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A Change in [ɗ] and Homonymic Extension in Oromo Language: Case Study in Some Dialects of the Language

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Abstract:
This study has explored a change in [ɗ] sound and the homonymic word extension in Afaan Oromoo selected Dialects. Afaan Oromoo has many dialectal variations of which Macha or western dialect is one. Among Macha dialect speakers of some northern parts, the [ɗ] sound is heard replaced by [ʔ] when the language speakers of the local residents pronounce words containing them. The general objective of the study therefore was to explore what new words would be formed when ever words containing [ɗ] sound is replaced by words containing [ʔ] sounds. For this study, the researchers have employed a qualitative data collecting method. The data collected from two elementary schools (grade 7 & 8) students of Oromo language speakers. The schools were selected in purpose as the data come from the schools were supposed to be saturate for the study. Data were collected totally from 200 sample students who were selected in random sampling by excluding students originally not from the study area. Techniques used in collecting data, different types of sentences were constructed using words containing [ɗ] sound and then presented the sentences to the students to read loudly in the class. Accordingly, every sample student was made to read at least one sentence loudly on turn-based. By this technique, the researchers were able to identify whether the students pronounce words containing [ɗ] in its sound in the constructed sentences. The finding of the study revealed that whenever words containing [ɗ] sounds are replaced by [ʔ] sound, homonymic words and unknown words are formed as a result. Therefore, regional government and educational bureau of the region Oromia has to work together to mitigate the homonymic conflict resulted from the happening.

Keywords: language change, dialectal variation, Oromo language, phonemes

1. Introduction

In micro linguistics, semantics deals with the study of meaning, changes in meaning and the principles that govern sentences or words and their meanings. As a branch of semantics, lexical semantics examines relationships among word meanings that how lexemes are organized and the lexical meanings of lexical items are interrelated. Homonymy, Hyponymy, polysemy, synonymy, antonymy and metonymy are different types of lexical relations (Rambaud, 2012).
Homonymy is defined differently by different scholars. Lyons, (1982; Richards and Schmidt, 2002; and Yule, 2006) define it as a term used in semantics for lexical items that are identical in spelling and pronunciation but have different meanings. According to these scholars, homonyms are the identical twins of language and therefore nobody can tell them apart just by looking at them. Only context can define or identify them.

For Hartmann and Stork, (1976) and Fromkin, et al. (2003), homonyms are different words with same pronunciation that may or may not be identical in spelling. This definition is partially similar to that of homophones. On the other hand, Watkins, et al. (2001) defines it just like defining homophones. According to them, it is words that sound exactly like other words but have different spellings. In this study, therefore, homonyms and homophones have given the same meaning and have been used interchangeable by taking into account the definition by Watkins and his colleagues.
A Language may basically have a slight figure of homonymous words and those words could possibly get larger and larger in course of time in the language. Even though evidences are not one and the same for all, there are scholarly stated assertions that how those homonymous words are become extensive in a language. Taylor, (1989: 29) says, "Homonymy is assumed to exist when the meanings of once polysemous[1] words become no longer recognizably related; or if two once phonologically distinct words become identical because of sound change".

For a sound change, which is presumed as one of the major contributing factors for homonyms to exist in a language, there is no simple explanation why it takes place in languages for. If one searches for literatures so as to identify its instigating factors for, the results will possibly end up with much speculations and little proofs.

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[1]Both polysemy and homonymy are lexical relations that deal with multiple senses of the same phonological unit. However, polysemy is used if the senses are considered to be related and homonymy if the senses invoked are considered to be unrelated.

On the other hand, there are scholars who talk about possible modes of sound change like regular sound change, lexical diffusion and merger in languages. According to Wang and his colleagues, a fundamental mechanism of sound change in a language is lexical diffusion; i.e. a phonological rule gradually extends its scope of operation to a larger and larger portion of the lexicon, until all relevant items have been transformed by the process (Chen and Wang, 1975). Labor, (2010) has also discussed about regular sound change and lexical diffusion as factors of sound change. According to him (ibid), regular sound change is the result of a gradual transformation of a single phonetic feature of a phoneme in a continuous phonetic space; and lexical diffusion is the result of the abrupt substitution of one phoneme for another in words that contain that phoneme. Merger is also raised and defined by these scholars (ibid); a merger is taken to exist when two systemic sounds which were distinguished by speakers come not to be so for, they become a single sound. Mergers always involve the collapse of a phonemic distinction by one sound becoming identical with another.

Linguists have long recognized that homonymy has a sensible synchronic bearing on the communicatory efficacy of a language and it leads to the loss of one of the words involved in a clash of homonyms (Coates, A. W. 1968). In addition to that, it is eristic and controversial issue in learning and teaching activities among students and teachers too. That is because, learners may encounter some difficulties to get the correct meaning of homonyms in contexts and learning homonyms for children is more slowly than other new words (Mazzocco, 1997).

In Afaan Oromoo (Oromo language) spoken, particularly in some areas of central and Eastern dialect speakers and with special focus in western dialect, commonly known as macha dialect, of some parts of Wallaga, the [ɗ] sound is heard replaced by [ʔ] when the language speakers of the local residents pronounce words containing those phonemes. For instance, if a person from those typical areas talks to speakers of other dialects of the language or when university students originally from those areas make a class presentation on their course projects, their classmates who share the same language with different dialects would be laughter of them as some words of Oromo language they speak have no [ɗ] where actually it had to have. When this happened to them, the speakers feel ashamed as they are unhappy to hear that they are clearing off a sound of the language unconsciously and therefore, they attempt to convince their friends or classmates saying 'we know the sound you are condemning us about for omitting from our common language; but we are not doing as you are blaming us that we did so; We didn't actually omit the sound from the language and will not do it too. Anybody of a speaker of the language can see what we compose and that can confirm him/her whether or not we actually omitting the sound. Others still say, 'there was no difficulty in the past and will not be occurred in the future too, with using [ʔ] by replacing [ɗ] in the language and therefore the blameworthiness of the subject coming from hair-splitters is worthless'.

