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Full Length Research Paper

Survey of research terms used in Afan Oromo: With special reference to three universities in Ethiopia

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This study intends to investigate the status of research terms used in Afan Oromo in terms of their standardized level. From the researchers' observation, it was found that students were using different terms when they write a proposal or the report of their thesis. Having this, the major objective of this research is to survey the research terms used in doing both action and basic research in Afan Oromo in Jimma, Haramaya, and Addis Ababa universities based on English research terms. However, the collected data were limited to the third year Afan Oromo and literature students who had taken research courses and teachers in the department. Moreover, samples of previous research works of graduated students from the department were analyzed. Thus, instruments like questionnaire, interview, focused group discussion and written document analysis were used to collect data from the primary and secondary sources. Then, the collected data were organized, analyzed and presented quantitatively and qualitatively. According to the interpretation made based on the data analyzed there is a significant variation in using research terms of Afan Oromo by the teachers and students of target universities. Terms or phrases are not used in standard forms. As a result, there are practical problems like communication gap in research dissemination, students' confusions, teachers' disagreement, and misunderstanding of ideas, low quality of research output and unreadable report, as well as inconsistent research format. Finally, the researchers proposed using standard research handouts and manuals as well as working together at central level as key solutions to overcome the problems.

Key words: Afan Oromo, research terms, standardization.

INTRODUCTION

Afan Oromo is the most widely spoken language in the family of Cushitic branch, and the most populous language of Ethiopia (Roba, 2004). Currently, it is taught in eight universities of Ethiopia at undergraduate level and, in one university at postgraduate level, namely Addis Ababa University. In these universities, students are expected to produce their senior essay or action research in Afan Oromo.

However, Afan Oromo is relatively new as a written language. Thus, it seems challenging for students as well as teachers of Afan Oromo to adapt and use research

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terms, as they are brand new to the culture of research in Afan Oromo. Specially, as research is conducted to solve social problems, it is better to use terms that are uniform and understandable by the readers. Therefore, it is important to investigate the status of research terms that the students and teachers of Afan Oromo are using in conducting both action and basic research for a better research output dissemination. Thus, this study focuses on three universities of Ethiopia: Jimma, Haramaya, and Addis Ababa; leading universities in training professionals of Afan Oromo and Literature. In the history of Afan Oromo, it was in 2006 that for the first time students graduated in Bachelor of Education in Afan Oromo teaching. These graduates were from Jimma and Haramaya universities. It is almost seven years since then and many students are graduating every year. Other recently opened universities are also started producing graduates in Afan Oromo and literature. However, as to the researchers' knowledge, there is no significant work done by these universities concerning the research terms employed to conduct research.

The researchers observed that students and instructors have used different Afan Oromo research terms for the same concept. This has led to misunderstanding among students and their advisors as well as examiners. Moreover, students are using research terms for wrong concept, since they are referring to different previous research works with different research term usage. Therefore, based on the observation made it seems crucial to survey the research terms used in research works written in Afan Oromo. To this end, the researchers select three universities namely Jimma, Addis Ababa and Heramaya to show the problem, its causes and consequences. Accordingly, the study attempts to answer the following questions.

1. Which Afan Oromo research terms the three universities are using?

2. What are the similarities and differences of the research terms that the universities are currently using?

3. What are the major problems observed as a result of different research terms used in these universities?

4. What are the major causes of the problems and their possible solutions?

Thus, this study helps to identify the problem areas of the students and instructors in using Afan Oromo research terms in higher education institutions. Moreover, it is hoped to encourage educators and other concerned bodies to give due emphasis for the standardization of Afan Oromo research terms to conduct scientific or action research in the target language.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Afan Oromo is a medium of instruction in primary schools and teacher training institutions of Oromia National Regional State. In addition to this, it has been taught as a subject in primary and secondary schools in Oromia Region.

Since 1994 Afan Oromo has been offered as a minor field of study. From 2003 onwards, however, universities like Jimma and Haramaya started offering BA program in Afan Oromo Language and Literature. The demand for qualified researcher in Afan Oromo Language and Literature is also increasing from time to time due to the fact that the language has become the medium of instruction in Oromia Regional State as well as medium of communication in the media institution of the Federal Government. Currently, Addis Ababa University is offering M.Ed in Afan Oromo and Literature.

