



Typology of Oromo Personal Names

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Abstract

This paper addresses the typology of Oromo personal names and considers naming as an important aspect of the Oromo society. The present study looks at Oromo names within the idea of linguistics anthropology. It considers names are not arbitrary labels but sociocultural tags that have sociocultural functions and meanings. The data was collected from native speakers Afan Oromo languages. Qualitative research design, Ethnolinguistics research and an in-depth interview were employed. The data were analysed qualitatively. The analysis shows Oromo personal names have typology or semantic classification based on the how and when of naming a baby. The typology of Oromo names include circumstantial names, depict special physical appearance and Behavioral features at birth, names derived from animals, tempronyms, names associated with plants (flora names), names referring to agricultural work product and cattle amount, names referring to the Oromo days of a month, names reflecting joy and happiness, name denoting seasons, birthday names, seven days of a week, birth order names, names indicating birth Places, twin names, clan name, names referring to grandfather, grandmother, and great grandfather (ancestor's names), names associated with trees, political related names, and teknonymy.

Keywords: Oromo Naming Practices; Oromo Personal Names; Typology of Oromo personal names

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1. Introduction

Very little has been written about the meaning, cultural and social significance of Oromo personal names and naming practices [1, 2]. Even the existing published literature that deals with the topic [2] provides little descriptions about Oromo personal names, meaning, and their typological or thematic classification. Furthermore, to the best of my knowledge, there are very few published scholarly researches which deal with the thematic classifications or typology of Oromo personal names. Although there are few written academic materials pertaining to the typologies of Oromo personal names, a great number of Oromo oral literature surrounding the subject do exist, and are commonly in use within Oromo societies. This study is an aspect of linguistic anthropology based on the theory that there is a strong interface between a people's language and their cultural practices. The purpose of this research was to collect and describe Oromo personal names so as to put them into typology.

Ethiopia consists of a number of nations and nationalities or ethnic groups and ways of life. The Oromo people are the largest ethnic group in Ethiopia and account for 50-60% of the population of the Ethiopian state occupying the largest regional state of the federal state [3, 4]. The Oromo people are the largest ethnic group of Ethiopia. Highlighting on this, Gada Melba [5] states the Oromo are one of the Cushitic speaking societies in East Africa who are mainly found in Ethiopia, parts of Kenya and Somalia. The main economic activities of the Oromo people are cattle breeding and agriculture. As stated in the 2007 summary of population and housing census of Ethiopia, the Oromo people constitute 32.5% of the population of the country. The population is more than 25 million out of the 73.9 million of the total population of the country.

The Oromo people primarily reside over a vast region of Ethiopia, predominantly in Oromia region and in some parts of Somalia, Kenya and Gojjam. This people share common linguistic, historical, and the cultural way of life. Their common language is Afan Oromo meaning the Language of Oromo. Oromo language is low land East Cushitic language family of Afro-Asiatic phylum spoken in most parts of the Ethiopian state and northern part of Kenya [6, 7, 8]. This language is the third most widely spoken in Africa surpassed by Arabic and Hausa [5, 9, 10]. Being the third most widely spoken in Africa, Oromo language is also considered as one of the 169 critical languages of the world since it was under suppression and was on the verge of extinction [12, 11]

2. Naming Practices of Oromo

The name given to a baby distinguishes him/her and also incorporates him/her fully into the wider society [1]. Zelalem [13] argues that "in most parts of Africa, naming a child is a big ceremonial event involving the immediate families and sometimes villagers." Highlighting on the naming ceremony, Baye [1] stated that the Borena Oromo people give a name to a child in ritual ceremony which takes five days. He also indicates that the naming ceremony incorporates a child into the world of human existence. This is because of the fact that the naming of a child is seen as uniting an individual child with the ancestors and the society [1]. Likewise, a baby is bestowed with a name already existing or a new name from the lexicon [14]. The above statements may imply that naming among the Oromo people is the responsibility of parents, grandparents, relatives, and elder peoples. From the discussion one can understand that the name given to a baby could:

- distinguish him/her from the others serving as self-identification.
- involve him/her to the wider community or the physical world of human existence.
- attach a baby to society or ancestors.

