole/ by /utʔ/ speech sounds. Substitution of mid consonant of the word is included in the ʔafo argot like *xʔaziju* “he left or remained” derived from Tigrinya *xʔariju* “he left” by substituting /r/ by /z/ and /a/ by /ə/. And *x^waxʔədə* “he imprisoned” formed from Tigrinya *xʔəjədə* through substitution of /j/ by /xʔ/ and /ə/ by /a/ and bi-articulating /xʔ/ to /x^w/.

4. 2.1.6.2. Two to Two Syllables Substitution

In ʔafo argot, the words are derived by substituting the syllables of the Tigrinya words. Then the similarity between Tigrinya words and ʔafo argot terms is very distant because the ʔafo argot and Tigrinya terms have few similar phonemes. Therefore, the possibilities of the formation of the ʔafo argot words are very doubtful because of their dual deformation as it has been mentioned in the sub-section “simple and complex form of the argot”.

Tig.	ʔafo argot	gloss	Tig.	ʔafo argot	gloss
bəliṣu	baṣiju	he ate	bəxiju	wətfʔiju ¹³	he cried
xʔəttilu	xʔətfʔiwu	he killed	səməṣə	sənkəʔə	he heard

¹¹ ga:ri: means “good” in Oromo (Mahdi, 1995:331)

¹²ʔamutʔ may come from Matʔʔutʔo “type of bush whose test is sour” through /tfʔo/ syllable substitution by /ʔ/ sound, metathesis of /ʔa/ and metaphoric expression.

¹³ Tigrinya word waj bələ “said woe” may be a base of wətfʔəjə “cried”.

As it is shown in the above data, *bafju* “he ate” might be taken from Tigrinya word *bəliŋu*. From the above words, *baffə* “eat” “drink” is found in Azmari argot of Amharic speakers (Leslau, 1952:105).

4. 2.1.6.3. Substitution of Individual Sounds

Substitution of sounds like /g/, /z/, /k/, /s/ by /l/, /w/ and /t/ respectively is displayed in the *ʔafo* argot. From the examples given below *ləbəja* and *lənfo* are formed from Amharic words but others are from Tigrinya, Geez or Semitic words.

Tig./Amh. ʔafo argot	gloss	Tig./Amh. ʔafo argot	gloss
<i>gəwəz</i> <i>ləwəz</i> ¹⁴	youngster, strong	<i>gənzəb</i> <i>lənzəb</i>	money, animal
<i>gənfo</i> <i>lənfo</i>	porridge(of wheat)	<i>gəmbə</i> <i>ləmbə</i>	clay pot
<i>gəbəja</i> <i>ləbəja</i>	market		

Rule g→l/-##

As mentioned in the above, the /g/ sound is substituted by /l/ on the initial syllable of the words, but the vowels are not changed. Similarly, the *ʔafo* argot used substitution of /z/ and /s/ by /w/ as well as /k/ by /t/ as stated below:

Tig./Amh. ʔafo argot	gloss	Tig./Amh. ʔafo argot	gloss
<i>kullu</i> <i>tullu</i>	all	<i>səfər</i> <i>wəfər</i>	residential
<i>zəffənə</i> <i>wəffinu</i> ¹⁵	he sang	<i>səkkərə</i> <i>wəkkiru</i>	he intoxicated

Rule s(z)→w/-## and Rule k→t/-##

From the above data, /s/ and /z/ which are fricative and alveolar sounds have been changed by glide and bilabial sound /w/ as in *wəffinu* “he sang” is derived from the Amharic word *zəffənə*, and *wəkkiru* “he intoxicated” formed from Amharic word *səkkərə*. *wəfər* “residential” is also formed from Tigrinya and Amharic word *səfər* through substitution of /s/ by /w/. *tullu* “all” is derived from Tigrinya *kullu* by replacing /k/ by /t/. As we have seen in the literature review, the *tullu* “all” and *wəkkərə* “get drunk” are found in the Azmari argot of Amharic speakers.

¹⁴ *ləwət* “youngster, strong” is thought as complex form of *ləwəz* in this argot.

¹⁵ *wəffənə* “singing” is noun form of *wəffənə* “he sings” in the *ʔafo* argot.

The ʔaʃo argot also has substitution of sounds in different position of the following words.

Amh./Tig.	ʔaʃo argot	gloss	sound changed
x'ələjə	ʃəliju	he roasted	x' → ʃ/-##
x'olo	ʃolo	roast	” ” ”
tʃ'əwəta	ləwəta	playing	tʃ → l/-##
h ^w ala	tala	later	h ^w → t/-##
kəʔalə	tʃiʔilu	he could do	k → tʃ/-##
ʔasir	wəʃir	ten	w → ʔ/-##

From the above data, substitution is made between /x'/ and /ʃ/ in *solo* “roast” or *ʃəliju* “he roasted” from Tigrinya words *x'olo* or *x'əliju* respectively. There are replacement of /tʃ'/ by /l/ as in *ləwəta* “playing” which is derived from the Tigrinya and Amharic word *tʃ'əwəta*. Substitution of /h^w/ by /t/ is practiced in *tala* “later” from Amharic *h^wala*. Moreover, /w/ and /ʔ/ are also replaced each other in the ʔaʃo argot *wəʃir* “ten” from Amharic *ʔasir* by palatalizing /s/ to /ʃ/, or deleting /tə/ from Tigrinya *ʃasərtə* as well as there is replacement of /k/ by /tʃ/ in *tʃiʔilu* “he could do” that taken from Tigrinya *kəʔalə*.

4. 2.1.7. Substitution and Metathesis

Substitution and addition are two different phonological processes. Substitution is the replacement of sounds of the standard language words to create unintelligible words in the argot. In addition to substitution, the transposition of the substituted sounds or others is also a basic tool to deform the words of the standard language in the creation of the secret language. Substitution and metathesis process are taking place in ʔaʃo argot simultaneously as the following:

Tig.	ʔaʃo argot	gloss	sound changed
zəbət't'ə	zət't'iwu	he hit	bt't' → t't'b/## and b → w/word medial
wəssadi	ləwwasi	thief	d → ##/##- and d → l/##-
gəza	məga	house	gz → zg/##- and z → m/##-

mins'af	wis'fa	carpet	af→fa/##- and min→wi/-##
tʃ'oma	ʔabtʃ'a	meat	ma→ʔab/-## and a→o/word medial

Based on the above data, *zat't'iwu* “he hit” is formed from Tigrinya *zəbat't'ə* by reordering /bt't'/ to /t't'b/ and replacing /b/ by /w/. *məga* “house” is probably taken from *gəza* Tigrinya term by reordering /gz/ to /zg/ and replaced /z/ by /m/. *ləwwasi* “thief” is also formed from Tigrinya *wəssadi* “a person who takes something” by reordering /d/ from final part of the word to initial part of the word and substituting /d/ by /l/. Furthermore, *wis'fa* “carpet, mat” is derived from Tigrinya *mins'af* by substitution of /mɪn/ by /wi/ and reordering /af/ to /fa/. *ʔabtʃ'a* “meat” is also taken from Tigrinya word *tʃ'oma* “fat (meat)” by reordering /tʃ'oma/ to /matʃ'o/ and substituting /ma/ by /ʔab/, and /a/ by /o/.

The other possibility of substitution and metathesis is that *tələbbinu* “he received” is derived from *təx'əbbilu* through substitution of /x'/ by /n/ and reordering of /l/ from the final consonant of the word to second consonant and /n/ from second consonant to final position of /l/. *ləngi* “very large pitcher used in making beer” is also formed from Tigrinya word *gənʔi* by reordering /gn/ becomes to /ng/, substitution of /ʔ/ by /l/ and then /l/ moved to the initial position of the word. There could be a possibility to take it from the Amharic word *gan* through metathesis of /gn/ to /ng/, addition of /l/ and vowel change.

4. 2.1.8. Substitution and Addition

Substitution and addition mean that there is substitution between or among sounds as well as addition of extra sounds to the standard language words to construct argot words. The ʔafo (Azmarī) argot of the Tigrinya speakers has the following replacement and addition of sounds:

Amh/Tig.	ʔafo argot	gloss	sound changed
bərgəd bələ	təbərgəjə	he woke up	Ø→tə/-## and d →jə/##-
təgənəjənə	təgənətʃtʃəjə	he met, greeted	Ø →jə/##- and jən→tʃtʃ/ word medial

As the above data elaborates, substitution takes place with addition such as *təbərgəjə*¹⁶ “woke up” probably from the Tigrinya phrasal verb *bərgəd bələ* “becomes stand up” or *bərgəg bələ* “becomes wake up” by changing the phrasal verb to non-phrasal verb, addition of /tə/ syllable and substitution of /d/ by /jə/. And *təgənatfəjə* “he met, greeted” is derived from the Amharic word *təgənaqənə* by replacing /ŋŋ/ by /tʃtʃ/ and by adding extra syllable of /jə/.

4. 2.1.9. Substitution and Deletion

Deletion is the removing of the sounds from the words of the standard languages (Tigrinya, Amharic) to form the secret language words. Deletion and substitution processes may come together in one word of argot. In the ʔaʃo argot, substitution and deletion are used to deform the Tigrinya and Amharic words as stated in the following examples:

Tig.	ʔaʃo argot	gloss	sound changed
kiltə	gitti	two	l→t/-t and k→g/###
s’əggəbə	t’obbənə	he was full	g → Ø/word medial and Ø→nə/##-
hīruf	rutʃ	selfish	hi → Ø/-## and f→tʃ/##-
tahtəwaj	tatimmiʃ	lower, under	h → Ø /word medial and waj→ mmiʃ/##-
laʃləwaj	lalimmiʃ	upper	ʃ→ Ø/ word medial and waj→ mmiʃ/##-

As mentioned in the above data, *gitti* “two” is formed from Tigrinya word *kiltə* through deletion of /l/ or assimilation of /l/ to /t/ completely and then gemination of /t/, substitution of /k/ by /g/ and change of vowels. *t’obbənə* can be derived from Tigrinya *s’əggəbə* by changing /g/ to zero, substitution of /s’/ by /t’/ and addition of /n/. *t’obbənə* “he was full, he was satiated” probably is also formed from Amharic *t’əggəbə* by using deletion of /g/ and then its gemination feature is replaced by /b/ and addition of /nə/ syllable. Similarly, *rutʃ* “selfish” is possible to be formed from Tigrinya word *hīruf* through /hi/ becoming zero and replacing /f/ by /tʃ/. Moreover, *lalimmiʃ* “upper” is derived from Tigrinya *laʃləwaj* by /ʃ/ becomes zero, and /waj/ becomes /mmiʃ/, and relatively, *tatimmiʃ* “lower, under” may be formed from Tigrinya *tahtəwaj* by deleting /h/ and

¹⁶ *təbərəgga* means “get up” in the Azmari argot of Amharic speakers (Lelau, 1952:106).

substituting /waj/ by /mmiʃ/. In addition to this, deletion of consonant and addition of vowel exists as stated below.

Tig.	ʔaʃo argot	gloss	sound changed
sigəm	səmo ¹⁷	sorghum	g→ Ø/word medial and Ø→o/##-
dəngola	dəngob	stone	a→ Ø/##- and l→b/##-

From the above examples, *səmo* “sorghum” is formed from Tigrinya word *sigəm* by shortening /g/, and replacing /i/ by /o/. The ʔaʃo argot word *dəngob* “stone” is also formed from Tigrinya word *dəngola* “stone” by removing /a/ final syllable of the word and substituting /l/ by /b/ or from *dingaj* “stone” is possible by dropping /j/ consonant and changing of vowels of the word.

