

# An Investigation into the Patterns and Mechanisms of Naming in Afan Oromo: Focus on Personal Naming

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## ABSTRACT

This study was conducted to describe the patterns and mechanism of naming in Afan Oromo by focusing on personal names. Descriptive research design was used to conduct this study as it is helpful to gather data in particular time with intension of describing the variables under study. In this study both primary and secondary data were collected via interview and document analysis. Interview guideline was prepared and used to collect data from the selected informants. Besides, relevant documents that were written on this issue were also referred to achieve the purpose of this study. To analyze the data collected through the above instruments, qualitative method of data analysis was used. The result of the data analysis shows that during the pre-modern Ethiopia state building (before 1885) Oromo people had been giving Afan Oromo names to their children in the way that the names were meaningful in the cultural, linguistic and socio-economic context of Oromo. The mechanism of naming that had been used before 1885 was coinage. During Imperial and Socialist Regimes of Ethiopia (1886-1991) Oromo people were forced to name their children in Amharic. This kind of naming is borrowing. After the coming to power of EPRDF in 1991, Oromo people started to re-use Oromo Cultural Names to name their children. Besides, Oromo adolescents who have an access to education and affected by globalization name their children in the way that the names are meaningful locally and globally. In addition, Oromo people are providing new names for their kids by combing two or more Afan Oromo words together. In short, the study revealed that there are different naming mechanisms and patterns of personal naming in Afan Oromo. Besides, the major mechanisms of naming in Afan Oromo are coinage, borrowing, compounding, blending, etc. It also appears that the patterns and mechanisms of naming in Afan Oromo has been profoundly affected by various socio-cultural, religious and political factors. For this reasons, the patterns and mechanisms of naming in Afan Oromo can be well understood by dividing into different historical times.

**Keywords:** Afan Oromo, Mechanism, Naming, Oromo, Patterns, word formation

## 1. BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Morphology is a branch of linguistics that studies about the patterns of word formation. According to Anderson (1992) morphology in linguistics is the study of the form of words and the way in which words are related to other words. It serves a variety of purposes from the creation of new lexical items to the indications of grammatical structure (Anderson, 1992). One of the issues that is studied in morphology is naming and its patterns. Name is what person, place, things idea, etc a called by (represented with). In other words, name represents person, place, materials, idea, etc. With this regard, our names distinguish us from billions of people in this world. Hence, names are the most fundamental part of human being that are used to identity an individual in a given society. According to Tsehay Demoze (2003) naming in Ethiopia is different from other countries. That means the use of first name and family name is unknown in Ethiopia. Everyone has his/her own name and also uses his/her father's name which comes after the personal name. Occasionally, the paternal grandfather's name can be added if needed. When we came to Oromo society, the names given depend on different background such as culture, political and norms of the society (Tesfaye Gudeta, 2003) In this study, an attempt is made to describe the mechanism and patterns of naming in Afan Oromo. Having brief information about Afan Oromo and its speaker is believed to facilitate the understanding of the issues explored in this study. Thus, the next section provides background information about these issues.

Oromiya is one of the Regional States in the current Federal Government of Ethiopia that is mainly inhabited by Oromo People. Oromo People speak their own native language known as Afan Oromo. Afan Oromo, Oromo Language, is an Afro-Asiatic language, and the most widely spoken of the Cushitic family. It is one of the major indigenous African languages that is widely spoken and used in most parts of Ethiopia and some parts of the neighboring countries (Mekuria, 1994). Afan Oromo is spoken by 40 percent of Ethiopian population (Kebede, 2009). In Ethiopia, Afan Oromo is spoken as a lingua franca by other people who are in contact with Oromo people. According to Mekuria (1994) and Feyisa (1996), Afan Oromo is used by different nationalities such as Harari, Sidama, Anuak, Gurage, Amhara, Koma, Kulo and Kaficho as a means of communication and trade with their neighboring Oromo people. In connection to this, Amanuel and Samuel (2012:32) stated that "It [Afan Oromo] is also used as a language of inter-group communication in several parts of Ethiopia."