In all programs (B.A, B.Ed, M.Ed), one of the objectives is to train high-level qualified researchers in the language. Therefore, students are required to be skilled in using research methods to solve various societal problems and to carry out research activities to standardize Afan Oromo in mass media, education, office works, literature, etc.

To achieve these objectives, courses like research methodology, research and report writing as well as technical writing in Afan Oromo are designed in the curriculum. For instance, in the course research and report writing contents like characteristics of research, types and approaches, developing research ideas, reviewing the literature, finding the library sources and note taking, reporting on sources, date collection, style and format of research report, bibliography format, and informal reports are included.

On the other hand, in the research methodology course contents like definition of research, the role of research in language, procedures in conducting research, method of selecting topic, methods of documentation (in text citation, bibliography, etc), format of research (border of sections, margins, letter forms, spacing), techniques of referencing (paraphrasing, referenced summary, direct quotation) and presentation are listed. Finally, students are conducting research projects as a graduation requirement.

The assumption is that to communicate research work results to the stockholders standardized research terms used in research reports are very important. However, in the case of Afan Oromo research works, since there are no reference books written in Afan Oromo regarding these research terms, variation is observed among research advisors as well as in the student's research works. As a result, this variation will create a gap in communicating research works.

Terms and phrases used in research works

Research works can be conducted in different languages. These languages can have standardized research terms through time. For instance, Kumer (2005) uses the following research terms for works reported in English. The general terms related to research works are the following:

Basic research, Action research. Pure research. Descriptive research, Applied research. researcher. presentation. oral defense. Title. Abstract, acknowledgement, List of tables, symbols and abbreviations. Bibliography, references and Appendixes.

The following research terms are also related to different chapters of the research proposal and the final report or research presentation. In the proposal part only,

Time table, Cost Budget breakdown

Chapter one

Introduction, Background of the study, Research Problem, Research objective, General Objective, Specific objectives, Research questions, Hypothesis , Delimitation of the study, Limitation of the study, Significance of the study.

Chapter Two

Review of literature, Theoretical frame work, Review of previous works, Review of related literature, Plagiarism, Direct and indirect quotation, Long quotation, Short quotation, Citation.

Chapter Three

Research Design, Study design, Lonaitudinal ,Correlation, Experimental, Ethical issues, Research method, Methods of data collection, Source of data, Primary and secondary source. Observation, Observation check list Interview, Questionnaire, Open and closed guestions. Attitudinal scale. Categorical scale , numerical scale, Focused group discussion , Data Data transcription, recording, Data tabulation . Variable, Selecting a sample, Subject of Informants. Sample , Sampling technique study, Population. Simple random sampling, Stratified random sampling, Purposive sampling, Data analysis, Quantitative and qualitative methods of data analysis.

Chapter Four

Result and discussion, Data organization, tabulation, analysis, interpretation, Tables, Graphs, Percentage, Histogram, Bar graph, Frequency polygon, Pie chart.

Chapter Five

Summary, findings, conclusion and recommendations ((Wiersma, 1995).

Albeit the above mentioned research terms are used in Afan Oromo research works currently, it is difficult to get similar terms or phrases that are used by advisors and students. The simple reason is that these terms are not standardized in the research works of the language. Even, in research works of different languages we may find detail standard abbreviations and symbols used by researchers like the following standard abbreviations in language research reported in English.

Accu = Accusative; Agr = Agreement; Agro = Objectagreement; AgroP = Object agreement phrase; Agrs = Subject agreement; AgrsP = Subject agreement phrase; AspP = Aspect phrase; Aux = Auxiliary; C = Complementizer; CP = Complimentizer phrase; def = definite; DP = Determiner phrase; Imperf = imperfective; Indef = indefinite: Intro = interrogative: IP= Inflectional phrase; Juss = Jussive; LF = logical form; MP = Minimalist program; Neg = Negative; Negp = Negative phrase; Noml=Nominalization/ Nominalizer; Perf = Perfective; PF = Phonological form; Pol = polite; t = trace; T = Tense; TP = Tense phrase; V = Verb; vP = light verbphrase; VP = Verb phrase; spec = specifier; 1s.s = first person singular subject; 1pl.s = first person plural subject; 2m.s.s = second person masculine singular subject; 2f.s.s = second person feminine singular subject; 2pl.s= second person plural subject; 3m.s.s= third person masculine singular subject; 3f.s.s= third person feminine singular subject; 3pl.s =third person plural subject.