Deletion and substitution have also taken place in compound words of the ʔaʃo argot such as *tatinka* “what did you happen” derived from Tigrinya phrase *ʔintaj kojnka* “what happen to you?” through deletion of /ʔin/ and /j/, and substitution of /k/ by /t/. And *kəndiminki* “how many” is formed from Tigrinya *kəndimintaj* “how many” through deletion of /j/ and substitution of /ta/ by /ki/ syllable. Moreover, substitution and change of vowel exists in the ʔaʃo argot like *bitf’il* “mule” from Tigrinya *bəx’li* by replacing /x’/ by /tʃ’/ and deletion of /i/ vowel and replacement of /ə/ by /i/.

4. 2.1.10. Deletion

Deletion is the removing of sounds from word. It may be at the beginning, end or medial part of the word. In the ʔaʃo argot, deletion of syllable is occurred while deforming Tigrinya words. The deletion process can take place by deleting the initial, medial or final syllable of the word. For example, *hatto* “sediment in beer or alcohol” is derived from Tigrinya *hatəla* through gemination of /t/, shortening of /la/ at word final and replacing the second syllable /ə/ of the word by /o/ vowel.

¹⁷ Sorghum is termed by sɨk’ma in Agew – Xamt’anga (Appleyard, 2006:191)

In addition to deletion of syllable at word final, the removing of initial syllable of Tigrinya words has also taken place in the formation of the argot. For instance, the ጥገገ argot word *t'iffi* “full” is formed from Tigrinya word *፳፻'iffi* “double” by deleting the initial syllable /፳፻/, replacing fricative /s'/ by the stop /t'/ as well as relating meaning of size between “double” and “full”. *t'iffi* “full” may also be taken from Tigrinya word *፻፲፻'iffi* “extra” through the deletion of /፻፲፻/ syllable at word initial and substitution of /l/ by /t'/.

Furthermore, in relation to the deletion of sounds at word medial, *t'ax'iru*¹⁸ “he knew” is formed from *t'ənk'ərə* “knew (lit. pressed)” in Tigrinya by shortening /n/ and becoming fricative sound /x'/ from the non-fricative sound /k'w/.

4. 2.1.11. Deletion and Addition

These two processes can take places simultaneously in the ጥገገ argot. For instance, *k'urunk'ur* “steel” is derived from Tigrinya word *k'ork'oro* by adding /n/, removing /o/ final vowel and substituting /u/ by /o/. In addition to this, the words of the ጥገገ argot are derived from Tigrinya words through addition and deletion of consonant or vowel together. For instance, the ጥገገ argot word *wətf'ittimma*¹⁹ “pan” is formed from Tigrinya *wintf'ihiti* “ type of pan” through deletion of /n/ , /h/, addition of /-mma/ and some vowel changes.

4.2.1.12. Vowel Deformation and Degemination

In the ጥገገ argot, vowel change is important in creating disguise speech as *hajmo* “physically well matured girl or young girl” is derived from Tigrinya term *hajjam* by degeminating /jj/ to /j/, reordering /a/ from central syllable /jam/ to the final syllable /jma/ and substituting /a/ by /o/ at word final position.

4. 2.2. Morphological Deformation

¹⁸ *t'ax'ari* means magician and *t'ax'ari zirna* “a person who knows zar” in ጥገገ argot.

¹⁹ Pan is termed *wətf'i:ti*: in Oromo.

Morphology deals with the study about the internal structure of words. All languages have words and in all languages some words, at least, have an internal structure, and consist of one or more affixes (Spencer, 2007:1). The affixes can be either bound or free. The bound affixes have derivational and inflectional functions in any language. However, in argot, the bound affixes have the function of obscuring communications. Argot speakers conceal their own communication by adding the bound affixes into different positions of the words of the standard languages (Tigrinya, Amharic...). The ?afo argot uses various additions of bound affixes in deforming words from Tigrinya and Amharic. The ?afo argot adds suffixes and prefixes. The ?afo argot uses different affixes to deform the words of the languages.

4. 2.2.1. Suffixation /-ka/

/-ka/ marks possessions in 2nd SgM in Tigrinya. For clarification, let us see the examples below.

- | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------|
| a) dəftər-ka | b) gənzəb –ka |
| exercise book –your:Sg:M | money – your:Sg:M |
| “your exercise book” | “your money” |

The addition of /-ka/ in the ?afo argot is found in final part of syllable of the words. It serves to make unintelligible communication between ?afo group and outsiders by adding it to numeral words taken from Amharic as stated below:

Amh.	?afo argot	gloss	Amh.	?afo argot	gloss
and	?andika	one	sost	sostika	three
aratt	?arattika	four	ammist	?ammistika	five
siddist	siddistika	six	səbat	səbatka	seven
simmint	simmintika	eight			

Rule Ø →ka/ [numeral word]-

As the above examples reveal, all the words are taken from Amharic. The ?afo argot speakers add the Tigrinya bound affix /-ka/ at the final position of the Amharic numeral words. It has been also added to Amharic adjectives and nouns to make disguise speech in the ?afo argot as:

Amh.	?afo argot	gloss
nətf’f’	nətf’f’ika	white
addis	?addiska	new

afər ʔafərka soil

Rule Ø →ka/ [Amharic adjective and noun]-

From the above examples, one can easily realize that the words *ʔafərka* “soil”, *nətf’f’ika* “white” and *ʔaddiska* “new” of the ʔaʃo argot are formed from the Amharic terms *afər*, *nətf’f’ika* and *addis* respectively through the addition of /-ka/.

4. 2.2.2. Suffixation /-ma/

/-ma/ serves as discourse marker in Amharic and Tigrinya when the speakers of the two languages admire and/or reflect a sense of respectiveness or haste about any part of human body or other expressions. It can also serve as an interrogative pronoun “who” when it is considered as a word (Amsalu, 2010:33). /-ma/ is added to nouns and adjectives of Amharic terms to construct the ʔaʃo argot words. The function of /-ma/ suffix, therefore, is to disguise speech between ʔaʃo group and non-ʔaʃo group and almost /m/ is geminated in the ʔaʃo argot terms. The ʔaʃo argot adds the /-ma/ suffix to Amharic words as the following:

Amh.	ʔaʃo argot	gloss	Amh.	ʔaʃo argot	gloss
səfed	səfədɪmma	basket work disc	fit	fɪtɪmma	face
angət	ʔangətɪmma	neck	k’əj	k’əjɪmma	red
irguz	ʔirguzɪmma	pregnant	t’əfər	t’əfərɪmma	rope
ingida	ʔingiddɪmma	guest	mənt’t’af	mənt’əfɪmma	carpet

Rule Ø → imma / [noun]-

Based on the above data, the speakers of the ʔaʃo argot add /ma/ suffix with gemintaion of /m/ sound into Amharic words to construct incomprehensive words. And the words of the ʔaʃo argot are added extra syllables. All the ʔaʃo argot words are formed from Amharic words.

In addition to this, /-ma/ suffix is also added to non-geminated Amharic sounds at word final with an addition of some vowels. Specifically, the /-ma/ suffix is appended to non-gemintaed Amharic sounds at word final as shown in the following examples:

Amh.	ʔaʃo argot	gloss
-------------	-------------------	--------------

ʔaf	ʔafoma ²⁰	mouth
g ^w az	g ^w azimma	goods
ፎሮ	ፎጻጻጫ	ear
k'ən	k'ənnimma	day, time

Rule Ø → (im)ma / [non-geminated sound at word final]-

From the above data, the sounds at words final like *ʔaf* “mouth”, *g^waz* “goods” and *ፎሮ* “ear” are non-geminated. The speakers of the ʔaʃo argot form *ʔafoma* “mouth”, *ፎጻጻጫ* “ear” and *g^wazimma* “goods” from the above Amharic words *ʔaf* “mouth”, *ፎሮ* “ear” and *g^waz* “goods” respectively through addition of /-ma/ suffix. The ʔaʃo argot *ʔafoma* “mouth” is also derived from Tigrinya and Amharic word *ʔaf* by adding /o/ vowel to the coda of first syllable of the word.

/-ma/ is also attached to geminated Amharic sounds at word final with gemination of /m/ speech sound as shown in the data below:

Amh.	ʔaʃo argot	gloss	Amh.	ʔaʃo argot	gloss
ገጽጽ	ገጽጽጫ	hand	ገጽጽጽጽ	ገጽጽጽጽጫ	white
ወጽዕ	ወጽዕጫ	outside	ገጽጽጽጽ	ገጽጽጽጽጫ	alone, only

Rule Ø → imma/ [geminated nouns final]-

As we can see from the above examples, the ʔaʃo argot words are deformed from Amharic words through the addition of /-ma/ where /m/ is geminated. For instance, the suffixation of /-ma/ and the gemination of /m/ have also taken place in the ʔaʃo argot words such as, *ገጽጽጫ* “hand”, *ገጽጽጽጽጫ*²¹ “white”, *ወጽዕጫ* “outside” and *ገጽጽጽጽጫ* “alone, only” taken from *ገጽጽ*, *ገጽጽጽጽ*, *ወጽዕ* and *ገጽጽጽጽ* respectively, which are Amharic words with gemination of /ጽ/, /ጽጽ/ and /ጽጽጽጽ/ sounds at word final.

²⁰ Mouth is termed ʔafa:n/ʔaf in Oromo (Mahd,1995:494), and ʔaf/lisan in Geez(see Dessi;2002:14)

²¹ ገጽጽጽጽጽጽጫ may also be possible as different natural communication of ʔaʃo people in their argot.

Amharic allows consonant-clusters at word final. The ?afo argot speakers also add /-ma/ suffix with gemination of /m/ sound into these Amharic consonant-clusters at word final, and the consonant-clusters are changed to non-consonant-clusters of the ?afo argot words as stated below.

Amh.	?afo argot	gloss
məlk	məlkimma	appearance
nəbs	nəbsimma	body, soul
ajt'	?ajt'imma	mouse
t'irs	t'irsimma	teeth

Rule Ø →imma/ [consonant-clusters of word final]-

From the above data, we can understand that the speakers of the ?afo argot add /-ma/ suffix into Amharic consonant-clusters at word final. And the speakers of the ?afo argot change the CVCC syllable structure of Amharic words to CVC or CV. For instance, Amharic word məlk “appearance” has CVCC syllable structure. However, this word is changed to CVCCVCCVC due to the addition of the /-ma/ suffix with gemination of /m/ as well as vowel epenthetic /i/. The syllable structure of the ?afo argot will be again discussed in the next part of the thesis.

In general, the speakers of the ?afo argot add /-ma/ with and without gemination of /m/ sound into Amharic geminated and non-geminated sounds at word final. In addition to this, /-ma/ is also attached into Amharic consonant-clusters and non-consonant-clusters at word final with gemination of /m/.

4. 2.2.3. Suffixation /-o/

/-o/ suffix is a 3SgM object marker in Tigrinya as we can see it in the final position of the word *x'ətıl-u-w-o* “he killed him” (Daniel, 2000b:77). In ?afo argot, there are terms whose final vowel is /-o/ suffix as stated below:

Tig/Amh.	Gloss	?afo argot	gloss
x'is's'a	pan cake	məx'ofo	enjera
ʕatər	chickpea	məʕitro	chick pea

təlbə	linseed	tɪlɪmbo	linseed
tʃ'ənnət	load	tʃ'ənnno	pouch
zələl bəllə	being hanging	zəllo	gentile organ of male
wiha	water	watʃtʃo	water
miʃʃaħri	maize	maʃʃiŋgo	grain
set	woman	sitto	gentile organ of female

From the above examples, we can understand that non-/o/ final words of Tigrinya and Amharic become the /o/ final ones in the ʔaʃo argot. For instance, the ʔaʃo argot words *sitto* “gentile organ of female”, *tɪlɪmbo* “linseed”, *tʃ'ənnno* “pouch” and *watʃtʃo* “water” are taken from Amharic non-/o/ final words *set* “woman”, *təlbə* “linseed”, *tʃ'ənnət* “load” and *wiha* “water” respectively. In addition to this, the words of the ʔaʃo argot *məx'ofo* “enjera”, *məʃitro* “pea” and *maʃʃiŋgo* “grain” are derived from Tigrinya non-/o/ final words *x'is's'a* “pan cake”, *ʃatər* “chickpea” and *miʃʃaħri* “maize” respectively. On the other hand, there is meaning change between the ʔaʃo argot words and the words Tigrinya and Amharic as stated in the above data. The semantic change will be discussed in the next part of the thesis.

