

Impacts of Oromo Language Standardization on Guji Dialect

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ABSTRACT

The main purpose of the study was to assess the ‘**Impact of Oromo language standardization on Guji dialect**’. To conduct the study, mixed research approach was applied. Depth interview, FGD, document analysis and open-ended and close - ended questionnaires were used as tools for data collection from target population of the study. From sampling techniques, non-probability sampling method was used to select sample of the study. Accordingly, purposive sampling was applied in this research in order to select target population of the study from whole population. The samples of the study were some instructors, high school teachers who teach Oromo language, experts who work in different Oromia offices and few famous people from Guji community. In the study, all participants were selected purposively believing that they are very crucial to give appropriate information for this research. Data were analyzed using both quantitative and qualitative methods of data analysis. The close-ended data were analyzed by frequency counting and percentage quantitatively, while qualitative data like interview, FGD, document analysis and Open-ended questionnaire analyzed qualitatively. Although more than three data gathering tools applied, all the data were analyzed thematically at the same time in order to triangulate them. The findings of the study revealed that Oromo language standardization has impact on unselected dialects in general and on Guji dialect in particular. Therefore, it was recommended that due attention should better if given to include some essential words from each dialect of Oromo language

Key words: Guji dialect, Impacts, Oromo language, Standardization

1. Introduction

Oromo language, which is a one of Ethiopian languages, has eight famous dialects that spoken by Oromo people, and Guji is one of tribes of Oromo nation who speak Oromo language. The division of these dialects variation within this language is based on its geographic locations. Although this language is one of the widely used language of Ethiopia, it remains being used as oral language for several centuries. The system of government policy that had been exercised in Ethiopia was set as the main cause of many languages annihilation (i.e. the mono language policy of Ethiopia in which more than 80 languages are spoken was hardened the existence of other Ethiopian languages except Amharic language). As the time went by, the

Dergue government was overthrown by transitional government which gave the path for other Ethiopian languages to exercise their free right of development.

Starting from downfall of military junta in 1991, all Ethiopian nations and nationalities have got opportunity to revitalize, conserve and develop their own language. Using the given chance, Oromo elites were run to make Oromo language the language of academic communication i.e. they have strived to transit this language from being only oral language to written language. During the process of this transitional period, certain Oromo language vocabularies were searched from different dialects in order to include it in written communication. However, the then material writers did not include words from all dialects of Oromo language. Specifically, dialects like Guji dialect, Raayyaa and Wollo are rarely included in written communication. As the result of this, some research findings revealed that there are impacts on Oromo language standardization and development in general, and there is impact on unselected dialects speakers on the behalf of their socio-cultural and economic in particular.

As well, since past Ethiopian government system jeopardized almost all, if not all, the nations and nationalities of Ethiopian people except Amara people, only very few in number of Oromo men and women got a chance of getting modern education. As a result of this, almost all Ethiopian people in general and Oromo people in particular remained under shadow of ignorance and under umbrella of illiteracy for long period of time. This long term over-domination of one nation upon many nations and nationalities created sprit of hopelessness and almost all of them resigned using their language, custom, culture and religion and forced to adopt Amarization – one language, one religion, one culture and others which totally unthinkable for the county within which more than 80 languages are spoken. Thus, this action caused all nations and nationalities of Ethiopia to raise against dictatorial governing system of Dergue government which led it to fell down in 1991.

After downfall of Dergue government, the new government Ethiopian Ministry of Education (MoE, 1994) stated that all Ethiopian nations and nationalities have right to revitalize, use and develop their languages. As it was noticed under article 5 of Ethiopia code of conduct, all Ethiopian languages are equal and they should exercise their free right. Based on this proclamation, Oromo language has got a chance to be used widely in Oromia and in its neighbors as well. In addition to this, this language has got a chance to be used as a medium of instruction in primary schools and in teachers training college in Oromia. Besides, Oromo language has been given as subject at high school and preparatory level since 2002, and it has currently been taught at higher institutions in degree, master and Ph.D. program.

As indicated in general introduction part, Oromo language has eight dialects which spoken by Oromo people. Among these dialects, Guji dialect is dialect used by Guji Oromo at southern part of Oromia. During the few elites from Oromo men and women run to codify and maintain Oromo language to transform it from oral to written language, all dialects, roughly were considered to be included into written language without due

emphasis. However, due to the fact that there were no deep investigation done to include rich vocabularies from each dialect of Oromo language, it needs further investigation to enhance and revitalize the development and standardization of this language.

If the given language has enough vocabulary, it can be easily developed. According to (Gliech and Wolff, 1991: 69), "Language cannot be limited to just one region or one period of time. It must be the synthesis of the natural varieties of dialects." Therefore, during writing and codifying of the language care should be given in order to give equal opportunity and chance for each dialect. Language has to have relevant lexis to grow as much as intended and to become the standard language. Collecting vocabularies from diverse vernaculars is very vital to enrich the progress and development of a certain language. If it is not surveyed as much as needed, it must have negative effect on dialects of certain clans in particular and on development of the language in general within the speech community. Supporting this view Wardhaugh (2006:34) states that "...choosing one vernacular as a norm means favoring those who speak variety, and it may reduce other variabilities and possible competing norms, and those who use those varieties." So, if one language is rich enough with many vernacular varieties, it can be developed easily than those languages who favor only one vernacular.

Although lexeme standardization is very essential for development of one language, necessary care should be given to compile the vocabularies of that language from each dialect. This is because it is crucial for one language to have rich vocabularies that can represent one another or which have the similar meaning. Having such like vocabulary play prominent role to enhance language development in different forms of written materials like students' textbooks, magazines, novels, pamphlets, fictions and others people use different language form i.e. they use formal and informal form of the language. Especially in literally texts writers want to use jargon/informal word related to their field. Therefore, in order to alleviate the problem resulted from the lack of word selection, using different variety that compiled from different dialects are very imperative. Fishman (1970:30) observed that "*one speech variety (the standard) is usually associated with status, high culture, and aspiration towards social mobility, while the second variety (non-standard) is typically connected with solidarity, friendship, and intimacy with a low status group.*" This tends to create an inferiority complex among the low status speakers. It also forces parents who wish for children to be recognized by the dominant group to fit in to the standard, possibly neglecting the language and culture they were born into.

In order to tackle the inferiority of one dialect and over dominance of others, which may cause social instability and recognition among speakers of one language, it seems better to collect vocabularies from each dialect. However, due to the fact that during the selection and codification of Oromo language standardization process, it seems that as far as my understanding concerned, deep investigation was not made to include essential and formal words/vocabularies from each dialect. Some studies directed on this area also witness this fact. Since Oromo language is on its way to development and standardization, it needs further

investigation to sort out the impact of selected dialects on unselected dialects in general, and on Guji Oromo dialect in particular.

1.1. The Guji People and their physical geography

The Guji people are one of Oromo tribes who have their own sustainable and original socio-political, cultural and religion which make them unique or identify other Oromo clans. In their ways of life as well as in their language variety of Guji Oromo, when compared with other Oromo language dialects, seem to be unique from other Oromo language varieties with the exception of the Borana Oromo. With Borana Oromo, they share some ways of life and speak a relatively similar dialect with only different in accent may be because of geographical contact (Van de Loo 1991). The Guji live in a large territory in South Ethiopia, approximately 300km South of Addis Ababa. The area is neighboring with Wolayta and Gamo-Gofa in the west, Sidama and Gedeo in the north, Borana in the south, and Bale and Arsi in the East. So, the Guji are neighbors with Borana, the Wolayta, and the Gamo, the Gedeo, the Sidama, the Arsi and the Bale people.