Naming is a joyous occasion among the Oromo people because children are regarded as wealth and as means of continuity of lineage. People give a child a name which refers to courage, brave and wisdom. Personal names are important pointers of individuals in society. Parents of the child are principal actors. The name they give may generally be linked with the identity the child as he/she grows. That means the name parents give emanate from the social fabrics of their life [15].

In this view, naming a child among Oromo has a social context within which it is embedded and become parts of the name itself. As a result, names start with pointing individuals and move towards various people-or towards institutions relevant to the namer's "state of mind" or mindset. As a result, names are believed to have influence on the behaviour of the bearer. Agyekum [16] says that "names are important indicators of people's behaviour and ways of life." Accordingly, the name given to a baby is linked with the state of mind that the name givers may have which the namee is expected to manifest in his/her future life.

A name of a baby may have predictable influence on his/her future life among the Oromo people of the study area. In relation to this, Dafa'a Jamoo [17] states that the Oromo people give names to their new babies on the basis of observation of stars during the night. This is connected with the calendar system of the Oromo. In line with the above concept, Legesse[18] states that the calendar system of Oromo is based on the astronomical observation of the moon in connection with six or seven star moving together. Accordingly, there are 27 days in Oromo Calendar system within a month which has a fate. Every days of a month has its own 'ayyaana' which means fate. Ayyaana or fate of a day on which a baby is born is ayyaana guyyaa dhalootaa (the birth day's fate).The ayyaana guyyaa dhaloota hedaa (the birth date fortune teller) is called Ayyaantu. In this case, the time reckoning expert (ayyaantu) observes stars during the night and prophesize a fate of the day on which a new baby is born [17]. The fate can be predicted within 1 to 27 days. The day from 28 -30 are called unlucky or ill-fated days. Dafa'a Jamoo states that ayyaana heda has different meanings. Ayyaana heduu (fortune prediction) is predicting the fortune with which a baby is born [2]. When a baby is born, the father of a baby calls a young boy and makes him take a bar of salt, coffee, and spear to the ayyaana hedaa [17]. The symbolic meaning of carrying a spear is to announce that a baby who protects the country has been born. The ayyaantu receives the bar of salt and coffee as a reward. Then he sits under an Oda tree and ascertains the day on which a baby was born from the father of the baby and gives a name accordingly [17]. The name the ayyaantu gives to a baby coincides with the fortune or fate with which a baby is born. In this case, the name given to a baby may have connection with the baby's future life.

In addition to this, the Oromo people give a name to a baby via hammachisaa which means 'making a baby to be embraced by a kallu'. Accordingly *hammachiisa* is making a baby to be embraced and blessed by traditional religious leader (Kallu) and abba Bokku. The kallu embraces, blesses and gives a name to a baby. Then the spirit that comes upon the kallu may give a name to a baby. There might be no clear rules how the kallu names a baby. In relation to this, Baye [1] argues the divine power is involved in choosing a name for a baby. In this

case, the name giver is the Kallu. Apart from this, the Oromo people give a name to their children relating the name with the name of grandfathers', tribes' or clan's, and fore grandfather's name. This indicates, the names have a referential function. So, the above discussion suggests that the people of the study area may give name to a baby through hammachiisa or ayyaana heda which means that the name is related to the fortune or fate of the baby with him/her birth day and name him/her accordingly.

3. Research Methods and Data collection

Both Qualitative research design and Ethnolinguistics research were used. Qualitative inquiry typically focuses on in-depth investigation of relatively small samples [19]. An ethnographic research primarily focuses on participant observation through direct interaction and participation in natural social and cultural settings in order to gain an understanding of the people's worlds. An in-depth interview and direct interaction were used to generate the data. The collected data were analysed using qualitative data analysis.

4. The Typology of Oromo Names

Names are classified according to the social categories to which they refer and the meaning they convey. Besides, explanation of name givers' idea was considered as a single name can be chosen by different parents for different reasons. For example, guutaa which mean 'full' is a name given by some parents to indicate they do not want another baby. In this case, guutaa refers to the last baby of the parents. In contrast, the same name can be given to another baby by other parents who wish to be rich [2]. The parents may have expectations of unfulfilled wishes for prosperity. They expect that the wishes could be fulfilled after the birth of the baby. This implies the meaning of Oromo personal name is context-dependent. A single name can have different possible meanings when embodied in different circumstances of birth. This could further express that the exact meaning of one's name can only be found in the minds of the name-givers and the context of naming. As a result, I tried to classify Oromo personal names on the basis of their meanings or themes, how and when of naming.

