



Full Length Research Paper

An Investigation into the Manifestation of Oromo Culture in Folklore: Focus on the Oromo Cultural Elements Reflected in Some Selected Afan Oromo Proverbs (*Mammaaksa*)

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Abstract

Oromo people have a well-developed oral literature such as myths, tales, proverbs, riddles, folk songs, etc. which have been socially transmitted from one generation to the other. Particularly, proverb (*mammaaksa*) is used by Oromo people as means of transmitting the culture, values and norms of the society. Despite these, there was little study conducted on the cultural elements of Oromo people reflected in proverbs. So, the main purpose of this study was to describe the cultural elements of Oromo people that are reflected in proverbs. To achieve this objective, descriptive research design was employed. Afan Oromo *mammaaksa* were collected from elders and documents using interview and document analysis respectively. Then, the collected proverbs were assessed for their relevance and appropriateness to the purpose of this study. Thus, only Afan Oromo proverbs that reflect Oromo cultural elements were selected and translated to English for analysis. Next, the selected proverbs were grouped according to related themes. Finally, the contents of the categorized proverbs were analyzed and interpreted thematically. The analysis revealed that different Oromo people cultural elements are reflected in Afan Oromo *mammaaksa*. For example, the analysis divulged that trust and friendship, truthfulness, self-respect and value, kinship and background, tolerance, advice, discussion, solidarity, sharing, etc. are reflected as some of the cultural elements of Oromo people. This shows that Afan Oromo *mammaaksa* reflects the diverse Oromo people cultural norms and values. Thus, it is recommended that proverbs should be collected together and documented in written form. It should be also included in the curriculum of the regional state so that the younger generation can learn proverbs in formal educational setting.

Key Words: *Afan Oromo, Folklore, Mammaaksa, Norms, Oromo Culture, Proverbs, Values*

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Introduction

Afan Oromo is the second widely spoken indigenous language in Africa, south of the Sahara (Mekuria, 1994; Mohammed, 1994). 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). Besides, Afan Oromo has long history of and well developed oral tradition (Feyisa, 1996). Despite of this and the size of its speakers as well as its value as a widely spoken language in the Horn of Africa, it remained as unwritten language for long period of time. As Tilahun (2006) stated "Until recently, Afan Oromo remained an oral rather than literary language." Consequently, there is little or no study that is conducted on the cultural elements of Oromo people as reflected in Afan Oromo proverbs. Besides, the past governments of Ethiopia discouraged the use of Afan Oromo for various formal purposes such as for administration, media and education (Dereje, 2010). Under the consecutive imperial as well as the dictatorial regimes of Ethiopia writing in other natives languages except Amharic was strictly forbidden. It was not permissible, to write, preach, teach and broadcast in the Oromo language in Ethiopia until the early 1970s (Mohammed, 1994:86). Various laws and proclamations were enforced to prohibited the use Afan Oromo from any official purposes such as for governmental works, media, education, etc. (Sheleme, 2016). However, after the downfall of the Derg Regime the language policy of Ethiopia was changed from monolingual to multilingual approach (Heugh, *et. al.*, 2007). Accordingly, Afan Oromo was chosen as the official language of Oromiya National Regional State and it is serving various new functions in governmental and private organizations. The change in the language policy of the country creates a fertile ground for the development of Oromo language, culture and identity (Dereje, 2010). Thus, it is rationale to investigate the proverbs in Afan Oromo that are used to reflect Oromo culture and to describe the cultural elements reflected in the proverbs.

Culture is the systems of shared beliefs, values, customs, behaviors and artifacts that the members of society use to cope with their world and with one another and that are transmitted from generation to generation through the word of mouth (Byram, 1989; Kattak, 2000; Duranti, 2007). It is the form of things that people have in mind, their modes of perceiving, relating and otherwise interpreting them. Thus, a society's culture consists of whatever it is that one has to know or believes in order to operate in a manner acceptable to its members (Byram, 1989). In short, culture is the integrated pattern of human knowledge, belief, and behavior, practices that characterize an institution, organization or group. In addition, culture consists of numerous elements such as: language, ideas, beliefs, customs, taboos, tools, art, values, attitudes, rituals, ceremonies and other related components (Kattak, 2000). These elements are habits and capabilities that are acquired by an individual as a member of certain society that can be reflected in various aspects. One way of reflecting culture is through folklore. Gaster as cited in Melakneh (2005) stated that folklore is that part of a people's culture is preserved, consciously or unconsciously, in belief and practices, customs and observances of general currency in myths, legends, and tales of common acceptance. So, it can be said that folklore is the tradition, art, knowledge, expressions and practices that is arts largely disseminated by word of mouth. In this way, folklore transmits the cultural values, morals and norms of one society to its next generation.

