

Dereje Terefe Gemechu

The Implementation of a Multilingual Education Policy in Ethiopia

The Case of Afaan Oromoo in Primary
Schools of Oromia Regional State



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ABSTRACT

Dereje Terefe Gemechu

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Diss.

This study examined the implementation of a multilingual education policy in Ethiopia. Its main focus was to find out the role of Afaan Oromoo as the medium of primary education in Oromia Regional State. The objectives of the study were to find out whether Afaan Oromoo as medium of primary education has played positive roles in enhancing educational access to and learning quality in Oromia. Further investigation also sought to find out if there were implementation drawbacks in a bid to suggest future policy interventions considered both at federal and regional levels.

The theoretical framework behind the study was to examine the social, cultural, and political ascriptions of language and describe the educational value of mother tongue in general and Afaan Oromoo in particular. The overall thrust of the study was to find out whether Afaan Oromoo has helped create a facilitative learning environment between home and schools and contributed to nurturing Oromoo children's positive self-esteem in their subsequent academic careers. Teachers, students, parents, experts in education and culture, both as implementers and beneficiaries, were consulted on the status and value of the multilingual education policy under implementation as it relates to Afaan Oromoo.

Research data were collected from schools, teacher education institutions and relevant government offices through the qualitatively designed instruments: interviews, participant observation, and document analysis. Data collected from the field were described and analyzed using interpretative techniques that suit a qualitative research design. Although critical implementation bottlenecks have been identified, there are positive educational and attitudinal responses from key stakeholders to the use of Afaan Oromoo as medium of primary education.

Keywords: majority and minority languages, multilingual education, monolingual policy, medium of education/instruction, mother tongue, school enrolment, quality learning, learning achievement, school retention, language development and promotion, language rights, language (and) identity, language vitality, and qualitative research.

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ACRONYMS

AA (A.A)	Addis Ababa
AAU	Addis Ababa University
ABE	Alternative Basic Education
ACA LAN	African Academy of Languages
ADB	African Development Bank
ADEA	Association for the Development of Education in Africa
AED	Academy for Educational Development
ALF	Afar Liberation Front
ANDM	Amhara National Democratic Movement
ANC	African National Congress
AU	African Union
CEC	Continuing Education Centre
CLIL	Content and Language Integrated Learning
CORs	Council of Representatives
CSA	Central Statistical Authority (present)
CSO	Central Statistical Office (past)
CODE	Canadian Overseas Development Enterprise
DFID	Department for International Development
EC	Ethiopian Calendar
EC	European Commission
EEC	European Economic Commission
EFA	Education for All
ELIP	English Language Improvement Programme
EMILE	Enseignement d'une Matière par l' Integration d'une Langue Etrangere
EPRDF	Ethiopian Peoples Revolutionary Democratic Front
ERGESE	Evaluative Research of the General Education System in Ethiopia
ESDP	Education Sector Development Programme
ESM	Ethiopian Student Movement
ESR	Education Sector Review
ETP	Education and Training Policy
EU	European Union
FDRE	Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GER	Gross Enrolment Rate
GPE	General Polytechnic Education
HDI	Human Development Index
HEIs	Higher Education Institutions
HIPC	Highly Indebted Poor Countries
HIV/ AIDS	Human Immuno Virus and Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome

HPRs	House of People's Representatives
HSI	Haile Sellassie First
ICDR	Institute for Curriculum Development and Research
IER	Institute of educational Research
IMF	International Monetary Fund
JRM	Joint Review Mission
LLP	Language Policy and Planning
LH	Aakka Laakofsa Haabashaatti
LHRs	Linguistic Human Rights
LWC	Language of Wider Communication
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MLR	Minority Linguistic Rights
MOE	Ministry of Education (present)
MOE & FAs	Ministry of Education and Fine Arts (past)
MTE	Mother Tongue Education
NER	Net Enrolment Rate
NIED	National Institute for Educational Development
NOE	National Organization for Examinations
NOL	National Official Language
OAU	Organization of African Unity
OEB	Oromia Education Bureau
OPDO	Oromoo Peoples Democratic Organizations
OIB	Oromia Investment Bureau (past)
OIC	Oromia Investment Commission (present)
OLF	Oromoo Liberation Front
ONLF	Ogaden Liberation Front
PAN SALB	Pan South African Languages Board
PAP	Programme Plan of Action
PMAC	Provisional Military Administrative Council
REBs	Regional Education Bureaus
ROL	Regional Official Language
SACMEQ	Southern African Consortium for Monitoring Education Quality
SIL	Summer Institute of Linguistics
SNNPR	South Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Region
TESO	Teacher Education System Overhaul
STVO	Saaganta Televiizioni Oromiyaa /Oromia Television Programme)
TGE	Transitional Government of Ethiopia
TPLF	Tigray Peoples Liberation Front
TVET	Technical/Vocational Education and Training
UNAIDS	United Nations AIDS Programme
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization

UNFPA	United Nations for Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UPE	Universal Primary Education
USAID	United States Agency for International Development (USAID)
USUAA	University Student Union of Addis Ababa
YoAL	Year of African Languages
WCEFA	World Conference on Education for All

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1 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

Education is one of the social enterprises in the modern world that governments and societies give critical attention to. It is through education that the youth can acquire necessary knowledge, skills and attitudes. These abilities and skills empower citizens to become successful in their career life. By extension, it is also argued by scholars that nation-states can only become competent in the globalizing world through their human capital, which supposes the indisputable role of education. This makes the education industry ever more strategic and instrumental in the struggle to win international competitions without which a nation's survival may face unprecedented consequences.

On the other hand, education in many countries of the world takes place in diverse societies, where bilingualism and multilingualism are the norm rather than the exception (UNESCO 2003). Thus, the question of which language best serves all children with diverse linguistic backgrounds has been high on the agenda of many developing countries. However, issues related to the choice of language of instruction is more complex in countries such as Ethiopia, where there are school children coming from home of between 70 and 80 different language varieties (Bender et al. 1976; Cooper 1976, 1989) to pursue their education. Many policy decisions are bound to fail mainly because they serve speakers of limited language or languages. Scholars argue that the underlying cause of failures of many governments to identify language-in-education as an important pedagogical ingredient is that the language issue is not solely educational; it is also social, political, economic, and cultural (Wiley 2006; May 2003, 2006; Schiffman 2006, Smith 2004). Consequently, the scholars argue that people's linguistic right can not be successful without other liberties, political liberty in particular (Wiley 1996).