4.1. Circumstantial names

Names in this category can be bestowed on the basis of the circumstances at the birth of the baby. The circumstances are related with the place of birth, events taking place at the time of birth, day of birth, season of birth and etc. Names under this category are grouped into: old age and wishes

4.1.1. Age Indicating Names

Personal naming pattern marks the time (year) in which a baby was born. Oromo people have different names for the baby they bear at old age. For instance, if the parents get a child at old age, the names they give indicate their age or the support they get from a child. Such names would be found in the following examples.

galgaloo (m) at the old'

galgalee(F) 'at the old age'

hinseenee (F) ‘unexpected during an old age’

dulluma (M) ‘oldness –refers a baby was born during an old age’

gaaddisaa (M) ‘umbrella and has pragmatic meaning of protector or supporter ,’

gaaddise (F)) ‘umbrella and has pragmatic meaning of protector or supporter

hirkisaa (M) ‘he who helps or gives support’

hirkoa(M) ‘supportive’

jaadataa(M) ‘remember , that means God remembered the parents during an old age’

jadatee F) ‘God remembered’

The above names are supposed to look after their family as well as to give due support during old age. They feed their family as well. To this effect, it is safe to say that children are considered to be like a ‘retirement fund’ at old age.

4.1.2. Names Which Indicate the Parents Wishes

Name givers bestow names which express their good wishes or hopes. Such types of names include:

čaalaa (M) ‘he who exceeds’

hundarraa (M) ‘he who is above all’

kumarraa (M) ‘ on top of thousand’/today’s thousand’

?irraanaa (M) ‘you are on top’

hawwii(M) ‘wish/desire/anticipation

jaadani (F) ‘aspiration/ambition’

The name-givers are expressing their appreciation, aspiration and wish for the bearers, parents, family, and the community at large through the name. In this sense, names reveal a particular emotion on the parts of the givers. The messages carried by the names may refer to situations at the time of birth or future expectation of the family as stated above. In this case, the expressions suggest that name givers express their aspiration, hopes, wishes, anticipation, etc via a name they give to a baby.

4.2. Names that Depict special physical appearance and Behavioral features at birth

Names encode the physical and behavioral characteristics of a baby during the first week after delivery. Naming does not usually take place on the very first day of birth. It takes place after a few days of birth. This depicts, people give a name to a baby without knowing whether the baby will grow short, tall, or attractive. Such kinds of names have metaphorical /extended meaning. See the following examples:

Names	Literal meaning	Extended meaning
ʔiftuu	light	come to bright life
fanosee	candle	beautiful, bright
k'abanee	calm and quiet	patient/tolerant
gommoooloo	bend over	'very huge/foolish'
birbirso	zigba tree	very long
bakkalčča	star	handsome/ big eye/attractive
magaallee	brown	beautiful/attractive
dungujee	a kind of onion	short and attractive
biiftuu	sun	very beautiful/nice-looking

The name *iftuu* literally means 'light' but metaphorically it expresses that a baby is light to the family. The baby is fortunate so that things go smoothly. The baby is the future hope of the family i.e. the family/name givers believe that there could not be any challenges. The name *bakkalča* literally means 'star'. Metaphorically it means a baby is very attractive, beautiful as its eye's is big. Big eye is one of the parameters of beauty measures. Similar to this, names like *biiftuu*, *magaallee*, *kuulanii*, *simboo*, *bakkalča* *faanose* etc are used to refer one's beauty. So, this analysis depicts that Oromo personal names has function both as referential and symbolic meaning. In support of this, Baye [1] states that the name of a person has both symbolic and referential meaning. In this manner, for instance, the name *biiftu* has reference to the sun but it has extended meaning reference to humans which means attractive and fortunate baby.