There are various genres of folklore. Some of the genres are crafts, fables, beliefs, myths, legends, tales, proverbs, riddles, ballads, folk art, dance, lullabies, sayings, parable, traditions, etc. Hence, proverb is one genre of folklore (Finnegan, 1970; Melakneh, 2005). According to Schipper (2006) proverbs have many characteristics that can be summarized as follows; proverbs are presented in concise and fixed artistic form, proverbs have evaluative and conservative function in society, proverbs have persuasive function, the origin of

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proverbs are unknown and proverbs express a supposed truth, or moral lesson. When we see their content, proverbs carry various themes which exist in a given country, language, or area. Thus, they are popularly used in many parts of the world. In addition, proverbs are often brewed across, country, language or religion (Finnegan, 1970). Though proverbs usually consist of one sentence, they are used to reflect different aspects of human life. The theme of a proverb is taken from our daily practical experience and real life situation.

Proverbs are used to reflect the beliefs, lives, philosophy, values, culture, works, identity, etc. of Oromo people. Thus, the study will enable us to understand how proverbs are used to divulge the cultural values and norms of Oromo people. It can be also used as an input by other researchers to conduct further studies in similar area. Proverbs are also used to reflect the daily habit, values and norms of human being which are considered as culture. This means proverbs reflect the culture of certain society. Therefore, the purposes of this study were to investigate the proverbs in Afan Oromo that are used to reflect Oromo culture and to describe the cultural elements that are reflected in the proverbs in Oromo culture folklore.

Research Design and Methodology

Research design

Descriptive research design was used in the description, recoding, analysis and interpretation of variables according to Alforque (2008). In addition, Glass and Hopkins (1984) stated that descriptive research involves gathering data that describe events and then organizes, tabulates, depicts, and describes the collected data. Therefore, descriptive research design was employed as it helps the researcher to describe and interpret the proverbs that are used to reflect the cultural elements of Oromo. Besides, qualitative data were collected via document analysis and interview and were analyzed thematically.

Focus of the study

The major focus of this study was to explore the proverbs in Afan Oromo that are used to reflect Oromo cultural elements. To describe the cultural elements of Oromo people that are reflected in proverbs, the researcher has collected various proverbs from different sources. Finally, only the proverbs that are relevant and appropriate for the stated purpose were selected and analyzed.

Methods of Data Collection and Analysis

Afan Oromo proverbs (*mammaaksa*) were collected from elders and documents using interview and Document Analysis. Semi structured interview was used to gather proverbs and to elicit the contents of the proverbs collected through interview. The interview was conducted with four elders on the basis of their adequate knowledge of the socio-cultural issues and oral tradition of Oromo people. Digital audio recording was used to record the interview data.

In addition, documents which are relevant to this study were assessed and analyzed. With this regards, books written on Afan Oromo proverbs (*mammaaksa*) such as Jildii-7(2007), Wiirtu Jildii-7(1995), Wiirtu Jildii-8(1999), Wiirtu Jildii-9(2001), Seenaa (2008), Taddese (2004), Tafarii (2001) and Soofiyaa (1999) were referred. Besides, some proverbs were added to the collected proverbs from personal experiences and observations. To analyze the collected data via interview and document analysis, first the interview data were transcribed and transformed into textual form by the researcher. Then, the textual interview data were combined with the data obtained from documents. After combining the two, the researcher assessed the proverbs for their relevance and appropriateness to the purposes of this study. Thus, only Afan Oromo proverbs that are used to reflect Oromo cultural elements were selected and translated to English for analysis. Communicative translation was used to translate the Afan Oromo proverbs to English. The communicative approach to translation seeks to make a translated text communicable to a reader. Accordingly, the communicative

translation was used by the researcher to make the text in the target language smoother, easier and communicable to the readers. That is, the translation was done in a way that they give an image or tell something to the reader in English.

After translating the proverbs to English, the researcher grouped the proverbs according to related themes. Two proverbs were only selected from each theme. Hence, in each category, the proverbs that were almost similar in their themes were discarded from the analysis. Finally, the contents of the selected proverbs were analyzed and interpreted thematically. The results, discussion and analysis data are presented in the next section.