Language standardization

Language standardization is a significant process in Therefore, this shows that, it is very important to have standardized terms and abbreviations as well as symbols in research works to communicate the result to the stakeholders. language development. Sociolinguists state that to develop a given language in its usage like education in school, in research, in regional and national Media as well as offices, language planning and standardization are very important. A language can have different dialects in its usage and using all terms and expressions as the same time may create obstacle in the wider communication of that particular language. Fasold (1984), quoting Ferguson (1968) identifies three categories of language development: Graphization, standardization and modernization.Graphization means the adoption of writing system whereas standardization is the process of one variety of a language becoming widely accepted throughout the speech community as a supra dialectical norm, which means the best form of the language rated above regional and social dialects.

In this case Afan Oromo has a different dialect that can be differentiated in terms of accent or sound level, words level, and expression level. But in the case of research terms it does not relate to dialects, rather it is due to the development of education and research in the language. Fasold (1984) states that some languages may lack the vocabulary to say certain things (like in science, education, new innovations, research works, etc), and it is solved by adding new vocabulary to the language either by coinage or by borrowing from other languages.

Although research trend in Afan Oromo is a recent phenomenon, there are research terms and expressions used. However, the problem is that the same terms and expressions of research works are used differently in Afan Oromo. As mentioned above, this variation creates obstacle in the language development in general and in the research communication in particular. Therefore, in addition to standardization of dialects, terms and expressions in science and technology, education and research is important in modernization and development of a given language. This will follow the process of language standardization like determination, codification, elaboration, implementation, cultivation, harmonization etc (Fasold, 1984).

Lexical standardization

Standardization refers to the process by which a language is codified or one variety of a language becomes widely accepted throughout the speech community of that language as a supra dialectal norm (Ferguson, 1968; Wardhaugh, 1992. This shows that standardization is treated as a process which helps to create a standard variety of a language.

Standardization is expressed as the process of selection or determination, codification, elaboration, modernization or expansion, and implementation or acceptance (Crystal, 1987:364; Hudson, 1992: 32-33).Norm selection or determination refers to the decisions that have to be taken to select a language or varieties of language for particular purpose. Also, codification deals with the process of acquiring publicly recognized and fixed forms. Elaboration, expansion or modernization refers to the introduction and expansion of modern vocabulary items to develop the functional adequacy of a language. Then, implementation is the process of implementing the proposed standard form into practice.

The need for lexical standardization

Language is a means of human communication. Effective communication requires the uniform use of a language. Nevertheless, it has the natural tendency of developing into varieties based on geographical or personal This needs efforts to control or reduce difference. language variation through the process of standardization. Although standardization does not hinder linguistic change, it could reduce language change and variation by proposing a standard form and creating uniformity of language use.

Procedures to standardized terms in a language

Haugen (1966) identifies four procedures of standardization. These are norm selection, codification,

elaboration and implementation. To choose a word as standard among the different dialects or usages, the criteria like number of speakers, frequency of occurrence, economy, productivity, written documents and semantic transparency and acceptance, originality, mass media and current status will be considered. Besides, to introduce modern terminology, methods such as semantic extension, derivation, compounding, blending and borrowing are used (Crystal, 1971; Bauer, 1983).

According to Stewart (1968), standardization is classified into formal and informal types. According to him formal standardization is a process through which a language is deliberately standardized whereas informal standardization is a process in which the speech community of a language unconsciously standardizes a language. In a broad sense language planning includes language standardization. The major components of language planning are graphization, modernization and standardization.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study was conducted in three universities in Ethiopia. These universities were Jimma University, Addis Ababa University and Haramaya University. They were selected for this study since the rest have no graduates in Afan Oromo so far during this research period.

To collect reliable information, two types of data sources were employed. These were primary and secondary sources. The primary sources were the participants of the study- students and instructors. Students' research papers and other documents were also used as secondary sources. Both types of sources were crucial in building up a comprehensive outcome and obtaining trust worthy information. It was the researchers' believe and the nature of the research questions to make instructors and students of the three universities the main research informants or participants in Afan Oromo and literature department.

