Temporal deictics in the Arsi-Bale dialect of Oromo

Ahmed Mahmud[1] and Shimelis Mazengia[2]

Abstract

This study investigates how temporal deictics—expressions used for locating the time points of actions or states of being—are encoded in the Arsi-Bale dialect[3] of Oromo in south east Ethiopia. The data were gathered from recorded interviews of native speakers, and field notes. Introspection was also employed for verification. The data collected were transcribed, analyzed, categorized and interpreted. The findings of the qualitative research show that the dialect encodes temporal deictics lexically, in a composite manner and grammatically. Lexical temporal deictics are either simple, restricted (specified with modifiers) or extended. In respect of composite encoding, time specifications and words of various classes are used in a syntactic structure. Grammatical encoding involves inflection and periphrasis for marking aspect/tense. Deriving names for new born babies from parts of the day at which those babies were born (appellative temporal deictics) and using some temporal deictics for metaphoric purposes are interesting features of the Arsi-Bale dialect.

Keywords: composite, deictic, directional, grammatical, lexical, postposition

1. Introduction

Language is a means through which humans communicate about whatever they consider worthy of imparting. Usually, communication takes place in context. A speaker modulates his or her message, taking into account the commonly shared context − in other words, what is also known to or presupposed by the partners. In an utterance, making reference to a referent, taking into account the specific partner as well as the specific time and place, is known as deixis[4]. The linguistic form which points to a referent is termed as deictic. Other than temporal deictics, there are person, place, discourse and social deictics (Fillmore 1971, 38; Levinson 1983, 62; Cruse 2000, 319).

[1]PhD Candidate at Addis Ababa University: ahmedmuhmud20@gmail.com
[2]PhD, Assistant Professor at the Department of Linguistics and Philology, Addis Ababa University: mazshimg@gmail.com
[3]Arsi and Bale are two adjacent areas which share the same dialect of *Afaan Oromoo* (Lit. 'mouth of Oromo'). As in the literature, for brevity, we refer to the language as Oromo, which is actually the name of the people.
[4]Deixis is a Greek term which means 'pointing' or 'indicating' (Lyons 1968, 275). In other words, it means verbally locating a referent.

Temporal deictics, the essence of the topic of the present study, concerns encoding information about the time of an event usually in relation to the utterance time. According to Comrie (1985, 8), expressions of location in time are represented by three main classes. These are lexically composite expressions (e.g., two months before she came), lexical items (e.g., tomorrow) and grammatical categories (e.g., answered, -ed past tense). The examples are deictic in view of the fact that they are related to a deictic center, which is, in most cases, the speaker. Lexical deictics involve individual lexical items with temporal sense while composite expressions involve phrasal or clausal structures with lexical items of time reference. On the other hand, grammatical categories necessitate verbal inflection and/or auxiliary through which the time when something happened or happens or will happen is expressed (Lyons 1968:304; Chung and Timberlake 1985, 203).

Most languages measure time in terms of the alteration of day and night, lunar months, seasons and years. These units of time are used relative to some fixed point, i.e., a deictic center or *origo* 'origin' (Latin). For instance, when one says, *Last month, he stayed with us*, that would mean, for the amount of time one lunar cycle takes. That is, about thirty days backwards from the time of utterance (the deictic center). Time units can also be used calendrically to locate events in 'absolute' time (Fillmore 1971, 31, Levinson 1983, 73). For example, *She will come next spring* would mean during the coming season of little rain. The reference is forward from the location in time (utterance time) which is before the time referred to.

As regards temporal deixis in Oromo, a member of the Lowland East Cushitic subgroup, there is no prior research conducted on the subject, as far as the researchers of the present study are concerned. The only study on deixis in the language is Shimelis (2020) which focuses on spatial deictics in the eastern dialect of the language. On the contrary, the present study is concerned with temporal deixis in the language, from the viewpoint of the Arsi-Bale dialect which is spoken in the south eastern part of Ethiopia. The study investigates the forms and functions of temporal deictics in the dialect. Data were collected from recorded free language use by native speakers, elicitation, through consultation and from field notes. Introspection was also taken advantage of to the extent helpful, especially, for verification. The collected data were then checked by three Oromo teachers who are also the native speakers of the Arsi-Bale dialect. For investigation, selected data were transcribed. Based on the transcription, the data were, analyzed, categorized and interpreted.

The study identifies, classifies and describes the linguistic mechanisms utilized for temporal deictics. Accordingly, Section 2, commences with presentation and analysis of the major time units that are in common use for temporal deictic purposes in the Arsi-Bale dialect. The third section, which is the core of the paper, deals with forms and functions of temporal deictics in the dialect. The fourth section discusses how some personal names are related to temporal deictics and how some temporal deictics are used metaphorically. Finally, the fifth section winds up by identifying and characterizing the temporal deictics employed in Arsi-Bale dialect.

2. Major Time Units

Identifying and measuring time intervals in some ways is a common practice in various speech communities and Arsi-Bale is no exception. In the following subsections, we will survey the conceptions and the corresponding expressions employed in the dialect in relation to time and the measurement of time units.

2.1. Seasons

In the Arsi-Bale dialect or in Oromo in general, seasons, as demarcated by specific weather conditions, are used for measuring time and locating particular events. Seifu (1978) states that the Muslim Oromos of Hararghe have both the solar and lunar time-reckoning wherein seasons are recognized by alternation of climatic conditions and appearance of the moon. That is similar to the way seasons are recognized in Arsi-Bale where they are demarcated by the natural phenomena of moderate rain, abundant rain, blooming of the flora and absence of rain (dryness).

According to the preceding natural pattern, the four seasons in the sub-region of Arsi-Bale as well as in most sub-regions of Oromo are presented in the next table.

Table 1: Seasons of the year		
N°	**Season**	**Gloss**
1	*badde:ssa*	'spring'
2	*hagajja*[5]	'rainy season' (summer)
3	*birra:*	'autumn'
4	*bona*	'dry season' (winter)

---

[5] *Hagajja*—the name of the summer season in Arsi-Bale dialect is also used in the other dialects of the language to mean the month of 'August'. For the summer season, the Arsi-Bale communities use also *ganna* to name the same season as in the other dialects.

Each season is marked by the climatic condition of that particular part of the year. *Baɗɗe:ssa* 'spring' is the season of moderate rain following the dry season (*bona*). It is the season for sowing seeds. The following season, *hagajja* (summer), is marked by heavy rain. The third season, *birra:* (autumn), is the season of clear sky after the rainy season, *hagajja.* It is the season for harvesting crops. The fourth season, *bona*, is known for dryness during which agricultural activities are minimal.

2.2. Calendrical Time

Calendrical time is essentially reference to the time units of day, week, month and year. In Oromo, as in many communities, a day, from a calendrical perspective, is the daytime (diurnal). The nighttime (nocturnal) is usually considered only for deictic references. As elsewhere, in the Arsi-Bale community, the calendrical time unit of a week embodies seven days while a month is based on the time of the lunar cycle (twenty-nine days). A year is twelve lunar months. In the table below are the calendrical time units that are used by the community.