4.3. Names derived from Animals

Names of some wild animals are modified and given to babies depending upon the behaviour the child is expected to manifest. For example, a lion is the king of all animals. It is brave, strong and popular. Babies are given the name of a lion expecting that a baby could possibly be brave, heroic, bold enough, graceful and frightening. Babies who were bestowed on this kind of names could have symbolic and referential meanings too. The followings are some of the names.

Names	Literal meaning	Extension meaning
leenč'oo	the lion	brave/very strong/frightening
k'eeransoo	the tiger	heroic/fearless
waangoo	the fox	aggressive
hoolaa	the sheep	sympathetic/compassionate
<i>jaldeassaa/ jaldeassoo</i>	the monkey	'ugly/unattractive'
<i>re?ee</i>	the goat	'talkative'

The above names are metaphoric expression of attributes of animals extended to humans. For instance, *jaldeassaa* is a name derived from *jaldeassa* which means monkey. Monkey is an animal which is ugly looking. Babies whose names derived from such kind of names are not good looking. Thus, names derived from animals expected to exhibit the behaviour of the animals. This indicates that Oromo personal names are bestowed with purpose and expectation.

4.4. Names associated with plants (Flora Names)

The names of grasses and trees can be given to babies. For instance, *čok'orsoo* literally means grass but meaning extends to a baby born during the rainy season. During this time the grass grows, plants sprout, and flowers blooms. In the Oromo culture, grass is a symbol of growth, wealth and development. So, the name *čok'orsoo* has both symbolic and referential meaning to name givers. In naming, figurative languages such as simile, metaphor and symbolic expressions can have paramount importance. For instance, *čok'orsoo* literally means grass. This does not mean the baby is a grass. It is a metaphorical expression which has symbolic meaning indicating that the name-giver has an aspiration that a baby can grow, and develop both mentally and spiritually as well as in properties. The following are some of the names of this kind.

Tree/grass	Derived personal name	Meaning
čok'orsa	čok'orso	the grass
<i>?ejersa</i>	?ejerso	strong tree
soojjama	soojjamee	slender and attractive
marga	margaa/margee	develop and wealthy
?agamsa	?agamsoo	fighter/defender

walleensuu Walleensuu defender

4.5. *Tempronims*

The term is used to refer to the period, day and time at which a baby was born. Oromo bestow names based on the time of a day, day, weekend, season and period in which the baby was delivered. Supporting this, names which refer to time, days and seasons in which the baby is born are mentioned as follows.

Name	Meaning
galgaloo	born during the evening or dusk'
ganamee	'born at dawn or in the morning'
boruu	'born at dawn'
waarijoo	'born at midday/midnight'
daraaraa	'born in the Autumn'
?arfaasoo	'born during spring'
roobaa	'born during raining'
?arfaasee	'born in Easter'
jimaatee	'born on Friday'
Kamisoo	'born on Thursday'

4.6. *Names referring to agricultural work product and cattle amount*

Many Oromo people live in rural areas. Their culture is not flooded with other cultures. They are not acculturated. Many of them are farmers. They rear cattle and cultivate crops. As a result, they name babies which indicate this reality. There are many names that show the livelihood of the Oromo people like farming, cattle rising, and other works in the homestead. Names like '*sooressaa*' rich in amount cattle owns', *galaan* 'the ocean, which has a meaning extension of very rich, *kumarraa* 'person expected to raise thousand cattle', *badaadaa* 'very rich', *duuressaa*; 'affluent', *duurettii* 'rich' and so on are some of the names which indicate once prosperity in cattle amount or agricultural work product.

4.7. *Names referring to the Oromo days of a month*

Oromo people give names to their new babies on the basis of observation of stars during the night [18, 17]. This is connected with the calendar system of the Oromo people. The Oromos have their own lunar calendar system which is connected with observation of moving of star during the night. In line with this, In Oromo the thirty days of a month has its own name which has fate. Babies born on each days of a month named after the fate of that name [2, 17]. Some of the names are derived from the names of the days. The following are personal names which are derived from the days of a month on which a baby was born.