Moreover, in some gatherings where Afaan Oromoo is a medium of conversation for and if a speaker from [ɗ] clearing dialect have a talk among friends, it is common for the friends to replicate words containing the sounds as a joke in the middle of the conversation just to give a signal that the speakers have merged two different sounds in a word. Even sometimes while hearing formal speech from a person of that typical locality, audiences from same language may be observed whispering to each other to witness that they are hearing something uncommon in their language. However, the intention for whispering from the side of the audiences is not just to oppose the speaker but as the sounds of the words would make them fun.

However, in the language, when words containing /ɗ/ are replaced by /ʔ/ extra homonymic words are occurred. Normally, homonym exists in Oromo language even though not to larger extent. For example, in Afaan Oromoo, 'Afaan' represents two concepts, one, an English equivalent meaning 'mouth', and the second 'Afaan' is to mean 'language'. If we take a statement said or written in Oromo language as, "Afaan isaa dubbate" the English equivalent meaning (he spoke his language or his mouth spoke), we can't be sure whether the word 'Afaan' in the statement is to mean mouth or language. Another instance, 'soquu' has an English equivalent meaning of 'searching for' in some areas of central dialect of the language and has a meaning of 'hewing a trunk by axes or cutting off grasses' among other dialects. For example, if a statement in Afaan Oromoo says, "Mukicha soqeen fide", it is to mean either a) I brought the trunk in searching or b) I brought the trunk after hewing. A word 'haadhoo' is another evidence to raise here as a homonymic word. 'Haadhoo' in Afaan Oromoo is a generic word that to mean own brother or sister in its first meaning. The second meaning is to mean female hens, goats or sheep that has produced offspring/s at least once. For instance, if a statement says in Afaan Oromoo, 'haadhoo hingurguran', the English equivalent is either to mean, 'an animal, (hen, goat, sheep), producing an offspring/s must not be allowed for sale' or 'brothers/sisters are not to be betrayed'. Moreover, a word 'dhaame' is another homonym in the language which mean 'switched off' and 'send a message'.

When we look into homonyms made of phoneme /ʔ/ replacing the /ɗ/ in words containing it, they are much in number and less is to be presented here. For example, [ɗadde:] which has an equivalent English meaning of 'Porcupine' is pronounced as [ʔadde:] among the speakers of dialects in investigation. [ʔadde:] has an English equivalent meaning 'lucky, chanceful'. Therefore, [ʔadde:] represents for the speakers of the dialects in investigation, both 'Porcupine' and 'lucky or chanceful' concepts. To add one more example, [ɗala] in Oromo language mean 'Kid' or 'Child' in English and this word is pronounced among speakers of the study area as [ʔala]. [ʔala] in the language has an English equivalent meaning of 'Abroad' or 'Outside'. Therefore, among the speakers of the dialects of the study areas, the word [ʔala] mean both 'Kid' or 'Child' and 'Abroad' or 'Outside' as well.

Therefore, the purpose of this study is to explore homonyms that are occurred by replacing /ɗ / with /ʔ/ in the words containing the phonemes in the Oromo language of some dialects especially Macha or western dialect.

2. Review of Literatures

2.1. 'Afaan Oromoo' (the Oromo Language)

Afaan Oromoo 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). According to Kebede, (2009) it is spoken by more than 40 percent of Ethiopian population and used by different nationalities such as Harari, Sidama, Anuak, Gurage, Amhara, Yem, Dawuro, Zay and others as a means of communication and trade with their neighboring Oromo people. The language is spoken also in Kenya, Somalia, Sudan and Tanzania (Tilahun, 1993).

Afaan Oromoo is spoken in a vast territory of Ethiopia ranging from Tigray in the North to the Central Kenya in the South, and from Wallaga in the West to Harar in the East and based on the geographical areas where it is spoken; the language shows variations (Ali and Zaborski, 1990). Such variations are termed as regional dialects. Different attempts have been made by scholars to classify the dialects of Afaan Oromoo based on the geographical background of the speakers. The most recent attempt made at classifying and mapping its dialects is by Kebede, (2009). He conducted a detailed study on the genetic classification of the language and concluded that there are ten genetic units in the language. Among these, six of them are the present dialect areas (i.e., Western, Central, Eastern, Wallo, Raya-spoken in Ethiopia and Waata-spoken in Kenya) and four of them (i.e., East, South-East-North, North, North-East) are historical genetic units from which the former developed. Western dialect is commonly known as macha dialect on which this study has made focus.
Afaan Oromoo has 29 segmental phonemes. Among these, five of them are vowels and the remaining 24 are consonants. The 29 phoneme inventories of the language are: a /a/, b /b/, c /c'/, ch /c/, d /d/, dh /ɗ/, e /e/, f /f/, g /g/, h /h/, i /i/, j /ʤ/, k /k/, l /l/, m /m/, n /n/, ny /ɲ/, o /o/, ph /p'/, q /k'/, r /r/, s /s/, sh /ʃ/, t /t/, u /u/, w /w/, x /t'/, y /j/, '/ʔ/. In Oromo, there are five sounds that are used only in loan words, but are not parts of the phoneme inventories of the language. These are p /p/, v /v/, z /z/, zy /ʒ/ and ts /s'/ (Fikadu, 2014 citing Bekamaa, 2004 & Getaachoo, 2006). In each pair, the first letter shows the grapheme representation of the nearby phoneme. As can be seen from the order pairs, both consonants and vowels are regular in their grapheme representations. Vowel length and geminates are distinctive phonemes in the language. Diphthongs (double discrete vowels) do not occur, and consonant clusters are attested although highly restricted. The syllable structure of Oromo can be schematized as follows: CV, CVV, CVC, and CVVC where C is a variable for 'consonant' and V is a variable for 'vowel'. Many (but not all) Oromo nouns inflect for gender (masculine, feminine, neuter), while all inflect for number (singular, plural) and case (nominative, accusative, dative, genitive, instrumental, locative, ablative, and vocative). Likewise, for pronouns, which also inflect for person, verbs inflect for person, gender, number, tense-aspect, mood, and voice. Tense marking does not play a major role in the language – the language divides events in time in two ways: complete (perfective/past) and incomplete (progressive – involving the present or future). Compound tenses are possible and are formed with a variety of auxiliary verbs. Several grammatical moods are attested: indicative, interrogative, imperative, and jussive (a directive mood that signals a speaker's command, permission, or agreement).