Besides, outside Ethiopia, Afan Oromo is spoken in Kenya, Somalia, Sudan and Tanzania (Tilahun, 1993). These make Afan Oromo one of the most widely spoken languages in Africa (Bender, 1976). Afan

Oromo has an officially decided writing script known as Qubee, which is based on the Latin orthography (Girma, 2001). Furthermore, it is spoken in a vast territory of Ethiopia ranging from Tigray in the North to the Central Kenya in the South, and from Wallagga in the West to Harar in the East. In these areas, it is spoken with several dialects (Ali and Zaborski, 1990). The Oromo people are found all over the country predominantly in Wollaga, Shawa, Illu Ababa Bora, Jimma, Arsi, Bale, Hararghe, Wollo, Borena and Guji. This research was conducted to identify the patterns and mechanisms of Naming in Afan Oromo.

## 1.2. Research Questions

Specifically, this research was intended to answer the following research questions.

- What are the common patterns of naming in Afan Oromo?
- What are the major mechanisms of naming used in Afan Oromo?
- What are factors that influence the patterns and mechanisms of naming in Afan Oromo?

## 1.3. Objectives of the study

The general objective of the study is to describe the mechanisms and patterns of naming in Afan Oromo. The specific objectives of the study were:

- To describe the common patterns of naming in Afan Oromo.
- To identify the major mechanisms of naming in Afan Oromo
- To assess the factors that influence the mechanisms and patterns of naming in Afan Oromo

## 2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

### 2.1. General Overview of Word Formation and Naming of Person

Morphology is a branch of linguistics that studies about patterns of word formation. According to Anderson (1992) morphology in linguistics is the study of the form of words and the way in which words are related to other words. It serves a variety of purposes from the creation of new lexical items to the indications of grammatical structure (Anderson, 1992). Thus, morphology deals with word formation. In linguistics, word formation is the creation of the new word. Word formation is a process by which new words are formed out of words or morphemes. There are many different ways to create new words from existing ones by affixation, non-affixation and compounding. All regular word-formation processes are word-based. Applying a regular rule to single already existing words forms a new word process. According to Handumod Bussmann (1996) word formation is sometimes contrasted with semantic change which is change in a single word's meaning. The boundary between word formation and semantic change can be difficult to define (Zuckermann, 2003).

One of the issues that is studied in morphology is naming and its patterns. Name is what person, place, things, idea, etc. are called by (represented with). Thus, naming a person is a process of giving a name to a newly born baby. Naming in Ethiopia is different from naming in other countries (Tsayay Demoz, 2003). According to Tsehay, (2003), the use of the first name and family name is unknown in Ethiopia. Very few have their own name also use their father's name which comes after their personal name.

### 2.2. Types of Word Formation

Word formation is a process by which new words are formed out of words or morphemes by means of affixation or compounding. There are several types of word formation. Some of the common ones are:

#### 2.2.1. Coinage (Noun Formation)

Coinage is a morphological process by which a language user deliberately invents or uses a particular word in a particular context to name a person or a thing. According to Halliday M. K. A. (1985), if a speaker does not remember an exact word that can really express his/her thought he/she coins an alternative word that is known as a neologism.

#### 2.2.2. Borrowing Names

Borrowing involves taking lexical items from one language to another. According to E. Ka. D. (1994) borrowed words are known as loan words and which also made to adapt to the phonological structure of a new language. For example, there are different borrowed words in English such as, restaurant from French, Mosquito from Spanish and etc. There are various reasons for borrowing words from other languages. In this connection, a language may possess words for which there are no equivalents in the other language (Rondom House, 1982). There may be words for objectives, social, political, and cultural institutions and events or abstract concepts which are not found in the culture of the other language. The socio-political situation of a country may also lead to borrowing. These reasons will make the native speakers to borrow words and names from other languages.

#### 2.2.3. Compounding

Compounding is the process by which a morphologically complex word can be constructed out of two or more unbound morphemes. Compounding is defined as a process of forming new words by combining different lexical categories. Compounding involves the combination of two words or more words (Chomsky, 1986).