Geographically, the residence area of the Guji society is situated approximately between 4°30"-6°38" North of Latitude and 36°43"-41°40" East Longitude. Excluding the 3 Guji tribes locked between other ethnic groups (Ottu, Shello and Wessitu), the current settlement area of 4 broad tribes (Uraga, Maatti, Hokku and Aladdu, also known as the Southern Guji) is estimated to be more than 30,000km²

Guji Oromo speak aboriginal Oromo language by using their dialect. They practice both pastoral and agriculture i.e. agro-pastoral based living style. The number of Guji Oromo estimated to be 1.6 million, and among these population about 90 percent of them are living in rural area, whereas the remain percent live urban. Their area occupies very fertile land and full of many natural resources such as gold, tantalum, ceramic, emerald and others. Guji pastoralists breed cattle, camel, goat, sheep, horse and mule, whereas its farmer plants both food crops and cash crops like wheat, sorghum, teff, maize etc., and coffee and tobacco respectively (Jalata, 2009).

Currently, Guji has two zones - East and West Guji zones. Although there are some ethnic groups who dwell in Guji zones, but the number of Guji Oromo is very high. According to the Census of 2007 conducted by the Central Statistical Agency of Ethiopia (CSA), the East Guji Zone has a total population of 1,389,800, of whom 702,580 are men and 687,220 women; with an area of 18,577.05 square kilometers. Without including the western Guji zone, the Eastern Guji zone has a population density of 74.81 km². From which 129,852 or 14.31% of them are urban dwellers, another 5,315 or 0.38% are pastoralists. A total of 269,440 households were counted in this Zone, which results in an average of 5.16 persons to a household, and 258,540 housing units. The four largest ethnic groups reported in Guji were (78.57%) Oromo, (2.59%) Amhara, (14.33%) Gedeo, and (1.59%) Somali, whereas all other ethnic groups are about 2.92% of the total population.

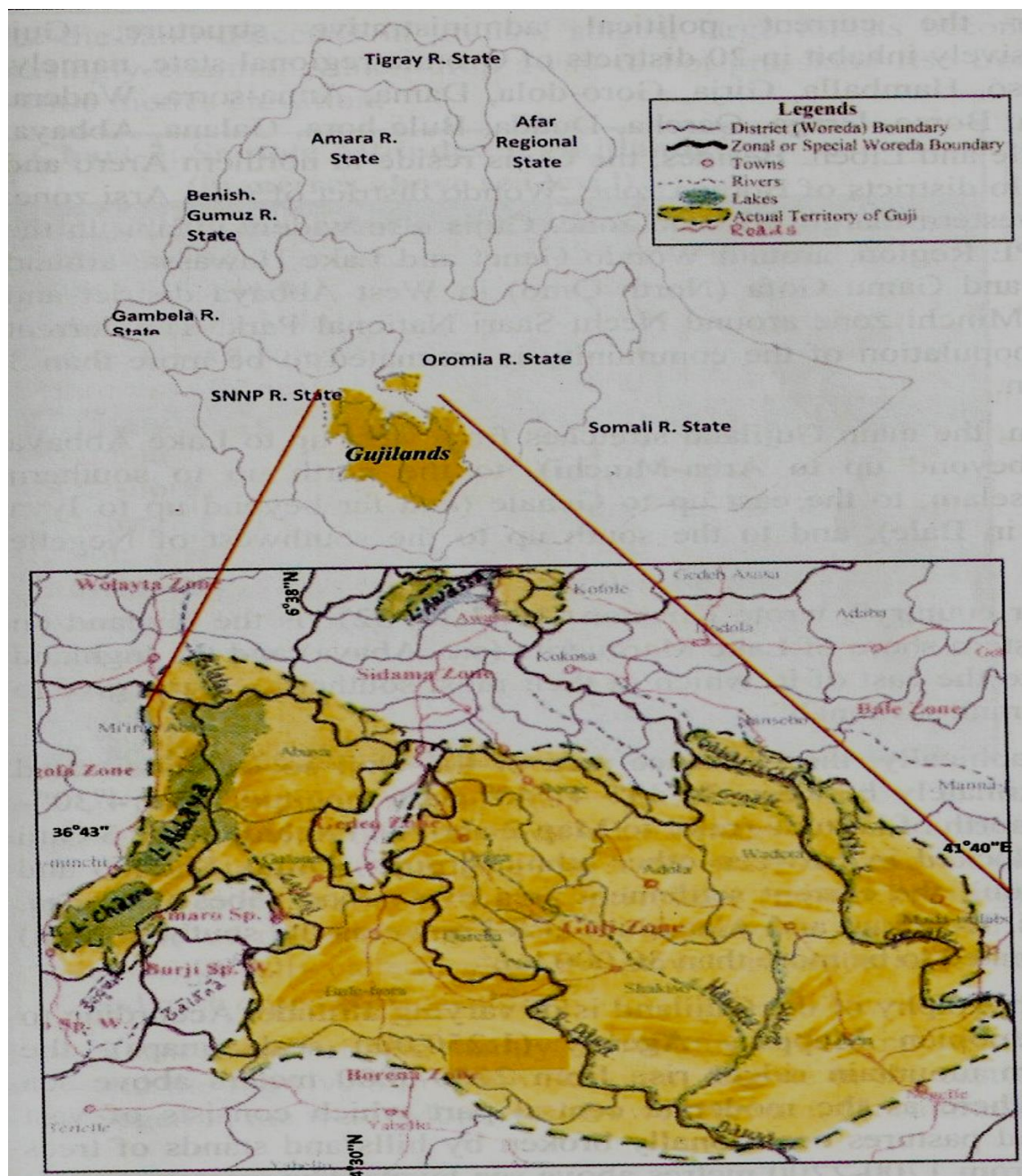


Figure 4. Guji settlement in southern part of Ethiopia (Jemjem 2011:55)

The Guji also moved into neighboring areas which are occupied by other ethnic groups. Some of them live mixed with the Gedeo and Sidama people other live with the Borana people in Borana dominated areas. Under the governmental systems of the former rules, the society settled in almost all Awrajas and Woredas in Sidama region in Fesehagenet, Bule, Gedeo, Yirgachaffe and Wonago Woredas, to the Northeastern part of the Lake Chamo and East of Lake Abbaya bordering Kore down to the Segen and Galana valleys reaching to Burji, and Arero Awraja. In Sidama Awraja, they live in Shebedino Woreda touching Bedesa Woreda to Bilate in Wolayta Awraja. A significant population of Guji also resides in Gamo and Gardula Awrajas of the previous Gamogofa province. They also live in Hageresalam and Haroressa Woreda and an engulfed group in Malgie-Wondo, in Awasa Woreda. Outside the Sidama province Guji also live in the Eastern part of Bale in Bedire and Oborso Woreda in Dallo Awraja up to Nansabo Woreda in Genale Awraja.

Currently, Guji inhabits 25 districts of Oromia Regional State, namely, Bore, Adola, Uraga, Shakiso, Girja, Nagelle, Wadera, Liben, Goro-Dola, Dama, Sabba Boru, Anna-Sorra and Gumi Eldallo are districts in East Guji zone. Bule – Hora, Hamballa, Abbaya, Galana, Kercha, Dudda-Dawa, Melka-Sodda, Suro Barguda, Birbisa Kojo'a and Toore. Besides, the Guji resides in Northern Arero and Yabello districts of Borena Zone. Guji also widely dwells in the Southern Nation Nationalities and People region around Wondo Genet and Lake Hawasa, around Dilla and Gamu Gofa (Northern Omo) in West Abbaya district and Arba Minch zone around Nechi Sari National park, (Jemjem, 2011).