N°	Time unit	Gloss
	Table 2: Calendrical time units	
1	*gujja:*	'day' (daytime)
2	*torba:n* [6]	'week' (seven days)
3	*kuɗa-ʃani:*	'fortnight'
4	*dʒiʔa*	'month' (thirty days)
5	*Wagga*	'year' (twelve months)
6	*gada:*	'eight years or reign' (a period during which someone is in power)
7	*dʒa:rra:*	'century' (hundred years)
8	*barkume:* [7]	'millennium' (thousand years)

As regards the months of the year, the Arsi-Bale community has its own nomenclature. In addition to this set, the community uses the months of the official Oromo and Ethiopian calendars. The subsection below presents the devised names of the Arsi-Bale twelve months of the year and those of the official Oromo and Ethiopic calendars.

---

[6] *torba:n* 'week' was derived from *torba* 'seven'

[7] *barkume:* was blended from *bara* 'year' and *kuma* 'thousand'. The name of the time unit is relatively new.

2.2.1. Months of the Year

The majority of the Arsi-Bale communities use a twelve-month calendar which was devised based on the Islamic one. As indicated above, the community also has the thirteen-month official Oromo and Ethiopic calendars. Accordingly, there are three sets of names of the months that are in use in the sub-region. The first is used essentially in the countryside and by the elderly in towns with little influence of modern education. The months are identified by names most of which were adapted from the Islamic calendar, as seen in Table 3 below. The second set is what is currently officially used in the Oromia region as a whole. The third set is the one which is used at the federal level and for communication with regional states. The latter is also in official use in some regional states and commonly used by some regions. Below, in Table 3 is presented the set used by the majority of the Arsi-Bale community and of which most of the months were derived from Arabic[8]. This is for the fact that the majority of the speakers of the dialect are Muslims. Under the name of each month, the corresponding month of the Islamic calendar has been provided in parentheses. Additionally, each month is followed by identification of its origin, what it means and a brief description.

Table 3: Months of the year in the Arsi-Bale dialect			
Nᵒ	**Month**	**Origin**	**Meaning**	**Description**
1	*ʔaʃuːraː* (*muħarram*)	Arabic	'ten'	The tenth day of *Muħarram* (the 1st month of the Islamic calendar) on which Moses (Musa) and his followers were liberated from Egypt. (Arabic: *ʕaʃuːraː*)
2	*safara* (*ṣafar*)	Arabic	'travel'	The flight from Mecca to Madina (pre-Islamic).
3	*moːwlida* (*rabiʕ al-ʔawwal*)	Arabic	'birth'	The birth month of Prophet Muhammad.
4	*ʔawwala* (*rabiʕ al-θaːniː/ rabiʕ al-ʔaxar*)	Arabic	'first'	Adapted from the Arabic third month, *rabiʕ al-awwal*.
5	*ʔaːkira* (*dʒumaːda ʔal-uːla*)	Arabic	'last'	Adapted from the Arabic fourth month, *Rabiʕ al-Axar*

---

[8] There are twenty-nine or thirty days in the months of the Islamic calendar which is based on the lunar cycle.

6	*za:ra:* (*dʒuma:da ʔal-ʔa:khirah*)	Arabic	'visit'	Refers to pilgrimage made to Dirre: Sheikh Hussien in Bale.
7	*radʒaba* (*radʒab*)	Arabic	'sanctify'	A sacred month during which fighting is forbidden (sanctified month)
8	*he:t'o:* (*ʃaʕba:n*)	Oromo	'dewarmer'	Traditional medicine for killing intestinal worms.
9	*so:ma* (*ramada:na*) (*ramḍa:n*)	Arabic	'fasting'	The month of fasting
10	*fiʃe:*[9] (*ʃawwāl*)	Oromo	'joy' (first)	The first month of joy after the fasting month. (Possibly an ideophone; not a regular word)
11	*ki:fiʃe:* (*ðū al-qaʕdah*)	Oromo	'joy' (second)	The second month of joy after the fasting month (Possibly an ideophone)
12	*hadʒdʒi:* (*ðu: al-ħidʒdʒah*)	Arabic	'pilgrimage'	The month of pilgrimage Arabic: *ðu: al-ħidʒdʒah*), is a derivative of the Arabic *hadʒdʒadʒa* 'make a pilgrimage'

Except for the names of the second and the seventh months (from the Islamic calendar), the rest have been altered in one way or another. While the first, second, third, fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh, ninth and tenth are altered Arabic forms, the eighth, tenth and eleventh are Oromo names.

For the first month, the community uses *ʔaʃu:ra* (Arabic: *ʕa:ʃu:ra*). As seen in the table above, the name was derived from *ʕa:ʃara* 'ten' which signifies the tenth day of the first month (Muħarram) of the Islamic calendar which marks, as indicated above, the liberation of Moses and his followers from Egypt. Certain learned sheiks of Arsi-Bale dialect speakers, however, opt for the typical name of the month, Muħarram. The second month *safara* (with *-a* suffixed) was derived from Arabic which means 'travel'. It implies the travel from Mecca to Madina. As indicated in the table, the third month, *mo:wlida* 'birth', is dedication to the birth of Prophet Muhammad. As a result, the name

---

[9] The names of the 10th and 11th months (*fiʃe:* & *ki:fiʃe:*) are, possibly, of ideophonic origin. They seem to be related to the expression *fiʃ dʒede*, 'he was delighted' (Lit. he said delighted) where *fiʃ* signifies relaxed mood. Both the stem *fiʃ* and the addition *ki:-* on the name of the 11th month need to be further investigated.

of the third month, on the 12th of which the Prophet was born, *rabiʕ ʔal-ʔawwal*, was replaced. The fourth month, *rabiʕ ʔal-θaːniː*, was assigned part of the disregarded name of the third month, *ʔawwal* 'first'. Similarly, the fifth month was assigned part of the typical name of the fourth month, *Rabiʕ ʔal-ʔaxar* (see in the table above). The name of the sixth month, *zaːraː* 'visit', is derived from the time during which the Arsi-Bale community members and others from elsewhere visit the holy place of Dirre: Sheikh Hussien in Bale. For the ninth month, the community uses *soːma* (with final -*a* added) which is from the Arabic/Semitic *sawm* 'fasting' and alternatively *ramadaːna* (with final -*a* added) which is the Arabic name for the fasting month. The twelfth month, *haʤʤ* (Arabic: *ðuː ʔal-ħiʤʤah*), is a derivative of the Arabic *ħaʤʤadʒa* 'make a pilgrimage.'