Days	Name	Sex
Basaa	basa:sa:	M
Basaa	Beseesee	F
Arba	Arbaayii	M
Dullačča	Dullačča	M
Salbaana	salbaanee	F
Salbaana	Salbaan	M
Gidaada	gidaadaa	M
Gidaada	gidaadee	F
Duurettii	Duuressaa	M
Bitaa	bitoo	M

4.8. Names reflecting joy and happiness

Names which reflect joy, happiness and gratitude are very popular in the Oromo culture. The Name-givers undoubtedly want to express their positive feelings after the birth of the child. Naming is a joyous occasion among the Oromo people since children are regarded as wealth and as means of continuity of lineage [2]. Parents of a baby are principal actors in this kind of naming. The following are some of the examples which reflect this. gammadaa ‘be glad’, gammadee ‘happiness’, *gammačiiiftuu* ‘she who makes glad’, ajjaanaa ‘lucky’, ajjaantuu ‘fortunate’, gammačču ‘happiness’, *and so on*.

4.9. Names denoting season

There are names which signify the season in which the child was born. The following names denote birth in which the child was born.

Name	Meaning
Arfaasee	(she)who born in spring
Gannee	(She) who born in summer
Gannaa	(He) who born in summer
Caamsee	(she) who born in Dry season
Birraa	(M) who born in autumn
Birraasaa	(M) Who was born in the Autumn

4.10. Birthday names (seven days of a week)

This naming pattern marks the day on which a baby is born. For instance, the following names are quite common in western Oromia: *Kamisoo* (male born on Thursday), *Kamisee* (female who born on Thursday), *Sanbatoo* (male born on Sunday), *sanbatee* (female who was born on Sunday, *ajjaanee* (female born on Tuesday), *Ayyaanaa*(male born on Tuesday), *jimmataa* (male who was born on Friday), and the same with the other day names. This naming pattern is mostly found in the rural areas because the options and sources of names are not as wide as in the urban areas.

4.11. Birth order names

There are a few Oromo personal names which indicate the birth order, i.e. the order of the child in the series of issues; for instance, the name "*Lameessaa, dabalaa, dabalee, ?ittaanaa*" indicates that the child's birth order is the second; "*ɖɖalk'abaa*" means the first. This kind of naming pattern works for the first and second child. When the number of the children exceeds two, it is named as follows. *Bayisa/bayisee* "multiply", *gurmeessaa* "gathering/collecting" etc.

4.12. Names indicating birth Places

This is a location (toponymic, habitation) names which is derived from the inhabited location associated with the person given that name. The personal names that belong to this category encode the feelings of the name-giver towards the birth place. When a name is given after a city or a country, it reflects the feeling that the name giver likes the city, birth place or country. Following are examples that belong to this category: *jimmee* 'one who was born in *Jimma*, *Galiilee/Galilaa* -one who born in '*Galila*', *Oromiyaa* 'Oromia-one who born in Oromia. Oromia is one of the regional states of Ethiopia.

4.13. Twin Names

Babies born with peculiar attributes are given special names that encode this information. Such names are given to twin babies. Twins are usually called by the similar name. Look at the following identical twins' name.

jiraa and jireeñña

jiraa (M) 'present/alive'

jreeñña (M) 'life'

gammadaa and gammačču

gammadaa (M) 'let you feel happy'

gammačču (M) 'it is happy/joyful'

The above names are given to male-son identical twins. jaalle and jallannee

jaallee (F) 'I loved'

jaallanne (F) 'we loved'

The above names are names of female identical twin. Since twins are physically similar and expected to have similar behaviour, they are given similar meaning names. The following are names of fraternal twins. The names of fraternal twins are again synonymous except the morphemes which indicate the difference of the two genders.

dirribaa and dirribee

dirribaa (M) 'two-fold or second'

dirribee (F) 'second baby-daughter'

dabalee and dabalaa

dabalee (F) 'adding to/two times'

dabalaa (M) 'adding to /twice/'

ʔobsee/ʔobsaa

ʔobsee (F) patient

ʔobsaa (M) patient

galaanaa/galaanee

Guutaa (M) full,

Guutee(full)

Sooressaa/soorettii

Sooressaa (M) the rich

Soorettee (F) the rich

4.14. Clan Name

There are personal names that point out the clan from which the baby is born. The clan names can be the names of brothers. As the brothers settled in various places they became clan names. The brothers who settled in various places became a clan and people were using clan name to their babies. Now-a-day a few people are giving clan name to their babies. The names would be given to a new baby owing to the fact that the parents love their clan. As a result, to show their love and respect for their clan, people give clan name to their babies. The following are some of clan names:

bariisoo, anno: guutoo, manni, bidaaru, diimmaa, waaajjuu, sap'eera, noonnoo, harruu, waarsuu, hoomaa, jomottoo and the like. This could also suggest that a baby should not marry from his /her clan. In addition, the clan names may be given to a person in order to perpetuate a previously bestowed name in the next generation. So, the name given to a baby has a social as well as personal value for the namee as well as the name-giver. In this case, clan names have both social and person deixis.