The current total population of the Guji community is estimated to be about more than 6 million. In sum, the main Guji land stretches from North up to Southern Hagereselam to the West up to lake Abbaya beyond up to Arba Minch and to the East up to Genale and far beyond up to Iyya River in Bale. The Guji people are unique not only in their own dialect but also in social and cultural practices. They have long relatively independent and equality of a strong and institutionalized social value. They have preserved the Gada system which is still very active practice in their culture. Guji's strong and organized Gada administrative system made them united and conservative in culture and their language (Jemjem, 2011).

2. Research Methodology

Under this part of the study, the research design, participants of the study, the method of data gathering tools, sample and sapling methods, instruments applied for data gathering and data gathering procedures and data analysis method are discussed in brief as follows.

2.1. Research Design

Under this research, the researcher uses mixed research approach. However, since close- ended and open-ended questionnaires are employed for only one objective of this research, it mostly bend/incline to qualitative research approach. Therefore, the research paradigm applied in this research is pragmatism ground theory. This world view helps the researcher to work on actual research problem understudy, and it makes researcher to use multiple methods when considerate a research problem (Creswell, 2009). In order to reduce or minimize the problem caused by shortage of data gathering instruments, it is the most preferable to use multiple data gathering tools. The researchers may increase the validity and reliability of their research findings by using multiple methods of data gathering instruments rather than using single method (Patton, 2002).

Therefore, the researcher collected data by using both qualitative and quantitative data via interview, Focus group discussion (FGD), document analysis and close – ended and open – ended questionnaires. On the behalf of questionnaires close-ended and open-ended questions were administrated for selected target population of the study. Besides, qualitative data gathering tools like depth interview, Focus Group Discussion (FGD) and

document analysis were employed as primary data gathering methods of this research. These tools deliberated as the means for increasing the validity and the reliability of the data and/or for strengthen the result of the study. Although the questionnaires – both close type and open one are used, most of the research questions were answered by interview, FGD and document analysis. For this reason, only qualitative methods were mainly emphasized, and the data from quantitative simply used to consolidate the answer of objective one research questions. The main purpose of using multiple methods is to escape from shortage of incomplete answers by informants. If the one question is not get responded or slightly answered, it may effectively answered in other methods. In addition to this, using three or more methods of data gathering tools are very essential to triangulate the data, which strengthen the validity and reliability of the research, and as the result of this, research questions cannot be left without being answered (Patton, 2002; Sarantakos, 1998).

3. Results and Discussion

Under this part, the results of data collected from target population via both close – ended and open-ended questionnaire, depth interview, Focus Group Discussion (FGD), and document analysis were analyzed thematically. The researcher has applied Likert scale for close - ended questionnaire to get the opinion of target population. Likert scale is one method of data gathering tool for descriptive research in order to get the opinion from research participants (Saran Tacos, 1998). Therefore, all data which collected on “*Impacts of Oromo Language Standardization Process on Guji Oromo Dialect*” were triangulated and thematically analyzed as follows.

NB: 1= strongly disagree 2= disagree 3= undecided 4= agree 5= strongly agree

Table 3.1: Description of Likert scale questionnaire by frequency and percentage

No	Items	SDA		DA		UN		A		SA		Total	
		f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
1	In Oromo written language all dialects are equally included	60	50	20	16.6	-	-	30	25	10	8.33	120	100
2	Selected dialect has no any impacts on Guji dialect	100	83.3	20	16.6	-	-	-	-	-	-	120	100
3	Selected dialect has several impacts on Guji dialect	10	8.33	-	-	-	-	80	66.6	30	25	120	100

4	In Oromo written language, only few dialects are included	-	-	-	-	5	4	110	91.66	5	4.1	120	100
5	Selecting one dialect and using it as standard dialect has great value for development of a language	60	50	30	25	-	-	15	12.5	15	12.5	120	100

NB: SDA- Strongly Disagree, DA = Disagree, UN = Undecided, A = Agree, SA = Strongly Agree

3.1 The Impact of Oromo Language Standardization Process on Guji dialect

Table one item one in which informants asked to give their opinion on whether all dialects are equally included in Oromo written language or not, 60 (50%) of informants expressed their strong disagreement and 20 (16.6%) of respondents expressed their disagreement. Thus, the total number of informants who opposed the opinion of item one are 80 (66.6%) informants. But, 30 (25%) participants and 10 (8.33%) of them expressed their strong agreement and agreement respectively. This means, out of 120 informants, 80 of them did not agree with item one, whereas 40 (35.33%) of them agreed with it. In addition to this, the result from interview which made with selected informants almost all, if not all, depicts strong disagreement with item one. **Interviewee A**, for example expressed his idea on this item saying, “*In process of Oromo language development, all dialects in it was not included. Due to the fact that Oromo people are the largest people in Ethiopia, it has many dialects. For example, Tulama, Macha, Borana, Raayyaa, Aseeboo, Ittuu, Guji, Arsi, Baale etc. Among these Oromo dialects, Macha and Tulama have used dominantly.*” Besides, this interviewee expressed his opinion as this has direct impact on socio-economic, culture and rituals of the community which their dialects are not selected, and it has also direct and/or indirect impact on both development and standardization of the language. In addition, the result from FGD reveals that there were some problems during the selection, codification and application of Oromo language dialects in written communication. Intensifying this idea one participant denoted that:

Related with the impact of selected dialect on unselected one, the issue of standardization is very complex thing, and it is very difficult. As I have tried to raise, Oromo language is not standardized hundred percent, but it is on the right track for standardization. Starting from the day which Oromo language got acceptance in 1991 to be used as the working language of Oromia regional state, the widely taken dialect was ‘Macca’ dialect. .. So, this may negatively affect unselected dialects. Words in one dialect carries social identity, so rejecting one dialect means like rejecting social customs, cultures and rituals of that society, (Participant Y).

The participant fortifies his idea during process of one language standardization appropriate care should be given, the participants had to strive to include each dialect from all parts of a given region. Again not only this prominent people who used different dialects from parts of speech community should have to participate in order to tackle dialect related problems. Another interviewee forwarded his idea concerned the inclusion of Oromo language in written materials by saying that *“The most dialect used in Oromo language are western dialects, and this has its own reason. During codification of Oromo language, many Oromo scholars participated from western part of Oromia- the speaker of Tulama and Macca dialect. Therefore, all dialects in Oromo language did not include in written materials.”* (**Interviewee B**). As all mentioned concerned with the inclusion of Oromo language dialect in its standardization process, the only western and central i.e. Macca and Tulama dialects are used predominantly. The other dialects of Oromo language such as Guji, Borana, Arsi, Wollo, Hararge and Rayya have little place in written communication. As it indicated by one respondent, the current predominantly used dialect in Oromo written communication is ‘Macca’ dialect at first hand and ‘Tulama’ hold second place, whereas ‘Guji’ and ‘Rayya’ placed at the last. Thus, this indicates that all Oromo dialects did not include in written communication.