4. 2.2.4. Suffixation /-na/

The morphological function of the suffix /-na/, in Tigrinya, is to mark possession in first person plural (Mason, 1996:35). However, the ʔaʃo argot speakers add it into some Tigrinya and Amharic words so as to conceal their own communication. Now, let us see how the /-na/ suffix works in the following data.

Amh./Tig.	ʔaʃo argot	gloss	Amh./Tig.	ʔaʃo argot	gloss
t'eff/ t'aff	t'ifna	't'eff'	ʔuf	ʔifna	fire
səw/ səb	səwna	person	das	disna	shed
sim	simkina	name	zar	zirna	zar

Rule Ø→na/##-

From the above examples, we can realize that the /-na/ suffix is attached into the final position of Tigrinya and Amharic words. In addition to this, changes or substitutions of vowel sounds by the

ʔaʃo speakers have been noticed. For instance, the ʔaʃo word *tifna* ‘t’eff’ is taken from Amharic *t’eff* through vowel change of /e/ by /i/ or from Tigrinya *t’aff* through substitution of /a/ by /i/ as well as degemination of /ff/ to /f/. And the ʔaʃo argot word *ʔifna* is derived from Tigrinya/Amharic word *ʔuf* “releasing an air out to burn wood” through replacement of /u/ by /i/. The ʔaʃo argot word *simkinna* “name” is formed through addition of /ki/ syllable and /nna/ suffix.

4. 2.2.5. Suffixation /-ki/ and a Tigrinya Preposition

The /-ki/ functions as possessive marker of 2SgF in Tigrinya like *məs’ħaf-ki* “your (SgF) book” (Rezene, 1999:82-83), and Geez such as *ʔigziʔki* “your (SgF) God” (Desse, 200:76). On the other hand, the ʔaʃo argot speakers add prepositions and /-ki/²² suffix into Tigrinya word *mən* “who” in order to create unintelligible words between the in-group and outsiders as we can observe them in the following data:

Tig.	ʔaʃo argot	gloss	Tig.	ʔaʃo argot	gloss
Mən	minki	who	ni-mən	ni-minki	whom
nab-mən	nab-minki	to where	kab-mən	kab-minki	from where
ʔab-mən	ʔam-minki	at where			

Rule Ø→ki / ##-, ə→i/word medial and Ø→ [preposition]/-##

As mentioned in the above data, there is multiplicity meaning of *mən* that serves as all interrogative pronouns by adding prepositions in Tigrinya. The Tigrinya prepositions include: /ni-/ indicator of object or receiver of an action, /nab-/ indicator of movement or goal, /kab-/ indicator of source of movement and /ʔab-/ indicator of existence of things. The ʔaʃo argot word *minki* “who” is derived from Tigrinya word *mən* “who” through vowel substitution of /ə/ by /i/ and addition of /ki/ suffix. And the ʔaʃo argot speakers also add the Tigrinya prepositions: *nab* “to”, *kab* “from” and *ni* “for” into ʔaʃo argot word *minki* “who” taken from Tigrinya word *mən*

²² The /-ki/ suffix is a 3SgF possessive marker in Soddo (Leslau, 1965:5).

“who”. For instance, *nabminki* “to where”, *niminki* “whom” and *kabminki* “from where” are formed from *minki* “who” which also taken from Tigrinya *mən* “who” through addition of /-ki/ suffix, vowel change as well as addition of Tigrinya prepositions *nab* “to”, *kab* “from” and *ni* “for” respectively.

4. 2.2.6. Prefixation /mə-/

Prefixation is the addition of affix into the word initial. The /mə-/ prefix uses as marker of instrumental nouns in Tigrinya and the ጥገታ argot. In addition to this, the ጥገታ argot speakers add /mə-/ prefix to Tigrinya words to construct some words of the ጥገታ argot as stated below:

Tig.	ጥገታ argot	gloss	sound changed
x'is's'a	məx'is'	pan cake	Ø→mə/-## and a→Ø/##-
ፍገክ	məፍገጳxurux	friend	Ø→mə/-## and CVCCV→CCVCVCVC##-
ጥገጥ	məጥገጥ	pea	Ø→mə/-## and Ø→o/##-

As the above data reveals, the ጥገታ argot word məx'is' “pan cake” is derived from Tigrinya *x'is's'a* through addition of /mə-/ prefix, deletion of /a/ and degemination of /s's'/ to /s'/. Moreover, the ጥገታ argot word *məፍገጳxurux* “friend” is formed from Tigrinya word *ፍገክ* through addition of /mə-/ prefix and reduplication of the word consonants as well as vowel changes. Furthermore, term *məጥገጥ* “pea”, in the argot, is formed from Tigrinya *ጥገጥ* by adding /mə-/ at word initial as well as vowel changes.

4. 2.2.7. Ideophone words

Ideaphonic property of words that sound like the noise associated with their referent. Languages may approximate each other in their onomatopoeic words, but rarely agree exactly on how to imitate a barking dog, the wind in the trees and so on. Ideaphonic words from different languages may sound similar to one another because they are imitating things in nature (Campbell and Mixco, 2007:9-10). Similarly, in the ጥገታ argot, there are assumed words that are created through imitation of their situation, sound or nature.

Tig.	Gloss	ጥገታ argot	gloss
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<i>ʃəxəx ʔabbillom</i>	make them slaughtering	<i>ʃək^wijjom</i>	slaughter them
<i>ʔuf</i>	a process of burning fire	<i>ʔifna</i>	fire
<i>x'ax'</i>	sound of wood breaking	<i>x'ax'ma</i>	wood
<i>kuʃ</i>	sound of dried things	<i>ʔatərk^waʃ</i>	red pepper
<i>zələl bələ</i>	being hanging	<i>zəllo</i>	gentile organ of male
<i>səfəf bələ</i>	being over	<i>sənfəf</i>	trouser
<i>lənk'ət' bələ</i>	being melted	<i>ʔank'at'o</i>	butter
<i>xuruf</i>	the sound of donkey	<i>xurif</i>	donkey
<i>fit bələ</i>	he sipped (boiled liquid	<i>fatʃtʃijjom</i>	he drank

From the above data, we can understand that the words of the ʔaʃo argot are derived from Tigrinya imitated words. These include *ʃək^wijjom*²³ “you (SgM)! slaughter them” is created from imitated word *ʃəxəx ʔabbillom* “make them *ʃəxəx* (the action of slaughtering)” by deleting /x/, changing the compound descriptive verbs to single word and substitution of /x/ by /k^w/. The ʔaʃo argot word *ʔifna* “fire” is taken from Tigrinya word *ʔuf* “the action of realizing an air out to burn wood” by adding /-na/ suffix of Tigrinya. In addition to this, the ʔaʃo argot word *x'ax'ma* “wood” is formed from *x'ax'* “sound of wood breaking” and addition of /-ma/ suffix. The ʔaʃo argot word *ʔatərk^waʃ* “red pepper” is formed from *kuʃ* “sound of breaking of dry red pepper”. *xurif* “donkey” is also derived from Tigrinya *xuruf* “the sound of donkey” through vowel change as well as substitution of /f/ by /ʃ/. Furthermore, the speakers of the ʔaʃo argot form words by relating the names and the manner of the animals and things with their names. For instance, the ʔaʃo argot word *zəllo* “gentile organ of male” is derived from compound verb *zələl bələ* “being hanging” by relating the nature of gentile organ of male. Similarly, the ʔaʃo argot word *sənfəf* “trouser” is also formed from Tigrinya compound word *səfəf bələ* “being over” by adding /n/ speech sound and relating the nature of trouser being hanging. The ʔaʃo argot word *ʔank'at'o* “butter” is formed from Tigrinya compound word *lənk'ət' bələ* “is being melted” by relating the

²³ *ʃək^wijjom* also means (you) break them as one informant said.

manner of butter being melting. *bənəbən* “sheep” can come from *bin...bīn or bən... bən* which is a manner of sheep fright of enemy, and *ʔirgan*²⁴ “God” derived from Tigrinya verb *ʔarəgə/ʕarəgə* “go up into heaven” in relation to Gods’ going up into heaven when he had been killed in Israel.

In addition to onomatopoeic words, some of the above words of the ʔaʃo argot are derived from compound verbs. Compound verbs are verbs that verbs composed of a fixed element followed by the verbs ‘become’ or ‘say’” (Leslau, 1964b:55). In ʔaʃo argot, compound verbs of the Tigrinya are changed to non-compound verbs. *bələ* means “become or say” in Tigrinya. The compound words of the ʔaʃo argot are constructed by changing compound verbs of Tigrinya to non-compound verbs such as *ʃək^wijom* “you (SgM) slaughter them, butcher them” from *ʃaxax ʔabbillom* “you (SgM) slaughter them”; *zəllo* “gentile organ of male” from *zələl bələ* “hop about”. *sənfəf* “trouser” derived from *səfəf bələ* “being afloat”, and *ʔank’at’o* “butter” formed from *lənk’ət’ bələ* “being melted”. In addition to this, there are terms they might be formed from compound verbs like *ʔabboxuna* “father” is derived from *ʔabbo* “father” and *xun* “be, (SgM)” (lit. be father), and *ʔinnoxuna* “mother” is formed from *ʔinno* “mother” and *xuni* “be(SgF)” (lit. be mother).

4. 2.3. Semantic and Form Deformations

Form deformation means the distortion of the physical structure or the pronunciation of the standard language (Tigrinya, Amharic) word in the secret language. But semantic deformation means the changing of the semantic representation of the standard language words in the argot or secret language. And form and semantic deformation also means the changing of the physical or pronunciation as well as the semantic representation of the standard language words together in the argot. Semantic and form deformation are taken place in the ʔaʃo argot. From these form

²⁴ It is pronounced as ʔargan may be due to regressive assimilation of /a/ on /i/ in different informants’ communication. ʔargan means also waw!!! or wəjne in Amharic.

changes, first, let us see that substitution of the initial part of the words and then converting the basic meaning of the words. It should be noted that the original meaning and the changed meaning have similarity in their semantic representations in some extent. Let us see some possibilities of this issue in the following examples.

Tig.	gloss	ʔafo terms	gloss
<i>tixəwəni</i>	give alms	<i>ləkkīwəni</i> ²⁵	(you) give me
<i>judən</i>	bull	<i>mudən</i>	big
<i>fəx^wəna</i>	the foot of beast	<i>ʔaxəna</i>	horse

As stated in the above examples, the words of the ʔafo argot are derived from Tigrinya by changing the form as well as the meaning of the words. The speakers of the ʔafo argot substitutes the initial sounds of the Tigrinya words. For instance, the ʔafo argot word *ləkkīwəni* “(you.SgM) give me” is taken from Tigrinya word *tixəwəni* “give alms me” through substitutions of /ti/ by /lə/ and semantic change of “give alms” to “give me”. The ʔafo argot word *mudən* “big” is taken from Tigrinya word *judən* “bull” through replacement of initial sound of the word /j/ by /m/ and semantic change of the word “bull” to “big”. Finally, the ʔafo argot word *ʔaxəna* “horse” is formed from Tigrinya word *fəx^wəna* “the foot of beast” through replacement of initial syllable /fə/ by /ʔa/ as well as meaning change of “the foot of beast” to “horse”.

In addition to this, the speakers of the ʔafo argot substitute the medial sounds of the Tigrinya words and change its meaning. For instance, the ʔafo argot word *wələza* “begging” is derived from Tigrinya *wədəsa* “praising” by substituting /d/ and /s/ by /l/ and /z/ respectively and changing the meaning “praising” into “begging” in relation to their tradition. In relation to this, the ʔafo argot word *menzo*²⁶ “cattle” may be derived from Tigrinya word *mezzo* “twenty five cent” by replacing /z/ by /n/.

