

NON -VERBAL COMMUNICATION USED IN ILUU ABBAA BOORAA  
OROMO SOCIETY

By  
EFA TEREFE

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FACULTY OF HUMANITIES  
DEPARTMENT OF LINGUISTICS

ADVISOR: BEKALE SEYUM (Ph.D)

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**Addis Ababa University**  
**School Of Graduate Studies**

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Approved by Examining Committee:

Advisor \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Examiner \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

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## **ABSTRACT**

*The aim of the study was to explore the Non-verbal communication used in Oromo. The study was conducted in Iluu Abbaa Booraa Zone of Oromia Regional State. Specifically the study was intended: to identify the object languages used during marriage, ajjeečaa 'heroism' and lightning ceremonies, to describe the semiotic representation of non-verbal communication (object languages) in the cultural practices; and to show the interaction between non-verbal communication and the society.*

*In order to achieve the intended objectives, qualitative research was adopted. 30 respondents were selected using purposive sampling method. However the woradas were selected using simple random sampling method. Two data gathering instruments namely: Interview and document analysis were used to collect the necessary information.*

*It was found that the Iluu Abbaa Booraa Oromo society use different cultural objects during different occasions such as marriage, lightning and hunting ceremonies. The society mostly communicates through the non-verbal codes especially cultural objects since they believe that the non-verbal communication has more reliability and believability. In addition, the Iluu Abbaa Booraa Oromo society uses non-verbal communication (cultural objects) to show socio-economic status, personal status, norms, identity etc. The society also uses non-verbal communication as a medium of shared understanding in-day-to-day activities and on occasions of cultural practices. In the society, every thing is related to cultural objects and all cultural objects have their own implication or semiotic representations depending on their contexts. Thus, from the results found, in the society object languages (cultural objects) have multiple functions.*

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We need a leader who shows us the way to go through, we need a pastor who can nurture us with the required knowledge, and we need guidance that can help to make a better man. If we are lucky we will come to know this wonderful king who has these qualities i.e. our Lord. Thank you God for your help!!

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# **CHAPTER ONE**

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1. Background of the Study**

Language plays a significant role in communication and identity formation. It is also a part of the shared inheritance of a group. Cultures are expressed by language. They form an integral part of the sum of human knowledge and are individually a unique encapsulation and interpretation of human experience (Crystal, 2000 in Spolsky, 2004).

In our daily life or interaction, we use language for communication. Communication is the process of sending and receiving messages in order to share meanings (Brooks, 1978:113 and Galvin, 2001:86). The communication process involves two or more people interacting verbally or non-verbally in order to understand each other's feelings, ideas, and attitudes (Galvin, 2001:86).

Generally speaking, there are two types of communication: verbal and non-verbal communications. Non-verbal communication refers to sending and receiving messages without the use of words or it is a mode of communication in which different cues are used other than the verbal languages. Even if we may not think much about it, we depend heavily on sending and receiving wordless messages in order to communicate effectively (Ibid).

The communicative value of objects is in most cases culture specific. Even within a given cultural environment there can be variations on the object used to communicate information related to age, gender, religion, marital status, and others. "Even within a culture, various

groups can have different non-verbal rules” (Adler, 2003: 157). This is generally to mean that different societies have their own cultural objects which communicate different messages during different ceremonies.

Though non-verbal communication has a variety of roles to play in a particular society, its use has not profoundly been studied. Therefore, exploring the appropriate uses of non-verbal communication deserves researching.

Just as there are many definitions for communication and verbal communication, there are also many ways to define non-verbal communication. As to Burgoon, Buller and Woodland (1996: 113), “Non-verbal communications are typically sent with intent; are used with regularity among members of social community; are typically interpreted as intentional; and have consensually recognized interpretations”. Burgoon (1978:9) also says, “We consider Non-verbal communications to those attributes or actions of human other than the use of words which have socially shared meaning”. Apart from this, Adler (2003:150) defines Non-verbal communication as “if non means ‘not’ and verbal means ‘words’, then non-verbal communication appears to mean “communication without words”. In addition, according to Malandro and Barker (1989:258), “Non-verbal communication is the process by which non-verbal behaviors are used either singly or in combination with verbal behaviors in the exchange and interpretation of message within a given situation or context”.

More of Non-Verbal communications in the society are used during different ritual ceremonies.

### ***1.1.1. The People and the Language***

Ethiopia consists of a number of nations and nationalities or ethnic groups with different backgrounds and ways of life. Among, the Oromo people are the largest ethnic group in Ethiopia and account for 50-60% of the population of the Ethiopian Empire (Tilahun, 1992). The Oromo people primarily reside over a vast area of Ethiopia predominantly in Wollega, Iluu Abbaa Booraa, Jimma, Shawa, Arsi, Baalee, Hararge, Wallo and Borana.

The Oromo have vast and very rich culture fostered by the size of the population and large land areas. In Oromo community there are different cultural objects which are different from place to place. Therefore, this study deals with cultural objects that have communicative values in Iluu Abbaa Booraa Oromo Society.

The western part of Oromia which includes, Jimma, Wollega and Iluu Abbaa Booraa is occupied by the Macha Oromo clan. Of the various tribes in Macha clans, Tummee had settled in Iluu Abbaa Booraa area.

According to the 2007 population and housing census the total population of Iluu Abbaa Boora is 1, 278,183. The majority of the people like those of the other parts of Ethiopia, generally live in rural areas and largely depended on agriculture for their livelihood.

Oromo has its own language which is called Afan Oromo or Oromifa. Afan Oromo is a Cushitic language spoken in many parts of Ethiopia and Northern Kenya. It is considered one of the five most widely spoken languages among the approximately 1000 languages of Africa (Gragg, 1982). It is the third widely spoken languages in Africa surpassed only by Arabic

and Hausa (Gadaa, 1988; Hordofa, 2001). In Afan Oromo, there are dialectal differences depending on the geographical settings of the groups. Among the many dialects of Afan Oromo, Iluu Abbaa Booraa Oromo society uses its own dialect as a medium of communication.

### ***1.1.2. The Geographical Settings of the Society***

Iluu Abbaa Booraa is located in the south-western part of Ethiopia and its center Mattu, with about 600km to the South of Addis Ababa. Iluu Abbaa Booraa is one of the zones of the Oromia regional state. It is bounded by Gambella in the West, Eastern Wallaga and Jimma in the East, Kafa and Shaka Zones of the Southern Nations Nationalities and Peoples Regional State in the South and West Wollega in the North (see the map [p. 6](#)).

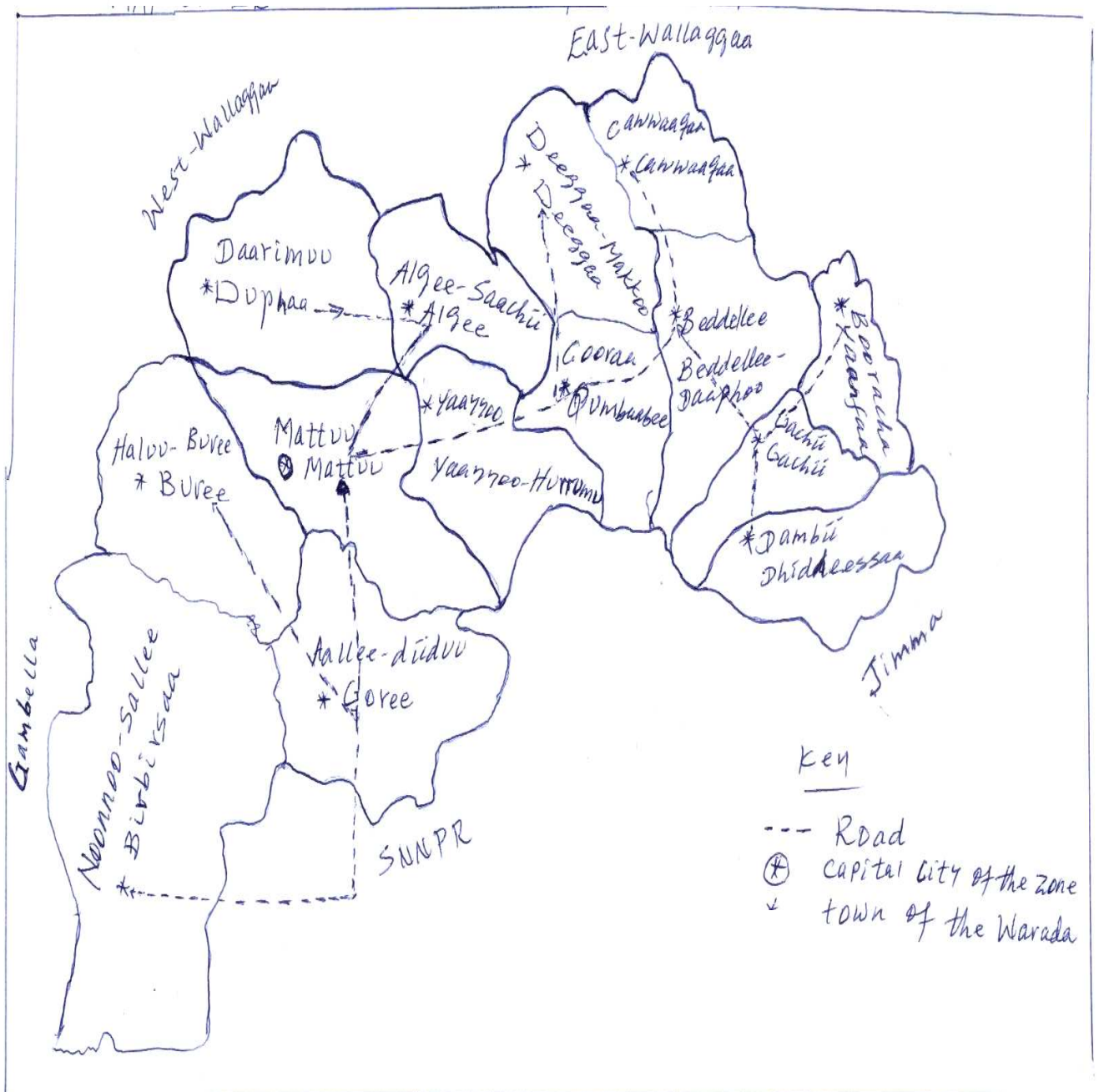
The topography of Iluu Abbaa Booraa rises up to 3000m above sea level. It receives the rainfall ranging from 2000 to 2500mm annually. It has different climatic zones. These varied climatic zones helped farmers to grow various kinds of crops. Cereal crops like Maize, Teff and Sorghum are produced. Maize and Teff are used dominantly for consumption. To support those grains, farmers also grow root crops such as inset and potato. The well known and the dominant cash crop in the zone is coffee.

### ***1.1.3. The Religious Practices in Iluu Abbaa Booraa***

Both oral and written sources confirm that the Oromo society have its own way of life, cultural values, language, religion and social organization. In stressing the traditional religion of the Oromo, Bartles(1983:90-91) explains that *waak'aa* 'God' Who created all lives Whose order is unbreakable is the Supreme Being in which the people believed.

Prior to the advent of both Islam and Christianity in the area, the local people had their own traditional religious practice which is known as *waak'effanaa* 'believing in one God' like other Oromo clans.

Currently, in the area different religious practices are found. The dominant ones are: Orthodox Christianity, protestant, Islam and *waak'effann* respectively.



Map: (Source: (Adapted from Girma Legesse (2007))

## **1.2. Statement of the Problem**

Since there are a considerable number of ethnic groups in Ethiopia, we do find the same number of cultures specific to each group. If we take the Oromia Region, while there are a lot of cultural practices characterizing the ethnic group as a whole there are a number of cultural differences depending on their settlement. However, it is impossible to cover all the different cultures found within this region. Therefore, the study is restricted to the identification and interpretation of non-verbal communication using object language in the Iluu Abbaa Booraa Oromo society. As stated in the background of the study, the society has its own typical object languages for non-verbal communication to transfer different messages. Such cultural objects in the society may not be available in other communities of the same region. Even if there may be the same cultural objects their communicative function is different from one community to another or it may not have the same function in either of the societies. In addition, even if the previous researchers stated some aspects of non-verbal communication used in different Oromo groups, they did not show the interaction between non-verbal communication and the society in the same manner. Hence the study focuses on identification, description and the interaction between the society and non-verbal communication practices used in Iluu Abbaa Booraa Oromo Society. So, it is important to study the object languages practiced in different ceremonies with particular reference to Iluu Abbaa Booraa Oromo community. The study tends to investigate the object languages which describe the underlying socio political structure and cultural life of the society. More specifically this study is expected to address the following basic questions:

- a) What is the interaction between the society and the non-verbal communications?
- b) What are the main contexts in which non-verbal communications are used in the Oromo of Iluu Abbaa Booraa society?
- c) What are the communicative functions that the non-verbal communications serve the community during different occasions?
- d) How does Non-Verbal Communication express the socio-political and economic structure of the society and its culture?

### **1.3. Objectives of the Study**

#### ***1.3.1. General Objective***

The general objective of this study is to introduce different objects used for communicative functions in the society. The study attempts to show how objects serve for different communicative functions and as means to understand the beliefs, norms, the economic systems and socio political relations among members of the society. In general, it is aimed to show how non-verbal communication (together with verbal communication) serves as communicative cues in understanding the culture of the society.

#### ***1.3.2. Specific Objectives***

The study is planned to address specifically the following objectives:

- a) To identify non-verbal communication (object language) used during marriage, hunting and lightning ceremonies.
- b) To describe the semiotic representations of non-verbal communication (object languages) used in the cultural practice of the society.
- c) To examine the interaction between the society and non-verbal communication.