Related with item one on which data gathered by using three types of methods from informants to get information on whether all essential Oromo language dialects included equally or not in written materials during selection and codification of Oromo language, almost all data revealed that Oromo language dialects did not include in written communication. But, according to (Deumert, 2004: 23), *“Standard languages which are based on a single dialectal source (mono centric selection) are rare, and most of standard language histories has been shaped by dialect leveling and ionization.”* Besides, she states that in order to make language standard multiple ancestors’ and their history must be included by making deep investigation as much as needed, and its different kinds of language contact (dialect convergent as well as spoken or written language contact) should be over searched (Deumert, 2004).

Therefore, based on above denoted information given by participants of the study, one can conclude that even though some activities performed by Oromo scholars and elites to include essential dialects in written materials from each dialect, all Oromo Language dialects were not included equally in written materials. From given dialects of Oromo language, Macca dialect got the first rank in written communication when compared with other dialects of Oromo language.

In **item two** which the participants of the study requested to get their opinion on statement ‘Selected Dialect has no any Impact on Guji dialects/unselected dialects’, 100 (83.33%) of participants revealed their strong disagreement and 20 (16.6%) of informants revealed their disagreement with this opinion. This indicates that all participants of the study showed that selected dialects have impact on Guji dialect/unselected dialects.

The interviewee stated that due to the fact that there are over dominance of few dialects in Oromo language written materials, there are some problems to prepare students' material or handout. Besides, using few dialects by ignoring some of them without considering the actual value and the role they play in development of language itself is a big problem. When we write we write as we speak; we use our own dialect; so, if the vocabularies are not collected from each dialect and standardized, it may have direct impact on speech community and on development of the language. Language is a transporter of culture, customs, rituals and identity of a given society. All these elements of life in society denoted by using dialect. But, when one dialect selected and imposed on one clan which have their peculiar dialect to express their way of life, it may distort the life history of that clan within speech community.

Word carries societal taboos, and when one dialect word/s taken and applied on another part of society, it may have opposite meaning or highly restricted in that society. In this case, the social disagreement can be resulted. So, as depicted by one of participants, *"Selected dialect has great impact on Guji dialect. When we say selected dialect, it is a dialect which used in textbook, mass media, in governmental office and in all activities. This situation makes selected dialect to over dominate Guji dialect and cause it to death, and therefore, selected dialect has direct impact on Guji dialect."* (**Interviewee H**). The standardized language means everything for a given society. One language can be a language of science and technology, language of education, the language in which different textbooks, story books, films, magazines and others if it is well standardized. To bring a given language to this stage, it has to have reach vocabularies. As the different sorts of words – both formal and in formal words have equal value based on a type and/or purpose of writing, it is very essential for one language to be rich in vocabulary (Gliech and Wolff, 1991).

Besides, the data from FGD depicted that ignoring some dialects of speech community and favoring other has direct impact on unselected dialects in general and on Guji dialect in particular. For example, one of FGD participant expressed his idea concerned with Oromo language dialects as follows: *In Oromo language, the widely used dialect is Macha dialect. This has its own impact on Guji dialects. The selected dialect/s include everything. The main purpose of selecting dialect is to standardize it, but standardizing dialect does not means taking one dialect and ignoring the rest, but it includes the selection of dialects from each* (**Participant Z**).

Therefore, standardization of language cannot be taken as a process of variant lessening, and it does not only embrace interference by fixing authorities ---, but also a process of collective micro-accommodation, dialect convergence and leveling which are consequences of the daily linguistic varieties of individuals (Deumert, 2004).

Bay and large, concerned with statement item two which participants of the study requested to express their idea on it. All of them signified their opinion that selected dialect/s has/have a considerable impact on unselected dialects in general and on Guji dialect in particular. Therefore, the researcher can interpret based

on the data gathered from three methods, the selected dialect has impact on socio-political, economic, culture, rites and on the identity of society which their dialects are not selected.

Item 3 in which the participants of the study asked to elucidate their agreement or disagreement on statement ‘Selected dialect has several impacts on Guji dialect’, 80 (66.6%) of the informants explicated their agreement and 30 (25%) of participants strongly agreed with given statement. In other words, from total participants of the study 10 (8.33%) of participants expressed their strong disagreement. Although 10 participants forwarded their strong disagreement, 110 (89.66%) of participants expressed their agreement with item three statement. In addition, the result from interview on which participant asked ‘What the Impact of Selected Dialect on unselected dialects?’ almost all of them explicated their idea as selected dialect has myriad of impacts on unselected dialects. Besides, the result from FGD also support the opinion of interviewees. For example one of FGD participants signified his idea on item three statement by saying: *“Related with the impact of selected dialect on Guji dialects, selected dialect takes the level in which it is spoken, and students also use this dialect. If educated person live in city, the selected dialect spoken by city people, but one which other people used outside city become countryside language or it remained as a local dialect”* (**Participant T**).

Due to the fact that language is the symbol and indicator of one society, it is responsibility of a given language’s community to rehabilitate their language. One way of enhancing actual function of the language is making it the language of education, science and technology. In addition to this, language is a mirror in which each society see themselves and the dialect is also a mirror in which one tribe see themselves. Therefore, ignoring one dialect and preferring another dialect has direct impact on social and individual identity. One of FGD participants fortified this view saying:

Educated persons are using Macca and Tulama dialects in writing and teaching. However, this is not complete because there is some words which we cannot get exact original Oromo language words to replace Oromo language, take for example, the word from Amharic ‘Tebelashitoal’ meaning ‘damaged’ I cannot get exact original word that used in Oromo Macca dialect, but when I came to Guji I got original Oromo language word which directly replace Amharic word ‘Tebelashitoal’ means ‘Hammaate’ in Guji dialect (**Participant F**).

Besides, according to Gliech and Wolff (1991: 69), *“Language cannot be limited to just one region or one period of time. It must be the synthesis of the natural varieties of dialects.”* Therefore, during writing and codifying of the language care should be given in order to give equal opportunity and chance for each dialect. If this issue is not taken in to consideration, there is impact on language development itself.

Generally, based on data gathered from participants of the study by using three tools – questionnaire, interview and FGD, one can conclude that the selected dialect has great impact on Guji dialect. The selected dialect has

impact not only on Guji dialect but it has also impacts on education, politics, economic, and on community's identity as a whole. One can argue that how the selection of one dialect impact the socio-economic, political and identity of social group who speak same language. This is clear and obvious as it is already mentioned by participants and the cited scholars that each and every activity of society performed by language, and each society speak dialect, ignoring their dialect means like ignoring all social life activities.

As it is shown on Table 1 **item 4** on which participants of the study requested to express their agreement or disagreement about statement 'Only few dialects are included' in Oromo written language.' among 120 participants of the study, 110 (91.66%) agreed with the idea and 5 (4.1%) of participant strongly agreed with it, whereas 5 (4.1%) of participants preferred undecided. Thus, concerned with this idea almost all participants realized that in Oromo written language only few dialects are over dominating other dialects of Oromo language. As well, the result of data from interview revealed that among eight Oromo language dialects mainly 'Macca' dialect highly over dominate the others. For example, as it stated by one interviewee, "*As the information I have concerned, the Oromo language dialect which used in school, in office and in any written materials at first level is Macca dialect, the second one is Borana dialect, then the third one is Arsi and Bale whereas some dialects such as Guji, Raayyaa, Hararge, Ittuu etc. are rarely used dialects in Oromo written language.*" (**Interviewee C**). In addition to this, the data from FGD depicted that the participants have positive attitude towards item four.