²⁵ *ləkkīwə* means become dull (eye), become dim in Geez (Leslau, 1989:11)

²⁶ *Manzə* means “animal fat that is eaten” in Gurage - *tʃaha* (Leslau, 1979:77).

The speakers of the ʔaʃo argot substitute the Tigrinya sounds at word final and change the representation of the words as shown the following data:

Tig.	gloss	ʔaʃo terms	gloss
k'ir tʃ'at	basket of grain	x'irtʃ'in	crop
miʃʃihari	maize	maʃʃingo	grain
x'omif	dress of female	x'oftə	cloth
gila	servant	gonno	slave
təʃənnifu	he became severely sick	təʃəddiwu	he was ill
tətəxəsə	he became sleeping	təkkojə	he slept
gudday	ceremony	gullas	marriage, bride/groom
tʃ'intʃ'a ²⁷	very small marble	tʃ'antʃ'o	baby
dəkkərə	he highly fulfilled	dəkkəjə	added ²⁸

From the above data, we can realize that the speakers of the ʔaʃo argot use semantic change and substitution of the Tigrinya sounds of the word final. For instance, *x'irtʃ'in* “crop” formed from Tigrinya *k'ir tʃ'at* “basket of grain” through substitution of /t/ by /l/ and /a/ by /i/. The ʔaʃo argot word *x'irtʃ'in* “crop” may also be formed from Tigrinya word *x'itʃ'in* “good” by relating the basic need of food. *x'irtʃ'in* is also possible derived from *k'itʃ'tʃ'a* “pan cake made from wheat or other”. The ʔaʃo argot word *maʃʃingo* “grain” is formed from Tigrinya words *miʃʃihari* “maize” or *miʃʃəla* “white sorghum” through substitution of the sounds at word final /hari/ or /əla/ by /ngo/ respectively and semantic change of the specific names to general names. The ʔaʃo argot word *x'oftə* “cloth” is derived from Tigrinya word *x'omif* “dress of female” through substitution of the final sounds /mif/ by /ftə/ and semantic change of specific name “dress of female” to general name “cloth”. The ʔaʃo argot word *gonno*²⁹ “slave” is formed from Tigrinya

²⁷ tʃ'intʃis “one who eats little” in Gurage- tʃaha (Leslau, 1979:38)

²⁸ dix^wa means fertile farm land in Tigrinya.

²⁹ ganjən “devil (lit. black)” is the nearest terms of Tigrinya with the ʔaʃo argot term gonno “slave”.

word *gila* “servant” through substitution of /l/ by /n/ and gemination /n/, vowels change and meaning change from “servant” to “slave” by relating the hard working of “slave”.

The speakers of the *ʔafo* argot delete Tigrinya sounds at word final and medial and change the meaning of the words. Now let us see some examples of this issue in the following data:

Tig.	gloss	ʔafo argot terms	gloss
s’əlmət	dark	wəlmɪ	evening
gənzəb	money, animal	gizna ³⁰	birr
s’afda	white	t’ada	wheat

As mentioned in the above data, the *ʔafo* argot word *wəlmɪ* “evening” is formed from Tigrinya word *s’əlmət* “dark” by deleting the final sound /t/, substituting /s’/ by /w/ and /a/ by /i/ and changing the meaning from “dark” to “evening”. The *ʔafo* argot word *gizna* “birr” is also taken from Tigrinya or Amharic word *gənzəb* “money, animal” through deletion of /b/, metathesis of /nz/ to /zn/ and vowels substitutions. And the *ʔafo* argot word *gizna* “birr” is changed its meaning from Tigrinya or Amharic word *gənzəb* “money, animal” from general name “money” to specific name “birr”. Moreover, the *ʔafo* argot word *t’ada* “wheat” is taken from Tigrinya word *s’afda* “white” by deleting /ʕ/ sound and changing meaning from “white” to “wheat”.

The *ʔafo* argot uses the form and semantic change from Amharic words. This includes deletion, gemination and addition with semantic change of the Amharic words as revealed the following data:

Amh.	gloss	ʔafo terms	gloss
tʃ’innət	load	tʃ’ənnə	pouch made of leather
set	female/woman	sitto ³¹	gentile organ of female
t’əfər	space	t’əfərɪmma	tying and wrapping

²⁹ *gizna* means “money” in the Azmari argot of Amharic speakers (Leslau, 1952).

³¹ *sitto* means “woman” in the Azmari argot of Amharic speakers (Leslau, 1952).

As we have seen in the above data, we can understand that the speakers of the ?aʃo argot form the words from the Amharic words through deletion, addition and gemination as well as change of semantic representation of the Amharic words. For example, the ?aʃo argot word *tʃ'anno* “pouch made of leather” is taken from Amharic *tʃ'inət* “load” through deletion of the sound /t/ and gemination of /n/ as well as vowel change. It is changed the semantic representation of the word from “load” to “pouch”. The ?aʃo argot word *sitto* “gentile organ of female” is derived from Amharic word *set* “woman” through gemination of /t/, vowel addition and substitution as well as meaning change from “woman” to “gentile organ of female”. Finally, the ?aʃo argot word *t'əfərimma* “tying and wrapping” is formed from Amharic word *t'affər* “space” through addition of /imma/ sounds and change of meaning from “space” to “tying and wrapping”. The ?aʃo argot word *ʃəgə* “man” may come from Tigrinya dialect (Rayya dialect) or Amharic *ʃəggə* “beautiful” by changing the function of the term and degemination of /gg/ to /g/ phonologically.

The ?aʃo argot word *ʃərk'ix'u* “he smelt” is possibly formed from Tigrinya *ʃix'ax'* “toilet” through addition of /r/ sound and meaning change. The ?aʃo argot word *tələza*³² “speech” is taken from Tigrinya *ləzəba* “discussion” through transposition of /t/ from the word initial to word final and then substitution of /t/ by /b/ as well as changing the function of the word from “discussion” to “speech or speaking”.

The speakers of the ?aʃo argot change the semantic representation of the Tigrinya words without form change as reveals the following data:

Tig.	gloss	?aʃo argot terms	gloss
xunano	condemnation	xunano	dog
mitʃ'tʃ'uw	good, attractive	mətʃ'tʃ'iwu	he laughed

From the above data, we can comprehend that the speakers of the ?aʃo argot derive words from Tigrinya words by changing the meaning of the Tigrinya words. For instance, the ?aʃo argot

word *xunano* “dog” is derived from Tigrinya words through meaning change from “condemnation” to “dog” because “dog” means “prostitution” connotatively and, therefore, prostitution is also “condemnation” in Orthodox Church. And, the ጥገጥ argot word *məṭf’ṭ’iwu* “he laughed” is taken from Tigrinya word *mitf’ṭ’uw* “good, attractive” probably by relating that the cause of laughing is being attractive.

4. 2.4. Using Different Semantic Aspects

Argots use different semantic aspects because of having inadequacy of terms or expressions (Leslau, 1964b: 60). The ጥገጥ argot also uses various semantic aspects such as multiplicity meaning, paraphrastic description, generic naming of specific terms, instrumental nouns and connotative meanings etc.

4. 2.4.1. Semantic Load (Multiplicity of Meaning)

ጥገጥ argot uses semantic load or multiple meanings of one word. Semantic load means one word signifies many things or concepts (Zealelem, 2006:118). But the signified things have similarity in their color, measurement, and so on. In the ጥገጥ argot, there are words which have multiple meanings of signified things by their similar color as:

Amh.	ጥገጥ argot	gloss
t’ik’ur	t’ink’urk’ur	coffee, black
nəṭf’ṭ’	nəṭf’ṭ’imma	paper, white, parchment, become grey hair

As the above data demonstrates, the ጥገጥ argot word t’ink’urk’ur means “coffee, black” taken from Amharic word *t’ik’ur*, and *nəṭf’ṭ’imma* means “paper, white, parchment, become grey hair” is derived from Amharic word *nəṭf’ṭ’* and there is metaphoric expansion among the concepts. The signified things have similarity in their color and named by the same word.

In addition to the above idea, there are general terms which their signified things are similar in their measurement semantically in the argot. For instance, *mudən* which means “big, large, old,

tall and heavy” and *mənif* which means “small, little, few, young and baby” are related in their measurement.

There are also general terms of the different concepts of the *ʔaʃo* argot whose implication is similar as stated below:

ʔaʃo argot	gloss
<i>ʃirk^wi</i>	light, bad smell and ugly
<i>gərtə</i>	good, beautiful, handsome, and pretty
<i>t^wək^wi</i>	bad, envious, and wicked
<i>dəngob</i>	stone, ice and wall
<i>tʃ^wənnə</i>	pouch and bag
<i>gallitʃtʃa</i>	rich, lord, master and owner
<i>ʔafərka</i>	earth and soil
<i>x^wax^wma</i>	gun, stick, wood, tree and bush
<i>gullas</i>	bride, bridegroom and marriage
<i>watʃtʃo</i>	urine, water, holy water and rain
<i>xurif</i>	donkey and zebra
<i>x^wəʃtam</i>	snack, fly and ant

As mentioned in the above examples, “light, bad, smell and ugly” are represented by *ʃirk^wi*, and “good, beautiful, handsome, and pretty” are signified by *gərtə* in the *ʔaʃo* argot. “bad, envious, and wicked” are represented by *t^wək^wi* and “rich, lord, master and owner” are represented by *gallitʃtʃa* in the *ʔaʃo* argot. In addition to this, “stone, ice and wall” are known as *dəngob*; “pouch and bag” are also called *tʃənnə*, and “gun, stick, wood, tree and bush” are called *x^wax^wma*. “Earth and soil” are known as *ʔafərka*. These termed things by the same words are similar in their manner, situation, structure and/or others. In the same way, “urine, water, holy water and rain” are represented by *watʃtʃo* because they are liquid; “donkey and zebra” are called by *xurif*, since they are from one kingdom, and “bride, bridegroom and marriage” are represented by *gullas* because they are specific terms of one general term marriage in the *ʔaʃo* argot.

4. 2.4.2. Connotative Meaning

Connotative meaning is a hidden meaning of word. In contrast, denotative meaning is the direct meaning of word. Many terms of the ?afo argot have connotative meanings. Let us see the connotative and denotative meaning of the ?afo argot words in the following data.

?afo argot	denotative meaning	connotative meaning
wərdix'u	it is failed down	it became cheapest
?afərka	soil	too much, dirty
tʃ'ənnə(am)	pouch	lair
wurama	hyena	big eater
məgaxa	your house	your wife
ləŋpi	foolish	harmless
t'əfərimma	tying and wrapping	thin

As we have shown in the above data, the connotative meaning of *?afərka* “soil” is “too much /many”. Moreover, *?afərka* means “dirty” in its expressive meaning. In this case, *tʃ'ənnə* means “pouch” directly or denotatively. But *tʃ'ənnə* is connotatively euphemism that indicates “lair”. It should be noted that when the speakers of the ?afo argot want to insult someone, they add /-am/ bound affix to *tʃ'ənnə* becoming *tʃ'ənnam* to say “lair”. Similarly, *gurama* or *wurama* means “hyena”, and it is used to insult someone as “big eater” connotatively.

4. 2.4.3. Generic Naming of Specific Terms

General terms are used to name particular things or parts of the whole body in the ?afo argot. These whole terms are used to signify specific parts by using certain context. However, out of context or situation, understanding of the specific parts is difficult. For this issue, we can see the following data:

?afo argot	generic (whole)	specific (part)
?amoma	eye	eyelid, eyebrow, iris...etc
?iɕɕimma	hand	finger, arm,

As the above data elaborates, both the whole and parts are named by the same term.