## **1.4. Significance of the Study**

This study can help the community to keep their identity, culture and inherited knowledge untouched by enhancing the vitality and continuity of their culture. This study is also believed to contribute to the literature of the Oromo cultures by showing the communicative functions of various cultural objects in conveying the beliefs, norms, status and values of the Oromo in general and of the Iluu Abbaa Booraa Oromo society in particular. The researcher also hopes that, this study will present the readers with general understanding of the non-verbal communication of the society in providing how they use objects to communicate together non-verbally.

The study can also make the following contributions:

- a) It can give clear picture about the culture of the society and how and when they use non-verbal communication.
- b) It can create awareness among the society to preserve their cultural objects as it can be a means of communication channel.
- c) It can also serve the government to identify the cultural objects of the society that deserve preservation as it reflects the identity of the people.
- d) It may induce other researchers to make further studies on different non-verbal communications.

## **1.5. Scope of the Study**

Non-verbal communication used in the Oromo society is very wide that it is impossible to cover all aspects in a single study. Among the numerous cultural practices to which the community employs non-verbal communications, this study deals only with the non-verbal communication used during marriage ceremony, heroism, and lightning ceremony in the Iluu Abbaa Booraa Oromo society. Among many others only the three ceremonies are selected on their uniqueness and richness in their use of non-verbal communication that employs cultural objects in the society during the occasions.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

This chapter treats the review of the key literature which provides background information about non-verbal communication. First the general overview of culture then review on the functions, characteristics and classifications of non-verbal communication will be reviewed.

#### **2.1 General Overview of Culture and Communication**

The term culture refers to the collection of folklore, objects, language, rules, rituals, habits, life styles, attitudes, beliefs and customs that link and give a common identity to a particular group of people at specific point in time (Kroeber, 1952). All social units develop a culture. Even in two- personal relationships, a culture develops over time. The society develops their own history, shared experiences, language patterns, rituals, habits and customs that give the special relationship or character i.e. a character that differentiates it in various ways from other relationships. Culture has important symbolic meaning for the society (ibid).

Any social units whether a group or a society develops a culture over time. While the defining characteristics of each culture are unique, all cultures share certain common functions. According to Kramsch (1998), there are three such functions that are particularly important from a communication perspective:

- a) Linking individuals to one another
- b) Providing the basis for a common identity
- c) Creating a context for interaction and negotiation among members

The relationship between communication and culture is a very complex and intimate one. First, cultures are created through communication; that is, communication is the means of

human interaction through which cultural characteristics whether customs, rules, rituals or other patterns are created and shared. Culture is a natural byproduct of social interaction (Kramsch, 1998). In a sense, cultures are the 'residue' of social communication. Without communication, it would be impossible to preserve and pass along cultural characteristics. Therefore, culture is created, shaped, transmitted, and learned through communication. The reverse is true for communication; communication practices are largely created, shaped, and transmitted by culture (ibid).

## **2.2. Functions and General Principles of Non-verbal Communication**

Communication is one of the human activities that everyone recognizes. Without communication, the culture of any kind will die. There are two types of communications in general: Verbal and Non-verbal types of communication. In Non-verbal communication, there exist cues as sex, race, body size, age, religion, and social status (Hiwot, 2005:6). We often send and receive non-verbal cues unconsciously. Most Non-verbal communication involves several related messages including facial expressions, tones of voice, gesture, eye contact, body movement, spatial arrangements, patterns of touch, etc. Non-verbal acts are more important in understanding human behavior than words alone; these are more powerful than what people say. Brooks (1978:113) recalls the popular sayings 'actions speak louder than words;' or 'one picture is worth a thousand words'.

Fiske (1982:71) assumes that all communication involves signs and codes. Signs are artifacts or acts that refer to something. The study of signs and the way they work is called semiotics or semiology. There are three main areas of study in semiology:

- a. The sign itself that consists of different varieties of sign.
- b. The codes of systems into which signs are recognized.
- c. The culture within those codes and signs operate.

Codes are the systems into which signs are recognized and which determine how signs may be related to each other. There are different kinds of codes. One of these is presentational codes which are limited to face-to-face communication or communication when the communicator is present. Human body is the main transmitter of presentational codes (Fiske, 1982:71). The codes and signals of communication differ from culture to culture through these powerful differences, we see the cultural separation of people. When we encounter people of other cultures we may fail to understand them because of difficulty in language, values, norms, rituals, expectations of family background and life experience (Hiwot, 2005:6).

While verbal and non-verbal communications have many similar functions, non-verbal communication has its own sets of functions for helping us to communicate with each other. It is important to understand the connection between verbal and non-verbal messages. Non-verbal messages work with or against verbal messages. The two are interconnected and function jointly (Galvin, 2001:68).

Just as we are performing with verbal languages, we are also using non-verbal languages in our daily life communication. To illustrate this idea, Wardhaugh (1977:18) said “Human being learns to communicate with each other through non-linguistic means as well as linguistic ones”. According to Brooks (1978:115) it is even believed that non-verbal communication precedes the verbal communication because it learned early in life. A child

who cannot even utter words can express his/her needs and feelings through non-verbal channels.

Most of our daily communication consists of non-verbal communication and our “immediate” messages are transmitted through non-verbal communication. To support this idea, Hinde (1972:251) says “Non-verbal communication in man is used to manage the immediate social situations, to support verbal communication and to replace verbal communication”.

In human communication, the verbal communication alone may not be effective since it consist a small part of information in our daily life interaction. We use more of non-verbal communication and most of the meanings that we share in communication are transmitted through non-verbal codes like vocal nuance, gesture, facial expressions, body movements and others. Brooks (1978:113) stated that:

*Non-verbal codes carry out more information than the verbal. Actually the verbal signals carry small part of information that people exchange in every day interaction. It has been estimated that in face-to-face communication no more than 35% of the social meaning is carried in verbal messages.*

However, according to Gibson (1992:96) “the bulk of information, i.e., 93% of the impact of message comes from non-verbal communication” The same thing is stated by Galvin (2001:84) who says, ‘most of information that estimated between 65% - 93% of messages is non-verbal, especially messages that convey meaning’ (Galvin, 2001: 86). This tells us that non-verbal channels are rich and effective in conveying a large amount of information in the social interaction. For example, our manner of dressing, hair style, ornaments, material objects, body movements, our facial expression etc are sources of information.

Non-verbal communication is more effective in expressing certain shades of meaning such as emotions, feelings, and attitudes. Infante (1993:250) stated the effectiveness of non-verbal communication in expressing emotions and feelings. He says, “Unknowingly or at very low level of awareness, individuals reveal their true emotions through of their non-verbal communication”.

It is often said that what is important is not only the meaning, but also the way that meaning is expressed. The non-verbal cues are used to determine the authenticity of verbal messages. We substitute, accompany, modify, validate or reinforce the verbal messages with the non-verbal cues to increase the efficiency of our communication. This is because non-verbal codes are reliable and make communication successful. “Non-verbal communication is important because it is highly believable” (Infante, 1993: 247).

*Non-verbal messages are more authentic and reliable than verbal messages while both verbal and non-verbal channels are capable of transmitting a tremendous amount of information in a short period of time; something more real or trust worthy comes at the non-verbal (Burgoon, 1978:29).*

According to Devito(1989:214), non-verbal communication has the following functions:

- a) It is often used to emphasize some part of the verbal message. We might for example, smile to emphasize a particular word or phrase.
- b) It also is used to reinforce the general attitude communicated by the verbal message. Example, we might smile when telling a humorous story.
- c) It is also used to deliberately contradict our verbal message with non-verbal movements. For example, by crossing our fingers we indicate that what we are saying is a lie.

- d) Non-verbal movement is frequently used to control or to indicate one's desire to control the flow of verbal messages. We might put our hand or vocalize our pause (for example, "Umm").
- e) It is used to repeat or restate the meaning of the verbal message by motion with our hand or head. For example we all know that a head- nod means "yes", a head- shake means "no", a wave means "hello" or "good bye", and a hand on the ear means "I can't hear you".
- f) It may also take the place of verbal messages. We can nod our heads to indicate 'yes'. "Non-verbal substituting is especially important when people are reluctant to express their feelings in words"( Adler, 2003:160).

The same thing is stated by Adler (2003:159), Brooks (1978:113), Malandro and Barker (1989:223), and Burgoon(1978:173). They discuss the many functions non-verbal communication can serve and show how non-verbal messages relate to verbal ones.

- a) *Repeating*: used in order to emphasize or clarify the verbal message. Pointing is an example of what social scientists called emblems-means when we use non-verbal communication to duplicates; we use non-verbal communication that is recognizable to most people within a particular cultural group. Obvious examples include a head-nod or a head-shake to duplicate the verbal messages of "yes" or "no". "Cross-culturally, nodding does not always mean affirmative, nor does head-shaking from side to side always mean negative" (Kottak, 2005: 88).
- b) *Substituting*: occurs when a non-verbal message is transmitted in place of a verbal message. For instance, if some one asks a question, instead of a verbal reply "yes"

and a head-nod, some one may choose to simply nod his/her head without the accompanying verbal message.

- c) *Complementing*: adding extra information to the verbal message. Sometimes non-verbal behaviors match the content of a verbal message. Much complementing behaviors consist of *illustrators*. Illustrators are non-verbal communication that accompany and support spoken words or non-verbal cues directly linked to words.
- d) *Regulating*: serves to coordinate the verbal dialogue between people. Non-verbal behaviors control the flow of verbal communication. For example, we may make eye contact, move closer to the person, or face the person directly- all non-verbal behaviors that indicate our desire to interact.
- e) *Contradicting*: when our non-verbal communication contradicts our verbal message.  
“When verbal and non-verbal messages contradict one another, receivers often place greater value on the non verbal communication as the more accurate message”  
(Argyle, Alkema and Gilmour, 1971:67).

Apart from the above mentioned functions, non-verbal communication can also be used to indicate relational standing (Mehrabian, 1981:235, Burgoon, Buller and Hale, 1984:56). For instance, romantic partners tend to stand close to one another and touch one another frequently to show their intimacy, to demonstrate and maintain cultural norms and to communicate emotions. When we tell people how we feel, we more frequently use non-verbal communication to express our emotions. “It is important to use and interpret non-verbal communication for emotional expression, and ultimately relational attachment and satisfaction” (Shaver, 2005:47).



### 2.3. Characteristics of Non-Verbal Communication

Some non-verbal communication is recognized across cultures. Although most cultures certainly have particular meaning and uses for non-verbal communication, there are universal non-verbal behaviors that almost every one recognizes. For instance, people around the world recognize and use expressions such as smiles, frowns, and the pointing of a finger at an object.

The main characteristics that may be found in all forms of non-verbal communication are called *universals*. There are some features that may be taken as universal non verbal communications (Devito, 1989:214; Adler, 2003:150).

1. *Contextual*: like verbal communication, non verbal communication exists in a context and that context determines to a large extent the meanings of any non-verbal communication (behaviors). It is essential that full recognition can be taken of the context.
2. *Usually packaged*: all parts of the body usually work together to communicate a particular meaning. We do not express fear with our eyes while the rest of our body relaxes. It is physically difficult to express an intense emotion with only one part of the body.
3. *Always communicative*: the observation that all behavior communicates is particularly important with regard to non-verbal communication. It is impossible not to behave, not to communicate; regardless of what we do our non-verbal behavior communicates something to some one. Even small movements are extremely important in interpersonal relationships. We can often tell, for example when two people genuinely like each other and when they are merely being polite.

*All non-verbal communications do not take place only behaviorally. Numerous non-verbal messages are also communicated by clothing and other artificial things like Jewellery, furniture, etc, that we can tell about someone by considering just the object with which we associate ourselves (Devito, 1989: 214).*

4. *Rule governed:* non-verbal communication is rule-governed; it is regulated by a system or rules that state what is and what is not appropriate, expected, and permissible in a social situation. For example, we learn how to express sympathy along with a rule that our culture has established or appropriately communicating sympathy. Like the non-verbal behaviors themselves, these rules are learned without conscious awareness and we learn them largely from observing.
5. *Believable:* for some reasons that are not clear, we believe non-verbal behaviors even when these behaviors contradict verbal messages. It may be the non-verbal messages that function below the level of conscious awareness and we learned them without being aware of such learning and perceive them without observing others.

The fundamental principles that underlie the workings of non-verbal communication include:

*They are culturally determined:* much of our non-verbal behavior is learned in childhood, passed onto us by our parents and others with whom we associate, through the process of growing up in a particular society- we adopt the traits and mannerisms of our cultural groups. “Brooks, (1978:113) says “every culture has its own body language, its own non-verbal codes”.

*They are largely unconscious:* our facial expression for instance, very often reveals whether we like something or not, no matter what our words express.

## **2.4. Types of Non-Verbal Communication**

By using a language, we could transfer information, maintain relationship, express attitudes and personalities. Language does not mean only speaking or writing. It means communicating by using different ways of communication systems like verbal or non-verbal means of human communications (Burgoon, 1978:159).

The scientific study of non-verbal communication and behaviors began with the 1872 publication of Charles Darwin's *The Expression of Emotion in Man and Animals*. Since then there has been a research on the types, effects and expression of unspoken communication and behavior. Research has identified various types of non-verbal communication. According to Brooks (1978:114), "non-verbal communication falls into eight categories: paralanguage, vocal non-verbal communication, sign language, gesture and body action, object language, tactile communication, space, time, silence" (Brooks, 1978: 114).

There are two types of non-verbal communications identified in the literatures which are labeled as vocal and non-vocal (Adler, 2003: 150, Tubs and Moss, 1994: 102). Now we will see how non-verbal messages operate as a form of communication and the various forms of non-verbal behavior as follows:

### ***Vocal /Non- Verbal***

These are groans of sounds, e.g. *Ohh*, *Umm*, which are usually unconscious. Scholars such as (Tubbs and Moss, 1994: 102) say that people use these sounds when the mind is blank; to fill that gap they make "heel", "Umm" sounds.