The voice system of Oromo involves three voices: active, passive, and the so-called semi-passive. Adjectives form a very small class in the language and inflect for gender and number. Nouns are typically used attributively to achieve the effect of adjectival modification. Adverbs form a large class of expressions in the language and bear case morphology. Both prepositions and postpositions exist, however, the use of postpositions is preferred and occurs with a higher frequency than the use of prepositions. Regarding word order, Oromo is an SOV (subject, object, and verb) language. Nouns precede modifiers, articles, pronouns, and case markers. Verbs follow their noun phrase arguments and occasionally their modifiers (Toleera et al, 1993; Namee, 1993; Dejene, 2010).

2.2. Homonymy

According to Ahmed, et al (2010) citing Lyons (1982: 72; Oxford Wordpower 2000:366; Richards and Schmidt 2002:241; and for Yule, (2006: 107) define homonymy as a term used in semantics for lexical items that are identical in spelling and pronunciation but have different meanings. this definition does not involve anything about homophones and homographs; in addition, it creates a problem with polysemy. Hartmann and Stork (1976:105, Atichison 1993:52, and Fromkin et al. 2003: 71) agree that homonyms are different words with the same pronunciation that may or may not be identical in spelling. Thus, they give them a definition that is partially similar to that of homophones. On the other hand, Watkins et al. (2001:269) define it just like defining homophones, i.e., "words that sound exactly like other words but have different spellings" in spite of the fact of not naming them 'homophones'.

Gramley and Pätzold (1992:13) on the other hand, define homonymy as "the existence of different lexemes that sound the same (homophones, e.g. days/daze) or are spelt the same (homographs, e.g. lead (guide)/lead (metal)) but have different meanings." In this way, they divide them into homophones and homographs. This is the definition that is adopted in this research.

2.3. Types of Homonyms

Homonyms that have the same pronunciation and the same spelling i.e. the identity covers spoken and written forms are commonly known as complete homonyms. Classic examples are bank (embankment) and bank (place where money is kept) (Lyons 1982:72 and Allan 1986:150). In another hand, they are called partial homonyms if they are those where the identity covers a single medium, as in homophony and homography. Thus, homophones and homographs are considered partial homonyms (Crystal 2003:220). Watkins et al. (2001: 269) differentiate between homonyms and what

they call 'near homonyms'. According to them homonyms are words that are "exactly" alike in pronunciation but differ in spelling and meaning, e.g. 'morning' and 'mourning'; 'there' and 'their', while near homonyms do not sound exactly alike, e.g. except and accept; loose and lose.

There are also homonyms called word homonyms. These are homonyms where all the forms of a paradigm and its collocation possibilities are identical. Thus, one does not get any indication of their belonging to one word or the other. Such homonyms are generally found in words belonging to the same part of speech. Examples are seal and seals (plural of seal which is an animal) and seal and seals (plural of seal which is an impression placed on things to legalize them). In addition, the possessive forms of these words, i.e., seal's are identical (Singh 1982: 24).

When the homonyms belong to the same part of speech, they are called lexical homonyms. The difference is only in their lexical meaning. They must come in one entry in the dictionary (Singh 1982: 25). For example, trunk (part of an elephant) and trunk (a storage chest).

When the difference between homonyms is not only confined to the lexical meaning but the grammatical types are also different, they are called grammatical homonyms. They are given separate entries in the dictionary. In these cases, the words have similar canonical form but different paradigms and structural patterns. Verbs occurring as transitive and intransitive or lexical units that occur as nouns, verbs, adjectives, etc. (e.g. cut (v.), cut (n.), cut (adj.)) are examples of such homonyms (ibid.).

2.4. Sound Change as Factor for Homonyms Formation

The classic instance of homonym clash leading to the complete loss of a word is the development of terms for 'rooster' in the Gascon dialects of southwestern France, as described by Bloomfield, (1933:396-8). Over a large area of southern France, reflexes of Latin gallus are found, one common form being gal. In Gascony, however, this term does not now occur, but has been replaced by terms originally meaning 'pheasant' and 'vicar'. Gilliéron and Roques point out that in this same area a sound changes of final [11] to [t] has taken place, so that gal would appear as gat; this, however, would conflict with gat 'cat', and so it was replaced by the 'peculiar' terms. What clinches the argument is the fact that the isogloss separating the 'peculiar' terms from gal coincides exactly with the isogloss for the sound change.

3. Materials and Methods

Horo Guduru Zone, the site of this study, is consists of 12 districts and 'Shambo' where school samples selected from are Zonal capital. Two elementary schools in Shambu town were selected from the study site in purposive sampling. Why the schools were selected in purposive sampling was that the data that would come from the Zonal capital were supposed to be saturate for the study. Grade 7 and 8 was selected in purposive sampling as that level is a transitional from elementary school level, where students' mother tongue is medium of instruction, to secondary school, where students' mother tongue is stopped to be used as medium of instruction. From both schools of both grades, totally 200 samples of students were selected in random sampling by excluding students originally not from the study area.

The data used in this study were elicited from 'Elellee', an Oromo–English-Amharic trilingual advanced dictionary. The dictionary was first published in 2009 and has got its fifth edition in 2010. It has 93,000 compiled words and this makes it the largest trilingual Oromo–English-Amharic dictionary so far. This study used the dictionary for the author has confirmed that he has had to consult numerous dictionaries, textbooks, encyclopaedias and magazines.