For example, eye and all the parts of eye are represented by *ʔamoma*. The hand and the parts of the hand are represented by *ʔidzɔɣimma*.

4. 2.4.4. Paraphrastic Description

ʔaʃo argot has lack of expressions. To solve inadequate expressions and to signify things, speakers ʔaʃo argot use paraphrastic description. Different things or concepts are described by using group words expressing their features. For instance, the speakers of the ʔaʃo argot use the following paraphrastic descriptions:

Phrases in ʔaʃo argot	meaning	Phrases in ʔaʃo argot	meaning
watʃtʃo ʔarfat’o water milk	“buttermilk”	gərtə tələzaʔu good speak: his	“wise person”
watʃtʃo ʔazəlo water carried	“pumpkin”		

From the above data, the group of the ʔaʃo argot words expresses relevant concepts. For instance, the ʔaʃo argot phrase or compound word *watʃtʃo ʔarfat’o* represents “buttermilk” by relating the thinnest of the “buttermilk” and by combining *watʃtʃo* “water” and *ʔarfat’o* “milk” words of the argot. The ʔaʃo argot compound word or phrase *watʃtʃo ʔazəlo* signifies “pumpkin” by relating the feature of “pumpkin” with the ʔaʃo argot words *watʃtʃo* “water” and *ʔazəlo* “carrying”. Finally, the concept “wise person” is expressed by *gərtə tələzaʔu* through combination of the ʔaʃo argot words of *gərtə* “good” and *tələzaʔu* “his speech”.

In the ʔaʃo argot, things or animals are also named through modifiers (nouns or adjectives) and the general terms like the following examples. Individually, the meaning of the terms are *ʃəgə* “male”, *ʔagəfno* “female”, *menzo* “cattle”, *t’int’o* “goat” and *ləwəz* “young”. But the above words with other words use as specific names of things as:

Phrases in ʔafo argot	gloss	Phrases in ʔafo argot	gloss
fəgə menzo	ox	ləwəz t'int'o	kid
male cattle		young goat	
ʔagəfno menzo	cow	ləwəz menzo	bull
Woman cattle		young cattle	

As mentioned in the above examples, the concepts, things or animals are expressed by using phrases or compound words. For instance, the ʔafo argot phrase *fəgə menzo* “ox” is derived from the argot words *fəgə* “male” and *menzo* “cattle”. *fəgə* “male” is determiner word of the *menzo* “cattle”. Counting system of the ʔafo argot is also similar as counting system of Tigrinya speakers in a note of ten birr and the number of ten. This issue is shown in the following data:

ʔafo argot	meaning	ʔafo argot	meaning
wafiri ʔandika	“eleven”	wafiri gitti	“twelve”
ten one		ten two	
wafiri sostika	“thirteen”	wafiri ʔarattika	“fourteen”
ten three		ten four	
wafiri ʔammistika	“fifteen”	wafiri siddistika	“sixteen”
ten five		ten six	
wafiri səbatka	“seventeen”	wafiri simmintika	“eighteen”
ten seven		ten eight	
gitti wafir	“twenty”	sostika wafir	“thirty”
two		three ten	
ʔarattika wafir	“forty”	ʔammistika wafir	“fifty”
Four ten		five ten	
siddistika wafir	“sixty”		
six ten			

As it has been seen in the above data, the ʔafo argot has phrasal or words to express the cardinal numbers. There is /-i/ between the term wafir and one up to eight. /-i/ taken from /j/ that serves as connector of the numbers like Tigrinya *ʔasərtə hədə-j həmsa-j* “eleven birr and fifty cent”, and /-j/ serves as connector of the numbers in Tigrinya. In general, the speakers of the ʔafo argot use paraphrastic descriptions or compound words to solve inadequate expressions of the argot.

Instrumental nouns	gloss	verbs	gloss
mətəkkoji	tool used to sleep (bed)	təkkujom	they slept
məddaməj	tool used to walk (leg)	təddam	(you) go, run
məbaʃəji	tool used to eat (hand)	baʃijən ³³	they(female) ate
məddaməja	tool used for road (road)	təddam	(you) go, move
məʃəkkoji	tool used to slaughtering (knife)	ʃəkk ^w ixum	(you) slaughtered
məʃəlgəhi	tool used to boil (pan)	ʃəlgihu	it is boiled
məʃəʃtʃəja	tool used to drink (drinking vessel)	ʃəʃtʃijə	I drank
məʃərt'əwi	tool used to shut down (door)	ʃərt'iwə	I shut down
məgobəti	tool used to seat down (chair)	təgobətə	he seat down
məməʃ'tʃ'əwi	tool used to laugh (mouth)	məʃ'tʃ'ixum	you (Pl) laughed
mə t'əsəja	tool used to grind(gridding tool)	t'asija	she floured

As we can understand the above data, the materials used to do different actions are expressed by the verbs changed to instrumental nouns. For example, *təkkujom* means “they slept” is changed to *mətəkkoji* “a tool used to sleep or bed” by changing from verb to instrumental noun. Parts of body are named by their function such as *məməʃ'tʃ'əwi* “laughing tool or mouth” is derived from verb *məʃ'tʃ'ixum* means “you (Pl) laughed” in the ?aʃo argot.

4. 2.5. Unknown Origin of Terms of the ?aʃo Argot

In ?aʃo argot, there are terms which their etymological origins are not known. Probably, these words may be created arbitrarily. Let us see the following examples.

?aʃo argot	gloss	?aʃo argot	gloss
matʃ'tʃ'o	abdomen	təkko ³⁴	head
gəʃʃinu	he watched	ʃəx'unam	afraid
gall+ʃtʃa	rich, lord	?ammoma	eye
?altinaj ³⁵	my relative	dəʃtʃo	't'ella'
wajjitu	he came	tinkab	one stringed violin
bakko ³⁶	hen		
?aʃawija	she praised in poem (?aʃo women)		
?ulota	feast or banquet in commemoration of the dead relative		

As we have seen in the above data, the base of the above words is obscured.

³³ x'aʃəjə also means to eat probably it may be complex form of the ?aʃo argot terms.

³⁴ tokko means “one” in Oromo (Mahdi, 1995:523).

³⁵ ?altinana means also zars in the ?aʃo argot.

³⁶ lukku: means “hen” in Oromo (Mahdi, 1995:362). Temben dialect of Tigrinya dərikko means “hen”

4. 2.6. Loanwords from Tigrinya

The ?afo argot includes borrowed words from Semitic languages because of the speakers of the ?afo argot movements to different areas to get income as well as they are the speakers of the Semitic languages (Tigrinya...). As we observed in this chapter, from Semitic languages, the speakers of the ?afo argot mainly use Tigrinya and Amharic roots by changing the form, and form as well as meaning of the words. In addition to this, several Tigrinya terms are used directly without any change. From these words, the determiners words of Tigrinya such as *?izi* “this”, *?izom* “these”, *?iti* “that” and *?itom* “those” are included in ?afo argot directly. *timali* “yesterday”, *məʕaz* “when”, *hizi* “now”, all terms of each month, days, seasons, moon, sun, etc are used directly from Tigrinya. In ?afo argot, not only Tigrinya terms but Amharic terms are also used like *?ag^wat* “whey” is found.

4. 2.7. Similarity of Grammatical Properties of ?afo Argot with Tigrinya

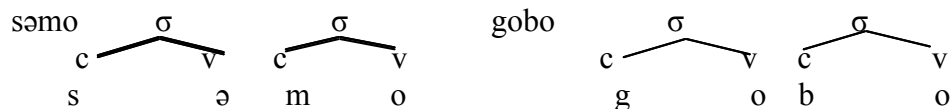
The ?afo argot uses phonological, morphological and syntactic structures as well as morphological expressions of Tigrinya. The phonological structure of the ?afo argot is similar with Tigrinya phonological structure. For instance, almost phonemes (consonants and vowels) of Tigrinya are used in the ?afo argot. For examples, /h/ in *himilto* “vegetable”, /ʕ/ in *guʕiʕiʕiʕ* “type of ‘tella’”, /m/ in *məgaxa* “your wife”, /z/ in *zarna* “zar”, /k^w/ in *k^wank^wəŋna* “?afo argot”, /u/ in *xuriʕ* “zebra”, /a/ in *gərziʔa* “she bought “ etc are some examples of Tigrinya phonemes which are found in the ?afo argot.

Syllable structure of the ?afo argot is also similar with Tigrinya syllable structure. Tigrinya has CV and CVC syllables or CV-, CVC-, -CV, -CVC and -CVC- in words (Girmay, 1983:52, 54), since the consonant cluster at word final is not permitted (Tesfai, 1993: 29 cited in Girmay,

1991). The syllable structure of ʔaʃo argot is also the same with Tigrinya syllable structure. The

ʔaʃo argot has CV syllable structure similarly to Tigrinya syllable structure as stated below:

səmo “sorghum” in the ʔaʃo argot gobo “mountain” in Tigrinya



As the above data elaborates, the syllable structure of the ʔaʃo argot word CVCV in *səmo* “sorghum” and syllable structure of Tigrinya CVCV in *gobo* “mountain” are the same. In addition to this, the CV syllable structure of the ʔaʃo argot is found in its words such as *t’ada* “wheat” and *məga* “house”. The ʔaʃo argot also has CVC syllable structure as Tigrinya as follows:

rutʃ “selfish” in the ʔaʃo argot rim “one’s share (land)” in Tigrinya

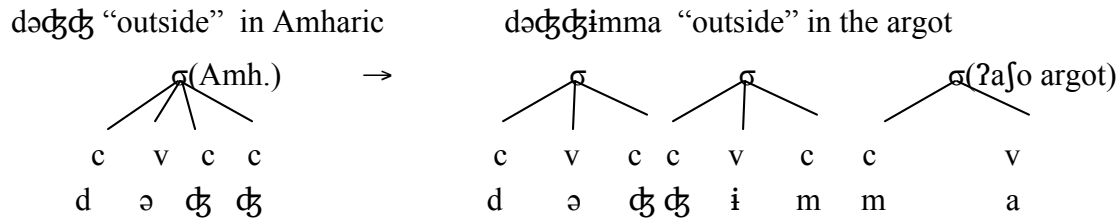


As the above tree structure of syllable, the ʔaʃo argot has CVC syllable structure in *rutʃ* “selfish” as Tigrinya CVC in *rim* “one’s share (land)” similarly. Therefore, the ʔaʃo argot has similar syllable structure with Tigrinya. Even non-CVC or CV words or words of Amharic are changed into CVC or CV syllable structure of the ʔaʃo argot when the speakers of the ʔaʃo argot use the Amharic words as root or base as stated below:

Amh.	syllable structure	ʔaʃo argot	syllable structure	gloss
məlk	CVCC	məlkimma	CVCCVCCV	appearance
nəbs	CVCC	nəbsimma	CVCCVCCV	body, soul
t’irs	CVCC	t’irsimma	CVCCVCCV	teeth
nəʃ’ʃ’	CVCC	nəʃ’ʃ’imma	CVCCVCCV	white
dəʒʒ	CVCC	dəʒʒimma	CVCCVCCV	outside

From the above data, one can understand that the speakers of the ʔaʃo argot change the Amharic consonant clusters at word final due to gemination or consonants frequency to non- consonant-

clusters. For instance, *dəḏḏimma* “outside” and *nəḥḥ’ika* “white” words of the ḥafo argot are taken from Amharic *dəḏḏ* “outside” and *nəḥḥ’* “white” respectively. The Amharic words *dəḏḏ* and *nəḥḥ’* are geminated in the final consonants, and they have CVCC syllable structure of the words. But in the argot, they became CVCCVCV syllable structure of the word. Let us see syllable structure of the ḥafo argot and Amharic in the tree structure.