### ***Non-Vocal/ Non-Verbal***

These types of non-verbal communications consist of symbols and signs which are not words. They include: facial expressions, appearance, gesture, object language, sign language, eye contact, body contact, etc.

## **2.5. Classification of Non-Verbal Communication Based on Cues**

Depending on the cues, Non-verbal communication is further divided into visual and vocal cues. Cue is a type of communication used by a person to let others know what is expected of them in a given situation. Cues are a type of receptive communication. Designing and using a consistent routine is the beginning of teaching cues (Tubbs and Moss, 1994: 104).

### ***2.5.1. Vocal Cues of Non-Verbal Communication***

***Paralanguage:*** the study of vocal phenomena (paralanguage) refers to something beyond or in addition to verbal language. There is a clear distinction between a person's use of words (verbal communication) and person's use of voice (non-verbal communication). People use voice and manners of speaking to help their impressions. Accent, rate of speaking, tone of voice and vocal quality are all clues people pick up to guess (Deetz and Stevenson, 1986:137).

Paralanguage has two components (Trager, 1985): vocal qualities and noises without linguistic structure.

***Vocal Qualities:*** vocal quality refers to the sound or tones of a voice. Some people have unpleasant voice qualities such as nasal raspy or whining tones that create an unfair image for them. It consists:

*Pitch:* it refers to the highness or lowness of the voice. Pitch can determine whether a voice sounds pleasant or unpleasant (Lydall, 1976: 405). The Pitch can affect the meaning of a message. A change in pitch of the voice is particularly good for gaining attention

*Tone (rate):* refers to how rapidly or slowly a person talks. Speakers will hold the attention of listeners best if the rate of speech is changing with the nature of ideas, mood and the kind of feedback the speaker is receiving.

*Noises:* Humor, crying, breaking may be belonging to the category of noises.

*Humor:* laughter releases stress and tension.

*Crying:* mostly, people do not show their tears unless they face a real problem. Usually they cry loudly when an old man or elder dies but they may cry by decreasing the voice when they face other problems; especially for a man it is not obvious to cry in public.

*Breaking:* when somebody cries very deeply and emotionally to express sympathy, love, or happiness that the person feels. Breaking refers to speaking in a broken way, halting voice, or to rigid and intermittent interruption of speaking (Brooks, 1978:116).

*Silence:* silence can be used as a communication channel. It is not unusual that what is 'not' said is as important as or more important than what 'is' said. Silence can have message value. It speaks more than eloquence. It could show anger, hostility, opposition and worry.

### ***2.5.2. Visual Cues of Non-Verbal Communication***

Visual cues ranges from facial expression and body movements to the clothing we wear and the objects we display (Tubbs and Moss, 1994:104).Several visual cues may well be universal, but the focus of interest is on the cultural differences that can be observed in face and body movements. Some societies use many gestures and facial expressions; others use very few. Moreover, a visual cue may seem to be shared between societies but in fact convey very different meaning. For example, in France using finger to pull-down the eyelid means that the person is aware of something going on. whereas in Italy, the same gesture means that the listener must become aware (David Crystal, 1997:403).

***Eye Contact:*** Eye contact, an important channel of interpersonal communication, regulates the flow of communication. Furthermore, eye contact with audiences increases the speakers' credibility. How often and how long we meet other people's eyes is a way of sending very important message about relations. One of the most potent elements in body language is eye behavior (Brooks, 1978: 119).

***Facial Expressions:*** the face is more highly developed as an organ of expression in humans than any other animals. There are different attitudes regarding facial expressions: while some say that facial expressions are identical, meaning attached to them differs. Others say that these do have similar meanings world wide with respect to smiling, crying or showing anger, sorrow, or disgust. However, the intensity varies from culture to culture.

The face is a tremendous complicated channel of expression for several reasons (Adler, 2003:67) one reason is the number of expressions people can produce. Another is the speed with which they can change. Finally it seems that different emotions show most clearly in different parts of the face. For example, smiling is a powerful cue that transmits:

- Happiness
- Friendliness
- Warmth
- Liking
- Affiliation
- disagreement
- taunt

Facial expressions may be broken down into the sub-codes of eyebrow position; eyelid, mouth shape and nostril size (Fiske, 1982:73).

***Gestures:*** deliberate movements and signals are an important way to communicate meaning without words. Common gestures include: waving, pointing, head, using fingers to indicate numeric amounts. Gestures have many different meanings in different cultures, and what may be friendly in one country or region can be insult in another (Morries, et al., 1979:79). “The hand and arm are the main transmitters of gesture” (Fiske, 1982:73). It is not only what you say that is important, but also how you say it that can make the difference. Gestures are essential components of communication. For example head-nod involved particularly in turn-taking in speech and one nod may give the other permission to carry on speaking; rapid nods may indicate a wish to speak (Ibid).

***Posture and Body Orientation Kinesics:*** kinesics is the study of body movement, gesture and posture (Fiske, 1982:73). Posture is a rich channel for conveying non-verbal communication. You communicate numerous meaning by the way you walk, talk, stand, and sit. Closeness posture is concerned with interpersonal attitudes like: friendliness, hostility, superiority or inferiority, and also indicate emotional state like the degree of tension or relation.

***Body Contact (Tactile Communication):*** Tactile communication is a communication by touch. It is the earliest and most elementary mode of communication of the human organism (Brooks, 1978:124). Tactile communication has a special significance to human beings. Whom we touch, where and when we touch can convey important messages about relationship. The term 'tactile' means 'touching' this has an important linguistic function in deaf and blind communication. A well known instance is "tadoma", a method of tactile speech communication between people who are both deaf and blind.

***Appearance:*** The voluntary control- hair, clothes, skin, body paint and adornment, and the other is the less controllable- height, weight and the like used mostly to send messages about personality; social status and particularly conformity ( Fiske, 1982: 72). "Hair is in all cultures is highly significant as it is the most flexible part of our bodies to show cultural differences" (Fiske, 1982: 73). Despite Kleinke, (1986) states that: "Dress, grooming, and general physical appearance are often the basis of first and relatively long lasting impressions that tell about rank and status of a person" (Kleinke, 1986:77-78).



***Symbols:*** symbols representation is used to communicate about an event, action, object, person, or place. Symbols are used for receptive as well as expressive communications. Symbols may stand as cues, signals and codes. “Objects, parts of objects, pictures, actions, gestures, signs and speech can all be symbols” (Durkel, 2002:108).

Concrete symbols are more easily associated with what they symbolize than of abstract symbols. When determining how closely a symbol resembles an event, action, object, person, or place, it is significant to consider how one perceives it.

***Spatial Cues:*** proxemics explains how people use space to communicate. It shows how space influences relationships and communication. It deals with physical closeness or distance. People often refer to their need for “personal space”, to say the way a person uses space in communication. The amount of distance and amount of space we perceive as belonging to us is influenced by a number of factors including: social norms, situational factors, personality characteristics, and level of formality. According to Hall (1959), there are four distance zones of personal space which surround us and have Non-Verbal meaning in different cultures.

*a) Intimate distance zone (0-18 inches):*

*Close phase (0-6 inches):* This is the distance of love making and wrestling, comforting and protecting. Allowing some one to move into the intimate zone is a sign of trust.

*Far phase (6-18 inches):* heads, pelvis is not easily brought into contact but hands can reach and grasp extremities, very confidential place.

*b) Personal distance zone (18 inches-4 feet):*

*Close phase (18-30 feet):* personal distance for a small protective sphere or bubble that a living thing maintains between itself and others.

*Far phase (30-48):* slightly low voice.

c) *Social distance zone (4-12 feet):*

*Close phase (4-7):* it is a distance for people who work together, attending a casual social gathering.

*Far phase (7-12):* it characterizing more formal business and social interaction.

d) *Public distance zone 12 feet and more:* It is a distance between the speaker and the public audience.

**Object Language:** object language is one of the different types of non-verbal communication through which we enrich our way of communication with others. It is a means of communication in which material objects are used to convey messages (Brooks, 1978:113). Just as we perform in other communicative channels such as Radio, Television, Books and Sound wave (for speech), we also send and receive information through object languages. Object language is the use of material things such as implements, tools, clothing style, ornaments, decoration, art objects, and so on. According to Burgoon (1978), “Object language comprises the display of material things art objects, clothes, the decoration of room, hair style, implements, machines, and the human body” (Burgoon, 1978: 124).

Human body including all the decorations made on it such as clothes, rings, hair styles, and jewelleries have clearly defined communicative values. The styles and qualities of clothes, the way the hair is made or cut and kinds of ornaments worn by individuals communicate about individuals’ status, religion, gender, culture, profession, marital status and so on. So, it

is simple to get information about individuals' personality and culture simply by looking at the objects used.

There are no much research studies done on this area. There are only a few researches that have conducted in different regions. For example Abdisa (1988) has studied some comparative aspects of action and object language in certain rituals of the Oromo of Kellem Wollega. In this study, Abdisa identified the objects which are performed during birth, baptism, and marriage ceremony. Ezra (1987) conducted a research on object language used in Arsi Oromo society. In his study, he identified objects used in different stages of the process of leading to marriage, burial ceremony, and festivals in the society. Apart from this, Haregewoin (1993) assessed the object language used by the people of Borena in Wollo. She has discussed how clothing, hair style, Ornaments, and decorations of the Borena people in Wollo are used in transmitting some messages during marriage ceremony. Similarly, Hiwot Adane (2005) has discussed the non-verbal communication in Hammer. She identified how symbol language, object language, posture language (jumping over the Bulls), tactile communications (the Evangadi dance), and physical appearances were used to transfer different communicative messages.

As stated above, no extensive research works are found on non-verbal communication and the communicative function of objects. Therefore, there is a pressing need for further study on this area. This fact inspired me to conduct a research on non-verbal communication practices in Iluu Abbaa Booraa Oromo society which has unique cultural objects used to communicate messages.

The distinctive feature of this study is that, it involves some cultural aspects such as hunting and lightning ceremonies which have not been considered in the aforementioned studies. In addition, the above mentioned studies did not show the relationship between non- verbal communication and the society and more of the researchers were dealt with identification of object languages used in marriage ceremony of their society. However, this study focuses on how object languages relate with the society in showing socio-economic status, personal status, socio-political etc of the society in addition to identification. The research setting is also different from those studies. It is an established fact that difference in setting results in cultural difference. This in turn brings about difference in cultural objects of the society. Hence, this study focuses on identification, interaction and description of non-verbal communication practices used in Iluu Abbaa Booraa Oromo society.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **THE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This section presents the research design, subjects of the study, the sampling technique, data gathering instruments and techniques of data analysis that are necessary for the realization of the aforementioned objectives.

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

The research is purely qualitative. Therefore, a descriptive research design is employed with the assumption that this type of design is suitable to adequately address the objectives of the study specified in advance.

#### **3.2. Subjects of the Study**

The target populations of this study are the woradas of Iluu Abbaa Booraa Zone. Almost all woradas in the zone share the same cultural feature. But to make the research manageable, it is important to select some representative samples from the zone. To do so, a simple random sampling method is found to be appropriate.

Before the study began, the researcher contacted the authorities in the culture and Tourism Bureau of the zone to get permission and the list of the woradas. Out of 24 the woradas of the zone, three woradas: Algie-Sachi, Mattu and Bilo-Nopha were randomly selected. From the three woradas, thirty sample respondents were selected using the following techniques.

### **3.3. Sampling Technique**

In the study, both simple random sampling and purposive sampling methods have been employed. Including all the woradas in the study may be both tiresome and time consuming. Thus, it was necessary to select a segment of the woradas under investigation since the cultural practices in the society is homogeneous. Therefore, the researcher reached on the decision to employ random sampling method technique to select samples among the 24 woradas of the Zone. To do so, the researcher gave the chance to all woradas by using a lottery system. The reason behind choosing this sampling technique is due to the fact that it is fair to select sample without any bias to generalize the results. However, to select the respondents from the selected woradas, the researcher used non-random sampling method. The researcher purposefully selected 30 informants from the sample woradas who are more elderly and share typical experience with regard to the research focus. The reason for selecting purposive sampling method is that not all people within the area know the communicative function of the cultural objects. Thus, the researcher wants to handpick the old people for the study.

The main goal of sampling in this study is not to determine how the representative informants are or how the given experience is distributed in the population, instead it is to find individuals who can provide rich and varied insights into the issue understudy. This goal is, therefore, best achieved through purposive sampling.

The first thing the researcher did to draw the representative sample for the study was identifying the number of people living in selected woradas for which he took the list of

people from the heads of Culture and Tourism Bureau of each woradas. Next, identifying the elderly who have typical information about the issue of the study was taken place. Finally, 12 informants from Algie-Sachi, 11 informants from Mattu and 7 informants from Bilo-Nopha were deliberately selected.

### **3.4. Instruments of Data Collection**

Selecting an appropriate method of data collection was absolutely necessary to achieve the intended goal. In this study, therefore, two research tools, interview and document analysis were used to gather relevant information for the study.

#### ***3.4.1. Interview***

Interview was favored for its relevance to the nature of the study and used as a main tool of data collection in this study. According to Donyei, (2005:18), interview is a natural and socially acceptable way of collecting information that most people feel comfortable with and which can be used in verifying situations and in focusing on diverse topics to yield in-depth data. It is a powerful way of helping people to make explicit things that were otherwise implicit and to accumulate the facts perceptions, feelings and understandings (Arkey and Fright, 1999:135). In this study, therefore, it is preferred to gather unlimited facts. It was adopted with the assumption that it would provide the study with more relevant data to address the objectives set in advance.