The choice of educational language is more challenging in developing countries, including Ethiopia, where the former colonial languages have left

negative imprints with regard to the use of indigenous languages. Even in some African countries where some national languages (e.g. Amharic in Ethiopia and Swahili in Tanzania) were used as medium of education throughout primary educational programs, several mother tongue (L₁) speakers faced difficulties. The result is that few students have found their way into secondary education and beyond (Heugh 2006, 81). In the following subtitles of this chapter, more issues will be examined as related to language role and status, language hierarchization, language use in education and their sociopolitical implications in diverse societies.

1.2 Language and language roles

Language is one of the major communication channels for human kind to meet their basic as well as complex needs. In its broadest sense, language is a means of communication between people. However, language is more than a code that involves social behavior. According to Wiley (1996, 2006) and Crystal (1987), language describes social behavior and no society is unaffected, whether it serves as a means of a facilitator or a barrier. Although it is often argued that language is described in neutral and technical-sounding terms such as a “means of communication” for “social intercourse”, Leibowitz (1974) maintains that language is more aptly viewed as a means of social control. From this perspective, language policy and planning must consider the social, economic, political and educational contexts in which persons with unequal power and resources contend with one another. It is also from this vantage point that language is considered as an instrument of social control and a surrogate for other social attitudes toward race, ethnicity, religion or economic status that underlie language conflict (Mullard 1989; Pattanayak 1989; Phillipson 1992).

As social behavior, language enters a realm in which there are norms of linguistic behavior that are based on the ability of some individuals to impose their standards on others. This develops the idea that language cannot be perceived independently of a given society. Scholars also strongly argue that language is inseparable from people’s culture and their relationship with each other. For instance, Ricento (2006) maintains that language is the medium through which individuals define and inhabit their own identities and as well assess or ascribe the identity of others. He further argues that it is often these differences in identities, whether achieved or ascribed, that lead to conflicts where language may play an important role.

Views on language also have implications for the conceptualizations of status, the perceived relative value of a named language as related to its social utility, which encompasses the so-called market value as a mode of communication. However, according to Harold Schiffman (2006), the market value as a mode of communication has a subjective feature known as society’s linguistic culture, which is deeply rooted. To Schiffman, two main factors have

relevance for the controversies in language use. The first deals with identity politics that lies at the core of most language conflicts. The identity politics derives from the perception that “who are we” matters in a group’s political life, and there is a variety of politically significant answers to mark a persons’ gender, class, family roles, profession, region, ethnicity, race, nation, religion and language (Schiffman 2006, 98). The scholar further contends that the identity politics is one of the contemporary attitudes toward one’s own ethnolinguistic group, where both fear and hatred may be manifested.

Another controversy is something related to the concept of language “equality” and “inequality”. According to Schiffman and Ricento (2006), the two concepts have been the sources of conflicts over language policies. For example, Ricento cites the case of the United States in which people with the assimilationist view uphold that the key to equal opportunity for non-English speakers is a shift to English as rapidly as possible. The assimilationists also believe that policies that encourage non-English speakers to continue to rely on their native languages, such as bilingual education, bilingual ballots, etc., are “hindering” their chances of achieving social equality. Contrary to this, pluralists contend that the United States has always been a multilingual society, despite the fact that English remained a dominant language. Both Ricento and Schiffman examined that for the pluralists, the relation between language and social equality and mobility is less clear-cut. The pluralists, as a consequence, argue that the achievement of equal opportunity should take into account a country’s fundamental ethnolinguistic diversity.

Will Kymlica (1989, 164) concurs with the views of the pluralists when he expresses: “Since the state operates within a linguistic and cultural context, it can not operate neutrally with respect to language and culture”. Still, another important bone of contention about language is the attribute or status given to them. This attribution leads to subtle means of social control. According to Wiley (1996), the motivation to use language as an instrument of social control is largely influenced by scholarly and popular attitudes towards language variation and multilingualism. Hence, the image of the Babel, of a fall from a state of unified linguistic grace into a condition of linguistic chaos is frequently evoked in countries where there are deeper majoritarian or dominant groups. On the contrary, fears and prejudices are directed at other language groups. In general, issues related to language are always the subject of controversy due to its underlying social, economic, political and cultural implications. It also follows that languages are valued in relation to each other: relative to their vital roles in the society. The following reiterations by Thomas Ricento clearly manifest how and when language status and values are seriously felt by their speakers:

Language is something most of us take for granted most of the time; it is usually when we discover that our language or language variety is different from, and perhaps less valued than, the language of others, or that our options are somewhat limited, either because we do not speak or understand a language or language variety, or use it inappropriately or ineffectively in a particular context, that we begin to pay attention to language (Ricento 2006, 21).

From the above citations, one can begin to think that language issues are personal rather than abstract and removed from our daily concerns. We have a stake in language policies, since they have direct bearing on our place in society and what we might or might not be able to achieve. Ricento, therefore, reveals that schools, work places, the neighborhood, families and all sites determine or influence what language (s) we will speak, whether our language is “good/acceptable” or “bad/unacceptable” for particular purposes, including careers, marriage, social advancement, and so on.

1.3 Multilingual and monolingual settings

Jan Blommaert (2006) argues that it is a sociolinguistic truism that societies are almost by necessity multilingual, in the sense that many varieties, genres, styles, and codes occur, despite self-perceptions of societal monolingualism. In addition, the fact that there are several oral languages and only about 200 states in the world means that most states are multilingual and multicultural. Many studies have focused on finding out how societies have become bilingual or multilingual which traces back to some of the historical precedents in this field. Spolsky, Baker and Jones (1998), Cooper (1989) and May (2006) contend that bilingual and multilingual communities evolved in a number of ways: voluntary and involuntary movements of people; military conquests, implicit and explicit policies, and missionaries. According to May and Ricento (2006), Skutnabb-Kangas (1999) and Fishman (1991), despite societies being multilingual, it is, however, the case in most (but not all) states that there is only one “national” language. The scholars further argue that those who command the national language consequently enjoy greater recognition and socioeconomic status than those who do not speak or write the national language.