As it is indicated on Table 1 **item 5** on which informants requested to give their opinion on statement 'selecting one dialect and using it as standard dialect has great value for development of language', from target population half of them that means 60 (50%) elucidated their disagreement and 30 (25%) of participants expressed their strong disagreement. However, among a given participants of the study, 15 (12.5%) and 15 (12.5%) of them signified their agreement and strong agreement. Although 30 (25%) of participants expressed their positive idea with item 5, from given target population 90 (75%) of them showed negative attitude on this item. Therefore, selecting dialect and applying it by imposing on particular society has great impact on development of the language rather than value. According to Duemert (2004:27), "*Standard languages are not merely uniform linguistic system; they are also used in different modes (spoken and written), styles (public and private, politics and administration, science and technology, religion, literature, law, mass media and conversation.*" Therefore, this scholar's view also support the response given by participants of the study.

Based on the information given by informants concerned with item 5, the researcher and/or any reader may understand that selecting one dialect and applying it by ignoring the other dialects of speech community can impede the development of a given language. This is because gradual diffusion of standard dialect across geographical areas, social groups and linguistic function affecting different groups and different registers at different times (Duemert, 2004). Therefore, when we see the current reality in our community (Guji community) the original and very famous words are on the verge of death because of selected dialects over

dominance of other Oromo language dialects. Specifically, Macca and Tulama dialects are highly overtaking or replacing Guji dialect. So, this situation is highly impacting socio – cultural and dialectal genocide on Guji community.

Table 3.2. Description of Likert scale questionnaire by frequency and percentage

No	Items	SDA		DA		UN		A		SA		Total	
		f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
6	Selecting one dialect and using it as standard dialect has great impact on development of language	5	4.1	6	5	-	-	80	66.6	29	24.1	120	100
7	selecting and using one dialect within one speech community has no any impact	92	76.6	18	15	-	-	6	5	4	3.3	120	100
8	Selected dialect has negative impact on cultures, customs, rituals and taboos of the community which dialects are not selected	-	-	-	-	-	-	30	25	90	75	120	100
9	Selected dialect has no impact on cultures, customs, rituals and taboos of the community which dialects are not selected	110	91.6	10	8.3	-	-	-	-	-	-	120	100
10	Including and using all dialects of Oromo language in written communication play great role to enhance Oromo language development	-	-	-	-	-	-	10	8.3	11	9.1	120	100

NB: SDA- Strongly Disagree, DA = Disagree, UN = Undecided, A = Agree, SA = Strongly Agree

Table 1.1 item 6 on which participants of the study requested to forward their opinion on idea ‘Selecting one dialect and using it as standard dialect has great impact on development of the language’, the 80 (66.6%) informants are agreed and 29 (24.1) of them denoted their strong agreement. This shows that from 120 informants, 109 (91.6%) of them confirmed that inappropriate dialect selection affect language development. In other words, 5 (4.1%) and 6 (5%) of responders expressed their strong disagreement and disagreement.

When item 5 and 6 are compared as crosscheck items, informants have clear understanding on the items. In addition to this, the result from interview and FGD support the data from questionnaire.

Table 1.1 **item 7** on which informants asked to give their idea on ‘Selecting and using one dialect within one language has no any impact’, out of the target population of the study 92 (76.66%) expressed their disagreement and 18 (15%) of them showed their strong disagreement, whereas 6 (5%) and 4 (3.33%) of informants agreed and strongly agreed with this item. Even if 10 participants expressed their agreement, 100 participants of the study signified that selecting only one dialect has a myriad of impacts on particular society which their dialects are ignored. Besides, the data from both interview and FGD revealed that preferring one or few dialect/s by ignoring some of them has impact on language development, social, economic and psychology of society which their dialects is not involved. The language building policy should pay appropriate emphasis to intricacy resulting from a linguistic structure. In addition, their mere existence and their number, the weight they have within the area of spread and outside, the role of different dialects, relevance of individual forms are of essential and critical importance (Gleich and Wolff, 1991). Generally, we can conclude that selecting few dialect by putting aside some of dialects within speech community has clear impact.

Table 1.1 **item 8** in which the informants requested to give their opinion towards ‘selected dialect has negative effect on culture, customs, rituals and taboo of community which their dialect is not selected’, out of selected participants 30 (25%) of them explicated their strong agreement and 90 (75%) of informants elucidated their agreement with the item. This indicates that all participants realized the selecting few dialects without considering others harmed the social identity of particular group which their dialect is not encompassed. One of participants from **FGD** signified this idea saying:

In addition to abovementioned impacts, selected dialects have great impact on culture, structure and socio-economic of Guji dialects. It impacts the psychology of society, for example, while they hear taboo words which other clan used as free word/s in their dialect. Many people cannot understand this taboo words in their context as it is dialect rather they believe as they speak this taboo word/s publicly. So, people who these words are taboo in their society can consider those speakers as shameless people. So, if the words are not standardized they brake social taboo, and this is also not good for psychology of that society. (Participant L)*

Actually, based on abovementioned informants’ response, selected dialect has negative effects on socio-cultural life of society which their dialects are not selected. When words are selected and used in society, it is selected in social setting. In that case, when new words replaced from other dialect they change original setting of the first word/s, and it will come out of its original context. At this time that society will not have interest to accept it. Therefore, selected dialect has direct impact on unselected dialect.

On the behalf of Table 1.1 **item 9**, 120 participants of the study were asked to give their idea about ‘Selected dialect has no impact on culture, customs, rituals and taboo of the community who their dialects are not selected.’ Among the participants of the study, 110 (91.66%) expressed their strong disagreement and 10 (8.33%) of them disagreed with the item. As this item is presented to participants to make crosscheck with **item 8**, it signifies that the informants confirmed that as selected dialect has negative effect on social life of particular groups whom their dialects are not preferred in education, in office work and in written communication as whole. In addition to this, the result from FGD and the result from interview have the same response on this item.

Language means everything; it is a mirror of one society. So, each society see themselves in language, but the reality is that dialect is sub-part of language which a given society use to express themselves, their culture, their happiness and sadness. Using the original word created in their community/tribe is above all crucial to reflect their way of life. Another interviewee denoted his idea on this saying:

Yes, selected dialects have negative effect on society whom their dialects are not selected. As I have raised earlier dialect is the carrier of social identity. Dialect denotes the way of life of given society, and each and everything get expressed by using dialect. It also carries the concept of social life, but if that dialect changed, it changes socio-political and cultural trend of that society. So, this situation has negative effect on given society. (Interviewee B).

Therefore, one can conclude that if due attention is not given during the selection of words from each dialect and ignoring some of them by prioritizing few, it negatively affects social life and social relationship of a given society. When we come to the current reality of Guji tribe, the other Oromo language dialects which are selected and used in written communication are negatively affecting Guji dialect specifically and other unselected dialects in in generally.

Table 1.1 **item 10** on which the informants of the study asked to give their opinion on statement ‘including and using all dialects of Oromo language in written communication play great role to enhance the development of the language.’ From target population of the study 10 (8.33%) of informants replicated their agreement and 110 (91.66%) of respondents strongly agreed with item. This indicates that selecting words from each dialect and include it in written communication and in social activities play a great role for development of language. Besides, the data from FGD and interview intensify this claim. For example, one of interviewees states his idea saying:

One, the rule of language did not support to select one dialect and standardize it by ignoring other dialects within the same language. This may natively affect the community which their dialect is not selected, and it also makes the community to reject and hate their own dialect. This has negative impact on language development in general and on given society in particular. In addition to this, the society which their

dialect selected may undermine the society which their dialects are not selected. This situation can also led to social conflict and new born of the language. (Interviewee C).