4. 15. Names referring to Grandfather, grandmother, and great Grandfather (ancestor names).

Some Oromo give the personal names of the deceased (the ancestors) to their babies since the babies resemble the features of grandfather or mother. Such kind of naming is a sign of remembrance of the forefather or mother. Besides, people choose the ancestors' name for the newborn baby since they realize certain features in the child are similar to those of the deceased. They also name their babies with the name of their ancestor to indicate the love they have for him/her. Through this name people remember the existence of the deceased people in their memory. Therefore, when parents decide to name their child in this way, the deceased should be a very close relative of the family, such as a great-grandfather or great-grandmother whom they like most.

4.16. Political Names

Political names relate to political situations at the time of birth of a child. They also express their intention for the future through names. The bearer of such names can easily be influenced by such names. The forthcoming examples illustrate some of these names.

mootii	(M)	'governor/leader'
bilisummaa	(M)	'freedom'
nimoonaa	(M)	'we shall win'
bilisee	(F)	'freedom'
dinajaas	(M)	'who drives out the enemy'

4.17. Names related to the existence of God

There are Oromo personal names which recognize the existence of God. Oromo people believe in super natural power which is called God. They bestow personal names that refer to belief they have in God. Personal names such as *čarroma*: (*Lucky*), meaning we are lucky to have this child from God, *amantii*, *amantee* (*Faith*), *amanuu*(*have faith in*), etc meaning it is through our faith in God that we have this child, *kennaa* (*gift*), meaning, this child was given to us by God, *jaalallee* (*Love*), meaning it is through the love of God that we have this child, *araarsoo* (*mediator*), meaning it is through the mediation of God that we have this child, *dinsaa* (*healer*), meaning it is through the healing of God that we have this child, *sibmoo* (*grace*) this to mean it is through the Grace of God that we get this child, etc refer to the existence of God.

4.18. Teknonymy

Teknonymy is a term that refers to a name given in a situation where a father, mother or grandparent is addressed by the personal name of his or her child or grandchild. In relation to this, Alford in [22] argues that the teknonymy is a practice whereby parents at the birth of their child cease to be known by their former personal names and are known as "father of" (child's name) and "mother of" (child's name).

Some people use a teknonym as a means of showing respect to the parents or grandparents of a particular child. It is seen as a sign of disrespect for one to address someone who is superior by his/her first name and therefore the use of the child's name is found to be most appropriate in this situation. Before any child is born, people address each other using title, e.g. *Obbo* /*Adde* + *name*, which is equivalent to the English Mr or Mrs, mostly affixed to the surname. *Obbo* + *name* is used to address people of male sexes where as *Adde* + *name* is used to address female sex. Most people prefer to use the names of children when addressing the parents and the grandparents of children. Parents in Oromo are addressed by the personal names of their children from the day when the first-born child is given a name. In line with this Anim's idea, the Oromo people address one another with their child. Most commonly it is the name of the firstborn baby that is used in this case. However, children who are in the same age level, call their friend name instead of calling the first child. For instance, as my informant disclosed, *gammadaa* is the first son of *guddataa*. *č'aalaa* is the fifth child. *č'aalaa* a 17 years old and is very popular in the community with his friends. As a result, his entire friend's call his father and mother of *č'aalaa* with a name called *father of č'aalaa*. The common word used is 'the father of' + a baby name or 'the mother of' + a baby name. It not only confuses the children; even some elderly members of the community do not know the

father names of their friends as they mostly address each other as the mother or father of (child's name). In this regard, as long as couples have children, there is no need to worry about their first names. In this tradition, parents feel respected if they are addressed by the personal names of their children, and are pleased as they understand that the community also recognizes them as parents and adults. See the following examples.