The researchers first looked up and sorted out words that contained [ɗ] sound in the dictionary. After sorting out the words, different types of sentences were constructed using those words and then presented the sentences to the students to read loudly in the class. Accordingly, every sample student was made to read at least one sentence loudly on turn-based. By this technique, the researchers were able to identify whether the students pronounce words containing [ɗ] in its sound in the constructed sentences. Another technique was also used to elicit unwritten data from the sample students. Accordingly, students were made in groups of each member 5. Then, issue for debate was given to them and the group members conducted a 30-minute bit long time debate among themselves one by one in turn. Finally, the data have been phonemically and phonetically transcribed and descriptively analyzed.

4. Results and Discussions

Sentences presented to the study samples to read were all constructed based on words that contained [ɗ] sound and those kinds of words are normally large in number in the language. When the students read those sentences, the [ɗ] sound in all words were changed to [ʔ] sounds and as a result evidently different homonymic word conflicts were heard. By that change of [ɗ] sound to [ʔ] in the words, the occurrence was not only the formation of homonymic words but also formation of words which are uncommon to speakers' other dialects of Afaan Oromoo. The following are different incidences how words containing [ɗ] sounds were changed to [ʔ] and the formation of different words.

4.1. Formation of Homonymic Words When [ɗ] Changed to [ʔ] in the Words Containing Them

When the sentences which were provided to sample students were analyzed, some of them were understood with no sentence ambiguity whereas others were very ambiguous. Even though a sentence ambiguity may come because of many factors, the case for the sample sentences constructed for this study were by homonymic nature of the words containing [ɗ] sound in it. Accordingly, the following table presented some homonymic words that sorted out from [ɗ] sound containing words in the language.

No.	Orthographic Form	Phonetic Form		Newly Formed Words with Changing [ɗ] to [ʔ]	
		Words	English Equivalent Meaning	Words	English Equivalent Meaning
1	badhaasaa	[bɑɗɑ:sa:]	Benefactor	[bɑʔa:sa:]	His/its load
2	dha'uu	[ɗɑʔu:]	hitting	[ʔɑʔu:]	Throwing
3	dhaala	[ɗa:lɑ]	Heritage	[ʔa:lɑ]	Culturally banned
4	dhaanaa	[ɗa:na:]	Somebody hitting someone	[ʔa:na:]	District
5	dhaddee	[ɗadde:]	Porcupine	[ʔadde:]	lucky, chanceful (adj)
6	dhadhaa	[ɗaɗa:]	Butter	[ʔaʔa:]	one who throws something
7	dhala	[ɗalɑ]	Kid, child, offspring	[ʔalɑ]	Outside, abroad
8	dhalaa	[ɗala:]	Female	[ʔala:]	Unpleasant smell
9	dhangaa	[ɗɑŋga:]	Meal, food	[ʔɑŋga:]	authority
10	dharraa	[ɗarra:]	A powerful desire for something, craving	[ʔarra:]	An expression to say don't be defeated
11	dhayii	[ɗɑji:]	a barrier typically of wood, enclosing an area of ground to prevent access, Fence	[ʔaji:]	An expression to regret
12	dheeraa	[ɗe:ra:]	Long	[ʔe:ra:]	Informant
13	dheessa	[ɗe:ssɑ]	Escaping, fleeing	[ʔe:ssɑ]	Where
14	dhiibuu	[ɗi:bu;]	Gorge, valley	[ʔi:bu;]	Pushing
15	dho'aa	[ɗoʔa:]	Explosive	[ʔoʔa:]	Warm
16	dhooftuu	[ɗo:ftu:]	Hairdresser	[ʔo:ftu:]	Animal shepherd
17	dhoosuu	[ɗo:su:]	To make exploding	[ʔo:su:]	To make roaring
18	dhotuu	[ɗotu:]	Over eating, consuming much	[ʔotu:]	If, something that is not certain: something that could either happen or not happen
19	dhuka	[ɗʊka]	Marrow, Armpit, a hollow under the arm	[ʔʊka]	Favor, goodwill, benevolence
20	dudhaa	[dʊɗa:]	Value, legacy	[dʊʔa:]	Dead, lifeless
21	fedhame	[feɗǎme]	Interested	[feʔǎme]	Loaded
22	gadhee	[gaɗe:]	Bad, immoral	[gaʔe:]	Role, Share, contribution
23	gadhiisuu	[gaɗi:su:]	Releasing, letting go	[gaʔi:su:]	Deriding
24	haadha	[ha:ɗa]	Mother	[ha:ʔa]	Muck, dirt
25	hidhii	[hɪɗi:]	Lip	[hɪʔi:]	Expression for refusal
26	hodhaa	[hoɗa:]	Wicker, Sewing	[hoʔa:]	Hot, warm
27	kadhaa	[kɑɗa:]	Praying, begging	[kɑʔa:]	removable
28	midhaan	[mɪɗa:n]	Crop	[mɪʔa:n]	by material

Table 1: Homonymic Word Formation when [Ɗ] changed to [ʔ]

As data of the study show, [ɗ] sound in words of Afaan Oromoo elicited from 'Elellee', trilingual Oromo-English-Amharic dictionary, are mostly found at word initial position. It also is evidence about the sound that there are some words having it at their middle position and are none at their word final. Accordingly, of the words presented on the table 1 above, many of them are with [ɗ] sound at their word initial. The Words used in this study are mostly nouns, either proper or gerund, and are frequently used ones in day to day communication of the language speakers. By the fact that the language was unable to become school language until a couple of decades back, some words on the table are strange to speakers of the locality dialect who neither have convenient situation to learn recently standardized words of the language because of the language has come to be educational language in the region nor have access to move where different dialects of the language are spoken. For instance, the word 'dhukkee' [2] and some others are not from the study dialect.