Result and Discussion

As it was described in the foregoing discussion, Oromo people have a very rich culture. They express their culture in different ways – one of which is by using *makmmaaksa* (proverb). In this article, an attempt is made to explore how Oromo cultural elements are reflected in proverbs. To do so, Afan Oromo proverbs (*mammaaksa*) were collected from elders and documents using interview and document analysis. Then, the collected proverbs were assessed for their

relevance and appropriateness to the purposes of this study. Hence, only Afan Oromo proverbs that are used to reflect Oromo cultural elements and values were selected and translated to English for analysis. After translating to English, the proverbs were grouped according to related themes. Accordingly, 10 categories were identified. Finally, the grouped proverbs were analyzed thematically. Below is the result of the data analysis are presented.

Category One: Trust

In the socio-cultural life of Oromo people, trust is important. Seena (2008) stated that proverbs are used among the Oromo as the media through which the society teaches one another; controls social norms, customs and values; criticizes or comments on one another's personality and a mechanism through which behavior and norm is enforced and practiced to fit the socially and culturally constructed norms. Accordingly, proverbs are used by the Oromo to reflect that trust is valuable cultural norm of the people. The following proverbs are used to emphasize the value of trustfulness among the Oromo.

Table 1: Sample Afan Oromo Proverbs that reflects Trust and Oneness.

| No | Afan Oromo Proverbs | English Translation |
|----|---|---|
| 1 | <i>Hiriyyaan wal hinamanne, malkaa ceetutti wal kaskiffit</i> | <i>Friends, who do not trust each other, do solemn oaths on every spot.</i> |
| 2 | <i>Hatii mana hattu hintala hinamanttu</i> | <i>The mother, who cheats home, never trusts her daughter.</i> |

The above proverbs depict that in an Oromo culture value is given to trust and oneness. With this regard, the first proverb is used to express that in friendship mutual trust is important. If there is no trustfulness, it will be difficult to lead peaceful and successful life. The phrase "*do solemn oaths on every spot*" is used to indicate that lack of trust will hamper the normal journey that friends took together. The second proverb "*The mother who cheat home, never trust her daughter*" implies that if someone do not trust

him/herself, he/she will not trust others. In other words, "*if someone trusts him/herself, he/she will also trust others*". This shows that trustfulness starts from one self. The two proverbs reflect that trustfulness is a valuable cultural norm of the Oromo people. For this reason, youngsters and other members of society are encouraged to be trustful.

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Category Two: Tolerance

In the cultural belief of Oromo people tolerance is given a great value. The Oromo people assert that for things are not constant in this world, one has to tolerate the momentary occasions.

Culturally, the Oromo people believe that if one tolerates the momentary occasions or challenges, he/she gets good result at the end. The Oromo express tolerance as a cultural value in *makmmaaksa*. See the following examples:

Table 2: Sample Afan Oromo Proverbs that reflect Tolerance

| No | Afan Oromo Proverbs | English Translation |
|----|---|---|
| 3 | <i>Obsaan aannan goromsaa dhuga</i> | <i>The one who tolerates will drink the milk of heifer.</i> |
| 4 | <i>Galaanni darbuu sii hin nyatiin, jarsi du'aa gaha sii hin abaarni.</i> | <i>Let the temporary flooded river do not take you and let the old man who waits for his death not curse you.</i> |

In the first proverb, "*The one who tolerates will drink the milk of heifer*" the word "**heifer**" is used to indicate young cow and it takes long time for a young cow to have calf and to give milk. Thus, if one tolerates and waits for the right time, the tolerant will drink milk of heifer at the end. Accordingly, Oromo elders teach the younger generation to be tolerant and if one is tolerant, the reward at the end is good or positive.

only for a given time and then, return to its normal size. Till that the flooded river should be tolerated, unless it leads to lose of life. The phrase "*Let the old man who waits for his death not curse you*" also implies that if the old man who approaches to his death curse someone, it is difficult to get forgiveness after the old man dies. Thus, it is necessary to tolerate. Here, tolerance is reflected as the cultural element of Oromo. So, it can be said that Oromo people employ the proverbs to emphasize that tolerance to a situation can help someone to survive and lead long life.