As it has been shown in the above tree structures, we can understand that the ḥafo argot does not allow CVCC syllable structure as Tigrinya which does not allow the consonants and vowels clusters. Therefore, the CVCC syllable structure of Amharic word *dəḏḏ* “outside” is changed into CVCCV syllable structures of the ḥafo argot in *dəḏḏimma* “outside”. To conclude, the syllable structures of the ḥafo argot are the same with Tigrinya syllable structures CV and CVC.

The different word classes of the ḥafo argot are derived from Tigrinya and Amharic words. The verbs of the ḥafo argot are also derived from Tigrinya and Amharic verbs as the following data:

Tig.	ḥafo argot	gloss	sound changed
dəfəʔə	dərʔiʔu	he pushed	∅ → r/ word medial
bəzəhə	bərziḥu	it became much	∅ → r/ word medial
wəs’əʔə	wərt’iʔu	he got out	∅ → r/ word medial s’ → t’/ word medial
mələsə	məlgisu	he answered	∅ → g/ word medial
k’ojmu	ləjmu	he stood up	k → l/-##

As mentioned in the above data, the verbs of the ḥafo argot are derived from Tigrinya and Amharic verbs through addition of /r/ and /g/ and substitutions of the /k/ by /l/ respectively.

The nouns of the *ʔafo* argot are derived from both Tigrinya and Amharic words through different phonological and morphological deformations. Now let us see some illustrative examples below.

Tig./Amh.	ʔafo argot	gloss	sound changed
tʃ'əwata	tʃ'ərɰata	playing	∅→ r/ word medial
gɪt'ɪm	gɪrt'ɪm	poem	∅→ r/ word medial
ɕəbəna	ɕɪbɪnbɪn	coffee pot	CVCV→CVCCVC/##-
sira	sɪrɪnsɪr	job	CVCV→CVCVCCVC/##-
hɪmbəʃʃa	labɪʃʃa	flat bread	hɪm→la/-##
x'olo	ʃolo	roasted	x'→ʃ/ -##

As the above data reveals, the nouns of the *ʔafo* argot are deformed from Tigrinya and Amharic words through addition, reduplication and substitution. For instance, the nouns *ʃolo*, *labɪʃʃa* and *tʃ'ərɰata* are deformed from Tigrinya nouns: *tʃ'əwata*, *x'olo* and *hɪmbəʃʃa*. In addition this, the *ʔafo* argot words *gɪrt'ɪm* and *sɪrɪnsɪr* are deformed from Amharic nouns *gɪt'ɪm* and *sira* respectively.

As discussed so far, subject pronouns of the *ʔafo* argot are derived from Tigrinya subject pronouns through the transposition of /nɪs/ to /sɪn/ and the addition of /k/ consonant as in *sɪnkɪxum* taken from *nɪsxum* to mean “you(Pl)” and *sɪnkɪxa* which is deformed from *nɪsxa* to mean “you (SgM)”. The *ʔafo* argot has different pronouns. The data stated below, therefore, illustrates the different features of such pronouns and how they are used in the *ʔafo* argot.

Subject Pronouns	Object pronouns	Possessive pronouns	Reflexive pronouns	Gloss
sɪnkəj	nɪ-sɪnkəj	na-sɪnkəj	sɪnkəj	I
sɪnkɪna	nɪ-sɪnkɪna	na-sɪnkɪna	sɪnkɪna	We
sɪnkɪxa	nɪ-sɪnkɪxa	na-sɪnkɪxa	sɪnkɪxa	You,Sg,M
sɪnkɪxi	nɪ-sɪnkɪxi	na-sɪnkɪxi	sɪnkɪxi	You, Sg, F
sɪnkɪxum	nɪ-sɪnkɪxum	na-sɪnkɪxum	sɪnkɪxum	You,Pl, M

sinkixin	ni-sinkixin	na-sinkixin	sinkixin	You, Pl, F
sinkən	ni-sinkən	na-sinkən	sinkən	They, F
sinkom	ni-sinkom	na-sinkom	sinkom	They, M
sinka	ni-sinka	na-sinka	sinka	She
sinku	ni-sinku	na-sinku	sinku	He

As it has been discussed in the sub-sections of metathesis and addition, pronouns of the ʔaʃo argot are formed from Tigrinya pronouns by reordering /nis/ to /sin/ and an extra speech sound /k/. As we can see in the above data, one pronoun of the ʔaʃo argot has different representations. For example, the subject pronoun *sinku* “he”, can also have the meanings of “himself”, which is the reflective pronoun form of the subject pronoun “he”. Therefore, the subject and reflexive pronouns are expressed by the same term (pronoun) in the ʔaʃo argot. From the above data elaborates, we can also understand that object and possessive pronouns are formed through the addition of /ni-/ object marker and /na-/ possessive preposition of Tigrinya respectively into the subject pronouns.

The interrogative pronouns of ʔaʃo argot are derived from *minki* which is formed from Tigrinya word ‘mən’ through vowel changes and addition of /-ki/ and addition of Tigrinya prepositions such as nab “to”, ʔab “at”, ni “for”, and kab “from”. Let us observe the examples listed below.

Tig.	ʔaʃo argot	gloss	Tig.	ʔaʃo argot	gloss
Mən	minki	who	i-mən	niminki	whom
nab-mən	nabminki	to where	kab-mən	kabminki	from where
ʔab-mən	ʔamminki	at where			

As mentioned in the above data, interrogative pronoun of the ʔaʃo argot *minki* “who” is derived from Tigrinya interrogative pronoun mən “who” by adding /ki/ and vowel change. The other interrogative pronouns of the ʔaʃo argot are formed from Tigrinya mən “who” which is deformed to the ʔaʃo argot word *minki* “who” and addition of Tigrinya prepositions.

Adjectives of the *ʔaʃo* argot are derived from Amharic and Tigrinya adjectives through different phonological and morphological deformations. Some examples are stated below:

Tig/Amh.	ʔaʃo argot	gloss	sound changed
nəʈʃ'ʈʃ'	nəʈʃ'ʈʃ'ika	white	Ø→ ka/ ##-
addis	ʔaddiska	new	Ø→ ka/ ##-
and	ʔandika	one	Ø→ ka/ ##-
ʕibud	ʕibud	mad	Ø→r/word medial
mīluʔ	mīlguʔ	full	Ø→g/word medial
t'ik'ur	t'ink'urk'ur	black	CVC→CCVCCVC/##-
kullu	tullu	all	k→t/-##

Based on the above data, the adjectives of the *ʔaʃo* argot are derived from Tigrinya and Amharic adjectives through additions, reduplications, substitutions etc. For instance, *t'ink'urk'ur*, *ʔaddiska*, *ʔandika* and *nəʈʃ'ʈʃ'ika* are derived from Amharic adjectives; *nəʈʃ'ʈʃ'*, *and*, *t'ik'ur* and *addis*. *tullu*, *mīlguʔ* and *ʕibud* are formed from Tigrinya adjectives *kullu*, *mīluʔ* and *ʕibud*.

The morphological or grammatical expressions of the *ʔaʃo* argot are the same with the morphological expressions of Tigrinya like subject, object, possessive, person, gender, number, negative and others affixes. The subject and object markers of the *ʔaʃo* argot and Tigrinya are the same as stated below:

Tig.	ʔaʃo argot	gloss
s'ərif-ə-j-o	səriiddib-ə-j-o	I insulted him
Insult-I-ep-him	Insult-I-ep-him	
s'ərif-u-w-a	səriiddib-u-w-a	he insulted her
Insult-he-ep-her	Insult-he-ep-her	
s'ərif-ən-ʔ-o	səriiddib-ən-ʔ-o	they (F) insulted him
Insult-they (F)-ep-him	Insult-they (F)-ep-him	

As it has been revealed in the above data, the subject markers of the *ʔaʃo* argot such as /-ə/, /-u/, etc are the same with the Tigrinya subject markers. The object markers of the *ʔaʃo* argot like /-o/,

/-a/, etc are also the same with Tigrinya object markers. /j/, /ʔ/ and /w/ are epenthetic consonants in the ʔaʃo argot and Tigrinya.

The person, gender as well as numbers markers of the ʔaʃo argot and Tigrinya are also the same as:

Tig.	ʔaʃo argot	gloss
zəbit'-u	zət't'i-j-u	he hit
zəbit'-a	zət't'i-j-a	she hit
zəbit'-om	zət't'i-j-om	they(M/N) hit
zəbit'-ən	zət't'i-j-ən	they(F) hit
zəbit'-ka	zət't'i-xa	you(SgM) hit
zəbit'-kum	zət't'i-xum	you(M/NPL) hit
zəbit'-kɪn	zət't'ij-ən	you(FPL) hit
zəbit'-na	zət't'ij-na	we hit

As it is indicated in the above data, the person, gender and number markers of the ʔaʃo argot are the same with Tigrinya. But the /k/ is changed to /x/ due to the existence of /i/ vowel in the ʔaʃo argot.

The possessive markers of the ʔaʃo argot are also the same with Tigrinya possessive markers such as /-j/, /-a/, /-u/, /-om/, /-ən/, /-xi/, /-xa/, /xum/ in *menzoj* “my cattle”, *menzoʔa* “her cattle”, *menzoʔu* “his cattle”, *menzoʔom* “their cattle”, *menzoʔən* “their (female) cattle”, *menzoxi* “your(Sg:F) cattle” and *menzoxa* “your (Sg:M) cattle”. /ʔ/ is epenthetic speech sound to separate frequent vowels because frequent vowels are not allowed in the ʔaʃo argot similar to Tigrinya.

/jə-j/, /ʔaj-j/, /kəj-/ are negative marker of the ʔaʃo argot such as *jə-dərnəgəj* “he did not make” and *jə-zaffəjənaj* “we do not have”, *kəj-tigirbit* “(you: Sg: M) no get in”, *ʔaj-təbərgijəna* “(you: Sg: M) do not wake up us” similarly as Tigrinya /ʔaj-n/ and /kəj-/. /ʔaj-n/ is changed to /jə-j/ or /ʔaj-/ in different dialect speakers of Tigrinya.

In addition to this, syntactic structure of the *ʔaʃo* argot is the same with Tigrinya syntax. Phrases as well as sentences of *ʔaʃo* argot are similar with Tigrinya phrases and sentences.

mudən ʃəgə “old man” (<i>ʔaʃo</i> argot)	ʔarəgit sibʔaj “old man” (Tigrinya)
old man	old man

From the above phrases, there are modifier and modified words. The head of the noun phrases are nouns which are found right position in Tigrinya and the *ʔaʃo* argot phrases. For instance, the modified and head word of the noun phrase is the noun *ʃəgə* in the *ʔaʃo* argot phrase. The modified and head word is the noun *sibʔaj* “man” in the Tigrinya phrase. And modifier phrase is also *mudən* the *ʔaʃo* argot phrase. Modifier phrase is *ʔarəgit* “old” in Tigrinya phrase. Therefore, the modifier phrases are found left position in the *ʔaʃo* argot and Tigrinya.

The head position of the verb phrase of the *ʔaʃo* argot is also right position, and the modifiers of the verb are left position as:

ham ʔaboxuna-xa	təlazi	ʔixa
as father-your(SgM)	talkative	is.you(SgM)
“you are too much talkative as your father”		
[VP [PP ham ʔaboxuna-xa]	[AP təlazi]	[V ʔixa]]

From the above phrasal structure of the verb phrase, we can understand that the complement phrase of the verb phrase is adjective phrase *təlazi* “talkative”. Modifier phrase of the verb phrase is also prepositional phrase *ham ʔaboxuna-xa* “as your father” and head of this phrase is verb *ʔixa* “you are”. Similarly, syntactic structure of verb phrase of Tigrinya is the same with *ʔaʃo* argot as follows.

kəm ʔaddiʔ-a	nifufiti ʔijja	“she is clever as her mother”
as mother-her	clever	is.she
[VP [PP kəm ʔadiʔa] [AP nifufiti] [V ʔijja]]		

As stated the phrasal structure of the Tigrinya in the above data, the complement phrase of the verb phrase is adjective phrase *nifusiti*. The modifier phrase of the verb phrase is prepositional phrase *kəm ?adi?ə*, and the head of the phrase is verb *?ijja*. So, the phrase structure of Tigrinya and the ?əfo argot is the same.