Similarly, Radford (1997:499) defines “a compound word as word built up out of two (or more) other words. See following illustrations from Afan Oromo as an example of forming compounding names :

| <i>Combined Words</i> | <i>Formed Compound names</i> |
|-----------------------|------------------------------|
| <i>Naafi + Yaadii</i> | <i>Naafyaad</i>              |
| <i>Lolii+ Booni</i>   | <i>Loliiboan</i>             |
| <i>Horree+Nuus</i>    | <i>Horrenuus</i>             |
| <i>Ofii+ Ijaan</i>    | <i>Ofijaan</i>               |

The examples shows that how two or more Afan Oromo words are combined together to form compound names. Regarding the classification of compounds, different scholars have suggested different systems. According Chomskyim (1986) there are three types of writing compound forms namely: solid compounds, hyphen compound and two word compound. For example, 'Nimoonaa', is a compound Afan Oromo that can be written in three different forms: **Ni-moonaa**, **Nimoonaa** and **Nimoonaa**'

#### 2.2.4 Blending

Another type of word formation that is described in terms of prosodic categories is blends. Blends are words that combine two (rarely three or more) words into one, deleting material from one or both of the source words. In blending two words are brought together to form a new words(Adjebis, 1999). It is a process that involve collapsing one form in to the other. Below are the examples of Blending in English Language.

**breakfast + lunch → brunch**  
**channel + tunnel → chunnel**  
**compressor + expander → compander**  
**guess + estimate → guesstimate**  
**modulator + demodulator → modem**  
**sheep + goat → shoat**  
**smoke + fog → smog**

Blending is also common used in Afan Oromo. According to Tasfaye Gudet (2003), in the last 10 years, different words were blended and used to name person in Oromo society. For example, there is a name called **"Singitan"** that is used by Oromo Family to name their children. The word **"Singitan"** blended form 'sitti\_hin' \_ gitan' by deletion of some sounds.

### 2.3 Factors influencing Patterns of Naming in Afan Oromo

#### A. Religions Factors

A religious family usually names their child from their own religious perspective. According Adler (2002), a Christian family may either give a baptismal name after people in the Bible while Muslim people give name from Holy Quran perspective. Each family needs to assert that the child belongs to their respective religion. Forexample, there are many names which are emanated from religious book like Abraham, Dawit, Aster are the names taken from Holly Bible and names as Ali, Mohammed, Ramahatu, Fatuma, are the names taken from Quran. This clearly illustrates the influence of religion on naming.

#### B. Influence of Famous People on Naming Children

In this modern world. media and literature play important role in choosing a names to name children. According Taylor (2012), the more medias cover about models, artists, strong rulers, influential people, the more became familiar with those names and the more people become inspired by them. For this reason, people will name their children by taking the famus people. Historically since Oromo people have been denied any government key positions and since the Oromo literature have been weakened purposely by government, it has been a big challenges for Oromo names to get promotion opportunities through Ethiopian Media in the past(Hawi Chala, 2012).

#### 2.3.2. Influence of Ruling System in the Past

The socio-political situation of a country can also affect naming. The previous governments of Ethiopia declared Amharic to be the only official language and LOI, although there were above 80 languages in the country. In spite of this fact, the previous governments of Ethiopia declared Amharic to be the only official language and LOI(Feyisa, 1996). This kind of policy forced the other languages in Ethiopia to be ignored and lost any recognition (Shimelis, 2006). For example, for a century(1886-1991), Afan Oromo was dominated by Amharic and was excluded from public and formal communication. According to Tesfaye Gudeta (2003), due to this influence and domination, Oromo people started naming their children in Amharic, but the naming is contextualized to pronunciation of Afan Oromo. For example, the name Abebe' in native speakers of Amahric pronounced in Afan Oromo as "Abbabaa". After the coming to power of the current government,EPRDF (19991) the use of Afan Oromo in public as allowed and people are naming their children based on their own culture and language( Tesfaye Gudetea, 2003).