The Oromo names of the three months which replaced those of the Islamic calendar are: *heːtʼoː* (8th), *fiʃeː* (10th) and *kiːfiʃeː* (11th). They replaced, respectively, *ʃaʕbaːn*, *ʃawwaːl* and *ðū ʔal-qaʕdah*. As indicated above, *heːtʼoː* is a traditional medicine prepared from the seeds of a tree that is also called *heːxoː*. It is drunk for cleaning the intestine from worms. It is also drunk to clean the bowel before the fasting month. The tenth month, *fiʃe* is the month following *soːma*/*ramadaːna* (fasting month). As pointed out above, the word is possibly an idiophonic one with the sense of 'joy' after the month of fasting. The eleventh month, *kiːfiʃeː*, is the second month of joy.

Unlike the months of the official Oromo and Ethiopic calendars, each of which consists of thirty days (excepting the thirteenth month), those of the traditional Arsi-Bale are asymmetrical. Like those of the Islamic calendar, they consist of 30 and 29 days alternatively.

The months of the official Oromo and Ethiopic calendars are presented below in Table 4. As pointed out above, the official Oromo months are additionally used in the Arsi-Bale sub-region and all over the Oromia region. On the other hand, the months of the Ethiopic calendar are employed for governmental purposes at the federal level and are also in official use in some regional states and are commonly used by some sectors of the communities of the regional states. Below, in Table 4, the list of the Oromo official months of the year is presented in the first column while that of Ethiopic in the second. For comparison, the third column consists that of the Gregorian. The first two are distinguished from the latter by the number of months they consist of. Accordingly, each one of the first two consists of thirteen months while the Gregorian twelve. The months (except the 13th one) in the official Oromo and

Ethiopic calendars are symmetrical in the number of days they consist of. In each month, there are thirty days. The thirteenth month comprises five days and six (in a leap year).

N°	Oromo	Ethiopic	Gregorian
Table 4: Official Oromo and Ethiopic months			
1	*fulba:na*	መስከረም /məskərəm/	September
2	*ʔonkolo:lessa*	ጥቅምት /t'ɨk'ɨmt/	October
3	*sada:sa*	ኅዳር /xɨdar/	November
4	*mudde:*	ታኅሣሥ /taxsas/	December
5	*ʔamaʤʤi:*	ጥር /t'ɨrr/	January
6	*gurra:nɗala*	የካቲት /jəkkatit/	February
7	*bito:tessa*	መጋቢት /məggabit/	March
8	*ʔebla*	ሚያዝያ /mijazija/	April
9	*c'a:msa:*	ግንቦት /gɨnbot/	May
10	*wat'abaʤʤi:*	ሰኔ /səne/	June
11	*ʔado:lessa*	ሐምሌ /ħamle/	July
12	*Hagajja*	ነሐሴ /nəħase/	August
13	*k'a:mme:*	ጳጉሜን[10] /p'agumen/	

2.2.2. Days of the Week

Girma (2016, 21) notes that the names of the days of the week in most of the Ethiopian languages are based on the Abrahamic religions (Judaism, Christianity and Islam) while others are based either on sacred personalities or on the names of market places. According to Seifu (1978, 483), the K'ottu (speakers of the eastern Oromo dialect) names of the weekdays are wholly Arabic while the other Oromo dialects, excepting Borana with an indigenous set, have a mixture of Oromo, Amharic, and Arabic names for the week days. As such, in the next table are the names of the days of the week from the perspective of the Arsi-Bale community. Some of them are of Oromo origin and some are not.

---

[10] Greek origin to mean "additional" (https://www.google.com/search?q=Greek+pagumen).
The Oromo *k'a:mme:* is, in turn, a derivative of the Ethiopic *p'agumen*.

Table 5: Days of the week		
Nº	**Day**	**Gloss**
1	*wi:t'ata*	'Monday'
2	*ki:bt'ata*	'Tuesday'
3	*harba:*[11]	'Wednesday'
4	*kamsa:*[12]	'Thursday'
5	*ʤumʕa:*[13]	'Friday'
6	*ʔassanbata*[14]	'Saturday'
7	*Gidirsanbata*	'Sunday'

As indicated above, the conception of 'day' is relative to the daytime, from sunrise to sunset. Nonetheless, reckoning a day with a twenty-four-hour length is common in towns. As regards the order of the days of the week, *wiit'ata* 'Monday' is taken by the speakers of the Arsi-Bale dialect as the first day of the week and *gidirsanbata* 'Sunday' as the last day of the week.

2.3. Referential Days

Referential days are those which come before or after the day on which an utterance is made in reference to them. The utterance (encoding) day is the deictic center or the reference point. The names of referential days in the Arsi-Bale dialect are the ones below.

Table 6: Referential days		
Nº	**Referential day**	**Gloss**
1	*he:lgadda*	'The day preceding the day before yesterday' (three days earlier)
2	*ʤe:ngadda*	'The day before yesterday'
3	*kale:ssa*	'Yesterday'
4	*harʔa*[15]	'Today'
5	*Boru*	'Tomorrow'
6	*ʔifta:n*	'The day after tomorrow'
7	*ʔifta:n ka:n*	'The day following the day after tomorrow' (Lit. the day after the day after tomorrow' (three days later)

---

[11] Origin *ʔarbʕa* (Arabic) 'four'

[12] *xamsa* (Arabic) 'five' .

[13] *ʤamaʕa* (Arabic) 'to gather', *ʤamʕ* 'gathering', *ʤumʕa* 'week', *ʔalʤumʕa* 'Friday'

[14] *shabbat* (Hebrew) 'cease/rest'

[15] *harʔa* 'today' is the temporal deictic day the―day that is considered to be the frame of reference for pointing either forwards or backwards.

Such a forward and backward reference to days is also common in the other varieties of Oromo and, of course, elsewhere. Nonetheless, the Arsi-Bale dialect is possibly one of the peculiar languages with special encoding for making a reference to three days away, either forward or backward from the encoding point (deictic center).

2.4. Parts of the Day

Parts of the day in the Arsi-Bale dialect are identified by the names seen in the table below. Most of them are encountered also in the other Oromo dialects.

Table 7: Parts of the day		
N^o	**Part of the day**	**Gloss**
1	*obboro:*	'The time between midnight and dawn'
2	*bari:*	'dawn'
3	*ganama*	'morning'
4	*wa:re:*	'late morning'
5	*saafaja*	'afternoon'
6	*galgala*	'evening'
7	*wa:ri:*	'late evening' (before midnight)
8	*halkan k'it't'e:*	'midnight' (Lit. half night)

Like the temporal words we have seen earlier, the ones listed in the table above are non-deictic, as they stand, since each one of them does not make a specific reference within a specific context. Simply they depict the different segments of the twenty-four-hour day. As we shall see in Section 3 below, they become deictic when they are referred to contextually from a specific point in time (deictic center).