The sentence of the ?əfo argot has noun phrase and verb phrase as stated below.

<i>sinkina</i>	<i>wajjitna</i>	“we came” (?əfo argot)	<i>nihna məs’i?na</i>	“we came” (Tigrinya)
we	came.we		“we came.we”.	

[S [NP *sinkina*] [VP *wajjitna*]]

[S [NP *nihna*] [VP *məs’i?na*]]

From the above sentences, we can understand that sentences of the ?əfo argot and Tigrinya contain noun phrases and verb phrases. In the ?əfo argot, the noun phrase and the head is *sinkina* “we” and the verb phrase and the head of the verb phrase is also *wajjitna* “came (we)”. When we see the sentence in Tigrinya, *nihna* “we” is the noun phrase and head of the noun phrase as well as *məs’i?na* “came (we)” is the verb phrase and the head of the verb phrase. Therefore, phrasal structure of Tigrinya sentence and the ?əfo argot are syntactically the same because they use NP +VP sentence structure.

Chapter Five

Summary and Conclusion

5.1. Summary

In this thesis, the researcher mainly discussed social and linguistic aspects of the ?əfo argot. From the social aspects of the ?əfo argot, the researcher stated the name, purpose and simple and complex form of the ?əfo argot. Besides, he described the marriage alliance of ?əfo and non-?əfo groups. Communication and interaction of the ?əfo people and other groups as well as the needed criteria to be members or speakers of the ?əfo argot were examined.

The researcher also analyzed the linguistic features or the formation systems of the ?afo argot. The form change, form and meaning change, use of different semantic aspects, grammatical features and loanwords of the ?afo argot from Tigrinya and Amharic words were described. From the form deformation system of the ?afo argot, the researcher examined the phonological and morphological disguising systems.

The researcher also presented the form and semantic change of the words to construct the ?afo argot words. In addition to this, he described the use of different semantic aspects like semantic load, connotative words, paraphrastic descriptions and instrumental nouns of the ?afo argot. Finally, the researcher dealt with phonological, morphological and syntactic usage of the ?afo argot.

5.2. Conclusion

From the data analyse of this thesis, the social aspects and linguistic features of the ?afo argot were discussed. Based on the discussions made so far, the researcher came up with the following conclusions.

The names of the ?afo and non-?afo groups, the data about the marriage alliance of the ?afo group and the proverb of non-?afo groups which says “?igzabiher ja ?intihaznis wadi x’əfi wat’a jixəwɪn” that means “when God became sad, the son of a priest would be wet’a (?afo)” were described. These all data indicate that there is underestimation between the two groups (?afo and non-?afo). Therefore, the ?afo group has its own secret language might be because of the

underestimation by the main society (non- ?afo group). So, this might be a reason that ?afo group to be self-designated, and to construct one strong group. Besides, the criteria to be member of the ?afo group are: someone should genetically be ?afo; someone should speak ?afo argot, or someone should marry from ?afo group. They all can communicate with one other using their secret language. Although they have differences in fluency and accuracy, they use the ?afo argot if the situation requires them to use it.

The words of the ?afo argot are formed from Tigrinya and Amharic words through form change, form and meaning change, use of different semantic aspects and direct terms of the Tigrinya words. The speakers of the ?afo argot use Tigrinya and Amharic words specifically through phonological and morphological deformation systems.

In the phonological deformation processes, the ?afo argot uses the addition of the individual speech sounds like voiced consonants: /r/, /g/, /m/, /n/, and ejective and voiceless consonants: /t'/ and /t/ rarely into Tigrinya and Amharic words. The addition of cluster of speech sounds or syllables are also included in some words of the ?afo argot. The transposition and addition of the speech sounds of Tigrinya and Amharic words are one way of phonological deformation of the ?afo argot. In addition to this, the ?afo argot words are derived through reduplication of consonants of the words, and reduplications and addition of speech sounds like /n/ usually and /mǝ-/ rarely to the reduplicated words. Substitution of one to one, two to two syllables and individual speech sounds in the Tigrinya and Amharic words are important in the derivation of the ?afo argot words. Substitution of individual or group of speech sounds also come in line with metathesis, addition and deletion processes to construct the ?afo argot words from Tigrinya words. Moreover, the ?afo argot uses deletion, deletion and addition, vowel deformation and degemination of the speech sounds of Tigrinya and Amharic words.

Morphological deformation is also used in the ?afo argot word formations. Especially, Tigrinya affixes and some Amharic affixes such as /-ka/, /-ma/, /-na/, /-ki/, /-o/ suffixes mainly and /mə-/ prefix are used in the derivation or making disguise speech of the ?afo argot. In the ?afo argot, there are words, which are assumed that their derivation has come from onomatopoeic words and the compound verbs of the Tigrinya. It is also used form and meaning change of the Tigrinya and Amharic words. Semantic change and substitution, deletion, degemintation and addition of the speech sounds of the words are very useful in the deformations of the ?afo argot words.

The ?afo argot has shortage of expressions. To solve the inadequate expressions, the ?afo argot speakers use different semantic aspects. From these semantic aspects, semantic load is important in solving the inadequate terms by relating things in their color, manner, situation, size and signifying them by a single term. Furthermore, the ?afo argot uses connotative and denotative meanings of the words, and naming whole and parts similarly. Instrumental nouns and paraphrastic descriptions are also basic in solving the inadequate expressions of the ?afo argot.

The phonological and syntactic structures as well as morphological expressions of the ?afo argot are the same with Tigrinya phonological and syntactic structure as well as morphological expressions.

This thesis and the Leslua's (1952) article have similarity in some findings of the word etymologies of the argots. Although the Azmari argot of Tigrinya speakers (?afo) and the Azmari argot of Amharic speakers (Enzata) live in different regions, they have some similarities in word meanings and forms with some differences in deformation systems. This similarity might have taken place because the speakers of the two argots have similar profession in playing *tj'ira*, and they are also the Semitic language group (Tigrinya and Amharic) speakers. The language contact between the two argots might also be a reason for their similarity because of the mobility of the speakers. Hence, from this similarity we can also realize that the speakers of the two argots were the speakers of one secret language but after long time they might become to live in different areas and speakers of their own variety of secret language.

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Appendix I

Interview Guide Questions

1. What is ?afo people who speak Tigrinya called?
 - A. In your argot, B. in Tigrinya C. in Amharic or D. in others language
2. What is non-?afo groups who speak Tigrinya called in your argot?
3. With whom do you make your marriage alliance?
 - A. if your answer is “with other groups”, how do you accept making marriage alliance with others?
 - B. if your answer is “with our group”, why?”
4. Do you invite non-?afo group in your ceremonies (marriage, baptizing, funeral ...)?

Yes No

 - a. If your answer is “no”, why?
 - b. If your answer is “yes”, how do you communicate with them?
5. What language(s) do you speak?
6. Which language do you use when you are marketing, singing, conversation and others,
7. How do you communicate when you are with your group members?
8. Can all group of ?afo communicate in lankʷəŋna or ?afo argot?

13. □□□□ □□□□□□ □□ □□?

14. □□□□ □□□□ □□ □□□□ □□ □□ □□ □□□□ □□□□ □□□□ □□□□?

15. □□□□ □□□□ □□□□ □□□□ □□□□ □□ □□□□ □□□□ □□□□□?

16. □□ □□□□ □□□□ □□□ □□ □□□□□?

17. □□ □□□□ □□□□ □□□ □□ □□□□□?

18. □□ □□□□ □□□□ □□□□ □□□ □□□□□?

Appendix III Words

't'eff' *t'ifna*

A person who knows zar *t'ax'ari zirna*

Abdomen *matf'tf'o*

Afraid *sax'unam, farnaħ*

All *tullu*

Amharic *?amark^wa*

Appearance *malkimma*

At where *?amminki*

Azmari man *?afo*

Baby *tf'antf'o*

Bad smell *fark'ax'i*

Bad, wicked *t'ək^wi*

Baptism *kiristintin*

Basket of grain *mə?ətfəji x'irtf'in*

Basket work disc *səfədimmā*

Beater *zət't'awit*

Beautiful *gərtə*

Become grey hair *nətf'tf'imma*

Begging *wələza*

Big eater *gurama, wurama*

Big eater *x'asiji, basiji*

Big, large, old, tall and heavy *mudən*

Birr *gizna*

Black *t'ink'urk'ur*

Blacksmith *t'isso*

Body, soul *nəbsimma*

Boiling tool *məfəlgəħi*

Bride *gullas*

Bridegroom *gullas*

Broad *gərfiħ*

Buda *bolox*

Bush *x'ax'ma*

Butter *?ank'at'o*

Carpet *mənt'əfimma*

Carpet, rug, mat *wis'fa*

Cattle *menzo*

Chickpea *x'irumbif*

Clay pot *ləmbo*

Cloth *x'oftə*

Cloud, fog, rain *wətfəfo*

Coffee pot *ǧəbinbin*

Coffee pot *məfəlgəħi t'ink'urk'ur*

Coffee *t'ink'urk'ur*

Darkness *ǧərar*

Day, time, date *k'ənnimma*

Delicious *x'urmuz*

Desert *bərnəxa*

Devil, satan *sijt'int'in*

Dirty *?afərka*

Dog *xunano*

Donkey *xurif*

Ear *ǧərimma*

Egg *na-bakko*

Eight <i>simintika</i>		Green pepper <i>guŋinguŋ</i>
Enemy <i>t'algaʔi</i>		Griddle, disc of clay in which bread is made
Enjera <i>məx'ofo</i>		<i>Məfolo</i>
Envious <i>t'ək^wi</i>		Guest <i>ʔingiddimma</i>
Evening <i>wəlmi</i>		Gun, <i>x'ax'ma</i>
Extra ordinary people <i>ʔi'iwntʔiw</i>		Hair <i>ʔi'ingurgur</i>
Eye <i>ʔammoma</i>		Hand <i>ʔi'ɔɔimma</i>
Face <i>fitimma</i>		Handsome <i>gərtə</i>
Farted <i>fənzəjə</i>		Harmless or innocent <i>ləŋŋi</i>
Feast or banquet in commemoration of the dead relative <i>ʔulota</i>		He <i>sinku</i>
Final, end <i>məfəriɔɔaʔta</i>		He heard <i>sənkəʔə</i>
Finger, arm <i>ʔi'ɔɔimma</i>		He is tired <i>dərkəmə</i>
Fire <i>ʔifna</i>	Fish	He killed <i>x'əʔʔiwu</i>
<i>na-watʔfo</i>		He adds <i>dəkkəjə</i>
Five <i>ʔamsitka</i>		He answer <i>məlgəsə</i>
Flat bread <i>labiŋŋa</i>		He ate <i>baʔiju</i>
Foolish <i>ləŋŋi</i>		He beats <i>zət't'əwə</i>
Foot, finger, road <i>məddaməja</i>	Four	He became sad <i>ħarzinu</i>
<i>ʔaratka</i>		He brings <i>wəsgədə</i>
Friend <i>məŋrəxurux</i>		He calls <i>s'ərwəŋə</i>
From where <i>kabminki</i>		He closed <i>ʔart'iwu</i>
Full <i>t'iffi</i> ,		He comes <i>wajjətə</i>
Full, completed <i>milguʔ</i>		He cried <i>wəʔʔiju</i>
Gentile organ of female <i>sitto</i>		He dislikes <i>t'algəʔə</i>
Gentile organ of male <i>zallo</i>		He drank <i>faʔʔiju</i>
Give me <i>ləkkiwəni</i>		He failed down <i>wərdix'u</i>
Goat <i>t'int'o</i>		He fears <i>fərnəhə</i>
God <i>ʔirgan or ʔargan</i>		He fills <i>məlgəʔə</i>
Good <i>gərtə</i>		He fought with <i>təbərəʔisu</i>
Goods, instruments <i>g^wazimma</i>		He got in <i>gərbitu</i>
Gourd <i>k'ilink'il</i>		He got out <i>wərt'izu</i>
Grain <i>x'ir ʔi'n</i>		He greeted <i>sərʔimu</i>
Grasped, caught <i>ʔatʔiju</i>		He greets <i>təgənəʔʔəjə</i>
Green (grain) <i>maŋŋingo</i>		He has <i>zaʔiwo</i>
		He imprisoned <i>x^wax'ədə</i>
		He insulted <i>səriiddəbə</i>
		He intoxicated <i>wəkkərə</i>