Supporters of monolingualism in the national language thus argue that all citizens and immigrants must abandon their “non-national” identities and conform to the expectations of the monolingual state. Opponents of monolingualism, on their part, argue that citizenship should not depend on monolingualism in national language, especially in cases where other languages could be considered national languages. According to the monolingualist views, opportunities for assimilating may be limited because of lack of opportunities to acquire oral fluency or literacy in the national language. These views frequently uphold the ‘failure’ of minorities to integrate into the mainstream society with intentional avoidance of the major sticking point related to the language variable.

According to Ricento (2006, 232), because of such conflicting interests, there emerge the notions of identity, that is, “us” (good ‘insider’ group) versus “them” (bad ‘outsider’ group) to come into play. Although the valuation of groups changes over time, there tends to be a socially constructed hierarchy

from low to high, indexed to purported cultural (including linguistic and political) differences in societies. This in turn remains a line of separating between groups who want to impose an assimilative sociocultural and political leverage and those who want to maintain their identities and cultural values attached to their language.

1.4 Majority and minority languages

The majority-minority language dichotomy is a common literature in multilingual settings. For years and to-date, popular belief goes that majority languages are those spoken by a large portion of the population for whom it is a mother tongue or a first language, while minority languages are those spoken by minority ethnic groups within a country (Ouedraogo 2000, 12). Contrary to this, however, the existence of “majority” and “minority” languages gradually took another dimension, largely sociopolitical, and appeared as if this hierarchy was natural and irreversible. Majority language began to be identified with greater political power, privilege and social prestige and subsequently displaced the range and function of a minority language (May 2006, 258). May further argues that languages and the status attached to them are the results of wider historical, social, and political forces or social constructs. In short, the inequalities associated with languages are the outcome of unequal power relations in the society.

By extension, the term “dominant” language is also a misnomer as any dominance is not by language but people with power dominate those without them. According to Pattanayak (1988, 1989), language when used as a metaphor misdirects the focus from people to language by hiding the agents of domination. The label “minority” language is also problematic since it may refer either to a numerical minority or to lesser power among speakers who constitute a numerical majority but speak a non-dominant language (Wiley 1996, 106).

Similarly, Mesthrie et al. (2000, 11) further contend that language status determination is almost always a sociopolitical criteria that decide the status of a variety, rather than being purely linguistic factors. On the whole, the terms “majority” and “minority” used under this subtopic and in most parts of this thesis ascribe to the sociopolitical contexts in which some languages are “majoritized” and others “minoritized”, as opposed to popular notions that denote numerical majority or minority within a given boundary of nation-states. Hence, one can be convinced of the fact that the main reason as to why certain languages and their speakers have become to be minoritized or majoritized is purely sociohistorical/political (Hamel 1997a, 1997b; May 2001, 2003 and 2006). It can also be equally argued that the categorization of many languages in Africa as “majority” or “minority” is mainly the outcome of past

colonial histories in the main more than their geographic or demographic contexts.

May, therefore, concludes that languages and the statuses attached to them have nothing “natural” as related to majority language prestige nor the stigma attached to minority languages. To the majoritarian view, however, the “rational” choice available to speakers of minority languages is to shift to the majority, thus perpetuating and accelerating language shift to the few dominant languages that are expected to survive into the next century (Skutnabb-Kangas and Phillipson 1999, 2006).

Ricento (2006, 233) concurs with the position of May in that the development of standardized languages from a multitude of language varieties resulted from the politics of state-making. In other words, the “ideal” linguistic model adopted by many of the nation-states (one nation-state with one national language) is a relatively recent phenomenon, arising from the French Revolution of 1789 and the advent of European nationalism. This reveals that the concept of the nation-state as having one national language is not a natural or an inevitable fact of human social organization. That is why many argue that multilingualism is the norm. Ruiz (1984) and Skutnabb-Kangas (1999) assess the underlying views regarding majority-minority language relationships. According to the scholars, the assumption that multilingualism is a “threat” to the unity and stability of a state, that social mobility is enhanced by the abandonment of minority language means that the latter has little value. As a consequence, languages have been given their relative and subjective positions as “good, useful, valuable” or “bad, useless, valueless” within the state system.

With the choice and preference of language backed by some external factors, “minority language” speakers are at disadvantage in many forms. Minorities who are peripherally situated in multilingual states often fail to gain territorial control or influence over their boundaries that have been penetrated by the acculturation process. Consequently, minorities and their territories have become more accessible to the majority population through the processes associated with time or space convergence. Cartwright (2006) argues that the long-term effect on minority languages is subtractive bilingualism in which the mother tongue of the minority is gradually displaced in an increasing number of domains by the use of the majority language. This brings about a situation in which the minority language becomes less and less significant as the majority language takes over most of the daily patterns of contact and interaction.

Urbanization, industrialization, mass tourism, rapid communication, and increased population mobility since World War II have also enhanced migration between the core and the periphery. According to Janelle (1973), time and space convergence has intensified the processes that are culturally perceived as erosive to peripheral minorities in Spain, France, and the United Kingdom. As a result, Cartwright (2006) contends that since the cultural space between various ethnic groups erodes through domain sharing, it is possible to anticipate demands for cultural protection. To this end, Giles, Bourhis and Taylor (1977) argue that there is need for ethnolinguistic vitality, which can

make the group behave as distinctive and active collective entity. The scholars add that minority ethnic groups that have little or no group vitality cease to exist as a distinctive society because the more vitality a linguistic group has, the greater the likelihood it will survive and develop a collective entity.

Cartwright (2006) further maintains that the vitality of the ethnolinguistic groups is organized under three main factors: the status, the demographic, and the institutional factors. According to the scholar, status variables encompass elements of prestige of the minority. Hence, the greater the status a linguistic group has in intergroup interactions, the more vitality it will have as a collective entity. Similarly, a community that has positive demographic variables that can be expressed through their numbers and their contiguous distribution throughout a given geographic region helps both to maintain and protect their language.

Finally, Cartwright (2006, 202) contends that institutional support for the group within the geographic area refers to the formal and informal areas in which members can use their mother tongue. Institutional support for the minority language can be fostered in schools, churches, chapels, and in public services. This is because languages that will survive the multilingual environment are those protected by the state so that they can enjoy pre-eminence in national and international negotiations. On the other hand, the use of minority languages has to be based on the principle of "territoriality" (for example in Belgium), in which an individual has the right to receive services in the language of the majority population in the area as opposed to the principle of "personality", where every person is free to obtain services in the language of their choice.