In Afaan Oromoo, when [ɗ] sound comes at word initial and followed by any of the vowel phonemes of the language (a, aa, e, ee, i, ii, o, oo, u, uu) or appeared at middle position as word cluster, the change of it to [ʔ] sound is realized without any influence of the preceding or following phonemes. Speakers of the study dialect were heard pronouncing all the [ɗ] sound in words containing them replacing by [ʔ] sound regardless of its position in the words. According to Weinreich, U. (1968), when a sound change occurs generally and is not dependent on the phonetic context in which it occurs, it is termed as unconditioned. Unconditioned sound changes modify the sound in all contexts in which it occurs. Therefore, the sound change observed by replacing all the [ɗ] sound of any context with [ʔ] sound in Afaan Oromoo could be seen in that manner.

However, what left paradoxical to the researchers and which actually needs farther detailed research work concerning the replacement of [ɗ] sound with [ʔ], was the maintenance of /dh/ phoneme in the written text of the sample students. When the researchers scanned over the written texts of the students, words those containing [ɗ] sound were seen being represented by the orthographic representation of the phoneme, /dh/. The sample students and educators who were originally from the study dialect help to explain how that comes, saying; 'the students don't know [ɗ] sound before they come to school. Once they learned the sound at school with its orthographic representation, they use it in their writing; but when pronouncing the sound in the words having them, they totally replace it with [ʔ] sound.'

In Afaan Oromoo, there normally are homonyms and examples were raised in the introduction section of this study by taking lexicons like 'Afaan, soquu, dhaame, haadhoo' and the like to indicate that they are homonyms. But there

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[2] in the table 2

are no research-based evidences so far in indicating that the speakers of the language are notably suffering of homonymic word clashes. To go deep with the issue and indicate what could be the effect on the language of the coming generation, it is worth mentioning what scientific literatures say about. Accordingly, from linguistic point of view, it is long discussed topic whether the conflict of homonyms can be considered the cause of different linguistic phenomena. From the very first studies the proponents of the homonymic theory defended that the conflict existed and had several consequences as a result. But others claim that the conflict of homonyms took place under practically any circumstances. According to them, the clash will only take place when both words belong to the same part of speech and to the same sphere of thought. The experts added that the amount of homonym words in a language also determinative in bringing about effects in the language (Menner, 1936). Therefore, even though the intention of this study was not to disclose the effect of homonymic words in Afaan Oromoo, it is worthy in revealing an extension of homonymy in the language and therefore the language experts can act to in accordance with linguistic therapy.

Based on the table 1 above, there are extended homonymic words that have come to be formed as a result of change in only [ɗ] sound to [ʔ] sound in the study dialect. When sorting out those homonymic words into their parts of speech, almost more than 80% of them are nouns, proper or gerund; even though very few adjectives and prepositional adverbs are appeared. The reason for making the sample words to be nouns were that scholars argue for homonymic conflict to be occurred, the words have to be from similar parts of speech. According to Menner, (1936), "the clash of homonymy would only take place when both words belong to the same part of speech and to the same sphere of thought. By looking at the words on the table, one can understand the homonymic word meanings which of each word can have in its lexeme unit. But to make the homonymic word conflict clearer, here are some examples in which the words are presented in sentences. All the sentence examples which were instructed by using homonymic words were not presented here; only some selected are presented as follow.

Example
- [ɗaːlɑ] dhalootaaf dabarsuun barbaachisaadha. (Heritage should be passed to next generation)
- [ʔaːlɑ] dhalootaaf dabarsuun barbaachisaadha. (What culturally banned should be passed to next generation)

In Oromo culture, though not exclusively Oromo, the living generation is not encouraged to consume totally what it had been inherited from its predecessors but there should be collateral legacy that the successors receive and maintain again for their successors. This is the basics that statements like the one under 'A', is said among Oromo community. [ɗaːlɑ], whose English equivalent meaning is 'heritage or legacy', is a word used replaced by [ʔaːlɑ], whose English equivalent meaning is 'culturally banned one'. Therefore, when a person from our study dialect utters a statement like under 'B', "[ʔaːlɑ] dhalootaaf dabarsuun barbaachisaadha", it would be difficult to determine whether the speaker is telling about heritage or culturally banned ones. Because, for both concepts, the speakers of our study dialect use only one word, [ʔaːlɑ] as [ɗ] is pronounced replaced by [ʔ].

Example
- Eenyummaan [ɗaːnaː] isaa hinbaramne. (It is unknown who hit him)
- Eenyummaan [ʔaːnaː] isaa hinbaramne. (It is unknown which district he is from)

If somebody is hit by anybody else and the injurious one is missing, a statement like 'A' "enyummaan [ɗaːnaː] isaa hinbaramne" in English, 'It is unknown who hit him', is used. The word [ɗaːnaː] in this statement is therefore, the one who hit the man and missing. The word is said as if it is word [ʔaːnaː] among speakers of our study dialect. But the word [ʔaːnaː] has different lexical meaning, district. Therefore, the speakers use the same word [ʔaːnaː] when they want to tell both concepts, about somebody hitting someone else and district.

Example
- [ɗɑddeː]n jireenya kee balleessiti. (Porcupine obliterates your life)
- [ʔɑddeː]n jireenya kee balleessiti. (The lucky obliterates your life)

In Oromo land, Porcupine lives in bush. Even though there are many bush living animals which feeds on farmers crops there, the one which is done by Porcupine is not taken as simple feeding on the crops but seriously taken as obliterating human life. By this fact, farmers of that society say, as example (5) 'A' above, "[ɗɑddeː]n jireenya kee balleessiti" in English "Porcupine obliterates your life" and therefore, farmers would make strong fence or protection to their crops or they would make a campaign in a group for hunting and eliminating the enemy of their crops. But if a person from this study site heard saying the above mentioned statement, "[ɗɑddeː]n jireenya kee balleessiti" in English "Porcupine obliterates your life", then the listens understand him/her as if the statement is "[ʔɑddeː]n jireenya kee balleessiti. (The lucky obliterates your life) for the person is unable to pronounce [ɗ] sound. Among Oromo, if a person is assumed that he/she is successful in all his/her life providing fates and others witnesses that he/she has bright destiny, then he/she is called among the society as the chanceful or the lucky. Thus, if a person says 'the lucky obliterates life' then the speaker would be either questioned in his/her normality or he/she could be assumed as strange to the culture of the society.