3. Encoding Temporal Deictics

Temporal deictics have been dealt with by various scholars (Fillmore 1971; Lyons 1977; Levinson 1983; Comrie 1985; Diessel 2012; Belkadi 2015, among others). Especially, the mechanisms of encoding identified by Comrie (1985) have been found to be applicable to encoding those encountered in the Arsi-Bale dialect. They are lexically composite expressions, lexical items and grammatical categories. As observed by Comrie (1985), expressions of the first type, which are of syntactic nature, are considered to be infinite while those of the lexical type are finite. As for the grammatical type, they are considered the least productive. Giving consideration to the preceding classification, temporal deictic expressions of various forms and functions that are encountered in the Arsi-Bale dialect have been examined. Accordingly, the types of temporal expressions employed for deictic purposes have been found

to be in agreement generally with the preceding classification. Thus, in the subsequent three subsections, we shall deal with the lexical, composite and grammatical means of encoding temporal deictics in the dialect.

3.1. Lexical Temporal Deictics

Here, what are considered lexical are words that are units of the lexicon and not only those words which have independent meaning. Accordingly, nouns (with temporal sense), demonstratives (nominal and adverbial) as well as postpositions are considered to the extent they contribute to locating events in time relative to utterance time or any other reference point in time. Event time could be close to or away from the utterance locus or any other reference point in time considered as a deictic center. Fillmore (1971, 39-40) postulates that two temporal indicators are necessary for the interpretation of temporal adverbs in discourse. That is, the coding time and the decoding time of the utterance. In a direct face-to-face communication, coding time and decoding time normally happen simultaneously.

Based on the nature of the temporal pointing they signify, lexical temporal deictics in the Arsi-Bale dialect could be classified into: simple, restricted and extended. Accordingly, subsection 3.1.1 shows how temporal nouns with adverbial functions point to the time of an event. Subsection 3.1.2 demonstrates how nouns expressing event time are restricted or specified by modifiers. On the other hand, subsection, 3.1.3. exhibits a type of temporal pointing of an extended nature. While the pointing of simple lexical temporal deictics is general that of the restricted lexical temporal deictics is more specific. On the contrary, the pointing of extended lexical temporal deictics spans from a given point over a certain distance.

3.1.1. Simple Lexical Temporal Deictics

This concerns temporal nouns of general senses in adverbial function. For instance, *kale:ssa* 'yesterday' is the name of the day that precedes *harʔa* 'today.' But in a specific communicative setting where it refers to a verbal action that took place a day before an utterance day, it is an adverb with a deictic sense. Below, [1a] is a question posed by a participant in a communicative setting about the arrival of someone while [1b] is a response to the inquiry. As a result, the response *kale:ssa* refers to a day before the utterance day which is 'today' from the point of view of the interlocutors. Thus, the specific day referred to is a deictic day which is in an adverbial function locating the arrival time of the person asked about in [1a].

(1)   a) *ju:suf*   *jo:m*   *ɗuf-ø-e*
          yusuf   When   come-3MS-PFV
          'When did Yusuf come?'
      b) *kale:ssa*
          Yesterday
          'Yesterday'

Unlike in the example above, in example [2] below, the temporal lexical item *kaleessa* is in a nominal modifier function; that is, it indicates that the boy is that of yesterday. However, it still has a temporal deictic sense pointing to a specific day, that is, the day which precedes the utterance day. Hence, it is a temporal deictic.

(2)   *gurba:-n*   *kale:ssa:*   *Kijja*
          boy-NOM   yesterday.GEN   Mine
          'Yesterday's boy is mine (my son).'

The utterance in [3b] is another example of a temporal adverb which makes a three-day backward pointing in time in response to the question in [3a]. It identifies the time of what is signified by the verb in the question; that is, it points to the specific day on which the girl got married in relation to the utterance day which is 'today' vis-à-vis the interlocutors.

(3)   a) *ʔintal-t-i*   *jo:m*   *he:rum-t-e*?
          girl-NOM.F-EP   When   marry-3FS-PFV
          'When did the girl get marry?'
      b) *he:lgadda*
          three.days.before.today
          'Three days ago.'

Expanding further on the simple lexical time deictics, we shall look at the restricted ones with modifiers; that is, those modified with temporal noun and nominal demonstrative as well as those adverbial demonstrative and postposition.

3.1.2. Restricted Lexical Temporal Deictics

A simple temporal noun in an adverbial function could be modified for a more restricted or specified time reference. Accordingly, it could be modified by another temporal noun, a nominal demonstrative, a verb with a relative clause function or a relative clause and postposition. In [4a] below, the temporal noun *kale:ssa* 'yesterday' is in a temporal deictic function from the perspective of the speech event participants who are at the time point today. It indicates the time at which the subject marked on the verb came. Since the deictic time

kale:ssa 'yesterday' is broad, one may wish to narrow it down as in [4b] by adding another temporal noun, *ganama* 'morning'. That results in a restricted scope within which the action of coming took place.

(4) a) *kale:ssa*   *ɗuf-t-e*
       yesterday   come-3FS-PFV
       'She came yesterday.'

     b) *kale:ssa*   *Ganama*   *ɗuf-t-e*
       yesterday   Morning   come-3FS-PFV
       'She came yesterday morning.'

Unlike a temporal noun modifying another temporal noun for further deictic specification, a temporal noun could be modified by a nominal demonstrative as in [5a] and [5b].

(5) a) *ganama*   *kana*   *ɗuf-t-e*
       morning   this.ABS   come-3FS-PFV
       'She came this morning.'

     b) *ganama*   *san*   *ɗuf-t-e*
       morning   that.ABS   come-3FS-PFV
       'She came that morning.'

In [5a], the proximal nominal demonstrative *kana* 'this' and in [5b] the distal nominal demonstrative *san* 'that' specify the time sense borne by the temporal adverb *ganama* 'morning'. Consequently, in [5a] the reference is to the morning of the utterance day which is today in relation to the interlocutors. In [5b] the reference is to a specific day the participants in the communicative event are commonly aware of. In [5a], the reference is proximal, whereas that of [5b] is distal in relation to the speaker, the deictic center.

In (6), the adverb *kalu:* 'near' is modified with the spatial demonstrative *kana* 'this'. Accordingly, the phrase *kalu: kana* 'near this' renders the temporal interpretation 'soon'. The expression along with the imperfective verb points to the time in the immediate future with the time of the utterance as the deictic center.

(6) *kalu:*   *kana*   *ɗuf-ø-a*
     near   this.m.ABS   come-3MS-IPFV
     'He will come soon.' (Lit. He will come near).

Temporal deictics could also be devised from temporal nouns modified by motion verbs or clauses in adjectival function. In [7a], the verbal adjective *ɗufu* 'coming' specifies the time expressed by the calendrical unit *torba:n* 'week'. Consequently, *torba:n ɗufu* 'the coming week' is a temporal deictic expression in a pragmatic context. From the perspective of the utterance time

as the *origo*, it indicates the time point at which the individual will come (arrive). Similarly, in [7b], the expression *ʔas de:ma: ʤiru* 'going towards here' specifies the time expressed by *ʤiʔa* 'month'. As a result, *ʤiʔa ʔas de:m-a: ʤiru* 'the coming month' (Lit. the month that is going towards here) is a temporal deictic; again, from the perspective of the utterance time.