### **3. Research Design And Methodology**

#### **3.1. Research Design**

The general objective of the study is to describe the patterns of naming in Afan Oromo. This involves description of the patterns and mechanism of naming. Thus, descriptive research design was used to conduct this study because it helps us to gather information or data in particular time with intention of describing. According to Babson (1993), descriptive research is a study design to depict the participants in accurate way. Hence, the use of descriptive research design enables us to describe the view of the participants.

#### **3.2. Sources of Data**

In this study, both primary and secondary sources of data were used. The primary source of data were Oromo students in Woialta Sodo University who came from West Shawa and South West Shawa zone. Interview guideline was prepared and used to collect data from the primary source. The secondary sources of data were relevant documents that were written on this issues such as research written by Tesfaye Gudeta (2003), "the Oromo cultural profile book", language policy of Ethiopia and other materials from different websites were referred. The documents were analyzed according to specific guidelines and criteria that were set before hand.

#### **3.3. Instruments of Data Collection**

To achieve the basic purpose of this study, data were collected by using two tools namely; interview and document analysis.

##### **A. Interview**

As Rangit (1999:115) shows that in situation where in depth information is required, interviewing is the preferred method of data collections depending on the nature of the study and the degree of control. Accordingly, the researcher has conducted semi structured interview with 10 individuals( 4 females and 6 males). Unstructured interview guideline was prepared and used to collect data from the selected students. The interview was prepared and conducted in Afan Oromo. The selected individuals were interviewed on various issues such as the patterns, mechanisms of naming in Afan Oromo and the factors that affect naming in Afan Oromo.

##### **B. Document Analysis**

Document analysis was used as a secondary source of data. Relevant documents were selected and their contents were analyzed to identify and describe the patterns and mechanisms of naming in Afan Oromo and to identify the factors that affect naming in Afan Oromo. This data gathering tool was used to relate the idea that was stored about Oromo society and pattern of naming in the society.

#### **3.4. Methods of Data Analysis**

To analyze the data collected through the above instruments, qualitative method of data analysis was used. The data collected through interviews was first transcribed and transformed into textual form. Next, the responses were read and codes were given to the data after the content was understood. Then, the codes were categorized into related themes. Finally, the categorized theme were interpreted. The data gathered from the documents were analyzed by using Content Analysis Method.

### **4. Data Analysis and Interpretation**

#### **4.0. Introduction**

The major objective of this study was to describe the common patterns and mechanisms of naming in Afan Oromo. To achieve this purpose, different documents were analyzed and pertinent individuals were interviewed. From the analysis of documents and interview data, it can be understood that there are different mechanisms and patterns of naming in Afan Oromo. It also appears that naming in Afan Oromo has been profoundly affected by various socio-cultural, religious and political factors. For this reason, the patterns and mechanisms of naming can be well understood by dividing it into different historical times.

#### **4.1. The Patterns and Mechanisms of Afan Oromo Naming before Pre- Modern Ethiopia State Building(Before 1885)**

There are different cultural, ethnic and linguistic groups that live in Ethiopia-One of which is Oromo. The Oromo are the largest single ethnic group in East Africa, (Jeylan, 2004). Oromo are Cushitic people who live in different parts of Africa, mainly in Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia. However, the great majority of Oromo live in different parts of Ethiopia. As compared to other ethnic groups, the Oromo forms majority of Ethiopian population comprising 40% out of the total population. The Oromo have their own heritage including culture, history, political institutions, religion, legal institution, language and other social framework (Qajela, 1993). One of the common features shared by Oromo People is Afan Oromo. Before 1885 Oromo people were administered by their own Gadaa. During their long history, the Oromo developed their own cultural, social and political system known as the Gadaa system. It is a uniquely democratic political and social institution that

governed the life of every individual in the society from birth to death.