The latter, the principle of personality, is applied in places where members of two or more linguistic groups are highly concentrated. Furthermore, where feasible, scholars advise the publishing of magazines and newspapers in minority languages. It is argued that for minority language-speaking groups, language policy and planning legislation is an essential ingredient in the struggle to maintain their ethnolinguistic vitality. To this effect, Cartwright cites an example of the attempts made by Welsh speakers. The measure taken by Wales was to reverse the erosion of the ethnolinguistic Welsh community, by the English language, to sustain their heritage.

Distinguishing between the rights of national and ethnic minorities affords greater linguistic protection by the state for the unhindered maintenance of their first language. This protection is applicable especially in the private domain "where members warrant", a principle drawn from the international law (Skutnabb-Kangas 2000). According to May (2006), extending greater ethnolinguistic democracy to minority-language groups, via Linguistic Human Rights (LHR), does not amount to an argument for ethnolinguistic equality for all such groups. Similarly, May argues that a call for greater ethnolinguistic democracy does not guarantee asserting equivalence in all domains with dominant or majority language. This is because the latter will continue to dominate in most, if not all domains, since that is the nature of their privileged

sociohistorical and sociopolitical positioning. Moreover, arguing that only national minorities can claim Minority Language Rights (MLR) is not an argument for simply ignoring the claims of other ethnic groups (May 2001).

May concludes his discussions by referring to the three tenets of international law as related to the viable and healthy relationship between majority and minority languages in a multilingual setting. First, it is important to work for the legitimization and institutionalization of the languages of minorities within the national-states. This enables minority language-speaking groups to share the benefits that national languages currently enjoy. It upholds the LHR advocates' view that the promotion of a majority or national language should not be at the expense of minority languages and that linguistic exclusivity upon the nationalist principle of cultural and linguistic homogeneity should be challenged.

Secondly, in order to avoid language discrimination, it is important that where there are a sufficient number of other language speakers these speakers be allowed to use that language as part of the exercise of their individual human rights as citizens. As de Varennes (1996) argues, "the respect of the language principles of individuals, where appropriate and reasonable, flows from a fundamental right and is not special concession or privileged treatment. Simply put, it is the right to be treated equally without discrimination, to which everyone is entitled" (Varennes, 1996, 117). The author also notes that though international law recognizes collective rights, all linguistic rights are attached to individual rights. It is based on the universal human rights principles of non discrimination, freedom of expression and minority protection.

Lastly, May (2006, 265-6) raises the conception of "appropriate and reasonable" with regard to individual language preferences. He argues that national minorities can demand the right to formal inclusion of their languages and cultures in the civic realms, but this need not and should not preclude other ethnic minorities from being allowed at the very least to cultivate and pursue unhindered, their own historic, cultural and linguistic practices in the private domain.

1.5 Language policy and language shift

Language policy is an interdisciplinary field. As a branch of sociolinguistics, it is relatively a recent phenomenon. It denotes the authoritative allocation of resources to language in general and to the written or printed language in particular. According to Fishman (2006), such authoritative decision-making concerning language has been practiced for centuries, if not millennia, throughout the world. Nevertheless, the scholar maintains that during the past century, language policy has become a concern primarily among the later-developing communities in the Americas, Europe, Africa, Asia, and Oceania (Fishman (1968, 1991, and 2006). Within these regions, it was found that

language policy and planning co-occurs with educational planning, industrial planning, agricultural planning, and cultural planning and other aspects of authoritatively directed community modernization. The scholar further argues that during the 1950s and 1960s, Western-trained linguists were engaged by many of the new nations in Africa, South America and Asia to develop grammars, writing systems, and dictionaries for their indigenous languages.

The activities of many of the sociolinguists during this period were considered beneficial to the contemporary drive for nation-building and national unification. The decision on which language (i.e. colonial or indigenous) would best serve the interest of the new nations was often based on which language would provide access to advanced, that is, Western, technological and economic assistance. According to Ricento (2000, 198), there was a consensus, especially among Western sociolinguists, that a major European language (mainly French or English) should be used for formal and specialized domains while local languages could be used for other functions. This stable diglossic view, however, resulted in some unintended effects by lowering the status and relegating the domains of indigenous languages to local uses only. The measure also inadvertently elevated the status and extended the domains of the former colonial languages to national political and elite educational sectors. It in turn helped to perpetuate the stratified and class-based structures of the colonial era in these countries.

Many scholars, however, believe that language policy is not simply an exercise in philosophical inquiry. According to Fishman (1991) and Blommaert and Ricento (2006), language policy is interested in addressing social problems that often involve language and in proposing realistic remedies. However, the search for these answers does not operate in a vacuum. Schmidt (2006) argues that the central issues in any language policy conflict revolve around competing attempts to socially construct group and individual identities which abound in the politics of language. Jan Blommaert (2006) also supports Schmidt's views since language policies emerge out of the interplay of actors at very different levels, including national governments.

However, until recently, political theorists have neglected language policy while a large number of them focused their emphasis on recent issues of close relevance to language policy: multicultural citizenship, identity politics, and the politics of "difference", etc could have been addressed (Kymlicka and Patten 2003; Patten, 2001). According to Schmidt, all politics derives from the intersection of two realities of human existence: difference and interdependence. The scholar further explains that if there were no differences, there would not be politics that has meaningful bearing with language and language policies. The most important point in this sub-section is to highlight how language policies take shape and enhance or limit the existence and development of languages in a multilingual setting.

Since language policy is a normative response to linguistic diversity (Mesthrie et al. 2000), its prevalence in a multilingual setting is a normal process. Language policy also involves the development of public policies that

aim to use the authority of the state to affect various aspects of the status and use of languages by people under the state's jurisdiction (Schmidt 2006, 97). It is believed that language policy gets into the political agenda when political actors believe that something important is at stake regarding the status and use of languages in the society, where these stakes require necessary interventions.

At the core of politics of language also lies a form of identity politics in which language policy partisans compete to shape public perceptions about the "we" that constitutes the relevant political community. Blommaert (2006) maintains that super-state forces can impose national language policies or they can be an effect of national governments seeking new international alliances with their partners. For example, the growing emphasis on the use of English in education in the peripheries of the world system is based on an image of globalization as monocentric, with economic, financial, and political centre dominated by the English language. Blommaert concludes that as a result of such influences in countries where English used to be a marginal linguistic commodity (e.g. in Congo and Mozambique), language policy is now motivated by a desire of national governments to align themselves with the United States and international organizations such as the IMF and the World Bank.