(7) a) *torba:n*   *ɗuf-ø-u*   *ɗuf-t-i*
      week   come-3MS-IPFV   come-3FS-IPFV
      'She will come next week.' (Lit. She will come the coming week).

    b) *ʤiʔa*   *ʔas*   *deem-a:*   *ʤir-ø-u*   *ɗuf-ø-a*
       month   here   go-PT   exist-3MS-IPFV   come-3MS-IPFV
       'He will come next month.' (Lit. He will come during the month that
        is going towards here).

In both examples, the verbal and clausal adjectives (relative clauses) seem to portray time as a moving phenomenon. In [7a], *ɗufu* 'coming' and in [7b], the main verb along with the adverbial *ʔas de:m-a: ʤiru* 'which is going this way' signify movement towards the speaker (deictic center). The time references which are specified by the verbal and clausal adjectives are imagined as moving towards the speaker, and not the speaker towards them.

A postposition, which comes after a temporal deictic, has a restricting effect of a deictic reference. That is what is observed in example [8] below. The temporal adverb *ʔifta:n* 'the day after tomorrow' makes reference to a specific day. That is, two days after the utterance day. Adding the postposition *bo:da* 'after' restricts the time location of the verbal action to a point after the day after tomorrow.

(8) *ʔifta:n*   *bo:da*   *ɗuf-ø-a*
    the.day.after.tomorrow   after   come-3MS-IPFV
    'He well come after two days.' (Lit. He will come after the day after tomorrow.)

Temporal adverbs could be further modified and result in hues of deictic interpretations. That could help to impart more specified temporal information concerning the time of a verbal action. Examples [9a] and [9b] are, respectively, based on [4b] and [5a]. Example [9a] changes the sense 'yesterday morning' in [4b] to 'after yesterday morning' while [9b] changes [5a] 'this morning' to 'after this morning.'

(9) a) *kale:ssa*   *ganama*   *bo:da*   *hin-ʔarg-i-n-ø-e*
      yesterday   morning   after   NEG-see-EP-CM-1PL-PFV
      'I have not seen him/her/it/them-after yesterday morning.'

b) *ganama*	*kana*	*bo:da*	*hin-ʔarg-i-n-ø-e*
morning	this	after	NEG-see-EP-CM-1PL-PFV

'I have not seen him/her/it/them after this morning.'

Below, in [10a], *ʔamma* 'now' is a temporal demonstrative adverb which indicates the utterance time in the example. The postposition *dura* 'before' specifies that the action expressed by the verb took place at a point before now. On the contrary, in [10b], *hoggas* 'then', indicates a time reference in the past that is presupposed by the participants in the speech event. The postposition *bo:da* 'after', which follows the temporal word, specifies the time location at which the verbal action took place.

(10)	a) *ʔamma*	*Dura*	*ʔarg-ø-e*
	Now	Before	See-1S-PFV

'I have seen before.' (Lit. I have seen before now).

	b) *hoggas*	*bo:da*	*ʔarg-ø-e*
	then	After	see-1s-PFV

'I have seen since then.' (Lit. I have seen after then).

In this subsection, we saw how temporal deictics are restricted by modifiers. Accordingly, we have discussed that a temporal deictic could be specified by a modifying temporal noun, nominal demonstrative, relative verb (or relative clause) or postposition. The next subsection deals with temporal deictics stemming from demonstrative adverbs in a mode involving directionality in time span.

3.1.3. Extended Temporal Deictics

The notion of extended temporal deictics concerns the case where temporal nouns or spatial demonstrative adverbs and postpositions are employed to mark a point in time whose span is extended away or towards a deictic center. Debela (2011, 88ff) observes that spatial adverbs and adpositions[16] could have temporal functions. This subsection examines the use of spatial adverbs and adpositions for temporal deictic purposes. In the example below, the ablative-marked distal demonstrative adverb, *ʔatʧi:* indicates a time point in the past that is known to the participants of the speech event from where the verbal action began and its consequence continued.

(11)	*ʔatʧi:*	*fajja:*	*ɗab-ø-e*
	there.ABL	Health	lose-3MS-PFV

'Since then, he became ill' (Lit. From there, he lost health)

---

[16] Adposition is a cover term for preposition and postposition. In Oromo, mostly postpositions are used.

In the example, the information is about an individual who became ill as of a presupposed time point and whose illness continued since then.

There are cases where the demonstrative adverbs could occur in a sequence as in (12) below either in proximal-distal or in distal-proximal or in distal-distal sequence. As in (11), the first is marked for the ablative case. The structure indicates where a certain action or state of a verb begins and happens continuously or intermittently. This could be observed in the examples below.

(12) a) *ʔasi:*   *ʔaʧ́ʧ́i*   *Wal*   *ʔarg-i-n-a*
     here.ABL   there   each.other   see-EP-1PL-IPFV
     'Hereafter, we will see each other.'

    b) *ʔaʧ́ʧ́i:*   *ʔas*   *Wal*   *hin-ʔarg-i-n-ø-e*
     there.ABL   here   each.other   NEG-see-EP-1PL-CM-PFV
     'We have not seen each other since then.'

    c) *ʔaʧ́ʧ́i*   *bo:da*   *wal*   *hin-ʔarg-i-n-u*
     there.ABL   after   each.other   NEG-see-EP-1PL-IPFV
     'We will not see each other from then on.'

In (12a), the speaker says that s/he and the addressee could see each other as of the utterance time while in (12b), s/he says they have not seen each other since a certain commonly known reference time. In (12c), the reference is to the future, in which case, the interlocutors would not see each other as of a presupposed time point in the future.

Like the demonstrative adverbs we have seen above, postpositions such as *dura* 'before' and *du:ba* 'behind' could also function as temporal deictics as seen in the example set below with reference to an individual and an addressee.

(13) a) *ʔinni*   *dura*   *barsi:sa:*   *tur-ø-e.*
     he   before   teacher   *stay*-3MS-PFV
     'Formerly, he was a teacher.'

    b) *dargagg-umma:*   *du:ba*   *mangudd-umma:-da*
     youth-NMZR   behind   old.age-NMZR-COPU
     'After young age is old age.' (Lit. behind youth is old age)

The postpositions, in the examples above, which are in temporal deictic functions, are themselves results of grammaticalization. According to Dabala (2011, 167-175), *dura* 'before' is a derivative from the relational noun *dura* which means the front part of an object like a car (sitting in the front part). The noun is also used to refer to the area just in front of the front part of an object (e.g. *konkola:ta dura* 'before the car'). In this function, *dura* is a postposition. Hence, this is a case of content word signifying a grammatical (functional)

role. A similar account could be given about *du:ba* 'behind' (see Debela 2011, 173-175).