Language can be developed in fast rate if it has rich vocabularies, but if its vocabularies are not developed as much as intended, its development can be stagnated for long period of time. According to Gliech and Wolff (1991), limiting language to single dialect, and/or to some period of time has great impact on development of given language. Therefore, during writing and codifying of the language care should be given in order to give equal opportunity and chance for each dialect's vocabularies/words and they could be included in written communication, in textbooks, magazines, fictions and in any written materials.

To sum-up, based on gathered data from questionnaire, FGD and interview one can confirm that searching and including words from each dialect of the same language catalyze the development of a language. But if this condition is not done by syllabus designers and material writers/evaluators, it may preclude and stagnate a language development.

3.3. Social Related Impacts by Selected Dialects on Guji Oromo

As it is tried to state under introduction part, Guji Oromo is one of the tribes in the Oromo nation who live southern part of the Oromia. Guji has his own culture, religion and dialect that identify them from other Oromo tribes. There are a lot of words used to express culture and religion, and there is also words highly restricted in order not to be used in public. From 1991 afterward Oromo language become working language of Oromia Regional state. During these time, as witnessed by informants of the study, only few dialects were included in written material. Since the selected dialects got a chance in education, in office, in media and in all other activities, the unselected dialects gradually became out of function in general and Guji dialect in particular. Among participants of the study one interviewee signified that by saying:

Although it is difficult to say Guji Oromo dialect is totally not included in Oromo written communication, I can say almost it is not included in written communication. When I came here for first time, I could not understand what they said, and I asked another student to tell me what they said. Therefore, almost there is no Guji dialect in written communication except very few of words taken from Guji dialect. (Interviewee A)

The shortage of Guji dialect from written material causes many social impacts in Guji society. Children first pick the language from their parents and from their environment and use and visualize it. When they start their preschool, they begin to learn things about their environment. But, if the used words in their material are new words or words from other dialects, the children may receive their dialect words as wrong and they begin to use new words which they picked at school. Gradually, they ignoring the original word of their parents dialect and begin to apply the dialects which they learned at school. Due to the fact that words are the

transporter of culture and socio-political identity of particular group, ignoring the aboriginal word means like ignoring one societies identity.

Thus, the shortage of Guji dialect in students' textbook and in other written materials has negative effect on Guji students. The reader may ask the question 'How?' If the student do not get original words which they acquired from their parents and/or from their environment in learning material, they cannot see themselves in it. As a result of this, they hate their original word and consider it as incorrect word/s. So, this has direct impact on students' psychology and indirect impact on their parents. Supporting this idea one of interviewees states that:

"When compared with other dialects, Guji dialect is not used in written communication. This may have psychological impact on Guji society. Especially, in school their textbook is written by Macca and Tulama dialects, and this can make students to take their dialect as a wrong dialect and cause them to feel inferiority than the students whom their dialects are selected." (Interviewee H)

Another social impact caused by selected dialect is lack of knowledge on word usage i.e. since meaning of word is vary from place to place and from dialect to dialect, it may negatively affect social value if the users not know the function and the meaning of that word within that society. Thus, there are some words which are highly restricted in public; they are considered as offensive or taboo to be used in public. But, this restricted words are different from dialect to dialect within same language speakers, for example, in Oromo language.

Some of the words which used in students textbook as free words in other dialects, and they restricted or taboo in Guji community. Such words are: **Fagaara**, **Xeerii**, **Saala**, **Geebaa**, **Randa**, **Muuxxee**, **Gumaa**, and etic. This and this like words are very offensive in Guji society. But, this words are used in students' textbook, on media and in office as free words. In Guji community these words have different meanings from meaning they have in Macca, Tulama and other dialects. For example, the word "**Fagaara**" has free meaning in 'Macca' dialect; it means part of human each of two large fleshy halves of the posterior part of the body between the base of the back, the perineum and the top of the leg. They use this word as free word without any offensive. They can say 'Ishiin fagaara guddaa qabdi' – she has big buttock. When you come to Guji society, 'Fagaara' means insulting someone as he/she is very bad. So, the word '**fagaara**' is very offensive and not used in normal context in Guji community.

The next one is the word "**Xeerii**". This word has free and used freely in 'Macca' dialect speakers. The word "**Xeerii**" means *intestine* in Macca dialect speakers, and they use the word as free word in their daily activity. But, in Guji dialect speakers the word "**Xeerii**" means *anus*, and it is highly restricted and cannot be used publicly. The other word which is used as free in Macca dialect and offensive in Guji dialect is the word "**Saala**". The word "**Saala**" means *gender*, and Macca dialect speakers use the word publicly, whereas the word "**Saala**" means *penis* very offensive and cannot be used freely in Guji community. Another word which

is used freely in Macca dialect speakers is a word “**Geebaa**” which means **Cup**. Many time people use this on media, in office and at school, but the word “**Geebaa**” means **Penis/male organ/** or synonym of **saala**, and Guji does not use it publicly. From informants of the study, one interviewee said, *“For example, as I raised earlier the words like bukke (side) xeerii (intestine) fagaara (Buttock) geebaa (Cup) and others have different meanings from dialect to dialect in Oromo language. So, I have been challenged with this like words in many places.” (Interviewee C)*

Another word which is **free** in Macca dialect and **offensive** in Guji dialect is the word ‘**Randa**’. In Macca dialect, ‘Randa’ means **Buttock**, and they use the word freely, while the word ‘**Randa**’ means **insult** in Guji dialect. Besides, the word ‘**Muuxxee**’ is used as free word in **Arsi** dialect; ‘Muuxxee’ means **top**. They use this word to express the uppermost of something. But, in Guji dialect the word ‘**Muuxxee**’ means female reproductive organ – euphemism for Vagina. So, the word “**Muuxxee**’ is very offensive/taboo and cannot be used publicly. Another word which the researcher took as example is the word ‘**Gumaa**’. The word ‘Gumaa’ means **revenge**, and it is used in Macca, Tulama and in other dialects as free words, whereas ‘**Gumaa**’ means **testicles/scrotum** in Guji. Therefore, the word is offensive and not used publicly in Guji society. Related with the problem caused by homonyms, one of interviewee denoted it by saying, *“Once upon the time, I went from my area to another area to gather data for my research. Then, I faced the word which I do not know in my area- the word ‘shaakalu’ meaning practice, when I said shaakalu an old man fight me because that word is taboo in Jimma dialect; it means making sexual intercourse illegally.” (Interviewee F).*

The abovementioned examples are simply taken to signify that selecting and imposing one community’s dialect on other community has social impact on them. It is difficult to say selecting one dialect and using it as standard dialect has no any social impact because the words carry different meanings from dialect to dialect. So, if care must not be given during word selection and codification in a given language, it has social impact and cause mutual intelligibility problem as well. In addition to this, the data from FGD signified that selected dialects have social impact on society which their dialects are not selected. One of FGD participants stated the impact of selected dialect on particular society by saying:

Selected dialects has great impact on culture, structure and socio-economic of Guji dialect. It impacts the psychology of society, for example, while they hear taboo words which other clan used as free word/s in their dialect they may easily offended because of that word/s. Many people cannot understand this taboo words in their context as it is dialect rather they believe as they speak this taboo word/s publicly. So, people whom these words are taboo in their society can consider those speakers as shameless people. So, if the words are not standardized they brake social taboo, and this is also not good for psychology of that society in whole. (Participant L)*

Therefore, since the dialect is transporter of culture, rituals and any socio-political trend of society, shortage or lack of Guji dialect in Oromo written language has social impact on Guji society.