In general, semi-structured and unstructured interview questions were used in the study. Six general unstructured interview questions were set to gather relevant qualitative data. These open-ended questions are used to enable the respondents to give free response using their

own terms to explain and qualify their responses. Semi-structured interviews were also used with the purpose of generating information rich in data about the cultural objects used to transfer messages in the society and used to give freedom for the interviewees to express their feelings, interests, understandings and even actions under investigation. In addition, it is used to control their ideas when they go out of the study focus and start to provide irrelevant data or information.

The interview questions were formulated in such a way that they can be easily rephrased, translated and adapted to the level of understanding of the interviewees. Some follow-up questions were also used to prepare the respondents to give more accurate information or to confirm response provided earlier.

Each of the questions of the interview was clearly posed to each of the interviewees followed by a serious note taking while they were responding to the questions. Note taking was used to record the data instead of the audio/video recording for two fundamental reasons: first, the aim of the study had nothing to do with the interviewees' speech/language, but it only required the information they provided. "The main task in interviewing is to understand the meaning of what the interviewees say" (Kvale, 1996). Second, as Strantakos (2005), explains, taking a note is equally important with audio/video recording except that, the later creates embarrassment or mistrust which hinders the amount of information to be provided. Since all the interviewees are speakers of Afan Oromo, the interview questions are translated into Afan Oromo.



### ***3.4.2. Document Analysis***

Document analysis is another tool to gather information for the study. It is an important research tool in its own right and is an invaluable part of most schemes of triangulation. A document may be: written document, a painting, a map, a photograph, etc. Documents are unobtrusive and can be used without imposing on participants; they can be checked and re-checked for reliability. Therefore, in this study the written documents taken from Mattu and Algie-Sachi about marriage practices in the society were analyzed.

### **3.5. Techniques of Data Analysis.**

The data gathered through both tools are analyzed in the following way. First, the data obtained from the informants are thematically described in the narrative form. Second, the documents were also analyzed qualitatively. Finally, the result obtained through both tools was cross-checked or triangulated.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **THE NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION USED IN ILUU ABBAA BOORAA OROMO SOCIETY**

Oromo has varieties of local customs, habits, views, and social laws as harbored by various clans over a long period of time. Hence, Iluu Abbaa Booraa Oromo society's culture is one of the many patterns that has been implicitly and explicitly learned, acquired and transmitted by generations over centuries. As it has some common features with other societies in the Oromia region, it has also its own unique features in expressing itself. The society of Iluu Abbaa Booraa has developed its own culture that distinguishes it from others. For instance, it has developed its own unique way of marriage ceremony, heroism ceremony, lightning rituals, religious ceremony, etc. These unique cultural activities are communicated through their verbal and non-verbal communications.

It is helpful to have knowledge of the language to understand the culture of the society, because the culture of any society is expressed in its language. As it is mentioned in the review literature, object language is a part of non-verbal communication which is used to transfer message by using different material objects. The Iluu Abbaa Booraa Oromo society uses different material objects in different occasions to communicate different messages. For example, objects used during marriage, lightning and hunting ceremonies have different communicative functions. They transfer information about the society's economic system, social and religious life. In other words, the wishes and aspirations, values, norms, etc. of the society are related with the objects used. Therefore, in this study, the focus is how the society

communicates non-verbally by using different cultural objects in three cultural practices in Iluu Abbaa Booraa Oromo Society. These are: Marriage, heroism and lightning ceremonies:

#### **4.1. Marriage**

Marriage is one part of culture that has been practiced over a long period of time and still exists in our century. Although it has different expression, the aim of marriage in every society is more or less the same. As to Westermarck (1977:23) “Marriage is the relationship between a man and a woman who have made a legal agreement to live together”.

Encyclopedia Britannica defines marriage as:

*Marriage is legally and socially sanctioned union between one or more husband or one or more wives that accords status to their offspring's and is regulated by laws, rules, customs, beliefs and attitudes that prescribed the rights and duties of the partners (Encyclopedia Britanica, 1992, V. 7, p. 871).*

Marriage meets one of the basic needs of human beings and leads to the formation of family, producing offspring, raising children and gives continuity to human generation. It is a social process that leads to the establishment of intimate relationship between husband and wife. It can be said that the aim of marriage in every society is common to all cultures. However, cross culturally the way of achieving marriage and the ceremony for declaring it is different from society to society or from place to place.

The Iluu Abbaa Booraa Oromo society has a traditional marriage ceremony which descended from earlier times. A great social significance is attached to the wedding ceremony. The wedding day is a very important day in the life of the bride and the groom. It is important for the bride whose wedding is celebrated once in her life. As for the man, he can celebrate his

wedding if he marries a second or a third wife either because of the death of his first wife or whenever he wants to have more than one wife as the culture is polygamous. However, even for the man, it is the first wedding ceremony which is more important than the second or the third one. What is very important to Oromo in general and Iluu Abbaa Booraa Oromo society in particular in respect to marriage institution is the existence of two terms that express the activities of the two opposite sexes *fuudhuu* and *heerumuu* for the boy and the girl respectively who are married formally or informally. In Iluu Abbaa Booraa Oromo society, there are five types of marriage: *naqannaa*, *hawwii*, *butii*, *ol-laqqii* and *aseennaa*. These can be categorized into two. Formal or acceptable and informal or unacceptable forms of marriage.

#### **Formal types of marriage**

#### **Gloss**

1. nak'annaa

Betrothal

#### **Informal types of marriage**

#### **Gloss**

1. aseennaa

a type of marriage which the girl moves to the home of the man she loves

2. butii

abduction

3. hawwii

elopement

4. ol-lak'ii

a marriage through which the man accompanied by some friends to go to the parents of the would be bride who are unaware of the plot.

The most typical form of marriage practiced in Iluu Abbaa Booraa Oromo society is *naqannaa* 'betrothal' which is the focus of the study. Betrothal is a form of marriage mostly arranged by the parents of the bride and the groom with great deal of negotiation. Such form of marriage is more stable than other forms of marriage in the society. However, the informal type of marriage is a type of marriage which takes place unilaterally by one of the parties either without the consent of the girl's family or the man's and the man's family or even some times without the will of the girl. It is one of the causes for conflict creation between kin groups belonging to the man and the girl and it builds unstable family relationship and eventually ends with divorce.

The process which leads to *naqannaa* marriage employs various objects of high cultural significance and communicative values. Although the focus of the study is on the objects, some preconditions which parents should take into account before the marriage are briefly discussed for understanding the background.

In choosing a bride for his son, the father of the man has to take the following criteria into consideration before initiating the betrothal process.

- a. The beauty and character of the girl and her ability in managing the household is the first criterion. The parents first investigate the conduct and the beauty of the girl. The qualities of the girl's mother are also important since the Oromo people have the belief that girls inherit qualities of their mothers. The Oromo has a saying which runs as follows: *haadha ilaali intala fuudhi* which literally means 'observes the mother to marry her daughter'.
- b. Lineage: in this society, when parents want to arrange marriage, it is obligatory to know the girls lineage clearly. This is to avoid possible inter-breeding which is

absolutely forbidden. Marriage within the same lineage is considered as *haraamuu* 'incest'.

- c. Reputation of the family: in selecting a wife for their son, the parents also have to study the background of the girl. The girl's family should not be from an alienated group such as the *tumtuu* 'blacksmith', *faak'ii* 'tanner', and *garba* 'slave'.
- d. Economic status is another criterion in choosing a girl for marriage. If possible parents of the man want to choose a daughter of a wealthy family with expectation that they will get many herds.
- e. The fertility background is also ascertained. That is the extent of fertility in the history of the girl's mother.

If the criteria are all satisfied, the family of a boy sends elders to the girl's family proposing their daughter in marriage to their son. The parents of the man then choose two or four trusted and aged friends of the father who will go to the girl's home for negotiation. Aged people are chosen because of their ability in convincing others and what elders say has acceptance in this society. Following the visit of the messengers, the girl's family begins their own investigation into the kind of people who are proposing the relationship. Any doubts about the family, of course, reflect up on the boy. Their criteria for accepting to the proposal for a union are the same as were those of the family of the man who initiating the process. If the girl's family found out that, the people in the other party are honest, co-operative, sociable, good in financial position, do not live far away, and from the same ethnic group but not from the same lineage or *balbala*,<sup>1</sup> then the girl's parents send a message indicating that the process could continue.

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<sup>1</sup> *Balabala* is the term used to designate this minimal patrilineal exogamous descent group.

#### ***4.1.1. The Communicative Function of Clothing, Hairstyle and Ornaments in Marriage Ceremony.***

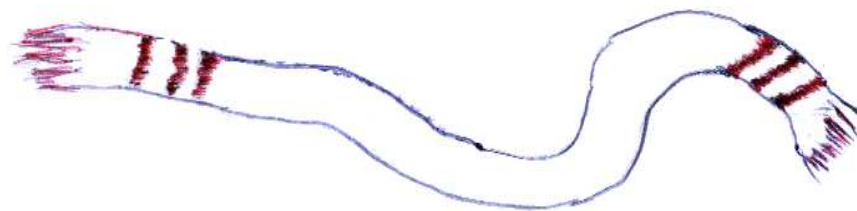
##### **Clothing Style**

In this society, various types of clothes are used for communicative purposes during marriage. These are objects which convey non-verbally, socially meaningful messages. For example, particular clothes put on by the bride or the groom can give information about who the wearer is and how he/she should be treated. “For most individuals the major medium of communication by appearance is dressing” (Burgoon, 1978: 79). By observing a persons’ dressing style, it can be possible to identify their religion, ethnicity, and their economic status. Adler says:

“People do intentionally send message about themselves by what they wear, and we can tell any thing about people, their personal attitudes or social philosophy by the way they dress” (Adler, 1982: 110).

The Iluu Abbaa Booraa Oromo society has its own dressing style. Especially on wedding days, clothing is one of the most communicative cue which helps to differentiate the bride as well as the bridegroom from their attendants.

The bride distinguishes herself from the other girls by wearing beautiful white clothes called *wandaboo* ‘cloth worn by a bride’ under it she wears *šaamaa* red colored nylon and ties her waist with a belt made of cotton known as *sabbata* ‘belt’.



*Picture 1: Sabbata ‘belt’*

Over the *wandaboo*, the bride wears a coat called *šurraaba* and worn *balee* ‘a play cloth’ over all. She also holds a new red colored *t’ilaa* ‘umbrella’. Those objects make her unique and indicate that she is a bride.



Picture 2: *t’ilaa* ‘umbrella’

Similarly, the bridegroom can easily be identified by his styles of dressing. The groom wears a white or light colored broad cloth suit trouser called *k’uumii* (*kofoo*), long sleeved shirt known as *kittaa* and *barmet’t;aa* ‘hat’. Besides he holds *alangee* “scourge”, which indicates his superiority to others and respect in his new family on that day. Therefore, one can easily distinguish the bride and the groom by their unique style of dressing.



Picture 3: *alangee* ‘whip or scourge’



## Hair Styles

The styles of hair have significant communicative functions in the society. Though it varies from culture to culture, the way the hair is cut and plaited, the length and color communicate messages about marriage status, ethnicity, religion, gender, social status etc, of the person.

The Oromo of Iluu Abbaa Booraa use various hair styles which are indicative of age level and marital status. In this society, a girl about eight to eleven years old will have a grown long hair that is decorated with numerous small braids. By the time she is about twelve, she shaves the spot over the upper part of the back of the head which is known as *k'arree*. The *k'arree* is a part of special hair style worn by a young virgin girl until her marriage. A small two-inch circle of hair at the crown of the head is braided separately from the rest of the hair. When she shaves this *k'arree* it communicates that she is mature enough and the lady is unmarried and she is virgin. After marriage on the fifth day, the whole hair is shaved and no more *k'arree* is left on the head. It is changed to *šurrubbaa* 'braid' when it grows to communicate that she is a married woman.



Picture 4: A girl Displays her *K'arree* (source: IAB Culture and Tourism Bureau)

## Ornaments

In this society, ornaments are also used to convey messages in different social affairs including marriage. It communicates meanings about the wearer. With regard to marriage, ornaments are not simply put on or used for the sake of beauty, but they enable people to receive ample information about the person or wearer non-verbally.

In Iluu Abbaa Booraa Oromo culture, ornaments are the cues to distinguish the engaged girl from the unengaged and the married from the unmarried ones. The engaged girl wears a piece of silver jewelry called *maataba*<sup>2</sup> on her neck. It is heavy and forged from Maria Theresa dollar. She also wears ornaments called *giraalbuu* 'ankle' on her legs and *k'ubeelaa* 'finger-ring' on her fingers. Some terms referring to object languages in the paper are originally borrowed from Amharic.



Picture 5: An engaged girl (source: IAB Culture and Tourism Bureau)

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<sup>2</sup> *Maataba*- a solid ring of silver jewelery worn on a cord around the neck of a girl who has become engaged.

The above picture displays ornaments which communicates the message that the girl is already engaged. So, another boy cannot choose her to be his fiancée. In this society, men do not wear any ornaments to communicate that they are engaged.

In general, clothing, hairstyle, and ornaments have great role in communicating the marital status of girls in the Iluu Abbaa Booraa Oromo Society.

#### ***4.1.2. The Non-Verbal Communication during Negotiation Ceremony***

With the action initiated by the boy's family and after carefully obtained information about the girl intended and her family it is cultural to have negotiations between the two families to arrive at a certain conclusion. In choosing the girl, the activity of the girl's mother must be taken into account. She must be an active woman in managing her home and doing the house work. In Iluu Abbaa Booraa Oromo society, it is believed that every activity of the mother i.e. keeping her house well, cooking, doing some traditional household works, etc. has an influence on the girl's future life. The purpose of negotiation if they are agreed on the issue is to fix the engagement day and to discuss the bride price to be given.