It is from this background that Ricento (2006, 20) argues that the "language industry", especially in the Western countries, contributes to the gate-keeping function of social institutions, schools in particular, whereby persons who command the "standard" varieties of the national language have social advantage over those who do not. Both Habermas (1987) and Phillipson (1992) argue that this process of colonization results in loss of culture, identity and socialization. Instead, it results in the imposition of an economic order that demands workers to become mere consumers without ties to traditional institutions. In consequence, Habermas identifies colonization, which takes in part through language shift, as the major social problem of our time.

According to Wiley (1996, 2006), many language policies tend to be implicit as they result more from institutional practices than from official policies. Haas (1992) relates such practices to institutional racism, in which there are systematic measures to advantage some groups and discriminate against others regardless of whether they were intended to do so or not. These practices also make languages as instruments that adversely affect students from minority language groups. An implicit language policy has tremendous consequences on access to social mobility of millions of people. Such a policy is largely hidden from view with the assumption that most citizens have accepted it as logical, natural, fair, and efficient. However, Ricento (2006) argues that it is none of those things, since no one speaks the standard variety and everyone speaks some variant of one or another language variety. Discrimination against speakers of varieties that have been stigmatized as "non-standard" occurs frequently, while victims of such discrimination have no legal recourse. The main reason is that as such language policies are hegemonic (Lippi-Green 1997).

Schiffman (2003) identifies that covert language policies may show ulterior motivations in which the underlying objective is against an egalitarian

language policy. It encourages linguistic integration by preventing the concentration of any single ethnic group from enjoying their numerical strength or cohesiveness to use their language in social life. Implicit or tacit policies can become hegemonic where the dominant groups seize the opportunity to maintain extensive power either through coercion or by creating consent. According to Wiley (1996) and Tollefson (1991), linguistic hegemony is achieved when the dominant groups create a consensus by convincing others to accept their language norms and usage as standard or paradigmatic.

Fishman (1991, 2006) notes that there is no language policy that does not affect the dominant use of a given language while leaving others aside. Indeed, the absence of authoritative policy always works in favor of the stronger party and gives rise to a “no-policy policy” in many settings throughout the world. In Fishman’s view, however, such “no-policy policies” and their consequences must be rendered visible and conscious. The scholar argues that the truth is that most language shift or maintenance is caused or consciously facilitated by conquest or other major dislocations of the status quo, rather than the assumption that it “just happens” (Fishman 2006, 318). Fishman concludes that the fact that for example, the United States does not have an overtly proactive language policy does not mean that such a “no-policy policy” does not strongly foster the spread of English for power functions in non-English mother tongue countries both in the Americas and elsewhere, or that the languages of the world are not being flooded with English terms, expressions, comics, and songs, via publications, television, and radio around the globe. Consequently, implicit policies that may be equated with accidental policies is not only dubious but the purpose of such policy is also targeted to minority language eradication and perpetuating own cultural dominance.

Though the US may not mean to do so, and it may not actually be involved in a conspiracy, as claimed, to kill off the world’s languages, the consequences may very well be the same; regardless of whatever its conscious motivation may be (Fishman 2006, 325). Fishman adds that such practices are all the more likely to be the case within the borders of the United States, where not a single immigrant tongue has reached a self-sustaining level in over 200 years. Ruiz (1984) holds that language policy is influenced by three basic orientations: language as a problem, language as a right, and language as a resource. As a result, language policies for children have to deal primarily with language as a right and resource. It follows that the fundamental goal of all legislation about language is to resolve the linguistic problems that stem from the conflicts and inequalities among languages used within the same territory, by legally establishing and determining the status and use of the language concerned (Turi 1994, 111).

One important point about language policies in a multilingual setting is to encourage the integration between different groups. Cartwright (2006) notes that the reduction in contact between ethnolinguistic groups in a plural society produces social distance that is considered a form of security by the leaders of a minority or linguistically weaker group. The scholar argues that such social

distance can reduce the knowledge and/or understanding of the 'other' in society. Since the loss of interaction curtails the opportunities to get to know members of the community, lack of empathy prevails and is often referred to as "cognitive distance" between ethnic constituents in a pluralistic society.

Another important point to be discussed in the area of language and language policy is the question of language shift. As noted under 1.4 in this chapter, in the peripheral ethnolinguistic communities, the settlement pattern of populations tends to be fragmented, and it is also the case that language use is fragmented too. The fragmented language use is frequently caused by the necessity of using majority language by residents beyond their home as the latter is the medium of main public domains.

Cartwright particularly observes that the young members of the minority languages are vulnerable to such language shifts as they become more mobile and susceptible to exogamy. In such mixed marriages, language use in the home may switch to the majority tongue, especially if the female spouse—the traditional carrier of the culture in the home—is from the dominant language group (Cartwright 2006, 199). In view of Paulston and Heidemann (2006), one of the causes of language shift is bilingualism. According to these scholars, exogamy, where parent (s) speak (s) the original language with grandparent (s) and the new language with the children, does not necessarily hold true to language shift. Although most ethnic groups within a nation do shift languages, they vary in their degree of ethnic cultural maintenance and in their rate of shifts. According to Castile and Kushner (1981), they vary in their ethnic pride or ethnic stubbornness. In Edward Spicer's expression, these are "the enduring peoples of the world", even after they have been forced to shift their language and become incorporated (Castile and Kushner 1981, 24). Thomas Ricento (2006) summarizes his discussions as related to language policy and planning into three main theoretical underpinnings.

First, as language policy debate is more than language itself, insights from political, economic, and social theory should provide scholars with the tools to explain what is at stake, why it matters, and what effect particular policy or policies may or may not have on such debates. Second, ideologies about language have real effects on language policies and practices in delimiting what is or not possible in the realm of language policy-making and planning. Third, research in language policy and planning needs to be understood as both multidisciplinary and inter-disciplinary activities where various conceptual and methodological tools from other disciplines have to be integrated and applied to real world problems and challenges involving language (Ricento 2006, 9).

1.6 Language policy, education and stakeholders' attitudes

One of the institutional language domains is education. According to Williams (1980), schools have been the principal instruments in promoting consensus

regarding the alleged superiority of standard languages. The social backgrounds children bring to school, the support efforts available to them, and their sense of self, to mention a few, have to do with children's educational success or the lack of it. This is facilitated or retarded through the language policy pursued by schools (Paulston and Heidemann 2006).