During those bygone times Afan Oromo was used as a medium by Gadaa Leaders to host meeting with the Oromo People. Children also learn the values, culture and norms from elders in Afan Oromo. Besides, Oromo elders settle conflicts created between individuals or groups using Afan Oromo. Furthermore, Oromo people had been giving Afan Oromo names to their children in the way that the names are meaningful in the cultural, linguistic and socio-economic context of Oromo. For examples, the following names were commonly used to name Oromo pre 1885:

**Table 1: Afan Oromo Names before 1885(Ethiopian Calendar)**

| NO  | Afan Oromo Names      | Sex            | English Meaning of the Names |
|-----|-----------------------|----------------|------------------------------|
| 1.  | Abdi                  | Male           | Wish                         |
| 2.  | Hawwii                | Female         | Hope                         |
| 3.  | Gammachuu<br>Gammadee | Male<br>Female | Happy<br>Happy               |
| 4.  | Rabbirraa             | Male           | From God                     |
| 5.  | Tolasaa<br>Tolashii   | Male<br>Female | His will<br>Her will         |
| 6.  | Warrihoo<br>Warritee  | Male<br>Female | Evening<br>Evening           |
| 7.  | Wayyeessaa            | Male           | The Improver                 |
| 8.  | Fayyisaa              | Male           | Healer                       |
| 9.  | Fayyiftuu             | Female         | Healer                       |
| 10. | 'Boontuu'             | Female         | Proud                        |
| 11. | Boonaa                | Male           | Proud                        |
| 12. | Galanaa               | Male           | The Sea                      |
| 13. | Galanee               | Female         | The Sea                      |
| 14. | Soreesa               | Male           | Rich                         |

These names are meaningful in Afan Oromo and Oromo Cultural context. They were often given other personal "Love names," by family members. Their second name is the main name of their father. A third name is usually the name of their paternal grandfather. Traditionally, the father picks Oromo children's names but the mother has great influence in naming the daughter of the family it must be said that Oromo names have meanings as they convey wishes of success, wisdom, prosperity, etc. The popular and original Oromo names are meaningful in Afan Oromo as the following examples reveals:

- Ibsaa' (for males)
- 'Ibsituu (for females)
- \*Both meaning light
- 'Guddataa' (for males)
- Guddattuu' (for female)

\*Both meaning Growth and show biological mental, economical advancement.

- Ayyaanaa' for males
- Ayyaantuu' of females
- Both meaning spiritual person

The mechanism of naming that was used before 1885 was coinage. Coinage is a morphological process by which a language user deliberately invents or uses a particular word in particular context. This patterns and manner of naming was changed during Imperial and Socialist Regimes of Ethiopia( 1886-1991) as the following discussion illustrates.

#### **4.2. Patterns and Mechanisms of Naming in Afan Oromo During Imperial and Socialist Regimes of Ethiopia( 1886-1991)**

After 1886, Oromo people were incorporated into Ethiopian Empire estate. Then, the consecutive regimes systematically developed and implemented a policy that was intended to replace Oromo language and culture by Amhara language and culture. For example, McNab(1989:86-89) noted that :

*The Imperial Government attempted to tackle the language aspect of these goals[centralization, modernization and integration] by single mindedly promoting a policy of unity based on Amharization. Amharic became one of the most important symbols of, and also the means of achieving national integrity and shared culture.----Amharic language and culture was treated by the government as being synonymous with Ethiopian language and culture.*

The quotation indicates that Ethiopian rulers designed the policy of Amharization, where all ethnic groups in the



country were obligated to abandon their own language and culture and forcefully made to accept the culture and language of the Amhara. Thus, the close examination of the language policy followed by the consecutive Ethiopian regimes from 1900-1991 indicates that the past regimes of Ethiopia attempted to replace Afan Oromo by Amharic (McNab,1989). Using mainly Amharic for education and governmental works has hindered the development of Afan Oromo and other languages. This kind of policy produces assimilationist policy forcing other languages to be ignored and lost any recognition (Shimelis, 2006).

During Imperial and Socialist Regimes of Ethiopia( 1886-1991) Oromo people were forced to use Amharic for several functional purposes. Afan Oromo names were replaced by Amharic names. Oromo people forced to name their children in Amharic instead of Afan Oromo names. Hence, between 1886-1991 various Amharic Names were used to name Oromo children. Not only naming their children in Amharic but most of Oromo people who already named by Afaan Oromo also forced to change or translate their former name to Amharic. It is the period of Amharic name baptismal.