Besides, in the second proverb the phrase "*Let the temporary flooded river do not take* " indicates that one has to tolerate a flooded river. Because, such flooded river will remain flooded

Category Three: Advice

Table 3: Sample Afan Oromo Proverbs that show Advice as a cultural element

| No | Afan Oromo Proverbs | English Translation |
|----|--|--|
| 5 | <i>Hima didduun du'a hin diddu</i> | <i>The one who refuses advice, will not refuse death</i> |
| 6 | <i>Olkaa'an fuudhan malee olka'an hinfudhan.</i> | <i>One takes tomorrow what he/she puts by today.</i> |

The Oromo people value the importance of elders' advices in the daily life as well as in the future generation. Accordingly, the Oromo elders use proverbs to advise their children about different important socio-cultural issues. In these proverbs, the value of advice is indicated. In the first proverb, "*The one who refuses advice, will not refuse death*" the importance of elders'

advice among Oromo people is reflected by comparing it with death. In the traditional culture of Oromo elders emphasizes accepting advice of someone is necessary and refusing the advice will lead to bad consequences. Thus, if one refuses the advice given to him/her by the community elders, he/she will not refuse death. Accepting an advice is portrayed as a way of

saving one's life. This can be also used to teach the young generation of society about the importance advice.

In the second proverb, "*One takes tomorrow what he/she puts by today*" the Oromo elders teach the younger generation about the

importance of saving something for the future. They underlined that someone will use what he/she saves in the past. Saving is culturally promoted. In both proverbs, the importance advice of elders is reflected as the cultural values of Oromo people.

Category Four: Hastiness and Slowness

Table 4: Sample Afan Oromo Proverbs that reflect the Discouragement of Hastiness & Slowness

| No | Afan Oromo Proverbs | English Translation |
|----|---------------------------------------|--|
| 7 | Jarjarranif abbaa dura hin dhalataan. | <i>Even though one is in hurry, one cannot born before his/her father.</i> |
| 8 | Kan suuta deemu qoreen suuta seenti. | <i>A thorn slowly gets into the body of a person who walks slowly</i> |

In Oromo society, being hurry or hastiness is discouraged. The above proverbs indicate that being hurry is not culturally accepted and younger generations are taught to act normally without being hurry. The proverb, "*Even though one is in hurry, one cannot born before his/her father*" used to reflect that even though someone is too hurry, he/she cannot do or achieve what he/she can normally do. That is, being hurry is not useful. This shows the need to be slow in the daily life or activity.

The second proverb depicts the value of carefulness in the socio-cultural life of Oromo people. The proverb "*A thorn slowly gets into the body of a person who walks slowly*" indicates that a person can save himself/herself from a problem when he/she is careful and slow in his/her actions. In other words, the proverb implies that hastiness leads someone into a danger or bad consequences. The proverbs reflect that carefulness and hastiness are aspects of Oromo cultural norms.

Category Five: Discussion and Agreement

Table 5: Sample Afan Oromo Proverbs that reflect the Importance of Discussion & Agreement

| No | Afan Oromo Proverbs | English Translation |
|----|--|---|
| 9 | Mariin malee, marataan mana hin bulchaan | <i>It is not being crazy, but via discussion that one can administer the house.</i> |
| 10 | Nama mannatti walii galetuu alaa waliin gala | <i>People who agree with each other at home can come back home together.</i> |

The Oromo have indigenous systems of resolving social, economic and political conflicts (Asmarom, 2000). They have been using these systems to live in peaceful co-existence with neighboring people. One of the systems is discussion. In Oromo culture discussion is given high value. Individuals are culturally encouraged to settle any disagreements and conflicts via discussion and negotiation. Any problem is

solved via discussion. That is why the Oromo elders say "*It is not being crazy, but via discussion that one can administer the house*". The proverb underlines the importance of discussion in the life of the individuals and society.

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Agreement or having common opinion is also valued in Oromo society. Thus, the proverb *"People who agree with each other at home can come back home together"* indicates that people who agree with each other in their localities or villages can obtain success when they work together on various activities. The proverb is used to depict agreement is the important to become fruitful in social life. Generally, the above two proverbs are used to depict the cultural value given for discussion and agreement in the Oromo society.