Back in 1951, UNESCO declared the axiomatic truth that the best medium for teaching a child is in his/her mother tongue given that conditions do not impede this intention. As argued by Harlech-Jones (1990), education is directly a political activity. It is a decision made by politicians as a major instrument of social policy. Harlech-Jones adds that this is especially meaningful when the national language is made the medium of education to all children. Paulston and Heidemann (2006) also argue that poor relations and inequality determine or characterize the landscape of language policy and planning within the education system in order to re-emphasize that a language policy is never simply and only about language.

There are also times when language policy in schools and community lacks convergence. Heller and Martin-Jones (2001) found that language use in the classroom defies policies that are largely monolingualist and purist. This takes place when teachers and students use unauthorized codes, the vernacular or non-dominant languages, in surreptitious ways instead of using the authorized code (s) in unofficial and off-task contexts. This is what Canagarajah (2006) characterizes as "hidden site" or "safe houses" (1995, 1997). Such spaces provide for minority students (and sometimes teachers) to represent their preferred cultural identities, develop solidarity, and tap into local knowledge to facilitate their learning process. According to May (2003) and Canagarajah (2006), this strategy gives both students and teachers opportunities to exercise their agency to resist unfavorable policies. It can also be interpreted as language planning from below.

From this, it can be said that students and teachers initiate their covert language acquisition and communicative practices that counteract dominant education language policies. Some examples also show that there is relative autonomy in the local context of society and schooling to negotiate policy decisions in one's favor. In consequence, language policy implementation is not only operating on a plain field-there are various groups that have stakes in it. While it is often viewed as a form of social engineering to advance higher levels of educational achievement through mass literacy and furthering economic development, there is quite a different view on the opposite side of the scale. According to Wiley (1996, 2006), from a centrist point of view, language policy and planning in diverse societies is perceived as a social deficiency that causes social and economic "backwardness". This ideology calls for linguistic unification, which is based on the nationalist models of the West. Wiley also contends that this model is prescribed as panacea for the socioeconomic ills of "modernizing" nations. Similarly, Jaffe (1999) notes what is considered as the paradoxical "unintended consequences" by resisting the language reforms at any time in point.

Jaffe relates the example of resistance of Corsican nationalists in France to reserve Corsican language from French for their in-group usage while using French for public purposes. This is to preserve the Corsican language from being mixed with French. According to Canagarajah (2006), such resistance becomes counter productive as it creates a new form of linguistic alienation and insecurity among the multilingual speakers. It also reduces the status of the language and limits its currency as a suitable medium for contemporary purposes. A similar attitude toward language policy was documented by King (2001). To King, even a failed language policy can have positive consequences. In her research on the Saraguro community in the Ecuadorian Andes, King finds that the policy of trying to promote Quechuan language in schools has been "a valuable and worthwhile exercise", in which indigenous students learn that their language has the potential of being written and used for academic purposes. The policy intention was to move away from the Spanish language, which dominates most of the official public domains but a policy gap was created between the policy success in the school and its failure to win the broader community. Canagarajah (2006) concludes that though the direct policy expectations were not fully realized, the side effects were interesting.

Schiffman (2003) also relates similar examples of covert language policy documented in Singapore. He reveals that covert policies at the micro-level of schooling and families affect the implementation of language policies in schools. In this instance, Schiffman finds that while the overt policy of the Singaporean government was to be egalitarian and pro-Tamil language as mother tongue medium in school, the intention was distorted. It was found that students adopted the covert policy of studying Tamil only to gain entrance to the university. In other words, they were not worried about developing proficiency in the language. Schiffman therefore brings into light how such covert and unintended language policies defeat not only the good intentions of officials but also negate the small benefits achieved for the minority language. In addition, the strategic position of schools to reverse language discrimination is unfortunately overlooked.

Negative language attitudes towards minority language may be a prime cause of parents not passing on their inherited language to a child. This does not only affect minority language production in schools through language lessons or content teaching in minority language but also affects the attitudes of children, teachers, administrators, and policy-makers. Its overall results are the devastating lack of inter-generational language transmission and reproduction of minority languages in families (Gardner 2006; Fishman 1991). The crux of the matter is that language policy in education is full of tensions both from above and below. Heller (1999), therefore, recommends the employment of an ethnographic research method to examine the consequences for the relevant communities; the ways in which what is on paper shapes everyday life and interpersonal relationships. Ethnographic research also helps to find out how macro-level language policies trickle down to classrooms (Freeman 1996); the effectiveness of different pedagogies and curricula in accompanying the policy

(Hornberger 1988); the role of schools in maintaining indigenous languages or initiating reversal (Aikman 1999; King 2001); and the place of education in reproducing the social stratification of the language groups (Heller 1999).

1.7 Language policy practices and attitudes in Africa and Ethiopia

1.7.1 Africa

Many scholars, especially African scholars, argue that language policy practices and attitudes in the continent have been and are still being influenced by the past, colonial and post-colonial. As a consequence, language policies that have been divergent across sub-Saharan Africa during the colonial period have shown a remarkable convergence towards a one-language model, except in Tanzania and Ethiopia (Heugh 2005; Alidou et al. 2006). This one-language model is against the multilingual and multicultural realities in Africa and also in contrast to the long period language transcription drive by the missionaries to serve as medium of instruction, especially in the former British colonies. According to Heugh, since independence, there is a move away from the use of mother tongue education by either reducing or eliminating the previous three-year mother tongue education, which was even almost impossible for pupils to learn enough of the second language in these years to switch to the latter medium of instruction by Grade four.

Despite uninformed popular beliefs, Heugh (2005) argues that the longer students have mother tongue education (MTE), plus a well-resourced second language as a subject, the better they will perform in this language, and are more likely to achieve well in mathematics, science and language than those learners in models with an early transition to an international language. It also follows that many research reports on the subject dispel the notion that MTE is more expensive than the second language education since early transition to the second language is the most expensive to resource; it requires all teachers to develop native-like proficiency in the second language to teach well in it, which in many instances appears unlikely.