The respondents also said that there is a great difference between the naming of their people from time to time. For example, the naming of the people of the past and of this time are different. In other words, starting from 1991, Afan Oromo became official language of Oromia region; therefore people started naming their children depending on their culture. For example, “*Nimoonaa*”, “*Caalaa*,” “*Keebeekibooni*”, “*Beckaam*” etc are commonly used name Oromo child in the contemporary time. According to the respondents, Oromo peoples in the past name their offspring by the borrowed names. Because, in the past times Oromo people were forced to use Amharic names to name their own off spring. The following table shows

**Table 2: Afan Oromo Names During Imperial and Socialist Regimes of Ethiopia( 1886-1991)**

| Amharic names | Afan Oromo pronunciations | English Meaning of the Names |
|---------------|---------------------------|------------------------------|
| Abebe         | ‘Abbabaa’                 | Flower                       |
| Niguse        | ‘Nugusee’                 | My King                      |
| Tadesse       | ‘Taddassaa                | Renewed                      |
| Tegegn        | ‘Taganyee’                | Found                        |
| Mengistu      | 'Mangistuu'               | Government                   |
| Teshome       | 'Tashomaa'                | Appointed                    |

As stated in the forgoing discussion, after modern Ethiopia building (1995-1991) for a century Afan Oromo was dominated by Amharic and excluded from public and formal communication. Then Oromo people started naming their children in Amharic, but the naming was contextualized to the pronunciation of Afan Oromo. The pronunciation of one word of any language is differently pronounced according to native speakers and those who talk the language as the second language. Accordingly, Oromo society pronounces the names of Amharic based on the linguistic properties of Afan Oromo dialect. For instance, the name ‘Abebe’ in Amharic is pronounced as “ Abbabaa” in Afan Oromo. In this case the sound ‘e’ is changed to “a” in Afan Oromo. Also Someone who is called ‘Niguese’ by Amharic speakers is pronounced as “Nugusee” in Oromo society. Here the sound ‘i’ is changed to ‘u’ in Afan Oromo pronunciation. This kind of naming is borrowing and contextualization. That is several Amharic names were borrowed and used to name Oromo children.

**C. The Patterns and Mechanisms of Naming in Afan Oromo Post 1991 until the Present(2016).**

In 1991 a new government called Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE) come to power . The FDRE followed a more flexible official approach which takes into consideration the rich linguistic and cultural diversity of Ethiopian peoples (Gfeller, 1999). To address linguistic diversity in education, the government declared that each region has the right to use its own language for instruction until the end of primary education (grade 8). The government also designed Educational and Training Policy (ETP) in 1994. In the policy, recognizing the rights of nations and nationalities to learn in their language is indicated as one of the specific objectives. In addition, Ethiopian languages are given protection in the constitution of FDRE. For example, Article 5 of the constitution declares that all Ethiopian languages enjoy equal state of recognition. Article 39 also states that every nation, nationality and people has the right to speak, to write and develop its own language, to express, to develop and to promote its culture and history.

The practice of multilingual policy has a great value in fostering the development of languages. Languages which were denied in previous times, are given the right to be used in governmental works, media, education, judiciary, etc. Specifically, languages that were limited to home use are now being used in public for different purposes. It is by using this fertile ground that Oromo people started to name their children in Afan Oromo. The naming pattern in Afan Oromo since 1991 can be seen in three different category:

**I. Re-use of Oromo Cultural Names**

After the coming to power of EFDR, Oromo people started to give Oromo cultural names to their children in the way that the names are meaningful in the cultural, linguistic and socio-economic context of Oromo. This means Oromo start to re-use of Oromo Cultural Names to name their children. Below are some of the examples:

**Table 3: The Re-Use of Afan Oromo Named Post 1991**

| Afan Oromo Names | English Meaning of the Names |
|------------------|------------------------------|
| Dhabaa           | The Planter                  |
| Hawwii           | Wishes                       |
| Eebbissaa        | The man who bless            |
| Eebbissee        | The lady who bless           |
| Caalaa           | The great man                |
| Calltuu          | The great female             |
| Araarsaa         | Negotiator                   |
| Araarsituu       | Negotiator                   |
| Lataa            | Buds                         |

## II. Use of Global Names as Afan Oromo Names

After 1991, adolescents who have an access to education and affected by globalization name their children in the way that the names are meaningful locally and globally. For instance, names such as *'Beekam'*, *'Feenaan'*, *'Firaanoli'*, *'Fira'ol'*, *'Ginenuus'*, *'Jajineet'*, *'Naa'ol'* and *'Roobeera'* are meaningful in Afan Oromo. In addition, the names are related to the name of foreigners and thus can have meaning out of the cultural context. In this way *'Beekam'* is related to the well known football player of England, *'Feenaan'* is related to South African football player, *'Jinenuus'* is related to the English word *genius*, *'Jajineet'* is related to the name Janet Jackson and *'Roobeera'* is related to Italian name. This mechanism of naming is borrowing and contextualization.

## III. Compounding and blending Afan Oromo Names and use it as a new name

In addition, Oromo people are currently giving names to their children which are uncommon in the culture but meaningful in Afan Oromo. They name their offspring by combining two or more Afan Oromo words that may indicate their inclination to foreign names and their nationalistic awareness. For example, *Naafi + Yaadii* are combined into *Naafyaad* and *Olii+ Biraa+tti* are combined into *Olibiraatti* and are used to name Oromo baby. See the following illustrations as an example :

| NO  | Root Words         | Formed Names  | Sex | English Meaning of the Names |
|-----|--------------------|---------------|-----|------------------------------|
| 1.  | Anaa + Toli        | Anatoli       | M   | Be Nice to me                |
| 2.  | Faruu+ Isaa+-fi    | Farruuisaaf   | F   | Praise to him                |
| 3.  | Fedhaa + Waqaa     | Fedhawaaqi    | M   | The will God(Waqaa)          |
| 4.  | Feenee+ Nutuu      | Feenetu       | F   | We want?                     |
| 5.  | Fira+ Oli          | Firaol        | M/F | Greater than Relatives       |
| 6.  | Horree+Nuus        | Horrenuus     | F   | We also ----                 |
| 7.  | Ifaa-itti+Isaan    | Iftisan       | M   | brightness will be by him    |
| 8.  | Kee +Beekii+Boonii | Keebekiboon   | M/F | Proud knowing your own       |
| 9.  | Lolii + Baasii     | Loliibaas     | M   | Fight and drive away         |
| 10. | Lolii+ Booni       | Loliiboon     | M   | Fight and be proud           |
| 11. | Naafi + Yaadii     | Naafyaad      | F   | Think for me                 |
| 12. | Olii+ Biraa+tti    | Olibiraatti   | M   | He is from up                |
| 13. | Robsee+ Inni       | Robseenni     | M   | He made the rain             |
| 14. | Sii+Yaadee         | Siyade        | F   | I think of you               |
| 15. | Yommii+-iyyuu      | Yommiyyuu     | M   | When ever                    |
| 16. | Hunda+ fi+ Giftii  | Hundaafgiftii | F   | Queen for all                |
| 17. | Seenaa + Tari      | Seenatar      |     | Pass the History             |
| 18. | Siif + Ani         | Siifan        |     | You and Me                   |
| 19. | Abdi + Borii       | Abdibori      |     | Hope for tomorrow            |

As the examples show, Oromo people are providing new names for their kids by combining words together using the different types of word formation techniques. The above names show double needs of the adolescents. On one hand, they need to make their children's name modern (new) and on the other hand, they need to keep their own culture by making the names to be meaningful in their own language. These mechanisms of naming are compounding and blending.