Abbaa gammadaa	'the father of Gammada'
Abbaa daččaasaa	the mother Dachaasaa'
haada margaa	the mother of Marga:
haadač'aalaa	'the mother of Dachasa
haadagalaanaa	'the mother of Galanaa'
ʔadde daraartuu	'the mother of Darartuu'
ʔobbo baač'aa	'Mr Baacaa'
ʔobbo lammeesaa	'Mr Lammesa'

5. Discussion

Oromo personal name system and practice is a marker of the people's belief, ideology, religion, culture, philosophy and thought. The names are best understood and analyzed when one has insight into the ethno-pragmatics, socio-cultural norms and the language and culture of Oromo. The Oromo personal names are therefore an aspect of linguistic relativity. In the philosophical sense, Oromo names refer to elements of Oromo human experience and ways of life. This paper has claimed that names are not mere arbitrary and meaningless labels but rather have indexical relationship to socio-cultural meanings and functions, places, time, people and events.

The classification of names into various categories as presented in this study strongly supports that the choice of names is based on social and cultural considerations. Agyekum [16] states that names have both social and cultural contexts which single out the bearer. This is to say that every person in this world has a name that solely identifies him/her from all other people in the world. In line with this, Guma [20] also states that names are expressions of social or cultural identity. He further argues that the expressive power of names are more than a word by which a person, place is identified. This could lead us to say names are not arbitrary lexemes or concatenated words rather words that reflect the world-view of the people. World-view, in this sense, is defined as the beliefs and thoughts of people about the world and the life of people within the physical world. Likewise, Oromo personal names express such beliefs and thoughts of the Oromo people and their way of life. That means names given to babies tell how they perceive and behave in the physical world. It embodies what babies would be and how they behave in the world of living.

The results of the analysis revealed that names of the Oromos have meaning. Hence the individuals who carry this name and since names have social meanings [20] are expected to live by the given name. The study revealed that most Oromo people give names such as *sooressaa*, *soorettii*, *dagaagaa*, *sooromee*, *kumarraa*, *kumajaas*, *dagaagoo*, *galaanaa*, *galaanee* and so on. The meanings of these names are connected with developing or becoming affluent in cattle wealth. This implies, to people of Oromo, a name given to a baby is anticipated to have an influence over a parent's and baby's future. In line with this idea, Agyekum [16] says that "names are important indicators of people's behaviour and ways of life." This helps to realize that Oromo personal names have influence on the character or life of the bearer. There was an Oromo whose name was akin to his behaviour. For instance, *ʔobsee/ʔobsaa* means patient. This person has calm behaviour. Besides, *bitoo* (left) was a man who is living in Haro-Limmu Woreda. He does the opposite of what he actually means. For instance, to bless he curses and to curse he blesses. This depicts that there is an inherent element in the name that corresponds to the bearer's mental and social behaviour. According to Zawawi [21] "a name constructs a person because the name one's bears may create an attitude in those who hear it before they meet the name bearer." Thus, it is justified to claim that once name can create either positive or negative image on the minds of the hearer [2].

The study revealed that the ayyaantu can remember and tell the exact day of a month by observing the moon and the collection of stars moving together. In support of this, Dafaam Jamoo [17] states that the Oromo people give name to their babies on the basis of the observation of the star in conjunction with the moon during the night. In line with this, Legesse [18] asserts that the calendar system of the Oromo is based on the astronomical observation of the moon and six or seven stars moving together. In Oromo culture all the days has a fate. The fate of days are associated with animals like dog, elephant, sheep, horse, hyena, tiger, monkey and things like soil, earth, water, milk, star, and moon [2]. A baby who is born on a day which is associated with a particular fate is expected to show the characteristics of the animal or the things [2].

Oromo personal names are given at any particular time of the day. Some of the given names, in this case, are of considerable psychological implications. Knowledge of a first name can in many cases convey a good deal of information about the person possessing it. It often gives a fairly good idea of the parent's age: a baby called, *galgalee* or *galgaloo* etc for example, are indicating that they are likely to have been born at old age. This shows that some personal names carry connotation of age. It may also provide clues about the time at which a baby is born: names like *dukkan*, *galgalee*, *waarijoo*, *waaritee* etc. indicate that they are born during the evening or at dusk.