A demonstrative adverb and a postposition could be combined for a temporal deictic function in a pragmatically given context. In the example below, a distal demonstrative adverb is followed be a postposition to signify a deictic function. The interpretation is that the individual did not come at any point before the time which the interlocutors are commonly aware of.

(14) *ʔisi:n*   *ʔatʃʃi*   *dura*   *hin-ɗuf-n-e*
      she   There   before   NEG-come-3FS-PFV
      'She did not come before then.'

The discussion in this section dealt with simple lexical temporal deictics, restricted lexical temporal deictics and extended temporal deictics. In the section that follows, we will deal with composite temporal deictics. These are expressions which are made up of several elements including temporal words.

3.2. Composite Temporal Deictics

These are what Comrie (1985, 8) refers to as "lexical composite expressions" and are considered the most used in languages with mechanisms for measuring time intervals. Generally, time specifications are inserted in the syntactic structures of the composite expressions. In the following example, the part of the utterance which is in boldface points to the time when the child was born, which is three months after the father left.

(15)
mutʃʼa:-n **ʔe:ga** **ʔabba:-n** **de:m-ø-e** **dʒiʔa** **sadi** **bo:da** *ɗal-at-ø-e*
child-NOM   since   father-NOM   go-3MS-PFV   month   three   after   bear-MD-3MS-PFV
'The child was born three months after the father left.'

In the example above, the clause *ʔe:ga ʔabba:-n de:m-ø-e* 'since the father left' is the reference time relative to the birth of the child. The temporal adverbial phrase *dʒiʔa sadi* 'three months' specifies the time interval between the departure of the father and the birth of the child. The adposition *bo:da* 'after' further specifies the time encoded by the preceding phrase. Hence, the whole portion of the utterance is a composite temporal deictic which indicates the time point at which the child was born.

The following is another example consisting of a composite temporal deictic expression. The expression *gujja: ho:la: bit-n-e san* 'that day when we bought sheep' is an adverbial noun phrase which modifies the main clause *kaddo:n galte* 'Kaddo: came home'.

(16) *Kaddo:-n*   *gujja:*   *ho:la:*   *bit-n-e*   *san*   *gal-t-e*
    kaddo:-NOM   day   sheep.ABS   buy-1PL-PFV   that   come.home-3FS-PFV
    'Kaddo came home the day we bought sheep.'
    (Lit. Kaddo came home that day we bought sheep).

Within the adverbial clause in the utterance above, there are various constituents which, in a composite fashion, locate the time when the subject, *kaddo*, came home. The temporal noun, *gujja:* 'day', modified by the relative clause *ho:la: bit-n-e* 'we bought sheep' along with another modifier, the distal demonstrative, *san* 'that', specifies the time point at which *kaddo* came home. Thus, the whole structure, *gujja: ho:la: bit-n-e san*, a noun phrase in an adverbial function, is a temporal deictic expression of a composite nature. As notified earlier, the inflection for the perfective aspect on the verbs, which will be dealt with in the next section, also signals that the coming home of *kaddo* took place in the past. The aspect/tense signaled by the inflection of the verbs (both in the main clause and in the subordinate clause) mark that the actions took place in the past, though not indicating the specific time.

Of the three mechanisms of temporal deictic expressions, the Arsi-Bale dialect employs—lexical, composite and grammatical temporal deictics—we have discussed the first two. Now we shall deal with the third one which concerns grammatical temporal deictics.

3.3. Grammatical Temporal Deictics

Concerning the time feature of verbs in Oromo, previous studies approached it from the perspective of either aspect/tense or simply tense. While the approach of Bender and Mulugeta (1976), Owens (1985), Banti (2010) as well as Banti and Shimelis (2023) is from the perspective of aspect/tense, that of such sketch grammars as Gragg (1976), Griefenow-Mewis (2001) and Stroomer (1995) is from the perspective of tense. As observed by Shimelis (2016), aspect and tense usually conflate in the verbs of the language. Aspect concerns the internal temporal structure of a situation as bounded and undivided (perfective) or stretched and divided into phases (imperfective). While the perfective aspect is normally associated with past time (past tense), the imperfective aspect is associated with non-past time (either present or future). We could generalize that, in Oromo, temporal grammatical categories in relation to verbs are aspect and tense which are expressed morphologically and periphrastically. While the former involves inflection, the latter requires combining a main verb with an auxiliary verb.

In the example below, the verb is inflected for the perfective aspect which implies that the action expressed by the verb is not divided into phases; it is, rather, a completed or a perfected (done) whole.

(17) ʔintal-t-i   de:m-t-e
      girl-NOM-EP   go-3FS-PFV
      The girl went.'

The inflection of the verb for the perfective aspect at the same time implies that the action was completed in the past. Hence, the perfective aspect and the past tense are conflated. Depending on context, the speaker of the Arsi-Bale dialect may also understand the utterance with the sense of present perfect: 'The girl has gone'. That is also the case in the eastern (Hararghe) variety.

Since Oromo is a pro-drop (null-subject) language, the subject of a sentence could be dropped and the verb could convey a complete sentential message. For instance, the information in [17] could be conveyed only with the verb *de:mte* 'She went' Note that the verb is marked for subject agreement with the third person feminine singular marker -*t*-.

In [18], below, the verbal action is not a completed (perfective) one as in the example above. Rather, it is incomplete (imperfective) with the sense of being stretched in time. Tense wise, it is non-past, either present or future. In other words, the verb could be understood as referring to an action happening at any point along the time line running from the present to the future.

(18) ʔinni   hin-de:m-ø-a
      he   FOC-go-3MS-IPFV
      'He goes/ will go.'

Observe that the time reference marked by the inflection of the verb with –*a* is either to the present or the future; hence, non-past from the perspective of tense and imperfective from the perspective of aspect.

In a complex construction of 'perfect tense', where two situations are involved, morphological time marking is not sufficient, especially in the western variety and in the variety that is undergoing standardization. An auxiliary verb would be additionally required. In example [19] below, the verbal structure is that of the 'present perfect tense' where the main verb is about a completed (perfected/brought to completion) action and is followed by an auxiliary verb which is inflected for the imperfective/non-past so as to signify the present result of the verbal action. Consequently, the interpretation is that of the 'present perfect tense' which signifies an action that took place in

the past but the result of which is relevant or observed at present. In other words, the action of the main verb is completed (perfect) and the verb is aspectually marked as such. On the other hand, the auxiliary verb of existence is marked for non-past (actually, in the sense of present tense).

(19) *mutʃ'a:-n*   *ɲa:t-ø-e:*   *dʒir-ø-a* [*ɲa:te:ra*]
    child-NOM   eat-3MS-CNV   exist-3MS-IPFV
    'The child has eaten.'