Example
- Tolasaan [ɗɑlɑ] jaallata. (Tolasa likes kids)
- Tolasaan [ʔɑlɑ] jaallata. (Tolasa likes abroad)

The syntactic meanings of both statements under example (7) 'A' above are clearly different. The word [ɗɑlɑ] in a statement under 'A' means 'kids' whereas [ʔɑlɑ] in statement under 'B' is to mean 'abroad'. For speakers of the dialect of this study, the word [ʔɑlɑ] represents both [ɗɑlɑ] and [ʔɑlɑ] for the dialect is being practiced free of [ʔ] sound. Therefore, an utterance produced to convey a message that 'Tolasa likes kids' will be end up with saying 'Tolasa likes abroad'.

Example

- Margaan [ɗala:] wajjin jiraata. (Marga lives with female)
- Margaan [ʔala:] wajjin jiraata. (Marga lives with something unpleasant smell)

Sometimes statements which are constructed using Afaan Oromoo homonymic words can be offensive to listeners who use the homonymic words differently. In the example above, a statement under 'A' means, 'a man called Marga lives with female' and a statement under 'B' means, 'the man, Merga, lives with dirty stuff which has unpleasant smell'. But speakers of the study dialect use [ʔala:] for both words as they are unable to pronounce [ɗ] sound. It is reasonable to conclude that these types of statements can be a cause for a conflict between a speaker from the study dialect and the man called Marga who is not from same dialect. Because, if the speaker utters with an intention of saying 'Marga lives with female' and his conversation understood by Marga as he lives with something unpleasant smell, the possibility for Marga to be uncomfortable to his interlocutor is predictable. Example

- Namoonni tokko [ɗarra:]n nama ajjeesa jedhu. (some people say, a very powerful desire is fatal]
- Namoonni tokko tokko [ʔarra:]n nama ajjeesa jedhu. (Some people say, a deriving expression is fatal]

In Oromo saying tradition, it is common to hear when the society say "[ɗarra:n [X][3] naʔadʒe:se], (I am to die of a very strong desire of …(mentioning what they desired)). In the same manner, when a person is in competing straggle or in actual fight with another/s, his/her supporters standing by say'[ʔarra: gurba:!], an expression in the language to say don't be defeated, straggle until you come to die. As the data for this study already confirmed that [ɗ] sound in the dialect of the study is replaced by [ʔ] sound, the possibility for the speakers of the study site is impossible to construct statement 'A' but statement 'B' for both concepts. Therefore, it would be difficult for speakers of others dialect to differentiate which concept they are talking about. Example

- Yakkamichi [ɗe:ssi] isaa beekamuu qaba. (The criminal escaping route must be known)
- Yakkamichi [ʔe:ssi] isaa beekamuu qaba. (The criminal where about must be known)

In example (13) 'A' and 'B', we see two different statements with similar syntactic structure but with quite different meanings. The difference in meaning has come to them because of words written in phonetic in brackets. Both statements talk about one thing, a criminal person. According to statement under 'A', there is a known criminal person and he/she has escaped. However, his/her escaping route is unknown; and the speaker recommends that the escaping route must be known. In another hand, the statement under 'B' talks about a criminal who is known but the unknown is his/her where about. And therefore, the speaker recommends that his/her where about must be known. Example

- Tolaan [ɗotu:] malee akka hojii hinbeeku. (Tola doesn't know the way to work but over eating
- Tolaan [ʔotu:] malee akka hojii hinbeeku. (Tola doesn't know the way to work but saying if this happened and that happened.

Both statements are uttered in negative senses that Tola doesn't know the way work. The difference is, in the statement 'A', what Tola knows is stated ironically as only eating and over eating, [ɗotu:] in Afaan Oromoo. Statement 'B' also blaming Tola as he knows nothing but always says if this done and that done, [ʔotu:] in Afaan Oromoo. Therefore, if a person from the study site is heard saying, "Tolaan [ʔotu:] malee akka hojii hinbeeku", it is not clear whether he/she is saying about 'over eating' or 'if statement'. Example

- Caaltuun [ɗʊka] argatte. (Chaltu found marrow)
- Caaltuun [ʔʊka] argatte. (Chaltu found favor)

The statement under example 19 'A' is common to be said when a person feed on meat of cooked bone and possibly a marrow from the inside of it. And statement under 'B' is said when a person is supported by others goodwill in their psychology or in what so ever circumstances where actually he/she never deserves it. Therefore, it represents both concepts for a person of our study site if they heard while saying "Caaltuun [ʔʊka] argatte". Because the word [ʔʊka] is similar with the word [ɗʊka] among them as [ɗ] sound is pronounced as [ʔ] sound.
Example

- Gadaan [dʊɗa:] Oromooti. (Gada is Oromo legacy)
- Gadaan [dʊʔa:] Oromooti. (Gada is Oromo dead)

Sometimes it is common to see a concept or philosophical knowledge which is sensitive to that a society who wants to take care of and maintain it for generations. The Oromo is the largest ethnic group in a country Ethiopia and granted Gada System [4] to global communities. Gada system or democracy (in modern sense) is an Oromo concept that had been practicing for centuries and is being practiced at the moment among many Cushitic language families in large and among the Oromos in particular. This long-aged legacy of Oromo was also registered as UNESCOs world intangible cultural heritage in 2016. The Oromos loves their heritage; they do want to promote it at any cost. But if a person intends to say a statement like example 'A' above, 'Gada is Oromo legacy' but uttered a statement like example 3 'B' 'Gada is Oromo Dead', it would be not debatable to predict how the case would make the society in large as a group to become upset. This could be possible to occur for a person from our study site. Because, he/she can't pronounce [ɗ] which is in the word [dʊɗa:] and will replace it with [ʔ] and of course the result of the replacement will form another word [dʊʔa:]. Example

- Waan [gaɗe:] baqachuun seera. (It is a must to run off immoral practices)
- Waan [gaʔe:] baqachuun seera. (It is a must to run off own responsibility)

As the examples above show, sometimes a concept with contents of fact and debatable personal opinions are come together in sentences having homonymic word conflict. The concept in Example (22) 'A' above seems fact. Because, any

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[3] [X] represents anything that the speaker is in desire of
[4] Gada system is Oromo concept or wisdom for administration, socialization, economy, and so forth. It has an equivalent meaning with the modern term 'democracy'.

society who share similar moral value advises its own people to run off immoral practices even though immorality is subjective to every society. Scholars define societal morality as harmony of interest and responsibilities among individuals in a group, especially as manifested in unanimous support and collective action for something. But a society where immoral practices are indulgently exercised; it would be difficult to save itself as a society from immorality caused risks.