There is a general consensus at least in survey type research that the first step in sampling is to define the population. Accordingly, all 3rd year students of Afan Oromo department (85, 92 and 102 from Jimma, Addis Ababa and Haromaya universities respectively) and instructors at the specified universities (5, 4 and 6 from Jimma, Addis Ababa and Haromaya universities respectively) were involved in this research.

Among the probability sampling techniques, simple random sampling was used for this study. Thus, from the total population (279 students at the aforementioned universities from Afan Oromo department) 30% of the students (84) were taken as the sample size. The researchers also used non probability sampling (availability sampling) for the interview of Afan Oromo instructors of the three universities. Moreover, two students and four instructors were purposely selected and included in FGD conducted at each university.

To get reliable information from the research participants, types of instrument to be used have paramount importance. Thus, questionnaire, FGD and interview were identified as pertinent tools of this study.

The collected data were tabulated and statistical techniques: percentage and mean were used for the numerical interpretation in the form of table, graph and chart. Besides, responses from interviewee and the recorded FGD narrated to move in parallel with quantitative data.

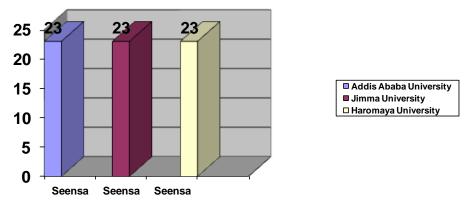


Figure 1. The term "Introduction" in Afan Oromo by the students of AAU, JU and HU.

Table 1. The term	'Questionnaire'	in Afan Oromo	by Afan Oromo
students of the thr	ee universities.		

S/No Questionnaire in AO		Frequency	Percent	
1	Bar-gaaffii	29	42.0	
2	Qorata Barruu	4	5.8	
3	Barruu Gaaffii	1	1.4	
4	Gaaffilee Barreeffamaa	2	2.9	
5	Gaaffifi Deebii	2	2.9	
6	Gaafachuun Ragaa Argachuu	1	1.4	
7	Gaafannoo	13	18.8	
8	Hubgaafannoo	1	1.4	
9	Gaaffilee	10	14.5	
10	Kan hinkennamne	6	8.7	
	Total	69	100.0	

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Afan Oromo research terms used in the three universities

This section provides the general description of Afan Oromo (AO) research terms used in the target universities. To this end, the data collected from students, instructors, sample senior essays, research course handouts and focused group discussion are organized, analyzed and presented in different forms. For instance the following data show the experience of students as well as the instructors' preferences of some randomly selected research terms.

As we can see from Figure 1, the students preferred *ka'umsa qorannoo (26), Rakkoo qorannoo (20%)* and *ibsa rakkoo qoratamuu (6)* respectively for the concept *statement of the problem* in English. As a whole the students have chosen nine different expressions for a single concept in Afan Oromo and Literature. The researchers have observed from sample papers that the phrase *ka'umsa qo'annoo* is also used for the phrase

background of the study (see appendix two). On the other hand, *Rakkina Qo'annoo (6)* and *ka'umsa qo'annichaa (6)* are used for *statement of the problem* by the teachers.

The data obtained from students of the three universities on the term "Review of Related Literature" in Afan Oromo and Literature are presented statistically as follows. Accordingly, the majority (27 students) have selected "Sakatta'a Barruu"; and "Sakatta'a og-barruu" as well as "Sakatta'a og-barruu firoomina" (11 students) equally used for the phrase "Review of Related Literature". Also, the analyses of the sample research have shown that the students as well as their advisors different expressions have used like "Gochima qorannoo", "Hima Rakkoo", "Rakkoolee Qo'annichaa" and "Himinsa Rakkinichaa" for this concept. Similarly, from 12 teachers included in this survey, six of them used "sakatta'a barruu" whereas 4 teachers prefer to use "ogbarruu firoomina" and the rest 2 teachers select "sakatta'a og-barruu firoomina" for the same concept "Review of related literature". We can observe similar differences for the term "Questionnaire" in Table 1.



Figure 2. The Afan Oromo term used by students for "Acknowledgment".

S/No	Afan Oromo terms	Frequency			Percent		
		HU	AAU	JU	HU	AAU	JU
1	Xinxala	10	1	12	43.5	4.3	52.2
2	Qaaccessuu	6	10	11	26.1	43.5	47.8
3	Calaluu	1	1	-	4.3	4.3	-
4	Guduunfaa	1	1	-	4.3	4.3	-
5	Yaaduu	1	4	-	4.3	17.4	-
6	Xiyyeeffannaa	-	1	-	-	4.3	-
7	Seecca'uu	-	2	-	-	8.7	-
8	Kan hinkennamne	4	3	-	17.4	13	-
Total		23	23	23	100	100	

Table 2. The term analysis in Afan Oromo research works for AAU, HU and JUstudents.