Category Six: Solidarity and Sharing

Solidarity and sharing are also the cultural elements of the Oromo that are reflected in proverbs. The people believe that it is necessary to establish a strong relationship with the other members of the society and to work together to become successful in life. Besides, the Oromo elders teach the youngsters to share what he/she have to the members of the society. The value of sharing and solidarity is expressed in the following proverbs:

Table 6: Sample Afan Oromo Proverbs that reflect the Relevance of Solidarity and Sharing

| No | Afan Oromo Proverbs | English Translation |
|----|---------------------------------|--|
| 11 | Kophaa dhiqanii xurii hinbaasan | <i>By washing alone, one can't avoid dirt.</i> |
| 12 | Kophaa nyaattuun qophaa duuti | <i>A person who eats alone dies alone.</i> |

The first proverb *"By washing alone, one can't avoid dirt"* reveals the impact of working alone and the necessity of working together to become successful in the activity one is performing. That is, the phrase *"washing alone"* is used to indicate working alone and *"one can't avoid dirt"* is used to reflect one cannot achieve his/her purpose. Hence, the first proverb *"By washing alone, one can't avoid dirt"* reveals that one may not be successful or may not achieve the objective of his/her life by working alone (without help other people). Through the proverb, the Oromo people show that for it is difficult to achieve an objective alone, it is essential for the members of a society to form a strong relationship with the members of a society and to help each other. This proverb reflects the necessities of helping each other to become successful in life. It appears that solidarity is suggested as a solution. This is expressed in the second proverb.

Besides, Oromo elders believe that kindness is important to live with others. They often use the proverbs to teach that the members of Oromo society should share his/her property with another Oromo family. With this regard, the second proverb *"A person who eats alone dies*

alone" shows that someone who is greedy and prefers to use her/his properties alone does not get along with others and obtain friends, therefore, remains alone in difficult situations. It indicates that sharing what we have to people helps someone establish a friendly relationship with them. The proverb *"A person who eats alone dies alone"* can be also seen in the context of helping one another or working together. Accordingly, it can be interpreted as *"A person who works alone, dies alone" means "A person who works alone will not be successful"*. This means that working alone leads to failure, but working together leads to success. In short, the two proverbs reflect that sharing and solidarity are the cultural norms of Oromo.

Category Seven: Truth

In Oromo society truth is given due attention. They value truth and believe that truth is long lasting. The people believe that if one follows the truth, there is no failure and he/she will be the winner in the end. That is to mean that a person with a grain of truth will not fail although he/she is challenged temporarily. According to the Oromo people, a person may hide truth for a short period of time, but it is impossible for him/her to obscure

it forever. Truth is bound to reveal itself after a period of time. For this reason, the younger generations are taught to stick to the truth via

mammaaksa. Below are examples with this regard;

Table 7: Sample Afan Oromo Proverbs that reflect the Importance of Truth

| NO | Afan Oromo Proverbs | English Translation |
|----|--|--|
| 13 | <i>Dhugaan ganama huqqattee galgala gabbatti</i> | <i>Truth looks thin in the morning but grows fat in the evening.</i> |
| 14 | <i>Dhugaan niqallatti malee hincabdu</i> | <i>Although it is thin, truth doesn't break.</i> |

In the above table, the value of truthiness is reflected as the cultural norm of the Oromo people. The first proverb "*Truth looks thin in the morning but grows fat in the evening*" shows that that truth will be evident in the end though it appears obscured in the beginning. That is, the proverb divulges that truth may be obscured at the beginning. It will be revealed at the end. The proverb shows in the Oromo cultural practices truth is considered to be valuable and long

lasting. The second proverb "*Although it is thin, truth doesn't break*" indicates that truth will not be destroyed at all. That is, even though it is suppressed at the beginning, it will never be destroyed. The proverb also reflects that truth survives and becomes the winner in the end. The proverbs show that truth is valuable in the socio-cultural life of the people.

Category Eight: Kinship and background.

Table 8: Sample Afan Oromo Proverbs that reflect Kinship and Background.

| NO | Afan Oromo Proverbs | English Translation |
|----|---|--|
| 15 | <i>Sanyii ibidaa daaratu nama guba.</i> | <i>The type of fire, the ash burns[man]</i> |
| 16 | <i>Hadhaa ilaalii hintala fudhii.</i> | <i>Marry the daughter seeing her mother</i> |

In these proverbs, the value given to kinship and background are reflected as cultural norm of Oromo society. In the first proverb "*A type of fire, the ash burns [man]*" a parallel comparison is made between fire and ash. This means that ash is the made or derived from a fire and like the fire, the ash also hurts human being. This shows the value that is given to the background of something.

of the woman he intended to marry at least for five generations. The second proverb "*Marry the daughter seeing her mother*" is used to reflect that in the Oromo culture, the background of the daughter's mother is studied before marrying the daughter. This because the background of the daughter can affect her behavior. Thus, the Oromo value the kinship and background.