#### ***The *milkaa* 'Omen' in Iluu Abbaa Booraa Oromo Society***

During the negotiation time, messengers are cautious about seeing everything facing them on their way to the girl's home, because every thing seen according to the society represents different meanings. This is called *milkaa* 'Omen'. The *milkaa* is a sign of something good or evil to come. Members of both families become cautious of the positive or the negative *milkaa* that they encounter to determine whether the process for the marriage session has to continue or to cease. The encounter can be interpreted positively or negatively depending on

the objects seen. This is the most important thing that decides whether to continue the negotiation process or not. If the interpretation according to the object seen is not positive, it is believed that they may not agree with the negotiation or even if they succeeded in negotiation, it is believed that the life of the couple will not be good after marriage. In general, everything is determined by the *milkee* they have encountered. On their way to the girl's home, if the messengers happen to hear a crow crowing, it is believed that the meeting to be carried out between the messengers and the girl's family will end with disagreement. One cause for such disagreement may be due to the bride price to be given.

One such *milkee* has to do with the sprouting of a sample of *garbuu* 'barley' not to produce the drink called *farsoo* 'local beer' for the celebration but it is the belief of the society to check from the state of its sprouting whether the match must continue or not. If the *milkee* so far is positive and the process should continue, the mothers at both households soak adequate *garbuu* into the water in a clay pot called *okkotee* 'jug' for two to four days. Then they cover it with the leaves of a tree called *bakkanniisa* to allow it to be sprouting. If the barley from both households fails to sprout at once, the families try another types of *garbuu* for two to four days again. If this too fails to sprout, then both families strongly believe that the match will not be positive for the couple. On the other hand, if the interpretation is positive it indicates a good future for the couple.

As the messengers go to the girl's home, they pay attention to the different things and incidents that they may encounter, which indicates good or bad *milkee*. For instance, if the messengers face a person carrying fire, it is believed to result in disagreement between the couple in the future. If the fire died in either of the households, it implies the discontinuity or

divorce in the marriage contract. Bullet shooting is believed to result in the death of either of the couple or of their first born baby.

Various other encounters by the messengers are also considered as bad *milkaa* in the society. A black fox or cat passing across their way is interpreted as a bad *milkaa* for the messengers. A woman carrying an empty pot, a horse ridden without saddle and a horse with its tail cut are believed to indicate negative phenomena to the couple. Other things which have negative implications include: ashes, bulls fighting, etc. these are believed to predict disasters or disagreements that the couples will face some time after the marriage. However, the messengers may also be lucky enough to encounter objects which communicate positively. For instance, if the messengers come across a woman carrying a full pot of water on her back, this predicts success in the marriage, if they see someone leading a cow, it communicates that the future possession by the couple of big wealth. Especially, if that person is coaxing the cow by offering it the salt, this predicts that the marriage will bind the couple together and their future will be as tasty as the salt.

The interest of the messengers is not only to succeed in getting the girl for their young man, but it is also to make sure that the future life of the couple after marriage is long lasting. The predictions depend on the objects they may encounter. It is to be noted that what matters is not only the object or substance seen but also the circumstance in which the object or the substance is found that communicate a message. The message drawn from a certain object or substance in one circumstance may result in a different prediction in another circumstance. For example, if the messengers face a crow preying on worms silently, this communicates a joyful, peaceful and healthy life that the couple will have after marriage. Cow dung, a cow

with its calf or with a herd of cattle communicates the wealth of cattle that the couple will have in the future. Children playing also predict that they enjoy having plenty of children in the future.

The encountering of people building a fence or a barn is another object cue which is related to the couple's future life. The fence shows the strength or the good relationship and unity between the couples. In addition to that it communicates the wealth of cattle they will have in the future.

In general, people around the couple have to be careful and vigilant about encountering good or bad *milki*. In both house holds everything needs to be perfect, whole and complete for the marriage to be successful. All domestic animals should spend the whole night in peace. The entire family should be at home and the fires should not die. If everything is alright or what they have seen is interpreted positively, the mediators go to the home of the girl's parents and ask if their daughter will marry the Youngman. The girl's parents often impose conditions and the mediators will take the message to the boy's parents. When the parents have reached an agreement, the man and the woman get engaged (betrothed). It is only after this that the girl's family can decide to agree with the engagement. And the family of the Youngman, after having the permission from the girl's family, takes the next step of fixing the engagement day. All these objects which can be interpreted negatively or positively play a great role in enabling the engagement or in ceasing to carry out the marriage.

#### ***4.1.3. The Non-Verbal Communication used during Engagement Time***

Before the day of engagement, the boy never sees his fiancée; and neither does she see him. It is on the engagement day that both meet with each other. On the engagement day, there is a ceremony in which various objects communicate different messages. For this ceremony, the boy calls his friends, some elderly men, and the male relatives close to him, such as his uncles and cousins at home to accompany him on the special occasion to the girl's home. At the girl's home, they will be supplied ceremonial foods and drinks. At this time, the girl's mother prepares the most delicious and expensive foods that communicate their economic status. The implication of the meal is to show the wish of the bride's family for the couples who are becoming engaged to have a fruit full life after marriage. In the midst of the ceremony, the girl is escorted into the house by her father and brother and sits on the ground in front of the groom's father, on the *handaqii* 'a wide straw mat' made of 'zembaba' next to her proposed *kaaDima* 'fiancé' or the groom.

The interesting thing at this time is the use of *č'ok'orsa* 'grass'. The boy inserts a spring of *č'ok'orsa* into her *qarree*. *č'ok'orsa* is a special grass that grows in a fertile areas (it often sprouts where cow dung has fallen) and runs as a creeper along the ground rather than growing tall and it grows in all season. The grass communicates long life and fertility for the bride. In addition to putting the *č'ok'orsa*, the *kaadhimaa* the 'fiance' also puts the *madaabii* 'necklace' around her neck and *k'ubeelaa* 'finger-ring' on her finger. This process is called *naqata* or *mataba-kaawwannaa* literally means 'the process of putting on the scored'. It conveys a message that she is his official *kaahimaa* 'fiancée' as of then. In the old days, the engagement was symbolized by the bracelet worn around the neck, but now a day in the society it is replaced by a ring worn on the finger and the ornaments put on the ears. This

shows us that the culture of the society is changing towards westernization. This also has resulted in some new messages conveyed by the new practices in which the non-verbal communications in the society are changing. Nowadays, people who are following the old and traditional processes and objects are considered as primitives while those practicing the new patterns are considered as modernized people.

Sometimes the groom may persuade his father to deliver a pair of gold ear-rings or an ankle bracelet of silver beads for the bride. When she appears in public, the more jewelry she wears, the better his reputation in society. This activity implies or communicates the socio-economic position of the groom as well.

*The č'ok'orsa in the hair of the fiancée*



*Picture 6: The kaaDimaa “fiancé” places a spring of č'ok'orsa in the hair of his fiancée on the engagement ceremony. (Source: IAB Culture and Tourism Bureau)*



Normal full-term *naqata* lasts between one to one and a half years. Once their daughter is promised to some one, her parents are in no hurry to marry her off, because she is decorated by different material objects. When a girl is decorated by such objects, every body understands that she is engaged. After getting engaged, the girl continues to improve her household skills and begins weaving small baskets such as *gundoo-booree*, *mosoobii*, etc.

Another important object that has non-verbal communicative feature is the girl's virginity. A young engaged girl may meet some one at the river when she is sent to fetch water, or in the forest when she goes to gather firewood, a young man whom she would call her *miču* "friend" can contact her for *Duggu* 'kissing' only. It is true that parents prize their daughter's virginity more than any other single quality they might offer to her husband when she marries. But innocent kissing poses no threat to that at all. The girl herself values her virginity as highly as do her parents, and will never be tempted to give it up before marriage. If she did, her reputation and her family's prestige would be ruined. Her entire future will fall in disaster if she were found not to be a virgin at her wedding. No other desire would overpower her wish to have a good marriage. If she lost her virginity against her will, she would follow her lover the one who is different from her *kaadhima*. Girls who do not have virgin have a low status in the society. Thus, virginity is considered as a quality marker of the girls in this society.

#### ***4.1.4. The Non-Verbal Communication used on the Wedding Ceremony***

Having conducted the engagement ceremony, after two months, the old men contact each other to fix a date for the actual wedding to take place. A popular time for the wedding in the society is after harvesting and before planting begins. At this time both parents prepare food

and drink for the wedding and invite guests. The families enjoy the wedding ceremonies of their children and say that *yeroo č'idha dhala keeñña itti arginuu dha* 'means it is the time to see the wedding day of our children'. Both families begin to make wedding feasts which show their economic status. These preparations begin seven to ten days before a date of wedding.

About two weeks before the fixed day, the young girl- friends of the bride to be are invited to come to her house often in the evenings to practice the special song which is called *arrabsoo* 'insult' along its dance.

In addition, at *jala-bultii* 'the wedding-eve' there is an occasion in which her friends express their sorrow because she is going to depart from them. This action is called *mararoo* 'songs of departure'.

One week before the wedding day, the groom calls his friends and age-mates to accompany him on mule if he is from a wealthy family to her house to take his bride. This group is called the *hamaamota* 'the attendants'. In the society, having a mule on a special occasion is believed as an indicator of wealth. If there are more horses on the wedding day the groom is considered to be from the socio-economic middle class. Therefore, the number of horses or mules communicates the status of his family. On the wedding day, the groom fires a gun to call his party. The groom's most important decisions at this time are two things. One, since his father should not make this journey he selects some one who acts on behalf of his father. Second, he has to select his *miindzee* 'best man'. To announce who will be his *miindzee*, the bridegroom brings three objects: an *alangee*, a kind of plant called *hulmaayyaa* and a glass of

milk. He places an *alangee* on the would be best-man's lap and hands him the *hulmaayyaa* and glass of milk. By doing these objects, he tells him non-verbally that he would be his *miindzee*. All these objects represent different meanings. The *hulmaayyaa* implies marriage or wedding, the *alangee* indicates authority and the milk communicates peace and wealth of the groom's family. Then *č'umboo*<sup>3</sup> is brought and broken and a piece is given to the *miindzee*. It means to the *miindzee* that he is considered as a member of the groom's family from then onwards. After the *miindzee* has eaten from the piece of the *č'umboo*, the remaining *č'umboo* is distributed to the others. Before leaving for the bride's home the father of the groom and the elders bless the bridegroom and members of his party. To begin the blessing, first cups are filled with milk. The full glasses of milk communicate wholeness, fulfillment and completeness.

As soon as the bride's house comes into view every one stops to prepare for arrival by dismounting from their horses, brushing off their shoes by leaf, straightening their clothes, etc. Almost all of the *hamaamota* will be in their best clothes. As soon as the *xurumbaa*<sup>4</sup> 'trumpet' is heard from a far, the girls at the bride's home begin to sing and dance more enthusiastically. The group sets out in good spirits and continually blows the *xurumbaa* to announce their coming. People often run to the path to watch the group passby, count the mule and wish them well. The number of mules communicate that he is from the higher class. As they arrived at the bride's home, they dismount from their horses or mules and tie them without the help of the bride's family. Now the guests are welcomed by the bride's father and relatives and escorted to a special temporary shelter built for the occasion called

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<sup>3</sup> *č'umboo*- round thick bread made of barley.

<sup>4</sup> *t'urumbaa*- A foot-long lightweight metal or horn whose sound is heard well across a long distance

*daasii*<sup>5</sup>. The girls move together at the same time singing to block the groom and his party from entry.

Once the groom and his party are in the *daasii*, one of the hosts distributes tall thick glasses immediately to his guests and fills them with overflowing good quality of *farsoo* ‘local beer’. While drinking it, the guests are also served delicious and well prepared food.

After a short while, the bride is brought into the *daasii* from a small hut and is let to sit down on the left side of the bridegroom to be blessed by her father and mother as well as her closest relatives. Both of them receive a full glass of milk from her father. They clip the glass together and sip some from the milk. They bow holding a single glass with both their hands and receive blessings.



Picture 7: The father blessing the couple (source: IAB Culture and Tourism Bureau)

Holding a single glass implies that the couple are united together. The father blesses his daughter orally by saying “you have made me happy in every way; May you be happy as I am; may all the good things come to you; may your friends never disappoint you; may you

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<sup>5</sup> *daasii*- A temporary but substantial construction made of strong wood supports for a roof covered with leaves. Therefore, abandoned after the event.

accumulate wealth, many children and good fortunes.” The society believes that if she does not receive blessing, her future life will not be good. After the blessing is finalized, the bride’s family provides *č’umboo* ‘a full circled thick bread’ and a full cup of honey that will be taken with the bride to the groom’s home. These objects convey the message that their daughter is virgin.

Now, during this pause in the wedding proceedings, male guests of the bride’s family count the *gumaata* ‘wedding gift’.



Picture 8: The relative of the bride is counting the wedding gift (source: IAB Culture and Tourism Bureau)

The *hamaamota* collect the various wedding gifts and mount on their mules. The number and types of woven articles such as *gundoo*, *mosoobii*, etc. that convey the ability and diligence of the bride. Other gifts such as *gaabii*,<sup>6</sup> *bullokkoo*,<sup>7</sup> cattle, *balee*, mule, etc. communicate the wealth of her parents.

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<sup>6</sup> *gaabii*- A heavy cotton wrap that serves through out Ethiopia. It is usually long and draped over the shoulder for warmth.

<sup>7</sup> *bullokkoo*- A large garment usually worn by men. It is a local production made of cotton.