The term "questionnaire" is also used differently by the students included in this research. For instance, as it is indicated in Table 2, the students have preferred 9 different synonyms in Afan Oromo terms and phrases. Some of these were "Gaaffilee Barreffamaa" and "Gaafachuun ragaa argachuu" literally translated from the vocabulary "question". However, the majority (29) students have used the term "bar-gaaffi" followed by Gaafanno (13). In addition, on the sample papers the terms Bargaaffi and Gaafannoo are used equally.

In general, from the data presented under this topic, one can understand that the Afan Oromo research terms used in the three universities are not standardized and there is a variation among the students and teachers of the same university. Therefore to present this variation in detail, specific data are presented in the next topic specially focusing on similarities and differences.

Similarities and differences of Afan Oromo terms used in the three universities

Here the data were presented separately to show the similarities and differences observed in using AO

research terms among the students and teachers of the three universities. The researchers believed that this approach is important to show the scale of the problem and to uncover the causes. Accordingly, the Figure 2 shows the similarities among the three universities.

All students from the three universities responded that they have been using the Afan Oromo term "seensa" for 'introduction". Moreover, the researchers noticed that in all collected sample research from these universities the term "seensa" is used uniformly. All the 12 teachers who participated as informant also agreed on the term "seensa" in Afan Oromo for "introduction". Thus, it can be deduced that the term "Seensa" is used as standard form.

Another important research term in Afan oromo is 'Acknowledgement' and the identified result is presented as follows.

As we can understand from Figure 2, the word "galata" in Afan Oromo is used in standardized form of the language by all target students in research works. It is the same for the teachers. The researchers recognized that from the total number of 43 terms included in this survey only the two terms mentioned above are used in Afan Oromo research works uniformly by the target population.

S/No	Afan Oromo terms	Responses						
		Students' frequency			Instructors' frequency			
		HU	AAU	JU	HU	AAU	JU	
1	Ibsafi argannoo	-	1	2	-	1	4	
2	Bu'aaleefi mariilee	7	2	-	2	-	-	
3	Qabxiileefi dhiheessa	-	1	-	-	-	-	
4	Mariifi bu'aa	-	10	-	-	-	-	
5	Firiifi ibsa	-	1	-	-	-	-	
6	Mariifi firii	2	1	-	-	-	-	
7	Bu'aafi ibsa	-	1	-	-	1	-	
8	Argannoofi marii(hiikoo)	2		-	-	1	-	
9	argannoo	7		-	-	1	-	
10	Bu'aafi Ibsa	-		7	-	-	-	
11	kanhinkennamne	5	6	14	2	-	-	
Total		23	23	23	4	4	4	

Table 3. Research terms in Afan Oromo for results and discussion.

For instance, the word "Analysis" in Afan Oromo has been used differently by the students as well as teachers (Advisors) as we can see from the following frequency in Table 2.

As can be seen from Table 3, in Addis Ababa University 7 different Afan Oromo terms were used. In addition, 3 of the students have not given any Afan Oromo term. *Qaaccessa* was used by 43.5% of the students.

On the other hand, Haramaya University students came with 5 Afan Oromo terms for an English term 'analysis'. Of these terms, *Qaaccessa* and *Xiinxala* (43.5 and 26.1% respectively) were widely used by the students. This works for Jimma University too. Despite the existing difference within these universities, *Qaaccessa* is well known and used across the three universities.

Equivalent research terms for 'Results and discussion' in Afan oromo varied more in Addis Ababa University than the other two (Table 3).

Seven different Afan Oromo terms are given, and *mariifi bu'aa* ranks first with 43.47%. The choice of the instructors was out of this term. *Ibsaafi argannoo* is a preferred Afan Oromo term for results and discussion for one instructor and for the other one *bu'aafi ibsaa was* preferable. Quite a good number of students (26.06%) did not give equivalent Afan Oromo terms.