Heugh (2005, 2006) also maintains that with few exceptions, there is now a convergence towards similar language education models across sub-Saharan African countries where children receive a three-year mother tongue education followed by a switch to the former colonial language. Wolff (2006, 28) observes that in Africa, the connection between development and language use is largely ignored and it is little understood outside the expert circles. The connection between the two is widely accepted on a priori grounds, but with little understanding of the exact nature of their relationship. Wolff, therefore, calls for a closer cooperation between linguists, educationalists, and economists in formulating what he calls a “language-development-education triangle”

connection in the future. The scholar describes three underlying problems that hinder efforts to overcome the distortion and institutionalization of a viable language policy in Africa: a) key stakeholders' lack of information on language in education; b) Western experts' negative attitudes regarding African languages; and c) the fact that African universities are not fulfilling their leadership role to promote and develop mother tongue education.

Heugh (2005, 2006) supports Wolff's argument, which considers that there are two major language policy design flaws in Africa. First, language education models used in African settings had their origins in second-language programs designed in Europe to teach students conversational skills, writing tasks and some literatures. These do not prepare students to learn language, mathematics, science, geography or history through the second language. Second, African language program designers have not kept up to date with contemporary research on the cognitive development of children and how children use language to learn all areas of the curriculum. Heugh (*ibid*) further notes that since such program designs did not originate in African settings, they do not accommodate the multilingual nature of the continent. The scholar finally assesses the African language policy model operating since the colonial period and its outcomes as follows:

A baffling phenomenon, debated at length by countless education and language scholars in Africa, and even beyond, is the continued use in Africa of language models which cannot offer students meaningful access to quality education. These models have failed the majority of those children who have had access to school systems since the Berlin Conference of 1884-5 allocated control over the continent to the colonial powers. They have succeeded only in providing successful formal education for a small percentage of children, yet they continue to be used as if they could offer lasting educational success for the majority of students. This is problematic for several reasons. The models have never demonstrated a positive return on investment in educational, social, economic or developmental terms despite the significant financial and donor resources which have been funneled into these education systems (Heugh 2006, 56).

Alidou et al. (2006) conclude that language-in-education (both as medium and subject), which would have been crucial for the continent's development could not be tapped. The creative potential of Africans for modern science and technology is thwarted by a language barrier. According to the scholars, this makes Africa even more dependent on expensive foreign expertise and impedes its development. Wolff (2006, 27) relates African educational problems with that of the continent's language policy practices. According to him, the major reasons for failing to achieve the goals of education since the 1990s Jomtien World Conference for Education which was scheduled to 2000 and the doubt for achieving the Millennium Development Goals in view is what he calls the "language factor", whose role is not only in the classroom but is also predominantly in society as a whole.

The argument further goes that the educational failure is due mainly to the language-in-education model, that is, the use of former colonial languages as medium of instruction that leads to poor educational performance. Alidou et al. (2006) argue that the failure does not come as a surprise to the elites who

used to advise African leaders and the students' parents to employ an early-exit model and a swift switch to L₂ or foreign language. The scholars (ibid.) contend that one of the serious problems continuing to be detrimental to the performance of the education system across Africa since independence is the fact that the "language-factor" is totally absent from the mainstream development discourse which is meant to alleviate poverty and lead to sustainable development. Instead, development discourse tends to be monopolized by experts from the field of economics and related social science disciplines who lack full understanding of the role of the language factor for both communications and social development. The scholars cite the continent's strategic documents such as the New Initiative for African Development (NEPAD) and others that focus on future development endeavors. Dutcher explains the situation as follows:

It is shocking that the international dialogue on Education for All has not confronted the problems children face when they enter school not understanding the medium of instruction, when they are expected to learn a new language at the same time as they are learning in and through the new language. The basic problem is that children cannot understand what the teacher is saying! We believe that if international planners had faced these issues on a global scale, there would have been progress to report. However, instead of making changes that would lead to real advancement, the international community has simply repledged itself to the same goals, merely moving the target ahead from the year 2000 to 2015 (Dutcher 2004, 8).

On the other hand, Wolff advances that given the multilingual settings in which most African societies function, development communication in Africa requires multilingual strategies for the following simple reasons:

- Development is largely about communication; in Africa this involves stakeholders with different language backgrounds.
- Communication is predominantly through language, be it oral or written, and be it in a foreign/official language or through indigenous/local languages.
- Communication is facilitated by shared language competence and language repertoires, most of all between local people and advisors/consultants, whether they are nationals or expatriates (Wolff 2006, 28).

From the descriptions so far given, it is evident that language policy practices and attitudes in Africa are heavily impeded by the interplay of factors. Wolff (2006) assesses that the "status quo maintenance syndrome" is affecting the formulation of a relevant language policy and planning. The scholar further argues that this syndrome benefits more the national elites and their expatriate counterparts to the detriment of the "under-educated masses". Wolff also believes that the status quo maintenance syndrome emanates from the following four causes: a) the attitudes towards language (indigenous and foreign or ex-colonial); b) historical experience and ideological preoccupation; c) sociolinguistic facts (multilingualism and multiculturalism); and d) political action (willingness to formulate a viable language policy and its

implementation strategies). According to Alexander (2000, 2003), the status quo maintenance syndrome clings on to the continued use of the dominant ex-colonial language as official language since independence and has created a post-colonial divide in many parts of Africa. In views of many scholars (e.g. Mateene 1980), this type of language planning has brought about a linguistic division based on those who know better the colonial language and who got access to education, and those (in fact the majority) who know the national African languages.

Failing to solve the problem of language-in-education policies has maintained the low status and prestige to the African languages and the eventual marginalization of majority of citizens from active engagement in the development arena. Alidou and Jung (2002) argue that this has impeded options for meaningful social change and democratic transformations of the African society. Bamgbose (1990, 2000) assesses that the negative attitudes towards failing to formulate a relevant language policy in Africa boils down to three factors: loss of confidence on the feasibility of multilingual education policy; the value of indigenous African languages; and the value of official ex-colonial languages as medium of learning.

On the other hand, Bamgbose (1990) contends that all of the negative attitudes and prejudices against the indigenous languages lead to uninformed choices when it comes to deciding on the medium of instruction in schools. The sad story is that without having good backgrounds in the sociolinguistic nature of the continent such uninformed attitudes are shared by members of the political and administrative elites and many of their expatriate counterparts, notably economists and social scientists. Such attitudes also affect the attitudes of the general public, notably, the teachers, parents and pupils, who have direct stake in the educational access and quality

In conclusion, Wolff and Heugh (2006) reiterated that the multilingual and multicultural reality of Africa, which have been considered as a threat to national unity is a considerable distortion. This is based on the consideration that the continent is home to between 1200 and 2000, which make up about a third of the world's living languages. This distortion is, therefore, made to justify the use of foreign/ex-colonial languages in government business and as a principal medium of instruction in education. However, the scholars consider this situation as missed opportunities to build quality education for the potential of the whole population instead of a tiny minority.