The ceremony is over. The groom rises alone while the *miindzee* helps the bride, covers her for protection, and leads her out. Here, she walks under the new red umbrella that marks her as a newly wed bride.

The mules or horses are saddled and ready to go, including the new one contributed by the girl's father as his major gift. Rather than mounting her on mule immediately, the bride, waits until a male has lifted himself into the saddle for a few minutes. Then the *miindzee* helps her on. In the society, the bride is forbidden to ride the mule first because that animal is incapable of giving birth. Eventually riding a horse for a short while is acceptable before being transferred to a mule according to old practice. Riding by mule implies strength of the bride in house hold workings whereas riding on horse back indicates fertility of the bride after marriage according to the belief of the society.

Before finalizing the wedding ceremony, there is a big game between the girls and the *hamaamota*. After the bride-groom takes away the bride, the girls took out *gundoo-booree* 'a small colorful woven material'.



Picture 9: The *gundoo booree* (source: IAB Culture and Tourism Bureau)

The *gundoo-booree* is given to the strongest girl among the bride's friends. Then they make a circle and stand round by the girl chanting special songs. The song goes on and on until the *gundoo-booree* is taken off by the aunt's son of the groom. In order to win the game, the *hamaamotaa* need to use tactics and strategies. The *gundoo-booree* has double meanings. First, it is used as a symbol of the virginity of the bride. Second, it is used as a symbol of competition between the two groups. The word *booree* itself is to mean gut, courage and duty to do something. If the *gundoo-booree* is not taken away by the aunt's son, it is believed that the groom cannot deflower the bride. All sing in union, rejoicing and dancing and blowing the trumpet as they go. Traditionally, the new bride is shy and speaks to no one but the *miindzee*.

Up on arrival at the groom's homestead, the party is met by the groom's sister and her friends singing verses to insult the bride in the same manner she and her friends had harassed the groom hours earlier at the bride's place.

In the society, before the bride enters into her husband's house, a sheep is slaughtered in the door way. The groom and bride are then smeared on their forehead with the blood by the groom's mother. The implication of the action according to tradition is to strengthen the tie between the couple. The slaughtering of the sheep at the end of the ceremony represents the pleasure of the groom's family by the joining of the bride to their family.

Another stage on the process where objects are used to communicate a message takes place in the small room of the couple. The *miindzee* leaves them alone. The groom tests the virginity of the bride in this room. The *miindzee* remains earshot and rush to the scene after

she has been deflowered. The bride uses scarf to take the blood, proof of her sterling character and purity throughout girlhood.

The stain is the bride's gift to the bridegroom and a seal on the relationship between the couples and their families. The groom immediately fires a gun to announce that his bride was virgin. If no proof of virginity is found the groom has a right to beat the girl, force her to get up and serve *farsoo* to his *hamaamota* in shame. Even sometimes, he may send her back to her parents. In the society, virginity has a great value on the life of the couple. A girl with virgin has high respect in her families whereas the community has negative attitude towards the girl who is not a virgin because being out of virginity before marriage is considered as taboo in the society.

#### ***4.1.5. The Non-Verbal Communication used after the Wedding Day***

On the second day following the wedding day, the *miindzee* with four or six of his friends make a triumphant journey to the bride's family to offer the proof of their daughter's virginity. While traveling, the *miindzee* takes the blood stained shawl and the thick full circled bread called *č'umbo* and a full cup of honey putting on a *gundoo-booree*. The origin of this bread is from the bride's family which was given on the wedding day. As soon as they arrived at the bride's parent's home, the *miindzee* show them the blood stained shawl, the honey and the bread to communicate that their daughter was virgin. In case the shawl is clean the honey is not full and the bread is broken convey non-verbally that she was not a virgin. Hence, starting from then on in the society, her family has got low status and disgust and cannot be used as an elderly negotiator because of his defect.



There is also another ceremony after the wedding day in which objects and actions communicate various meanings. On the fifth day of the wedding, there is a ceremony called *šanan* ‘fifth’. It is the first day on which the bride first ventures into the world outside her small house. The groom and the *miindzee* put some money at the door way that she steps on when coming out. The money implies that their wish of wealth for her in the future. Then, the groom shaves her *qarree* and it indicates that she became *nadheen* ‘a married woman’ and no more *durba* ‘a girl’. The bride too shaves a string of hair from the groom’s head to communicate non-verbally that he is no more *qeerroo* ‘a bachelor’ and that he has become a *suubboo* ‘a married man’.

In general, in the society, some one who married the girl out of the formal marriage ceremony or betrothal process is considered as poor and has got low status.

#### **4.2. The *ajjeečaa* ‘heroism’ Ceremony in Iluu Abbaa Booraa Oromo Society**

The Oromo are well known as ferocious warriors and famous hunters throughout their history as it is reported by Bahrey who first wrote in Oromo in 1593-1646. Bahrey (1954:122) says:

*To kill a lion, elephant, leopard, buffalo, wolf is the aim of every man and was formerly an essential and preliminary to a respectable marriage, which is the first step towards formal recognition as a social adult.*

Bahrey (1954:122) describing the motive of Oromo when they kill larger animals says:

*When Oromo killed larger animals, they get their whole head shaved, leaving a little hair in the middle of the skull. Those who have not killed large animals do not shave their heads, and consequently they are tormented by lice.*

Among the Oromo, the *ajjeečaa* of the larger animals had been a test of manhood since from time immemorial. The *ajjeečaa* was considered as a school of warfare in which young warriors learnt to handle their weapons and to accustom themselves to difficult situations. The animals that were hunted for a test of manhood and heroic activity were: Lions, elephants, leopards, buffalos, wolves etc. The *ajjeesaa* 'hero' who kills these animals was equally respected in the society and prepared a ceremony in which the *ajjeesaa* was treated differently from non-killer.

In the olden times, larger animals were available in sufficient number in most forests of Iluu Abbaa Booraa Land, and the *ajjeesaa* was not required to go far to kill and to obtain the status of the *ajjeesaa*. However, now large areas of forests were destroyed due to deforestation; this together with uncontrolled hunting resulted in the scarcity of the animals. This required the people to make long trips in search of such game where the forest was less affected. A larger number of *ajjeesaa* went on foot or by horse carrying their *galaa* 'food' and weapons called *eeboo* 'spear' with them. Killing took place during the dry season when forests were less dense and the game was very weak and less aggressive because of lack of sufficient food and water.

Nowadays, most of the larger animals that used to be hunted for a test of manhood are not available in the area. Even where there are some, killing them is strictly forbidden. For this reason, after the revolution some community members carried out illegal hunting only different types of antelopes, pigs and other smaller animals covertly where there are forests. In the olden days, killing of smaller animals was not considered as heroic and status giving activity. It was taken as something that replaced *adamoo* 'hunting'. The *ajjeechaa* is a

ceremony which the society used to celebrate when men killed big animals such as elephants, lions, or buffalos. According to the informants, in the old days, men practiced hunting frequently. The *ajjeechaa* requires courage, tactics and strategies. The *ajjeechaa* is made by a group which is led by *abbaa duulaa* ‘the leader of the group’ and by the *karaa-saak’r’uu* ‘the one who paves the way’. After carefully examining the place, they entered the forests to attack with spear when possible and to drive out the animals into the open. The big animals were hunted with the use of big spears.

In this society, a man was not considered full or complete until he killed one of the big animals or until he fought an enemy in the battle. Hence, men wanted to be honored as brave and spent more than a week hunting in the forest far away from their homes. If they come back with success they become the *ajjeesaa* ‘hero’ with trophy. The *ajjeečaa* is therefore, a ceremony which lasts for a week or more and its purpose is to declare that the man is brave and that he became the *ajjeesaa*. The ceremony has many stages which involve feast, dancing, and singing war song.

#### ***4.2.1. The Non-Verbal Communication used during the ajjeečaa ceremony***

##### ***4.2.1.1. The Non-Verbal Communication from the Killing Day up to the Fifth Day***

###### ***Ceremony***

From the killing day up to the fifth day of the ceremony, the *ajjeesaa* used different objects which communicated messages about his trophy. The type of objects used by the *ajjeesaa* varied with the type of the big animals he killed. After killing, the *ajjeesaa* used to cut off and fetch the different parts of the animal like the ear, the tail, the skin, the teeth or the horn of the animal. The main purpose of cutting parts of a larger animal was to present these

trophies as a proof for whether he actually did or not and used as a requirement for marriage in the society. For instance, if the animal killed were a lion, the *ajjeesaa* wears *amfaarroo* ‘lion’s mane’ on his forehead and tied the tail of the lion on his left hand. On the other hand, if the animal killed was a buffalo an *ajjeesaa* wears the heels, the tallow, and the horns of the buffalo because one can claim to have killed a larger animal. Without doing so it was impossible to get the status of bravery. Therefore, these requirements of having a witness seem to have forced males to cut off and fetch different organs of the animal they have killed. Then the *ajjeesaa* used to sing loudly the song of *ajjeesaa* called *geerarsa* until he arrived at his home to be congratulated and welcomed by his family. The objects which are the parts of the killed animal conveyed their victory and distinguished them from non-killers.

#### ***4.2.1.2. The Non-Verbal Communication on the fifth Day Ceremony***

The *ajjeesaa* had to stay with his hosts at a nearby river- until his family prepared themselves for feast and for the celebration. A big preparation was made for the ceremony. For example, food and drink had to be prepared, the courtyard had to be cleaned and broken fences had to be repaired. Every thing should be perfect on the hero’s return home.

The fifth day is the day on which the *ajjeesaa* makes peace with the *ayyaana* ‘guardian spirit’ of the animals. This activity is called *gumaa- dhiqannaa*<sup>8</sup>. To accomplish this, the *ajjeesaa* swam in a river. A sheep is slaughtered there and the peace making process is done. They put nine pieces of meat and bread around the river. The bread and the meat depicted that the *gumaa- dhiqannaa* was accomplished. The number of the pieces of meat has no meaning of any kind.

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<sup>8</sup> *Gumaa dhiqannaa* is a sacrificial ceremony prepared by the *ajjeesaa* of larger animals for one day

In the society, only men who have killed larger animals were expected to prepare the *gumaa-dhiqannaa* ceremony. On the ceremony, a young bull is prepared to be sacrificed. *daadhii*, 'wine', *farsoo* 'local beer' *arak'ee* 'gin,' etc. are prepared on the ceremony. It is believed that the *ajjeesaa* will get leprosy or some other misfortune such as cattle disease; poor crop, etc. if the ceremony is omitted. To avoid such disasters and to gain protection, it is believed that the *ajjeesaa* should prepare the *gumaa-dhiqannaa* ceremony.

On return to the home of *ajjeesa* from the river, which is often at some distance from his house the *ajjeesaa* is welcomed by his relatives and friends with appropriate songs. He moved with his weapon, a spear and his trophies which indicate his heroness. He approaches his home; singing the triumphy song. Usually though the *ajjeesaa* is already anointed with butter on his home coming. The anointing is made on the fifth day. He gets anointed on his head with butter by his mother. Butter anointing communicates good fortune or good luck.

Having prepared the young bull for sacrifice and drinks to be served, *ajjeesaa* invites other heroes to participate on the ceremony. Non-killers are not invited; however, they are not inhibited from attending and enjoying the ceremony.

On the proposed day, other *heroes* begin to go to the house of the new *ajjeesaa*. Before they leave their houses, each *ajjeesaa* gets his hair anointed with butter by his wife, wears clean clothes, puts *ilka-arbaa* 'ivory' on his upper arm if he was an *ajjeesaa* of an elephant, beads around his necks and goes boasting around his house to show his wife how brave he is. Other heroes usually went to participate in a ceremony with the parts of the animal they killed to distinguish themselves from non-killers.

When they arrived riding their horse back at the house of their host, they gallop forth and back at the door or around and circle boasting about the animals they had killed and about the manner of killing for some minutes. Only heroes are permitted to enter the house to enjoy themselves with the prepared drinks and the songs of the *ajjeesaa*, and to dance with women who are dancing and praising as well as ululating<sup>9</sup> them within the house. Non-killers are expected to stay and be served outside around the yard of *ajjeesaa* for the whole day. After a minute the men friends of the *ajjeesaa* put five pots on fire to prepare porridge. The porridge is special in that the whole is eaten only by men not by women as it used to be normally. Each individual who participated in the ceremony should eat the porridge. Eating the porridge conveys a meaning which means they are lucky in their life and got high status in the society in killing larger animals. Having finished the porridge, a young bull is slaughtered in front of the door; where the whole meat (except the hump) is cooked and eaten by the participants including the non-killers. The skin is wrestled and distributed to all men who have killed larger animals to show that they are heroes.

The hump of the slaughtered bull is hung up on the branch of a tree, which is prepared and placed in front of the door for this purpose. The heroes then boast turn by turn to cut and eat pieces of the hump with their knives as a proof for their bravery.

At the end of the ceremony, all heroes mount on the back of their horses and ride a circle in front of the door for the last time, singing and boasting, while the participants praise them. Each hero boasts about the animal he has killed, about his wife, etc. Firing gun into the air has also its own message. Individuals who have killed two or three larger animals fire the

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<sup>9</sup> Ululation is an utterance of victory or joy. It sounds like “il-il-il-il” pronounced rapidly at a high pitch

gun depending on the number of larger animals they killed to distinguish themselves from those who killed only one.

#### ***4.2.1.3. The Non-Verbal Communication used after the Fifth Day Ceremony***

The *ajjeesaa* wears material objects that communicate the type of the big animals he killed and which distinguish him from those who did not kill any of the big animals. A man who did not kill one of the big animals cannot wear any types of objects used by the *ajjeesaa* in this society.