Unlike the western and quasi-standard[17] varieties, the Arsi-Bale and the Hararghe varieties use simply the perfective form also for present perfect tense interpretation. That is, the latter varieties do not add the auxiliary verb for the complex construction of the present perfect tense. The interpretation, whether in the perfective or in the present perfect sense, is determined pragmatically. Accordingly, example (19) would appear as in (20) both for the perfective and present perfect senses.

(20) *mutʃ'a:-n*   *ɲa:t-ø-e*
    child-NOM   eat-3MS-PFV
    'The child ate/ has eaten.'

The perfective sense, 'The child ate', is used when one wants to tell that the action of eating did happen. On the contrary, the present perfect, 'The child has eaten', is conveyed when the speaker intends to mean the action happened and the result of that is apparent.

A structure involving two situations could be that of the past perfect tense and the future perfect tense. In the case of the past perfect tense, one action happens before the other in a past setting. On the contrary, in the future perfect tense, two actions (one after the other) happen in the future. Example [21] illustrates the past perfect tense in the Arsi-Bale dialect. Both clauses in the utterance are marked for perfective/past. The fact that one action happened before the other is not grammaticalized in the variety. It is simply from the usual practice of stating about the latest event first and going to the earlier that one would understand the utterance of a past perfect value.

(21) *wajita*   *ʔati*   *dɯf-t-e*   *mutʃ'a:-n*   *ɲa:t-ø-e*
   when   You   come-2S-PFV   child-NOM   eat-3MS-PFV
   'When you came, the child had eaten.'

---

[17] We use 'quasi-standard' to refer to the variety of Oromo that is undergoing standardization. Normally, a standard language is a language variety which has undergone codification considerably.

Formally, an utterance in the future perfect tense is not so different from that of the past perfect tense except that the first clause of the former is marked for dependent imperfective with the morpheme *-u*. Again, as in the case of the past perfect tense, the first clause (the predicate of which is marked for imperfective states about the latest event and the second clause about the earlier. The next example illustrates this.

(22) *Wajita ʔati ɗuf-t-u muʧ'a:-n ɲa:t-ø-e*
     Time   you   come-2S-IPFV   child-NOM   eat-3MS-PFV
     'When you come, the child will have eaten.'

The western variety (possibly also the quasi-standard variety) would have the past perfect tense and future perfect tense constructions in [21] and [20] respectively as in [23] and [24] below.

(23) *jero: ʔati ɗuf-t-e muʧ'a:-n ɲa:t-ø-e: tur-ø-e*
     time   you   come-2S-PFV   child-NOM   eat-3MS-CNV   stay-3MS-PFV
     'When you came the child had eaten.' [Lit. When you came the child stayed having eaten]

The western dialect and the quasi-standard variety use the auxiliary *dʒir-* 'exist' for the present perfect tense, as indicated earlier, and *tur-* 'stayed' for the past perfect tense interpretations. The main verb, both in the present perfect and past perfect constructions, is in the perfective aspect. However, since its lengthened final vowel signals another verb following, hence it is glossed as converb[18].

With regard to the future perfect tense, the quasi-standard variety and the western dialect mark the verb of the first clause for dependent imperfective and the main verb of the second clause for the imperfective aspect. Here, there is no auxiliary verb as in the case of present perfect and past perfect constructions. Here is an example of a future perfect tense for the western variety (possibly also for the quasi-standard variety).

(24) *jero: ʔati ɗuf-t-u muʧ'a:-n hin-ɲa:t-ø-a*
     time   you   come-2S-IPFV   child-NOM   FOC-eat-3MS-IPFV
     'When you come the child will have eaten'.

As seen above, in the Arsi-Bale variety, grammatical temporal deictics are formed morphologically unlike in the case of the western and the quasi-standard varieties which employ both morphological means and auxiliary

---

[18] Converb is typically a non-finite verb with adverbial function and syntactically dependent on another verb.

(except for the future perfect). The forms of the verbs for the complex constructions are summarized in the table below.

Nº	Perfect tense	Arsi-Bale variety	Western/Quasi-standard varieties
(a)	Present perfect	PFV	CNV + AUX (IPFV)
(b)	Past perfect	PFV + PFV	PFV + CNV + AUX (PFV)
(c)	Future perfect	IPFV + PFV	IPFV+ IPFV

Table 8: Forms of verbs in complex constructions (perfect tense)

4. Appellative and Metaphoric Deictics

In the Arsi-Bale community, some personal names are associated with part of a day during which the bearers of the names were born. They are, thus, names with deictic implication that is, pointing to the actual time of birth. We have termed such names 'appellative deictics' (names which imply temporal deixis). Another interesting phenomenon in the domain of temporal deictics in the Arsi-Bale dialect as well as in Oromo in general and, possibly, in other languages, is that some temporal deictics have metaphoric senses. The next two subsections present brief accounts of both appellative deictics and metaphoric deictics.

4.1. Appellative Temporal Deictics

As indicated above, some personal names that are given to new born babies are associated with a specific time of the day at which the babies were born. That is, naming of some babies is based on the temporal *origo* of birth. For example, a male baby born early morning is named *Bari:/Bari:so:* (*bari:* 'early morning'). If the baby is female, the name that is given is *'Bari:te:.'* On the other hand, if the time of birth is late morning, a male baby would be called *Ganamo:* (*ganama* 'morning'), and a female baby *Ganame:*. Similarly, if a male baby is born in the afternoon, he is called *Sa:fayo:* (*sa:faya* 'noon'), and, if the baby is female, *Sa:faye:*.

Similarly, a male baby born in the evening is named *Galgalo:* (*galgala* 'evening') and a female baby *Galgale:*. A male baby born before midnight is named *Wa:ritu:* (*wa:ri:* 'late evening') and *Wa:rite:,* if female. Likewise, a baby born at midnight is greeted with *Halko:* (*halkan* 'night') if male and *Halke:* if female. By hearing or reading such a personal name, one could readily identify the particular time of the day at which that person was born.

4.2. Metaphoric Temporal Deictics

As pointed out above, in the Arsi-Bale dialect as well as in Oromo in general and, presumably also in some other languages, some temporal deictics have metaphoric senses by mapping from a semantically obvious domain to a less obvious one. As such, they convey senses different from the usual ones. The following are examples of temporal deictic expressions with metaphoric meanings. For each example, there are two translations. The first is the straightforward one while the second is the metaphorical one.

(25)　a) *ʤiru:-n*　　*ʔilma*　　*nama:-ø*　　　*harʔ-uma*
　　　　　life-NOM　　son　　　human-GEN　　　today-FOC
　　　　(i) 'The life of human beings is just today'
　　　　(ii) 'The life of human beings is the present worldly life'.

　　　　b) *boru:*　　*ke:*　　*be:k-i*
　　　　　tomorrow　　our　　know-2S.IMPV
　　　　(i) 'Know your tomorrow'
　　　　(ii) 'Know about your future.'