He keep (sth) *t'ərbəx'ə*
 He left *x'aziju*
 He liked/loved *wəriddədə*
 He opened *xərfitu*
 He passed the day *wəlʕit'u*
 He passed *ħalfət'ə*
 He ploughs *ħarnəsə*
 He pushed *dərʕiʔu*
 He received *tələbbinu*
 He sent *sərdidu*
 He sent away *səriddədə*
 He sings *wəfənə*
 He slaughtered, broke *ʕək^wəjjə*
 He slept *təkkojə*
 He wants *dəlgəjə*
 He was full, he was satiated *t'obbənə*
 He was ill *təʕəddiwu*
 He wept *nərbiʕu*
 Head *təkko*
 Hen *bakko*
 Hidden *t'irʕuʔ*
 Holy water *wəʕʕfo*
 Honey *ʔaxʕa*
 Horse *ʔaxəna*
 House *məga*
 House wood and mud *ħidimdim*
 How many *kəndminki*
 Hyena *gurama, wurama*
 I could not do it *ʔajʕiʔloj*
 I did not get *sərʕinə*
 I *ʕinkəj*
 Ice *dəngob*
 Important *t'ərx'ami*
 It became much *bərzihu*
 It becomes cheapest cost *wərdix'u*
 It becomes solid *dərnəx'ə*
 It becomes thinnest flour *dərkəmə*
 It becomes, happened *təjnu*
 It is boiled *fəlgəħə*

It is disappeared *t'ərfəʔə*
 It looks like *məsgələ*
 It was arrived *bərt'ihu*
 Job *sirinsir*
 Knew *t'ax'ərə*
 Lair *ʕ'ənnam*
 Language *lank^wəjja*
 Later *tala*
 leather *x'urumbit*
 Let god kill you *ʔargan jibərgixa*
 Let us break *nigobət*
 Let us sit down *nigobət*
 Linseed *təlimbo*
 Local beer *dəʕʕfo*
 Lower, under *tətmif*
 Mad *ʕərbud*
 Made *dərnəgə*
 Magician *t'ax'ari*
 Man *ʕəgə*
 Market *ləbəja*
 Marriage *gullas*
 Meat *ʔabʕ'a*
 Milk jug *məʔəʕəj ʔarfat'o*
 Money, animal *lənzəb*
 Mother in law *ħimitmit*
 Mouse *ʔajt'emma*
 Mouth *ʔafoma*
 Muslim *kənəb*
 My friend *məʕrəxuruxəj*
 My lover *wəriddədjə*
 My relative *ʔaltinaj*
 Name *ʕimkina*
 Narrow *s'ərbib*
 Neck *ʔangətamma*
 New *ʔaddiska*
 Night *ʕərar*

Non?aso man *bugunə*
 Oky *gara*
 One *ʔandika*
 One stringed violin *tinkab*
 Only *biʔʔimma*
 Outside *dəʔʔimma*
 pan cake *məx'is'*
 Pan *wəʔʔimma*
 Paper *nəʔʔimma*
 Parchment *nəʔʔimma*
 Pea *məʔitro*
 Person *səwna*
 Pharyngeal, shoulder *ʔangəʔimma*
 Place, country *dirim*
 Playing *ləwəta, ʔ'ərwəta*
 Please *x'azi*
 Poem *girtim*
 Porridge(of wheat) *lənfo*
 Pouch *ʔ'ənnə*
 Pregnant *ʔirguzimma*
 Prostitution *xunano*
 Rain *wəʔʔo*
 Red *k'əjimma*
 Red pepper *ʔatərk^waf*
 Religious ceremony *mihbirbir*
 Residential *wəʔər*
 Rich, lord *galtʔa*
 Roasted *ʔələjə*
 Roasted maize *ʔolo*
 Rural people, villagers *baʔgo*
 Salt *ʔamutʔ'*
 Sauce *ʔamut', mawat'o*
 Sediment in beer or alcohol *həttə*
 Seven *səbatka*
 She bought *gərziʔa*

She called *s'ərwiʔa*
 She gave birth *wəlgida*
 She praise in poem *ʔafawija*
 She *sinka*
 She waited *t'ərniha*
 She was washed *təhart'iba*
 Sheep *bənəbən*
 Shepherd *t'ərbax'i*
 Singing *wəʔəna*
 Six *sidistika*
 Slaughter them *ʔək^wijjom*
 Slave *gonno*
 Sleep *təkkojə*
 Small millet *dingussina, dinguffiguf*
 Small *mənif*
 Smelt *ʔərk'əx'ə*
 Snack, fly, ant *x'əʔtam*
 Soil, earth *ʔafərka*
 Sorghum *səmo*
 Speaking *tələza*
 Steel *k'urunk'ur*
 Stone *dəngob*
 Stood up *ləjmu*
 Suitcase *məʔəʔʔi x'oftə*
 Sweeper *mədərngi x'irʔ'in*
 Tear *nirbiʔat*
 Teeth *t'irsimma*
 Ten *wəʔir*
 There is *zəʔəjə*
 They have discussed *ʔəwaraguʔu ʔələwu*
 They shopped *ʔərik'k'it'om*
 They was finished with each other
təʔərəʔʔimma
 They: f *sinkən*
 They:m/n *sinkom*
 Thief *ləwwasi*
 Thin *t'əʔərma*

Three *səwostiika*
 Threshing ground *məzət't'əwi x'ərtf'in*
 To where *nabminki*
 Toga(white cotton loose garment) *kutinkut*
 Tomorrow *təngi*
 Town *kīimtim*
 Trouser *sənfəf*
 Two *gitti*
 Type of 'tella' *guŋiŋiŋ*
 Type of home *dīsna*
 Type of t'əlla *dix'undux'*
 Type of tella *s'irins'ir*
 Ugly *firk^wi*
 Upper *lalmif*
 Urine *watfjo*
 Vegetable *hīmlto*
 Vegetable, fruit *na-ləbəja libfə*
 Very large pitcher used in making beer *ləngi*
 Waked up *təbərgəjə*
 Wall *dəngob*
 Watch *gəffənə*
 water container *Kudunkud*
 Water *watfjo*
 We did not feel comfort *xərfiʔuna*
 We divorced/untied *fərtihna*
 We hauled *k'ərdihna*
 We *sīnkina*
 Well matured physically girl *həjmo*
 What did you happen *tatinka*
 Wheat *t'ada*
 White *nətf'f'ika*
 White *nətf'f'imma*
 Who *minki*
 Whom *nīminki*
 Wicked *t'ək^wi*
 Wood, tree *x'ax'ma*
 Wrapping *t'əfərimma*

Yoghurt *ringiʔgiʔ*
 You.pl *sīnkixum*
 You: sg: f *sīnkixi*
 You: sg: m *sīnkixa*
 Youngster, strong *ləwəz, ləwət*
 Your house *məgaxa*
 Your wife *məgaxa*
 Zar *zīrna*
 Zar *ʔaltina*
 Zebra *xurif*
 ʔaʃo argot *k^wank^wəʃna, lank^wəʃna*
 ʔaʃo speech *ʔaʃo tələza*

Appendix IV Text

Discussion among the researcher and Ato Tesfay's children in ?afo argot

Re = Researcher, sp 1= Werkey, sp2 =, sp3 = bride of the home, sp4= Belay (informants), and (Tig.)= the sentence or the word is in Tigrinya

Re = sinkəj k^wank^wəŋŋa jɪtʃtʃi?il ?ijjə “I can speak in k^wank^wəŋŋa (azmari argot)

I k^wank^wəŋŋa imp.can is.I

Sp1= boman “yes”

sp2= baŋgo t'ax'iruwo

Villager, non-azamri know.he.it

“non-azmari or villager is able to speak the argot”

Re= sinkəj ?afo ?ijjə “I am ?afo man”

I ?afo is.I

Sp2= jətənkaj “you did not”

Sp1= ?afo dixə “do you ?afo man”

?afo intr. You(SgM)

Re=?iwwə “yes” (Tig.)

Sp3= tinkab tizit't'uw?

ʈʼɪra hit “do you play ʈʼɪra ”

Res= ʔatʈʈiʔloj

neg. can.I “ I can not”

sp1= ʔaʃo tɛjnu tinkab zɛjɪʈʈiʔil ʔallo ʔijju

ʔaʃo being ʈʼɪra neg.can. there is is.he

“there is ʔaʃo person who can not play ʈʼɪra ”

Sp2= sinku tinkab ʔajɪʈʈiʔli

he ʈʼɪra neg.can.he

he can not play ʈʼɪra

sp3= suxʼʔilka nab(Tig.) ʔafomaxa ʔijju

only to mouth. Your(SgM) is.he

“he only ate that he is unable to work”

Sp1= ha..ha..ha... (laughing)

Res= suxʼʔilka (Tig.) tɪbafi “you only eat”

Only imp.eat.you(SgM)

Sp1.sp2 and sp3= mɛgobɛti ʔawwɪjɪtɛlu “bring a chair for him”

Seating tool bring.you(SgM).him

Res.= mɛgobɛti diju zɪbbəhal

mɛgobɛti int.it imp.call.it “is it called mɛgobɛti”

sp2= sinku mɪnki ʔijju?

That(M) what is.it.(M) “what is that?”

Res.= sinka caset ʔijja

this(F) cassette is.it(F) “ it is a cassette”

Res.= mɪnki sɪrɪnsɪr tɪrɪnɪh?

What job imp.work.you(SgM)

“What job do you have?”

Sp2= mɛhrəs jɪhɪrnɪs

Farming imp. Plough. “ I work farming”

Sp2= bɛjɪnɛj dijjɛ(Tig.) zɪtalɛz?

Only int.I imp.speak. I “do only I speak”

Sp1.sp2. sp3= tulluxum tɛtalɛzu

All.you(Pl) speak “speak all of you”

Res.= nɛbɛrɛjanɛbɛrɛ tɪtʼaxʼru do?

Story imp.know.you(Pl) “do you know?”

Sp2= ʔajɪʈʈiʔli “I do not know”

Sp1= ʈʼaʔaluwo “(you.Pl) know it”

Res.= mənis təllizu

Little speak.you.Pl. “speak little”

Sp3=bitigrɨŋŋa ʔijju zixʔil (Tig.)

In. Tigrinya is.he imp.can.he “he can narrate in tigrinya”

Sp1= nəbərəjanəbərə bitigrɨŋŋa mibər bik’wank’wəŋŋa jəbbillun (Tig.)

Story in.tigrinya however in.k’wank’wəŋŋa neg.have.it

“story can be told in tigrinya rather than k’wank’wəŋŋa”

Res.= siminkaxa minki ʔijju

Name.you.SgM who is “ what is your name?”

Sp2=s’ilaləj “Tsilaley”

Res= sinkuxas “what about you”

Sp1=sinkəj wərk’əj

I Werk’ey “ I am Werkey”

Res.= mudən dixa

elder int.you(SgM) “ are you elder brother”

Sp1= mənis

Declaration

I, the under signed, declare that this thesis is my own original work. To the best of my knowledge, it has not been presented for a degree in any university, and all resources of the materials have been dully acknowledged.

Name _____

Signature _____

Place _____

Date of submission _____