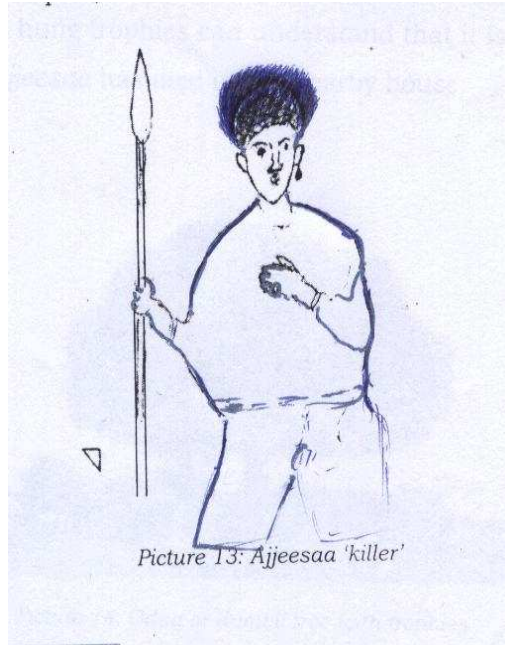
The *ajjeesaa* wears objects like ear-rings, finger-rings. The ear-rings differ according to the kind of animals he have killed. The ear-ring which is worn by the *ajjeesaa* of larger animals (e.g. lion) is called *lootii*.<sup>10</sup> The ear-ring which is worn by an *ajjeesaa* of a buffalo is made of the horn of a buffalo called *kolbaa*. In addition to the ear-rings, the *ajjeesaa* also wears a ring made of metal. The style of the finger- ring that the *ajjeesaa* wears is different from those worn by others in that, he has to wear it on the small finger of his left hand; not on his ring finger. The ring is called *K'ubeelaa-ajjeesaa* 'the ring of the hero'. Thus, according to the informants, in the society, if a man wears *k'ubeelaa* on his small finger, it signifies that the wearer is the *ajjeesaa*.

Moreover, heroes do not shave their hair. They let it grow and keep it long and anoint it with fresh butter. After that they starts to wear some beads around their neck, pierce their ears and let their hair grow long and comb it (unlike what was reported by Bahrey). Anointing their hair is not allowed for men who did not kill any of the big animals. The *ajjeesaa* holds a special spear which is called *eeboo k'ondaalaa* 'spear of a hero'. In the society all these objects convey non-

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<sup>10</sup> Lootii is worn by an *ajjeesaa* of larger animal made of cartridge of a bullet

verbally that the wearer is the *ajjeesaa* and represent the kind of the big animal he killed. Therefore, in the society, the person with all these objects has high respect, value and status.



**Picture 10: Ajjeesaa 'hero'**

#### **4.2.1.4. The Non-Verbal Communication on the Funeral Ceremony of the *ajjeesaa***

Different objects which were used by the *ajjeesaa* when he was alive are used to convey meaning or message on his funeral ceremony. On the mourning ceremony, different material objects such as *faacha* 'lion's mane', *gaamfa* 'horn', *gogaa* 'skin' and *eeboo* 'spear' are used by mourners which communicate the status of the deceased. If any one who is the member of this society sees the mourners carrying such objects along with the corpse, he/she can easily understand that the deceased was an *ajjeesaa*. He/she also identifies the kind of the big animals he had killed by observing these objects.

After the burial of the *ajjeesaa*, these objects are removed from the house and are hung on a tree nearby the home of the *ajjeesaa*. The stand is made from two stems of big branches of an



*Odaa* or *Dambii* tree which takes new roots on the spot where it has been planted. The trophies hung on a cross bar between *Odaa* or the *Dambii* stems. Therefore, any one who observes this tree with the hanging trophies can understand that it is the tomb of the hero or that the *ajjeesaa* has died in the nearby house.



Picture 11: *Odaa* or *dambii* tree with trophies

Within a few months the trophies wither away due to heat and rain, but the *Odaa* or *Dambii* tree keeps on growing and becoming huge. The tree will be referred to by the hero's name as a remembrance. It means even if the hero died, his achievements live forever or as long as the *oda* or *dambii* tree lives. The tree is named *Odaa* or *Dambii faacha*.

On the contrary, if the planted *oda* or *dambii* tree refused to make no roots and does not grow, it is believed that some misfortune is likely to occur to the family and the relatives of the deceased hero. Informants reported that according to the traditional beliefs of the society, this communicates that his family and relatives will not be *ajjeesaa* in the future.

### **4.3. The Lightning Ceremony in Iluu Abbaa Booraa Oromo Society**

Lightning according to the Webster Dictionary (1197), “is the flashing of light produced by discharge of atmospheric electricity from one cloud to another or from cloud to the earth”.

Ritual ceremonies of lightning are series of organized actions which have religious elements or activities by which some supernatural powers are involved.

*Rain is uncertain and when comes usually accompanied by thunder storms. This affected the divergent form of practices and beliefs which eventually encourage the fight in vast number of spirits (Smith 1995: 15).*

The Lightning ceremony is one of the ritual ceremonies celebrated by Iluu Abbaa Booraa Oromoo society. In the society, the lightning ceremony involves various objects that communicate various messages.

#### ***4.3.1. The Non-Verbal Communication used during Lightning Ceremony***

In Iluu Abbaa Booraa Oromo society, lightning ritual practices are celebrated by the family on whose farm land, residential house, family members or animals that thunder has fallen down. The purpose of practicing lightning ritual is to make reconciliation with *waaqaa* ‘God’ for he threw thunder on the particular family or their properties with the belief that they committed some kind of a sin or something which the *waaqaa* did not like. The disaster caused by the thunder is believed by the society as being God’s response to the sin-committed by individuals. This is believed to create trouble to the family of the sinner in particular and the society in general. The disaster like strong wind and heavy ice which can damage plants or their farm would be considered as the community’s punishment from *waaqaa* and it is some times called *dheekkamsa waaqaa* ‘the scolding of God’. Informants described the incidence as follows:

*God can punish a community if an individual or a family commits sins (What God dislikes); this is because it is the community's responsibility to properly bring up its members. When we fail to do this, God reminds us by scolding (or by sending thunder or heavy winds).*

On the other hand, there is also another explanation for lightning accidents. These groups say God would send his lightning down to us because as he looks down at the earth, the Satan insults him by protruding its tongue at him. This means that the devil laughs at God and to this, God replies by thundering the victim.

According to reports from the informants, when the thunder falls down on the family, the family in which this has happened invites men from among the black smith families to lead or guide them on the ritual ceremony. The number of the guiding blacksmiths should equal with the number of the ten commandments of the Bible. The ceremony guided by the blacksmith starts on the specific day the lightening had fallen and continues until the tenth day of the phenomenon. The blacksmith puts pincers outside. The society believes that the pincers prevent the rainfall. According to the beliefs of the society, if it rains before they have accomplished the reconciliation process, the lightning may happen again. Therefore, someone who is a member of this society can receive a message that the rain would not fall when he/she sees the pincers outside.

On the next day, all able members of the family in which the thunder fell have to go to a nearby market place. On the occasion, their style of dressing is completely different from the usual. They wear cloth around their waist called *marxoo* 'apron'.



Picture 12: A family celebrating the lightning ritual

They tie their waist and their head with a kind of tree called *ilchimmee* . They also hold a kind of reed-like plant known as *hulmaayyaa* on their shoulder. Their style of dressing conveys two messages. Firstly, one can easily understand that they are a family that thunder fell in. Secondly, the *marxoo* they wear implies they are praying to the God in order to get forgiveness. The term *marxoo* or *marxifachuu* has a meaning related to praying to the God.

According to the data offered by informants, the victims circle or go round the market ten times again. Having finished going round the market ten times, they collected every grain available in the market and take it to their home to prepare *farsoo*, loaves of bread, porridge, etc. from the grain (especially black barley) they have collected from the market, for the tenth day celebration. On the tenth day, there is a ritual celebration which is called *araara waak'aa* 'making reconciliation with God'. Close neighbors of that family should add some amount of grain which serves for the preparation of the ritual ceremony. This has its own

implication i.e. if they do not add some amount of grain for the preparation of the ceremony; the thunder may fall down to them according to the beliefs of the society.

#### ***4.3.2. The Non- Verbal Communication used on Yearly Celebration of the Ritual***

The family in which the thunder fell practices a ritual ceremony every year on that particular day, to avoid further destruction likely to be caused by violent thunder. On the occasion, a black sheep is slaughtered. According to the belief of the society, God is black and everything that the society does is related to the property of God. In addition to this, *farsoo* 'local beer' is brewed and different food such as porridge from black barley; bread, etc are prepared and eaten on the field. Different materials which are used on the particular day or on the ritual ceremony such as *huuroo* 'pot', *haaduu* 'knife', etc. are not taken back home and they are left on the field.

This society believes that if these objects or materials are taken back home, the scolding or sin may come back with them to their home. Therefore, the materials should be left there. On this occasion, the material objects which are left out on the field convey a message that the family in the nearby house was struck by lightning and had practiced its ritual ceremony. The observer can also make sure that he/she should not go to that family to borrow any of their properties on the particular day. Someone receives the message simply by looking at the objects which are left outside on the field since he/she is familiar with the traditional belief of the society. According to the belief of the society, the family that encountered the thunder was sinful and did not obey the rules of the *waaqaa*. Therefore, the punishment is given to them by the *waaqaa* to teach them as they believe.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION**

#### **5.1. Summary**

The primary function of a language is facilitating communication. Communication is the process by which we assign and convey meaning in an attempt to create shared understanding. We can say that communication is the base for our life. Humans can communicate in one way or another, either it could be verbally through words or non-verbally. Non-verbal communication refers to any human behavior other than word or it is simply the way of communication with others without speaking. Non-verbal communication which we use in every day activities is more general and universal than speech communication.

Non-verbal communication is culture specific; in order to interpret the message, we have to be aware of that cultural background or context in which it is created and used; because the relationship between both verbal or non-verbal communication and culture is a reciprocal one.

There are different areas that we can explore in non-verbal behaviors like: eye movement, (eye contact), gesture, facial expression, appearance, space, body contact, posture, Object languages, etc. Some of the functions of non-verbal communication are to accent, complement, contradict, regulate, repeat, and substitute.

Non-verbal communication has universal characteristics: It is contextually meaningful, usually packaged and always communicative. It is rule-governed and believable. There are also principles of non-verbal communication; it is mostly unconscious and culturally determined.

Non-verbal communication functions in different aspects in a given society. For instance, the human body including all the decorations made on the body such as clothes, hairstyles, ornaments, etc. that communicate status, group identity, religious background, attitudes, and desires of individuals are used as non-verbal communicative cues.

Different societies have different cultural objects that are used to transfer messages in different cultural practices that make a society unique from one another. In accordance with, Iluu Abbaa Booraa Oromo society has various cultural practices such as marriage, *ajjeeachaa* 'heroism' and lightning ceremonies among others use different objects to communicate messages.

In the society, there are different types of marriage practice. The most typical and frequently practiced marriage type is *naqannaa*. In this type, various cultural objects are used to convey messages at different stages in the process of marriage. Some of these cultural objects are *kittaa*, *wandaboo* and *balee*, *madaabii* and *qubeelaa*, black cat/fox and bull fighting. For instance, *wandaboo* and *balee* are used to convey messages that the girl is a bride where as *kittaa* communicates that the boy is a groom. Besides this, there are objects that are used to transfer messages in *ajjeesaa* ceremony: *faacha*, *lootii*, *amfaarroo*, etc. to mention some that are used to convey information related to the *ajjeesaa*. Likewise, objects used for communicating message related to lightning ceremony include: black smith, black sheep, *marxoo*, etc.

In a nut-shell the above mentioned cultural objects are frequently used for communicative purposes in the society.

## 5.2. Conclusion

Based on the findings the following major conclusions have been drawn. The Iluu Abbaa Booraa Oromo society mostly communicates through Non-Verbal codes. According to the belief of the society, Non-verbal codes have more reliability and believability for expressing feelings and emotions. In the society, there are different cultural practices: Marriages, heroism, lightning, etc practices. These cultural practices have objects that have high value as they convey meanings non-verbally.

Marriage is one of the cultural practices in the society. In Marriage ceremony, the society uses various Non-verbal communications (object languages) to transfer messages related to marriage. These are clothing styles to communicate that a wearer is a bride or a groom, ornaments to show that someone is engaged or a brave. The *qarree* is a hair style of a girl used to convey meaning that a girl is unmarried and virgin. Similarly, there are object languages in the process leading to marriage that are related to *milkaa*. In the society, *milkaa* plays a great role in selecting a girl to be a wife for their boy.

There are object languages which are considered as positive and negative *milkaa* in the society. For instances, if massagers see a crow preying on worms silently and children playing , and black cat and fighting of bulls, etc. convey meaning that the *milkaa* is positive or negative. In the society marriage is determined by both *milkaa*. On the wedding day, different object languages show the socio-economic status of the groom's and the bride's families. For example, if there are a number of mules on the groom's side on the day, the groom is from higher social status. Similarly, different wedding gifts from the side of the bride's family convey the wealth of her families. There are also objects that communicate the purity of the



bride on the wedding day. In the society, virginity is used as a means of status giving. Therefore, the interaction between non-verbal communication and the society is inseparable.

Another cultural practice in the society during the earliest time was *ajjeečaa*. The *ajjeečaa* was the ceremony which practiced in the earliest time that had used as a test of manhood. In this society, males should kill larger animals to be respected as a man and to get the status of bravery. This society uses a technique to distinguish the *ajjeesaa* from non-killers. To do so, the *ajjeesaa* should cut off parts of an animal killed as a proof whether he killed or not. These are: *amfaarroo*, *faacha*, *ilkaan*, etc. which is varied with the type of animal killed. Thus, the one with all these trophies is the *ajjeesaa*. In addition, if a person wears *lootii Kolbaa*, *qubeelaa* and grows his hair he is the *ajjeesaa*. These objects are used for communicative function even after the burial of the *ajjeesaa*. The trophies are hanged on the *odaa/dambii* tree which is planted on his tomb, close to his house. Thus, if one sees the objects hanging on the tree he/she realizes that the *ajjeesaa* has died from nearby the house. Thus, in the society, non-verbal communication serves as a reflection of the social-status of individuals or groups.