3.4. The Impacts of Selected Dialects on Structure of Guji Dialect

In addition to social impact, selected dialect has also structural impact on Guji dialect. So, in order to see what kind of structural impact selected dialects may have on Guji dialect, the researcher has made document analysis in addition to three main data gathering tools. Each dialect speakers has their own way of writing words, and they also have the way they pronounce words in their dialect. Within same language speakers, there are also different way of using words which have different structure. This different can be seen at phonemes/segments, words, syntaxes and semantics levels.

Therefore, when one dialect imposed on particular society, which have their own dialect, it may negatively affect the original structure of their dialect words. Thus, the document analysis was made by selecting words from reading passage of grade eight Oromo language textbook. Accordingly, some words which selected from reading passage were compared with words in Guji dialect in order to see their structural difference and the impact may it have on Guji word structure and meaning. Since, Macca dialect is over dominate other dialects of Oromo language, the researcher selected ‘**Macca**’ dialect and compared it with **Guji** dialect. As the researcher has tried to state under introduction part, among eight famous Oromo language dialects, Guji Oromo dialect has some unique features which distinguish it from other Oromo language dialects. These features can be observed at different parts of speech. So, some of these features are discussed below

3.4.1. Phonological variation

Table 3.3. Phoneme Alternations between Guji and Macca Dialect

No.	Vowel alternation (i~a)		
	Guji	Macca	Gloss
a	ideemuu	adeemuu	‘to go’
b	ibida	abida	‘fire’ (n)
c	idzeesuu	adzeesuu	‘to kill’ (v)
	Vowel alternation (i~o)		
	Guji	Macca	
d	ifi	ofi	‘oneself’
e	moti	miti	‘not’
	Vowel alternation (a~i)		
	Guji	Macca	
f	adaamma	adaammi	‘cactus’
g	faʔa	faʔi	‘etc’
h	dabarsa	dabarsi	‘story’
	Vowel alternation (ee~oo)		
	Guji	Macca	
i	simbirree	simbirroo	‘bird’
j	biyyee	biyyoo	‘soil’

k	kallee	kalloo	'baby carrying bag'
Vowel alternation (aa~uu)			
	Guji	Macca	
l	guutaa	guutuu	'full'
m	maraataa	maraatuu	'mad'

Table 3.3. Vowel alternation

The vowels /i/ and /a/ alternate between Guji and Macca Oromo in a number of verbs and nouns (a, b, c, f, g, h)). Remarkably, this alternation seems only to occur word-initially and finally, but not word-medially. Contrarily, the vowel alternation /i~/o/ (Table 3.3 d, e)) occurs word-initially and word-medially. The alternation /ee~/oo/ and /aa~/uu/ only occurs word-finally (Table 3.3 (i-k) and (l, m) respectively. The vowel alternation affects mainly the short vowels /a/, /i/, /o/, /u/ but not /e/. Long vowels, except the alternation /ee~/oo/ and /aa~/uu/ word-finally (i, j, k) and (l, m) respectively. As it is illustrated in above table, vowel alternation also affects certain consonant variation between Guji and Macca, as shown in **Table 3.3**.

Table 3.4. Consonant Alternation

No.	Consonant alternation (m~b)		
	Guji	Macca	Gloss
a	mišink'a	bisinga	'sorghum' (n)
b	misimaara	bisimaara	'nail' (n)
Consonant alternation (s~f)			
	Guji	Macca	
c	suunfate	fuunfate	'he smells' (v)
Consonant alternation (s~š)			
d	suta	šuta	'hair at birth'
e	bisaan	bišaan	'water'
f	isii	išii	'her'
Consonant alternation (nn~ɲɲ)			
g	funnaan	fupɲaan	'nose'
h	eennu	eeɲɲu	'who'
i	funno	fupɲo	'rope'

Consonant alternation is categorized into four sets: (a) /m~/b/ (Table 3.4. a-b), (b) /s~/f/ (Table 3.4 c), (c) /s~/š/ and (d) /nn~/ɲɲ/ (g-i), whereas set (a) contains an alternation nasal vs. plosive within the bilabial place of articulation, the sets (b), (c), and (d) do not change the manner of articulation but the place. That means in one case (c, set b) the alveolar fricative /s/ in Guji occurs as labio-dental fricative /f/ in Macca, while in set

(c) and (d) the alveolar consonants in Guji change to palatal consonants in Macca. Alveolar plosives and post alveolar consonants are not affected by alternation. Furthermore, consonant alternation does not frequently occur word-finally, probably due to the restricted number of words ending in a consonant. It is remarkably that the alveolar fricative /s/ in Guji either occurs as labio-dental /f/ or as palatal /š/ in Macca Oromo.

In conclusion, as it is illustrated in Table 3.3 and Table 3.4, there are a number of vowels and consonants alternation between Guji and Macca Oromo, but it remains basically indistinct what these changes triggered.

3.5.2 Structural change at Morphophonemic level

Structural change at morphophonemic in Oromo language exists across morpheme and word boundaries. The most common phonological process in Oromo language is consonants assimilation. In addition to this, there are also other phonological processes which exist in Oromo language like epenthesis, metathesis, reduplication, dissimilation and deletion though assimilation and metathesis are most frequently occurred as source for divergence between the two dialects.

3.5.3 Assimilation

Assimilation is a phonological process in which a sound becomes more like to another sound in its environment. Assimilatory process takes place in Oromo when prefixes ending in consonants are attached to other morphemes beginning with consonants or when suffixes beginning with consonants are attached to morphemes ending in consonants.

Table 3. 5. Assimilations and merging of consonants

Total assimilation			
No.	Guji	Macca	Gloss
a	dalla	dalga	‘flat level’
b	soodda	soogda	‘salt’
c	dudda	dugda	‘back (parts of body)’
d	arraasa	arfaasa	‘December’
e	darre	darbe	‘i/he passed’
f	kolle	kolfe	‘i/he laughed’
g	d̪isse	d̪igse	‘i/he caused to fall’
h	c’asse	c’abse	‘i/he broke’
i	ossa	obsa	‘patience’
j	addi	abdi	‘hope’
k	diddama	digdama	‘twenty’
Merge into new consonant			

l	beessičče	beeksiste	‘you/she made know’
m	fuusijpe	fuusisne	‘we made take’

As it illustrated on table 3.5, there is a predisposition in Guji Oromo to avoid clusters of various consonants by assimilation processes yielding a single geminated consonant. The general tendency is that Guji dissolves consonant cluster in favor of the alveolar consonant in a cluster containing alveolar and non-alveolar consonants. The position of the alveolar consonant is not important for this assimilation, as seen in **Table 3.5** (b-c) vs. (k). If the alveolar consonant precedes the non-alveolar consonant, progressive assimilation occurs, but if the alveolar consonant follows the non-alveolar, regressive assimilation is found. When two different alveolar consonants form a cluster, as in Table 3.5 (l, m), two processes seem to occur in Guji. Firstly, the two alveolar consonants assimilate to each other yielding a geminate alveolar consonant which, in a second process, is palatalized, i.e, Macca *fuusisne* first becomes *fuusinne* in Guji which, is then, changes into *fuusijpe*. The palatalization could be understood as kind of dissimilation to make a phonological distinction between assimilated alveolar-non-alveolar clusters vs. alveolar-alveolar clusters. However, the assimilation does not apply to all consonant clusters in Guji (see, for instance, Table 3.6 examples a-b below).