Accordingly, a word [ɡɑɗe:], 'immoral' in English, represents concepts of disrespect, hatred, selfishness, and so forth among Oromo society. As an example (22) 'A' above shows, if an Oromo elders or intellectuals want to offer an advice to their youth and say "Waan [ɡɑɗe:] baqachuun seera", English meaning, "It is a must to run off immoral practices", the statement would be uttered among the speakers of the dialect in this study, "Waan [ɡɑʔe:] baqachuun seera", its English meaning, "It is a must to run off own responsibility". The change in the sounds has brought about two major difficulties. One, it blocked the message wanted to be conveyed and second, it produced statement which possibly is untruth. Example

- barsiisichi barataasaan waan ittiin fuunfannu himi jennaan [hɪɗi:] jedhe. (For the teacher question to his/her students to tell what sense of organ of us is helping to differentiate odorous substances, the student said, a lip)
- barsiisichi barataasaan waan ittiin fuunfannu himi jennaan [hɪʔi:] jedhe. (For the teacher question to his/her students to tell what sense of organ of us is helping to differentiate odorous substances, the student replied, no)

While teaching in the class the teacher may ask his students what sense of organ of us is helps to differentiate odorous substances. And according to the statement 'A', the students replied [hɪɗi:], a lip. When the speakers of this study dialect call the word [hɪɗi:], they say it [hɪʔi:], whose English equivalent meaning is no. in this case therefore, if the speakers from the study dialect asked to report on the students answer, they only say [hɪʔi:] (no), even just to report the answer given by the student as a lip. Example

- Har'i guyyaa [hoɗa:][5]ti. (Today is wickerwork day)
- har'i guyyaa [hoʔa:][6]ti. (Today is hot day)

Wickerwork is common among Oromo; but there is no nationally or locally identified day to celebrate it. Traditionally, women from lower social class who earn less income to feed their family would come together and engaged in wickerwork. When they complete their craft, the final products would be taken to where the local market is to sell and support their family. Accordingly, there are days in which they would engage in wickerwork activities which they called it, as example (26) 'A', 'guyyaa [hoɗa:]" and this day is given that name just to differentiate it from days which are assigned for marketing. A statement under Example (26) 'B' is quite different from 'A'. It talks about hot weather. The statement "Har'i guyyaa [hoʔa:][7]dha, in English "Today is hot day" is just to tell that the day is not either rainy or windy or others. Example

- Qeerroon mana [kɑɗa:] ijaare. (The youth-built prayer house)
- B). Qeerroon mana [kɑʔa:] ijaare. (The youth built removable house)

Both statements, 'A' and 'B', tell us about similar happenings that the youth-built houses. The difference is on the types of the built houses. Statement 'A' tells us that the built house is prayer house whereas statement 'B' is about removable or illegal house. For the speakers of the study dialect, the word [kɑɗa:] 'prayer' in English, is uttered as the word [kɑʔa:] as [ɗ] sound in the prior word is changed to [ʔ] and pronounced in such way. Therefore, there is no way for the speakers of other dialects of Afaan Oromoo to understand the sentence "Qeerroon mana [kɑʔa:] ijaare" as if its English equivalent meaning is "the youth-built prayer house". Thus, the word [kɑʔa:] is a homonymic one particularly at the study site by representing two concepts, prayer house and removable.

Example

- Namichi [mɪɗa:n] fidee dhufe. (The man brought the crop)
- Namichi [mɪʔa:n] fidee dhufe. (The man brought by an instrument)

The word [mɪɗa:n] in statement 'A' is noun and has an English equivalent meaning 'crop'. However, the word [mɪʔa:n] in statement 'B' is an instrumental prepositional adverb and has an English equivalent meaning of 'by an instrument'. Therefore, for the speakers of our study dialect, the prepositional phrase [mɪʔa:n] represents both concepts, the 'crop' and 'by instrument'. The statement of 'B' "Namichi [mɪʔa:n] fidee dhufe" therefore, is impossible to determined whether the speakers of the study site is saying 'the man brought the crop' or 'the man brought by an instrument'.

4.2. Formation of Uncommon Words when [ɗ] Changed to [ʔ] in the Words Containing Them

The following table shows when words containing [ɗ] sound is changed to [ʔ] and the newly formed words of Afaan Oromoo are uncommon to speakers of other dialects of the language.

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[5] The [ɗ] sound in the word [hoɗa:] need to be geminated.
[6] The [ʔ] sound in the word [hoʔa:] need to be geminated.
[7] The [ʔ] sound in the word [hoʔa:] need to be geminated.