In [25a], *harʔuma* 'just today' appears to be literally referring to the utterance day. But, based on the common knowledge of the interlocutors about the construction, the reference is, broadly, to the earthly life. Thus, the meaning borne in (ii) under (25a) is metaphorical. Similarly, in [25b], *boru* 'tomorrow' is not meant to imply directly the day following the day of utterance; but one's future or future life, as in (ii). Depending on context, the reference of *boru* 'tomorrow' could even be to the life after death.

Also metaphorically extending the senses of such temporal nouns as *galgala* 'evening', *ganama* 'morning', which are used for temporal deictic functions, is common in the dialect as also elsewhere. While the former is used to refer to old age the latter is used to imply young age.

5. Conclusion

To set the stage for the investigation of how the Arsi-Bale dialect of Oromo encodes and uses temporal deictics, the paper gives prior attention to time measurement and time units in the dialect. Accordingly, seasons of the year, calendrical time units, months of the year, days of the week, referential days, and parts of the day have been identified and described.

Based on aspects of time measurement and units, temporal deictics, the main concern of the study, have been examined from formal and functional viewpoints. As also suggested in the literature, three major means of

expressing temporal deictics—lexical, composite and grammatical mechanisms—have been identified and discussed. In the case of the lexical means, apart from employing simple lexical items, modifying them by temporal nouns, nominal demonstratives, verbs with relative clause function (or relative clauses), or by postpositions makes available restricted or specified lexical items. Furthermore, within the class of lexical temporal deictics, a subclass of extended temporal deictics has been recognized. What are functional in the subclass are single adverbial demonstratives, double adverbial demonstratives, adpositions and combinations of adverbial demonstratives and adpositions. On the other hand, composite deictics involve temporal words along with words of various classes while grammatical deictics marked with verbal inflection or with main verb and auxiliary. Unlike the variety of the language that is in a process of standardization and the western dialect, which employ auxiliaries for expressing present and past perfect tenses, the variety under investigation uses simply the perfective inflection of main verbs also for perfect tenses.

There are two other interesting features in relation to temporal deictics in the Arsi-Bale dialect. These are appellative and metaphoric temporal deictics. The former concerns deriving names for newly born babies from the names of the parts of the day at which they were born while the second is employment of temporal deictics for metaphoric purpose.

Typologically, temporal deictic expressions in the dialect of Arsi-Bale are in agreement with what Comrie (1985) proposed. With respect to grammatical marking, the dialect employs aspect-tense conflation whose interpretations are resolved essentially by taking situational contexts into account. In this regard, especially in the case of the perfect-tense constructions, the dialect is at variance, for instance, with the western and quasi-standard varieties. The latter varieties employ auxiliaries for tense specification in addition to main verb aspectual orientation.

Conducting similar research also on the other dialects of Oromo would be a significant contribution for understanding the overall formal and functional aspects of temporal deictics in the language. Furthermore, pursuing systematic investigation into the various aspects of deictics in the dialects of the language would be of great importance for insight into the language from the viewpoint of pragmatics.

Abbreviations

ABL	Ablative	Lit	Literal
ABS	Absolute case	M	Masculine
AUX	Auxiliary	MD	Middle
CLT	Clitic	NEG	Negative
CM	Clause Marker	NMZR	Nominalizer
CNV	Converb	PFV	Perfective Verb
COPU	Copula	PL	Plural
EP	Epenthesis	S	Singular
F	Feminine	1	First person
FOC	Focus	2	Second person
GEN	Genitive	3	Third person
IMPV	Imperative	Ø	zero morpheme
IPFV	Imperfective Verb		

Acknowledgements

References

Banti, Giorgio. 2010. Oromiffa. In *Encyclopaedia Aethipica*, edited by Siegbert Uhlig, Vol. 4: O-X, 54-59. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag.

Banti, Giorgio and Shimelis Mazengia. 2023. Oromo. In *The Oxford Handbook of Ethiopian Languages*, edited by Ronny Meyer, Bedilu Wakjira and Zelealem Leyew, 257-293. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Belkadi, Aicha. 2015. Associated motion with deictic directionals. *SOAS Working Papers in Linguistics*. Vol. 17, 49-76.

Bender, M. Leonel and Mulugeta Eteffa. 1976. Galla. In *Language in Ethiopia*, edited by M.L. Bender, J.D. Bowen, R.L. Cooper and C.A Ferguson, 130-148. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Chung, Sandra and Timberlake, Alan. 1985. Tense, aspect, and mood. In, *Language typology and syntactic description vol. III–Grammatical categories and the lexicon,* edited by Shopen, Timothy, 202-257. Cambridge: University Press.

Comrie, Bernard.1985. *Tense.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Cruse, Alan. 2000. *Meaning in Language: An Introduction to semantics and pragmatics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Debela Goshu. 2001. *The Semantics of Oromo Frontal Adpostions*. Oslo: University of Oslo.

Diessel, Holger. 2012. Deixis and Demonstratives. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/265592153.

Fillmore, Charles. 1971. Santa Cruz Lectures on Deixis. University of California, Berkeley. Reproduced by the Indiana University Linguistics Club, November 1975.

Girma Awgichew. 2016. *Zaman ak'o'at'ar, ya k'anaatinnaa ya waraat siyyaame*. The Red Sea Press, New Jersey.

Gragg, Gene. 1976. Oromo of Wellegga. In *The Non-Semitic Languages of Ethiopia*, edited by M.L., Bender, 166-195. East Lansing, MI: African Studies Center, Michigan State University.

Griefenow-Mewis, Catherine. 2001. *A Grammar Sketch of Written Oromo*. Cologne: Rudiger Koppe Verlag.

Islamic months. https://ocmic.org.uk/12-islamic-months

Levinson, Stephen. 1983. *Pragmatics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Lyons, John. 1968. *Introduction to Theoretical Linguistics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Lyons, John. 1977. *Semantics*, Vol. 2. London: Cambridge University Press.

Owens, Jonathan. 1985. *A Grammar of Harar Oromo*. Hamburg: Helmut Buske Verlag.

Seifu Metaferia. 1978. The Eastern Oromo (K'ottus) of Ethiopia and their time-reckoning «system». *Africa: Rivista Trimestrale Di Studi e Documentazione Dell'Istituto Italiano per l'Africa e l'Oriente*, *33*(4), 475–508. http://www.jstor.org/stable/40759054.

Shimelis Mazengia. 2016. Aspect and Tense in Oromo. In, *Time in Languages of the Horn of Africa*, edited by Ronny, M., and Edzard, L., 117-137. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag.

Shimelis Mazengia. 2020. Spatial deictics in Oromo. *Journal of Ethiopian Studies,* Vol. LIII, 1-38.

Stroomer, Harry. 1995. *A Grammar of Boraana Oromo* (*Kenya*). Cologne: Rudiger Koppe Verlag.