Compared with Addis Ababa University, Haramaya employed relatively limited (5) varieties of terms. But, like Addis Ababa University, 21.73% of the students of Haramaya did not give Afan Oromo term for 'Results and discussion'. Apart from students, 2 teachers of Haramaya did not respond to this term. On the other hand, two of the Haramaya teachers replied as *argannoofi marii* and the other two answered bu'aafi *waliin marihachuu*. In Jimma University, two terms were used; *bu'aafi ibsa* and *ibsaafi argannoo. Ibsaafi argannoo* is used by all Afan Oromo teachers of Jimma University involved in this study.

Major problems observed and their causes

This topic deals with major problems related to lack of standardized Afan Oromo research terms and their major causes.

The first problem is that terms are used interchangeably for different concepts. The data obtained through FGD conducted in these three universities support that there is an information gap and misunderstanding among students and even their advisors as well as examiners. Moreover, the collected data indicated that

11 students from Haramaya University used the phrase *"Hir'ina Qorannichaa"* for "the Scope of the study". Six (6) students also used the same phrase for "Delimitation of the study" interchangeably. Similarly, 5 students have preferred *"Daanga Qo'annoo"* for "the scope of the study". But, 10 students chose this phrase for "Limitation of the study".

The second problem revealed from FGD discussion was that students were confused when they refer to different written materials like previous research works. As mentioned in the literature to introduce modern terminology like research terms for a language, methods such as semantic extension, derivation, compounding, blending and borrowing are important (Crystal, 1971; Bauer, 1983). However, when we see the case of Afan Oromo words they are already in use practically. The problem is that the process of standardization does not effectively take place at a central level in a planned manner. Teachers from Addis Ababa University and Haramaya University who participated in FGD explained that there is an attempt to standardize these research terms at official level especially by the Oromia Culture and Tourism Bureau. However, the printed material is not disseminated to the users.

Thirdly, such variation leads to the low quality and less readability of research works reported in the language. During the FGD, teachers from Jimma University described that it is difficult to read and understand students' senior essay of their advisee for the students try to copy the direct meaning of words from dictionary or from previous research works which cannot be a right model. This problem also indicates the need for standardization to facilitate smooth communication.

The fourth major shortcoming is that students are obliged to use incorrect terms if there is no harmonized terms before. For instance, as we can see from the data, the term "turjumaana" is used in Afan Oromo for "interpretation", which is a direct translation of "interpreter".

Finally, those students from Haramaya and Jimma University that participated in FGD stated there is no consensus among advisors and examiners on a given term since they have different experiences in using the terms. Thus, students may engage in unnecessary argument with their advisor or examiner.

Conclusion

This survey research is intended to show the standardization status in Afan Oromo research terms based on the data collected from three universities in Ethiopia. The researchers have stated objective and research questions having the background problem emanated from their experience and observations at work. Accordingly, data are collected using primary and secondary sources from Haramaya, Addis Ababa and Jimma universities using different instruments. Then, the data were organized, analyzed and interpreted quantitatively and qualitatively. Therefore, the described and interpreted data revealed the following major points.

1. There is no standardized research term used by students and teachers across the three universities.

2. From 43 research terms included in the survey only few words are standardized in the three universities.

3. There are considerable differences across the three universities in using research terms in Afan Oromo.

4. Relatively, more variations are observed in Addis Ababa and Haramaya universities, not only among students, but also among teachers.

5. The major effects of this variation are creating misconception and misunderstanding of ideas.

6. Communication gap to understand and disseminate research outputs was observed.

7. The standard and readability of the research reports

are limited;

8. Unbalanced value judgment among the advisors and examiners is revealed

9. Terms are interchangeably used for two different concepts which leads to presenting a wrong idea under the topic; and

10. Terms are used out of their linguistic forms and semantic contexts.

Recommendations

Although language standardization is a long process, it is better to start early to achieve the objective as much as possible. Therefore, the researchers have recommended the following points as solution to minimize the above major problems in a short or long time plan.

1. It is important to have a centrally prepared research course handout by all departments of Afan Oromo and Literature, Department of Oromo Folklore as well as Department of Journalism in the respective universities.

2. It is better to disseminate compiled materials with standardized research terms to stakeholders.

3. In all concerned universities it is important to have advisors guidebook with uniform research terms which is reserved in library for students.

4. Regional level workshops and research symposiums are important to have a uniform application or to familiarize the selected terms to all stakeholders.

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