Words	Phonetic Forms	Newly Formed Words	English Equivalent Words or Phrases
Badhaadhaa	[baɗa:ɗa:]	[baʔa:ʔa:]	Prosperous, wealthy
Dhiibuu	[ɗĩ:bu;]	[ʔi:bu;]	Gorge, valley
Dhabaa	[ɗaba:]	[ʔaba:]	Poor, underprivileged
Dhaga'uu	[ɗagaʔu:]	[ʔagaʔu:]	Hearing
Dhagaa	[ɗaga:]	[ʔaga:]	Stone
Dhaltuu	[ɗaltu:]	[ʔaltu:]	Female (not for human)
Dheebuu	[ɗe:bu:]	[ʔe:bu:]	Thirsty, aspiration
Dheedhii	[ɗe:ɗĩ:]	[ʔe:ʔi:]	Raw, uncooked
Dheekkamsa	[ɗe:kămsa]	[ʔe:kămsa]	Irritation, impatience,
Dheengadda	[ɗě:ŋgadda]	[ʔě:ŋgadda]	A day before yesterday
Dhibaa'aa	[ɗıba:ʔa:]	[ʔıba:ʔa:]	Lazy, idle
Dhibba	[ɗıbba]	[ʔıbba]	Hundred
Dhibdee	[ɗıbde:]	[ʔıbde:]	Challenge, confrontation
Dhiha	[ɗıha]	[ʔıha]	West (direction), evening
Dhihoo	[ɗıho:]	[ʔıho:]	Near, close to
Dhiibbaa	[ɗĩ:bba:]	[ʔi:bba:]	Pressure, influence
Dhiifama	[ɗĩ:fǎma]	[ʔi:fǎma]	Excuse, apology
Dhiiga	[ɗĩ:ga]	[ʔi:ga]	Blood
Dhiittaa	[ɗĩ:tta:]	[ʔi:tta:]	Violence, aggression
Dhimbiibbaa	[ɗĩmbi:bba:]	[ʔĩmbi:bba:]	Crystallizing, to bring together
Dhimma	[ɗĩmma]	[ʔĩmma]	Subject, issue
Dhiphoo	[ɗıp'o:]	[ʔıp'o:]	Narrow, contracted
Dhirsa	[ɗırsa]	[ʔırsa]	Husband
Dhoobbii	[ɗo:bbi:]	[ʔo:bbi:]	Throwing mud against a wall
dhooguu	[ɗo:gu:]	[ʔo:gu:]	Favoring, be in support of someone
Dhoqqee	[ɗok'e:]	[ʔok'e:]	Mud
Dhorka	[ɗorka]	[ʔorka]	refusing, Deprivation, denial
dhowaa	[ɗowa:]	[ʔowa:]	Explosive
Dhufaatii	[ɗufa:ti:]	[ʔufa:ti:]	coming
Dhugaatii	[ɗuga:ti:]	[ʔuga:ti:]	Drinking
Dhukkee	[ɗukke:]	[ʔukke:]	Dust
dhukkuba	[ɗukkuba]	[ʔukkuba]	Disease, sickness
Dhullaa	[ɗulla:]	[ʔulla:]	Protuberance, Swelling
Dhuma	[ɗũma]	[ʔũma]	Final, the end
Dhuubbaa	[ɗũ:bba:]	[ʔu:bba:]	Drenched, soaked
Dhuufuu	[ɗũ:fu:]	[ʔu:fu:]	Fart, flatus
Dhuunfaa	[ɗũ:nfa:]	[ʔũ:nfa:]	Private, not public
Faldhaana	[falɗã:na]	[falʔăna]	Spoon
Fuudha	[fu:ɗa]	[fu:ʔa]	Marriage
Hadhaa	[haɗa:]	[haʔa:]	Bitter, sour
Handhuura	[hanɗu:ra]	[hanʔu:ra]	Umbilical cord
Hudhaa	[huɗa:]	[huʔa:]	Obstruction, hindrance
Kaadhima	[ka:ɗĩma]	[ka:ʔima]	Fiancé, boyfriend/girlfriend
Nadheen	[naɗe:n]	[naʔe:n]	Women (informal)

Table 2: Formation of Uncommon Words when [ɗ] changed to [ʔ]

According to the data of this study presented on table 2 above, even though sound change is observed and new words are discovered, the newly formed words resulted from the change are uncommon and have no literal or contextual meaning to speakers of others dialects of the language. By looking at the phonetically transcribed words and presented under column of 'newly formed words' in table 2, any Oromo literate who is familiar with linguistics basics can confirm whether the words can have meaning in the language.

All the words presented in table 2 are nouns with most of them are [ɗ] word initial and are words frequently used ones in day to day communication of the language. There is also a situation for very few words at which [ɗ]sound appeared in the middle of them. But for all words containing [ɗ] sound, the change followed no specific fashion but all were subjected to be replaced by [ʔ]. by the fact that the newly formed words of the language in table 2 above are uncommon to the speakers of other dialects of the language, no detailed analyses were made to each word but simply their phonetic forms are presented.

5. The Implication to the Way Forward

It was mention in this study introduction section that the Oromo is the largest ethnic group in the country Ethiopia and its language 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). It is spoken by 40 percent of Ethiopian population (Kebede, 2009) and is spoken in Kenya, Somalia, Sudan and Tanzania outside of Ethiopia (Tilahun, 1993). Based on the geographical area it is spoken, studies showed, the language has about ten different genetic units for its dialectal variations (Wondimu, 2015). By this fact that the language 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, the existence of different several dialects is inevitable. Based on the state, Ethiopia, constitutional right, the Oromos has been using their language as Oromia regional state working language, media of education, media of broadcast communication and all the activities of justice affairs.

Though the language has been using as media of education, yet there are many challenges for language experts, teachers, teaching material developers and language technologists in vis-à-vis to the language dialects. Of the challenges, the extending form of homonymic words would bring a sensible synchronic bearing on the communicatory efficacy of a language and it leads to the loss of one of the words involved in a clash of homonyms identified in this study in general. The language is also facing difficulty because of the dialect variation to be standardized and therefore, language technologists would make NLP (natural language programming) for the language Afaan Oromoo, teaching material developers would use the standardized form and the teachers would teach in uniform fashion. Therefore, if the Oromia regional government and education bureau of the region work together to aware the [ɗ] clearing community, especially the children, from the very early age in helping them to maintain the sound, it will be successful. unless otherwise, the possibility for the sound, [ɗ], to be totally omitted from the study dialect in particular and in the long run, from the language in general is predictable.

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