Personal names have both symbolic and referential meaning [1]. The symbolic nature of Oromo names and their interpretation depict Oromo beliefs, fortune, wishes, aspiration and hopes. In logical sense, a name refers to a different element of human experience i.e. to an individual or a collective entity, which it designates or denotes [16]. Hence, a name is referential. In line with this, the Oromo names are referential. This means the personal names of Oromo refer very specifically (but without describing) to the person who had that name. In this manner, Oromo names are not arbitrary but purposive since they are based on socio-cultural and ethno-pragmatic contexts.

There are some Oromo personal names that are associated with certain places, time, season, weekends, days or months. So, people who gave birth on the days of the name accordingly (eg *Sanbatoo/sanbatee:Sunday; Jimaatee: Friday,Dafinee; Monday*).Or sometimes the fates of days of months of the year (according to lunar calendar) play a part in the choice of the child's name (eg *Beseesee, Ayyaanaa*, etc). Places' names, on the other hand, are often taken as personal names (eg.Jimmee, Lakamtee, Dichoo) ; Babies born on morning/dawn was given names like *Bariyoo, Bariitee*; babies born during night was given names like *Galgalee, Galgalooetc*, Babies born in season was given relating it with the characteristics the season will exhibit. In fact this is related with weather condition. Names such as *Arfasee* were born in spring, *Birree, Daraartuu* was named who born in Autumn, *Bonee* was given who was born in winter season and etc. As a result, the study concerned with the typological classification of Oromo personal names. The classification is based on their meanings or themes. Besides, the article discloses the socio-cultural implications of Oromo personal names.

6. Conclusion

Oromo people follow different traditions in bestowing personal names to their babies. The variation of naming practices implies that personal names are not selected haphazardly. Consequently, birth day fate, birth season, birth days of a week, haammachiisa and also the background of the family are all considered in naming a baby. The wishes, happiness and sufferings endured by the family are also taken into account. These indicate that Oromo personal names are not simply labels or references. They, rather, carry with them valuable information about the baby's future, fate, and behaviour. Further, it depicts the parent's belief, norm, religion, ideology and the culture and expectation of the community into which a baby is born. This may, in turn, indicate that Oromo personal names reflect the various social attitudes and relationships, life experience, social customs, and the way in which social groups behave toward their languages. Hence, Oromo names can be regarded as a means of perceiving reality and relating with facts of life and social existence of the people.

A name given to a baby is expected to express the parent's future wellbeing. That means the name of a baby is strongly connected with both the future life of the baby and his/her parents. A fortune, behaviour, life and wellbeing of babies are believed to be tied with the name bestowed to him/her.

A name tells a lot about the individual it signifies, the language from which it is drawn, and the society that ascribes it. In this manner, Oromo names indicate some linguistic structures and affixation processes found in the language, the position of the name's bearer in society, and the collective history and life experiences of the people surrounding the bearer of that name.

Thus, it can be concluded that Oromo personal names that are chosen and bestowed on babies have a meaning. Besides, the Oromo personal names are used as a means of communication and as an archive of important events that happen during the person's life. They are used to document all the experiences of a family or community or of the name-giver himself or herself. So, Oromo personal names are not only used to identify people but also play a greater role in addressing contextual meaning and tacit communication.

The typology of Oromo names includes circumstantial names, depict special physical appearance and Behavioural features at birth, names derived from animals, tempronyms, names associated with plants (Flora Names), (Names referring to agricultural work product and cattle amount, names referring to the Oromo days of a month, names reflecting joy and happiness, name denotes season, birthday names, seven days of a week, birth order names, names indicating birth Places, twin Names, clan Name, names referring to Grandfather, grandmother, and great Grandfather (ancestor's names), names associated with trees and Grass (Flora Names), Political Related Names, and teknonymy.

Oromo personal names are a multidisciplinary area of study for scholars in sociology, history, religion, anthropology, linguistics, ethnography and philosophy. It is an important area of the Oromo culture that should not be ignored in any sociolinguistic and anthropological studies.

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