Lightning ritual is another cultural practice in Iluu Abbaa Booraa Oromo society. The disaster caused by the thunder is believed by the society as being God's response to the sin committed by the family. If the thunder falls down on a particular family, the family should make *araara waaqaa* 'reconciliation with God'. In making a reconciliation process, various object languages are used to convey messages. For instance, ten men from blacksmith ethnic group are invited by the family to guide the process. Pincers are also used. As the belief of the society, pincers are used to prevent the rain. If it rains before finalizing the reconciliation process, the thunder may fail again on the family as they belief. On the occasion, all

members of the family have to go to the nearby market for the reconciliation. The family wears *marxoo* around their waist, tie their head and waist by *ilchimmee* and holds *hulmaayyaa* that communicate the family is celebrating the lightning rituals. On the day, the family collected different objects for the tenth day celebration like: black sheep, black barley, etc. All things should be black because God is black as according to their belief. According to this belief if they relate everything to his characteristics they get forgiveness for their sin. Generally speaking each cultural practice has its own cultural objects that transfer messages.

No	Cultural context	Non-verbal cues	Message	Type
1	Living style and economic activity	High number of cattle (mules) much crops	Greater social status	Symbol
2	Hair style	k'arree  Man does not shave his hair	Virgin girl  Heroness	Object language
3	Ornaments on girl (necklace, Bracelet etc). Decoration on man	Girls wear a big iron around their neck/hand.  A man wears ear-ring and finger-ring.	Engaged girl  Braveness/ heroness in killing larger animals	Object language
4	Clothing styles	- A girl wears <i>wandaboo, balee</i> - <i>mart'oo</i>  -A man wears 'k'uumii' and 'kittaa'	-A bride  -A family celebrating a lighting ceremony  -A groom	Object language
5	Pre-marriage sex and virginity	No sex before marriage	Virginity means beautifulness and status	Symbolic
6	Braveness	A man decorated with the killed animal's skin/ivory	He killed a large animal	Object language
7	Slaughtering a sheep	Mother of the groom smears the groom and the bride on their forehead	Shows strengthen or tying them together	Action language
8	Looking at <i>milkee</i>	E.g. full pot of water, etc.  Empty pot of water, a black cat/fox crossing the way etc.	Positive (good) <i>milkee</i>  Negative (bad) <i>milkee</i>	Object language
9	Stained shawl, bread, honey	Blood on the shawl, unbroken bread and full cup of honey	Virgin	Object language

10	Stained shawl, bread, honey	Clean shawl half bread No honey	Dis-virgin	Object language
11	dambii/odaa tree with trophy nearby the house	Tomb of a brave/hero	He killed a large animal	Object language
12	Ornaments	A man decorates his bride with different ornaments	Shows his socio-economic status (from wealthy family)	Object language

### 5.3. Recommendation

As time goes, cultural change is inevitable. Most of the cultural practices and the cultural objects which serve for communicative purposes in the society have been lost due to different factors like: intermarriage between different communities, adoption of different religious practices, etc. Modern education and urbanization have also brought some change by introducing the western way of life into the life of the society.

Therefore, as cultural objects reflect the identity and as they are used as communicative cue in the society, elders should take responsibility in creating awareness among the current generations about the importance of preserving these cultural objects and passing them onto the upcoming generations the many functions of cultural objects.

Since objects are a part of communication, the effect of cultural assimilation on a culture of the society, particularly on the change of cultural objects with regard to communication is currently evident. Before they are lost, some mechanism of documenting them is necessary by the society or other organizations. Researches on them should also be encouraged.

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## **Appendix A**

### **I.Gaaffiiwwan Afaanii(Interview Questions)**

1. Gosoota aadaa Hawaasni Godina Iluu Abbaa Booraa ittiin beakamu maal fa'i?
2. Akka Godina kanaatti aadaan adda addaa hawaasicha keessatti beekaman yeroo akkamii ayyaaneffatamu/kabajamu?
3. Gosoota aadaa kanneen keessatti namootni qooda fudhatan eenyu fa'i?
4. Meeshaaleen aadaa fkn fuudha fi heeruma, ajjeechaafi sirna haraara bakakkaa keessatti beekaman maal maal fa'i?
5. Hawaasichi meeshaalee aadaa (cultural objects) kanneen fayyadamuun ergaa akkamii waliif dabarsaa/suu danda'aa? Akkamitti?
6. Meeshaaleen al-afaaniin (Nvc) ergaa dabarsuu danda'an walitti dhufeenya hawaasichaa keessatti ga'ee maalii qabu?

### **II.Gaaffilee kara- saaqxuu(Guiding questions)**

1. Akka hawaasa kanaatti namni tokko fuudhuu/heerumuu ykn kaadhimamuu isaa/ishee akkamittiin beekama?
2. Meeshaaleen aadaa nama fuudhe/herume kan hin fuune/hin heerumne irraa addaan baasuuf hawaasicha fayyadan maal fa'i?
3. Meeshaaleen guyyaa fuudhaa isa fuudhuu/ishee heerumtu hamaamota irraa addaa baasuuf nu fayyadan maal fa'i?
4. Aadaan uffannaa hawaasicha keessa jiraa? Yoo jiraate uffannaan gaafa fuudhaa fi heerumaa, ajjeechaa fi sirna haraara bakaakkaa kkf adda addummaa qabaa?
5. Uffannaan Kun ergaa addaa addaa qabaa?



6. Durbummaan hawaasicha keessatti fudhatama akkmii qabaa?
7. Akka aadaa hawaasichaatti gaafa fuudhaa galgala durbummaan jiraachuu ykn dhabamuun isaa akkamitti beekama?
8. Yoo dhiigni carqii adiitti dibame, dhukaasni dhuka'e hiikaa maali qabu?
10. Akkaa aadaa Godina kanaatti yeroo durii bineensota kanneen akka leencaa, gafarsaa, yeyii fi Qeerransaa ajjeesuun maaliif?
11. Hawaasa kana keessatti namoota bineensota kanneen ajjeesanii fi kanneen hin ajjeesin akkamitti aaddaan baasuun danda'ama? Sadarkaan isaanii hawaasa keessatti maal fakkaata?
12. Meeshaaleen aadaa haraara bakakkaa keessatti hawaasichi fayyadamu maal fa'i? ergaan maali dabarsuu danda'u?

## Appendix B

### Glossary

adamoo	hunting
ajjeečaa	killing big animal (heroism)
ajjeesaa	hero
alangee	‘whip or scourge’
anfaarroo	Lion’s mane
aannan	milk
araara	reconciliation
arak’ee	local alcohol
aseennaa	a type of marriage whereby the girl moves to the house where the boy she loves
ayyaana	guardian spirit
balee	kind of shawl-like garment made of a single layer of cloth
barmee’t’aa	a hat
bik’ila	sprout
booree	Something likes gut, courage
butii	Abduction
č’iDa	ceremony
č’umboo	Traditional thick bread
daaDii	wine
daasii	A temporary substantial construction.
dambii/odaa	A kind of tree (see picture 11)
durba	A girl
eeboo	A spear
eegee	tail
faačča	trophy
farsoo	local beer
gaabii	cotton made double layer cloth
gala	food

garbuu	barley
geerarsa	songs of hero
gogaa	skin/hide
gumaa	revenge, blood- feuds
gumaata	Gift
gundoo	flat woven made of grass
haaduu	knife
hamaamota	attendants
hawwii	elopement
hulmaayyaa	a kind of tree
huuroo	pot
ilkaan-arba	ivory
ilchimmee	a kind of tree
jaarsolii	elders
jala-bultii	wedding-eve
kaaDimaa (M/F)	fiancé/ fiancée
kittaa	long shirt
kolbaa	ear-ring worn by a man who killed a buffalo
lootii	ear-ring of a killer
madaabii	ladies ornaments worn around the neck
(maataba)	
mart'oo	Cloth worn by a family celebrating the lightning ceremony
milkaa	Fortune/luck/ omen
miindzee	Bestman
muDii	Waist
naDeen	A married woman
nak'ata/nnaa	betrothal
okkotee	Jug
suubboo	married man
Šurrubbaa	braide
sabbata	belt (woman use it to fasten their waist) (see picture 1)

wandaboo	Cloth worn by a bride on the wedding day.
waak'a	God
k'arree	Hair style of unmarried virgin girls (see picture 4)
k'eerroo	Bachelor/unmarried man
k'ondaala	a killer (see picture 10)
k'ubeelaa	Finger-ring
k'uumii	broad suit worn by a groom
Deekkamsa	scolding
t'ilaa	umbrella
t'urumbaa	trumpet

## Appendix C

### List of Informants

No	Name	Sex	Age	Address	Remarks
1	Itana Agamso	M	70	Mettu	He has a knowledge about the culture of Iluu Abbaa Booraa Oromo society very well
2	Banti Sutuma	M	58	Algie- Sachi	He knows about the ceremony of <i>ajjeečaa</i> very well and he is the <i>ajjeesaa</i> of wolf.
3	Teferi Mangasha	M	48	Algie- Sachi	His information concerning lightening ceremony is a vital importance. He knows objects used on the ceremony and he was the member of the family who celebrates the lightning ceremony.
4	Jifare Tolasa	F	57	Bilo-Nopha	She gave me valuable information about the marriage of the society in narrating form.
5	Oncho Tola	M	73	Algie- Sachi	Celebrates lighting ceremony and has an ample knowledge about the ceremony and objects used to transfer information
6	Abebu Negeri	F	60	Algie- Sachi	She narrates the difference between girls and women by ornaments used.
7	Birhanu Mamo	M	65	Mettu	<i>ajjeesaa</i> of Buffalo and he knows about the ceremony.
8	Dawud Oumer	M	65	Mettu	He gave me relevant information about all cultures of the society because he was the leader of culture and Tourism bureau.
9	Tola Wakene	M	61	Algie-Sachi	Responded most of the questions given to him.

10	Abdulaxif Musa	M	63	Bilo-Nopha	He gave me clear picture that distinguishes an <i>ajjeesaa</i> by the objects used.
11	Ambisa Doba	M	75	Algie-Sachi	Narrates the negative (bad) and positive (good) <i>milkee</i> 'omen' in searching for a girl to be a wife.
12	Irrana Gameda	M	62	Algie-Sachi	The information he provided on marriage and lighting ceremonies are a vital importance for the study
13	Gudata Oncho	M	71	Metu	He gave me information about objects used on the burial ceremony of an <i>ajjeesaa</i> and after the ceremony.
14	Sambato Macha	M	69	Bilo-Nopha	An <i>ajjeesaa</i> of buffalo and wolf and he knows the ceremony and objects used to transfer information about an <i>ajjesaa</i> .
15	Getacho Badhasa	M	55	Mettu	Contributed a lot of experience on questions regarding marriage ceremony and he knows the difference between engaged, unengaged girls and women.
16	Kedir Abbaa-Bulla	M	57	Algie- Sachi	Narrated how to celebrate an <i>ajjeechaa</i> ceremony and why <i>ajjeechaa</i> was necessary in the earliest time in the society.
17	Legese Negeri	M	56	Algie-Sachii	Narrates the process leads to negotiation and objects used during negotiation ceremony.
18	Husen Burayu	M	58	Mettu	He provided information about <i>ajjeechaa</i> ceremony and he is the member of the <i>ajjeesaa</i> family. He knows very well about the

					ceremony and he has <i>eeboo</i> ‘spear’ of his father.
19	Firrisa Danno	M	72	Mettu	Clearly responded to all questions about marriage and he celebrated an <i>ajjeečaa</i> ceremony and he killed buffalo.
20	Bejela Aga	M	54	Algie-Sachi	Briefly the information he gave about different objects used to differentiate the status of the groom on the wedding day and objects used to communicate about the purity of the girl in the society.
21	Tadasa Bayana	M	60	Algie-Sachi	Narrated the general background about the culture of the society
22	Gudeta Amante	M	75	Algie-Sachi	Deeply responded to questions about activities and objects on the wedding ceremony (especially when the groom deflower the bride in the small room)
23	Yadete Banti	F	55	Mettu	She celebrated an <i>ajjeečaa</i> ceremony of her husband and she knows the objects used to distinguish the killer from the other.
24	Itafa Kenesa	M	65	Bilo-Nopha	Pointed out the meaning of <i>k’arree</i> and what activities should the engaged girl carry out.
25	Sisay Agamso	M	57	Mettu	The information he gave me about the status of the virgin and disvirgin girls in the society is much important is the leader of culture and tourism office.

26	Terefe Aga	M	58	Algie-Sachi	Provided the information about the criteria to select the girl for their boy.
27	Tadasa Jifar	M	55	Bilo-Nopha	He is knowledgeable about the meaning of cultural objects and gave me very important points.
28	Gamta Bokkoso	M	76	Bilo-Nopha	He is an <i>ajjeesaa</i> of a lion and he knows the status between the <i>ajjeesaa</i> and non- <i>ajjeesaa</i> .
29	Abduu Nabii	M	61	Mettu	Shared information about the economic status of the bride's and the groom's families on the wedding day from the objects used on the ceremony.
30	Mitiku Legesse	M	40	Algie-Sachi	He knows the cultural objects and their related meaning very well. He was the leader of Culture and Tourism Office.