Besides, in an Oromo society, marriage creates important alliance between the wife takers and wife givers. The two groups establish certain kind of family relationships. Accordingly, the Oromo people believe that that the background histories have relation with the present. Hence, the Oromo society specifically, the wife takers or bridegroom, seriously consider the descendants or ancestors

Category Nine: Self-respect and Value

Table 9: Sample Afan Oromo Proverbs that reflect Self-respect and Value

| NO | Afan Oromo Proverbs | English Translation |
|----|---|--|
| 17 | <i>Yaa soogiddaa offif yoo jette miya'ii yookaan dhagaadha jedhani siigatu.</i> | <i>Salt taste for yourself, unless you will be thrown away as a stone.</i> |
| 18 | <i>Sanga abban gafa cabsee ollaan ija jamsa</i> | <i>When the owner breaks the horn of his ox, the neighbor will destroy the eye of that ox.</i> |

In the culture of Oromo people valuing oneself is important. In the first proverb, '*Salt taste for yourself, unless they will throw away as a stone*' reveals that if you don't value yourself, others will not value you. This also indicates self-respect starts from home (oneself). In the second proverb, "*When the owner broke the horn of his ox, the neighbor will destroy the eye of that ox*" reflects that if one does not value him/herself,

others will not value him or her. That is, if one disrespects her/himself, others also disrespect him/her. The above proverbs show that the Oromo elders encourage the youngsters to value and respect themselves.

Category Ten: Strive/effort

Table 10: Sample Afan Oromo Proverbs that reflect Self-respect and Value

| NO | Afan Oromo Proverbs | English Translation |
|----|--|--|
| 19 | <i>Abban iyyatu malee ollaan nama hinbirmatu</i> | <i>If one don't cry neighbor do not cooperate.</i> |
| 20 | <i>Dhibee abbaan himaateef dawaa barbaadu</i> | <i>Medicine is given when an individual tells his illness.</i> |

The Oromo people often use proverbs to teach their children to make efforts. That is, Oromo elders use proverbs to encourage members of the society to make effort. Through the proverb; they make the individuals know that they should make every attempt to help themselves so that they can be considered as important and self-reliant persons in the society. The first proverb, "*If one don't cry, neighbor do not cooperate*" used to reflect that if someone do not strive or do not make an attempt, the neighbor will not support him/her. That is, if you strive or make an attempt effort, the neighbor will support you. The second proverb, "*Medicine is given when an individual tells his illness*" is used to show that solution is given when an individual tells his problem. Thus, making an effort is rewarded in Oromo society.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Oromo have very rich and distinct cultural elements that are shared among their members. One way of reflecting the elements of culture is through proverbs. Proverb (*mammaaksa*) is used by Oromo people as mechanism of teaching and maintaining cultural values and norms of the society. Accordingly, the main aim of this study was to describe the cultural elements of Oromo people that are reflected in proverbs (*mammaaksa*). The analysis of the collected proverbs revealed that different Oromo cultural elements are reflected in Afan Oromo *mammaaksa*. For example, the analysis divulged that trust, truthfulness, self-respect and value, kinship and background, tolerance, advice, discussion, solidarity, sharing, etc. are reflected as some of the cultural elements of Oromo people. This shows that Afan Oromo

makmmaaksa reflects the diverse Oromo cultural norms and values. Besides, the analysis shows that the proverbs reflect the daily habits, values and norms of Oromo which are considered as a culture of the society. Thus, the Oromo people use the proverbs to transmit their own cultural values and norms to the next generation.

The Oromo people use the proverbs to teach the youngsters about the social norms, customs and values of the society. This implies the need of teaching the proverbs to the younger generation so that the youngsters can grow up by knowing and practicing their own culture. To do so, proverbs should be collected together and documented in written form. It should be also included in the curriculum of the regional state so that the younger generation can learn proverbs in formal educational setting. This will, in turn, ensure the sustainability of the proverbs and the culture. As we are in the age of globalization, the contents of proverbs may be distorted and even it can be lost. Consequently, there is a need to study proverbs in detail and preserve it for the future generation. The proverbs analyzed in this paper are not inclusive as there are thousands of Oromo proverbs. Thus, other researchers can conduct further studies on the contents and implications of Afan Oromo proverbs.

Conflict of interest

The author didn't declare any authorship and financial conflict of interests regarding this work

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