3.5.4 Metathesis

Metathesis is a phonological process in which, for variety of reasons, the order of nearby segments is moved. The metathesis process that can be observed between Guji and Macca dialects is illustrated in the following Table.

Table 3.6 Metathesis

I. Adjacent consonants			
No.	Guji	Macca	Gloss
a	saglaaffaa	salgaaffaa	‘ninth’
b	afraaffaa	arfaffaa	‘fourth’
II. Syllable onsets			
c	dʒaldeessa	daldʒeessa	‘baboon’
d	kʼalame	kʼamale	‘ape’

On above table, we can see two types of metathesis namely metathesis of adjacent consonants (Table 3.5. a-b) and metathesis of the onset consonant of two adjacent syllables (Table 3.5. c-d).

3.6. Grammatical variations

3.6.1 Jussive and imperative

In Oromo language, Jussive and imperative verbs have an intrinsically marked and positive value for emphasis. Certainly, in imperative and jussive sentences in Macca dialect it is possible to mark any constituent for focus. However, in Guji dialect, focus is only functional to the verb, (Debela and Meyer, 2003)

- (1) a. *Inni bor dafee dhufuu-tii* - Guji
he NOM tomorrow be quick come 3sm JUS
- b. *Inni boru dafee haa dhufu* - Macca
he NOM tomorrow be quick JUS come 3sm
'Let him come quickly tomorrow!'
- (2) a. *Bor daf-ii koott-u* - Guji
Tomorrow be-quick-JUS CONV come IMP-2s
- b. *Boru daf-ii-ti kott-u* - Macca
Tomorrow be-quick-JUS CONV-FOC come IMP-2s
'Come quickly; tomorrow'
- a. *Irbaata nyaadh-uu koottu* - Guji
- (3) Dinner eat-2s-CONV-JUS come-IMP-2s
- b. *Irbaata nyaadh-uu-ti kottu* - Macca
Dinner eat-2s-CONV-JUS-FOC come-IMP-2s
'Come after you ate your dinner'

Examples (1-3) above show that jussive verbs in Oromo language are marked by a special vowel, *-u* attached to the agreement suffix plus an additional element. In Macca Oromo dialect, this additional element is the preverbal marker *haa* while in Guji dialect it is the suffix *-ti* which elicits lengthening of the preceding vowel. While in Macca dialect, constituent of an imperative clause can be focused by the suffix *-ti*, Guji Oromo cannot use this suffix as focus marker nor any other marker.

3.7. Features of the Noun phrase

3.7.1. Number

Number in Oromo distinguishes singular and plural. Number marking is not obligatory when it is clear from context, in particular in the presence of numerals (Gragg, 1976: 180) i.e, nouns that refer to multiple entities are not obligatorily plural marked. That is, if the context is clear, a formally singular noun may refer to

multiple entities: *nama* 'man' or 'people', *nama shan* 'five men' or 'five people'. When it is important to make the plurality of a referent clear, the plural form of a noun is used. Noun plurals are formed through the addition of suffixes. The most common plural suffixes in Macca are – *oota*. A final vowel is dropped before the suffix, and this suffix becomes –*ota* following a syllable with a long vowel: *mana* 'house', *manoota* 'houses', *barsiisaa* 'teacher', *barsiisota* 'teachers'. Other common plural suffixes in Macca Oromo are –(w)*wan*, –*een*, and –(a)*an*; the latter two may cause a preceding consonant to be doubled: *waggaa* 'year', *waggaawwan* 'years', *laga* 'river', *laggeen* 'rivers', *ilma* 'son', *ilmaan* 'sons'. The plural marking morphemes most frequently used in Guji are: –*eelee* and –*wwan*.

Table 3.7. Variation in singulative number marking segments

-DEF	+DEF				
General Number	Singular				
	Guji		Macca		Gloss
	M	F	M	F	
nama-፩	nami-cha	nam-ttii	nam-ti-cha	nam-ti-ttii	'man/woman'
re'ee-፩	re'ee	re'ee-ttii	re'ee-ttii	re'ee-ttii	'goat (m/f)'
gaangee-፩	gaangee	gang-ittii	gang-ittii	gang-ittii	'mule (m/f)'
farad-፩	farad korma	farad d'laa	fardi-cha	fardi-ttii	'horse (m/f)'
saree-፩	sari-cha	sari-ttii	sari-cha	sare-ettii	'dog (m/f)'
lukku-፩	lukki-cha	lukki-ttii	lukkuu	lukkuu	'hen (m/f)'
dzabbii-፩	dzibicha	raada	dzibichi-cha	raadi-ttii	'calve (m/f)'
muka-፩	muk-icha	muk-icha	muk-icha	muk-ittii	'tree (m/f)'
har'a-፩	lans-icha	lans-ittii	hiriyy-ittii	hiriyy-icha	'friend (m/f)'

Singulative is marked by the suffix –*icha* for masculine nouns and –*ttii* for feminine nouns in Guji, while Macca Oromo adds the element –*t*– preceding these suffixes.

Table 3.8. Variation in plural number marking segments

+DEF Plural				
Guji		Macca		Gloss
M	F	M	F	
beeda	nad'iin	nam-oota	dubart-oota	'men/women'
re'eelee	re'eelee d'altu	re'-oota	re'-oota	'goats (m/f)'
gaango-lee	gaango-lee d'altu	gaango-ta	gaango-ta	'mules (m/f)'
sare-eelee	sareelee d'altu	sar-oota korma	sar-oota d'altu	'dogs (m/f)'
lukku-lee	lukk-lee d'altu	lukk-oota	lukk-oota	'hens (m/f)'
muk-een	muk-een	muk-oota	muk-oota	'trees (m/f)'
lans-oolee d'alaa	lans-oolee d'iiraa	hiriyy-oota d'iiraa	hiriyy-oota dubra	'friends (m/f)'

According to Table 3.7 above, plural in Guji is marked most frequently by elements *-lee*, *-oolee*, *-een*. In Macca plural is often marked by the suffix *-oota*. In Guji, there are some exceptional cases other than the additions of the plural marking morphemes which have different forms to mark plural.

Generally, based on structural comparison made between Guji and Macca dialects, one can observe that/confirm that there are variation between structure of Guji dialect and Macca dialect. As the researcher has tried to denote earlier, the Macca dialect was selected among seven other dialects to compare it with Guji dialect because it is widely used dialects in Oromo language. Therefore, when we see the material written in Oromo language like students' textbooks, different letters, magazines and other literary materials there is over dominance of Macca dialect. This indicates that there is also structural impact on Guji dialect due to the fact that almost there is no Guji dialect included in written materials.

4. Recommendation

The following recommendation are given based on the result of the study:

- ✚ Since Oromo language standardization process has impact on unselected dialects, it should better if reinvestigation will carry out in order to include essential words from each dialect of Oromo language.
- ✚ Guji dialect is almost not included in Oromo language written communication and there is no any written dictionary of Guji dialect. Therefore, educated men and women from Guji clan have to work hard to document and upgrade their dialect. If this action will not be taken as soon as possible, Guji dialect is going to be replaced by other dialects of Oromo language.
- ✚ Words from Guji dialect should have to be included in students' textbooks in order to keep the dialect a live.
- ✚ Language standardization committee and language academy should work together to tackle the problem caused by inappropriate selection of lexemes from different dialects of Oromo language.
- ✚ Standardization committee and Research scholars should have to work hard in order to minimize communication barrier among the speakers of different dialects of Oromo language.

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