## D. Use of foreign Names as Oromo Names

Furthermore, some Oromo are currently giving names which are totally absent in their culture and meaningless in their own culture. Currently, they are calling their kids by the name of well known celebrity in the world whom they admire. One can find names such as *Sagna*, *Mandela*, *Obama*, *Robiniho*, *Rolando*, *Rooney* and *Fabrigas* as the name kids in some parts of Oromiya, even though they are not common in Afan Oromo. This kind of naming is borrowing. Some foreign names were borrowed from different languages and used to name the newly born of Oromo baby.

## E. Use of Religious Names to Name Oromo Child

As stated above, the educational policy and the constitution recognized linguistic, religious and ethnic diversity and allowed the practice of these diversity in various aspects of daily life. In line with this fertile ground, various religions started to flourish. People started to join the religion they are interested in. As the result, some of Oromo family started to name their child according to their own religion dogma. Others name their child with the names in different holy books such as Quran and Bible.

Example of names from religious books:

- **Mohomed**
  - **Ali**
  - **Zara**
  - **Jibiril**
  - **Fatuma**
  - 
  - **Abraham**
  - **Aster**
  - **Dawit**
  - **Pha'uloos**
  - **Laqaas**
- } **These the names are from Quran**
- } **These are names form Bible**

This kind of naming is borrowing. Several names were browed from the religious books and used to name Oromo child.

## 5. Conclusions

In this study, an attempt was made to describe the mechanisms and patterns of naming in Afan Oromo. To achieve this purposes different documents were analyzed and pertinent individuals were interviewed. The study revealed that the patterns and mechanisms of Afan Oromo naming during the pre-modern Ethiopia state building(before 1885) was based on the cultural and historical circumstances of Oromo people. During those time Oromo people had been giving Afan Oromo names to their children in the way that the names are meaningful in the cultural, linguistic and socio-economic context of Oromo. The mechanism of naming that had been used before 1885 was coinage. During Imperial and Socialist Regimes of Ethiopia( 1886-1991) Oromo people were forced to use Amharic for several functional purposes. Afan Oromo names were replaced by Amharic names. Oromo people forced to name their children in Amharic instead of Afan Oromo names. Hence, between 1886-1991 various Amharic names were used to name Oromo children. For examples, the names such as *Ababaa*, *Ayalaa*, *Tagagnee Kabadaa*, *Kasahuun*,etc were the borrowed names form Amharic. But their pronunciations were contextualized in to the linguistic properties of Afan Oromo. This kind of naming is borrowing and contextualization.

The naming pattern in Afan Oromo since 1991 can be seen under various category. After the coming to power of EPRDF in 1991, Oromo people started to give Afan Oromo names to their children in the way that the names are meaningful in the cultural, linguistic and socio-economic context of Oromo. This means Oromo start to re-use of Oromo Cultural Names to name their children. Generally, the names which are said to be origin to Afan Oromo like: Ibsaa, Ibsituu, Guddataa, Guddattuu, Ayyaanaa, Tolasaa, Tolashii, Ayyanatuu, Eebbisaa, Eebbisee and the like are given to Oromo children. Besides, adolescents who have an access to education and affected by globalization name their children in the way that the names are meaningful locally and globally. For instance, names such as *'Beekam'*, *'Feenaan'* *'Firaanoli'*, *'Fira'ol'* *'Ginenuus'*, *'Jajineet'*, *'Naa'ol'* and *'Roobeera'* are meaningful in Afan Oromo. Inaddition, Oromo people are providing new names for their kids by combing two or more Afan Oromo words together. For example, *Naafi + Yaadii are combined into Naafyaad and Olii+ Biraa+tti are combined into Olibiraatti and are used to name Oromo baby.*

The above analysis divulged that there are different naming mechanisms and patterns in Afan Oromo. It also appears that naming in Afan Oromo has been profoundly affected by various socio-cultural, religious and political factors. For this reason, the patterns and mechanisms of naming can be well understood by dividing it into three historical times. However, this study is not broad and detail. It is advisable to conduct detailed research on origins, types, meanings, mechanisms and patterns of naming in Afan Oromo.

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