1.7.2 Ethiopia

Ethiopia has always been a multiethnic and multilingual nation. But the country had no written constitution or official language policy before the late Emperor, Haile Selassie (Anteneh Getachew and Derib Ado 2006, Mohammed Habib 2004). According to Mohammed Habib, two different policy objectives seem to have influenced the central concerns of the Ethiopian regimes after the liberation in 1941. These are the need to promote national unity and how to manage the country's diversity, which until recently, was particularly based on

language differences and cultural grounds. The common feature, however, was that all Ethiopian decision-makers lacked meaningful strategies and real commitment to accommodate the country's diversity based especially on language differences until recently.

As a consequence, some political groups insisted on the promotion of national unity and social integration. To Mohammed Habib (2004), this group thought and worked hard with the hope that the linguistic diversity of the nation would wither away under the impact of modernization. Other groups opted for asserting local diversity as a legitimate and realistic means for harmonious coexistence and wider political participation. Though overt language policy was not put in place by past governments, Amharic had been the medium of Kings (Theodros 1955-1968; Yohannis IV 1972-1989 and Menelik 1989-1913) and members of the royal families (Anteneh Getachew and Derib Ado 2006; McNab 1989; Cooper 1976, 1989).

During the reign of Menelik, Amharic usage was expanded due mainly to the annexation of the diverse multilingual and multicultural nations in the south and southwest of the country (Cohen 2001, 2007; Smith 2004; Anteneh and Derib 2006). The scholars added that soldiers, the Church, and settlers from the northern parts of the country heightened the expansion of Amharic in the annexed territories. Overt and explicit language policy came during the reign of Haile Selassie, specifically after 1941. According to Lahra Smith (2004), although Amharic began to serve as language of the imperial state when Menelik came to power, its institutionalization as a policy came during the time of Haile Selassie, especially after the 1955 Constitution. Amharic became the medium of instruction in the first two grades only until the change of curriculum in the early 1960s where it began to serve as the medium of instruction throughout the elementary school (Grades 1-6). To McNab (1989), since then, Amharic not only became the means of accessing wider economic, political and educational opportunities in Ethiopia, but also became obligatory, along with English, as a gatekeeper for certifications of examinations and entry into the country's only University, Addis Ababa University-regardless of much wider linguistic backgrounds of non-Amharic speaking children.

According to Smith (2004) and Cohen (2007), while Amharic is the language of the Amhara ethnic group who is not a numerical majority, it enjoyed official state recognition for almost 100 years. This made it unassailable despite the fact that many Ethiopian languages began to serve for official purposes and media of primary education after 1991. However, the above stance and attitude has been against the background that Ethiopia has been already a multilingual society and there was no justification why its linguistic diversity should be considered a threat to national unity (Turton 2006). Nevertheless, the change of government in the country (1991) brought about an unprecedented change of governance and sociolinguistic defragmentation in the country. Based on the country's 1995 Constitution, Ethiopia adopted a federal system where nine ethnolinguistic regional states and two city administrations were reframed. This political measure evidenced not only a

geopolitical reform but also showed new clearly marked geo-linguistic line-ups in the country. The members of the federation as stipulated in the Constitution (Article 47) were framed on the basis of five main criteria out of which mutual intelligibility of language stands tall. The same Constitution has declared the status and use of language as follows:

1. All Ethiopian languages shall enjoy equal state recognition.
2. Amharic shall be the working language of the Federal Government.
3. Members of the Federation may by law determine their respective working languages (The Constitution of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, 1995, Article 5, 78).

Prior to the Constitution, the education and training policy of 1994 also made clear the position of the Government. The rationale for using various mother tongues in primary and corresponding levels of education and training was pedagogical and as an accord with the rights of nationalities or ethnic groups to self-expression as per the Constitution. Accordingly, all of the nine regional states have defined their official regional languages and medium of instruction. Lahra Smith (2004) has labeled some of these regions as “mono”ethnic states (e.g. Oromia, Somali, Tigray, Afar and Amhara), while the rest were grouped as multilingual states: Benshangul-Gumuz, Harari, Gambella and the diverse South Nations, Nationalities and Peoples (SNNPR) regional states. Of the two city administrations, Addis Ababa and Dire-Dawa, the former uses Amharic because of its virtue of a federal capital for the federal government while the latter uses three languages (Afaan Oromoo, Somali and Amharic), especially for the primary education program.

While more than twenty nationality (ethnic) languages are now serving in the country with differing statuses, as official business and medium of primary education, Smith (2004) notes that language in Ethiopia has not been and is still not free from political identity. The scholar maintains that despite lack of clarity on the exact role of the federal working language (Amharic) and other languages being used at various statuses in the country, the current language policy has given members of the federation what is known as territorial language rights in the context of multilingualism. However, the policy under discussion has become contentious among the different elites who argue in favor and against it. In this regard, there are groups who consider the use of regional or ethnic language as a divisive policy that could instigate differences and may result in ethnic enclaves (Cohen 2007, 82). The implication of the argument no doubt shows a preference of what Mekuria Bulcha (1997, 15) calls as “linguistic homogenization”, which has been in practice since the Ethiopian modern state was in place.

According to Alem Habtu (2003), this group is characterized as “Pan-Ethiopianist”, which upholds past governments’ political centralization with language playing a cementing role. The view also takes language diversity as a “threat” to the unity and integrity of the country (Markakis 1974). Markakis further argues that past Ethiopian governments used to avoid issues related to ethnic, linguistic and religious diversity and any inquiry in to them had been

discouraged. The Pan-Ethiopianist undoubtedly upheld and continue to do so what Wiley characterizes as “linguistic unification”, a recipe from the nation-builders’ cookbook (Wiley 2006, 135).

The other counter argument, according to Alem Habtu, comes from what he calls as “Ethnonationalist” group who opposes the aforementioned centralist view. The scholar examines the views of the ethnonationalists who strongly assert the current language policy as a type of distributive justice. This group considers the policy not only as a mere pedagogical response but also as a great political achievement that can contribute to peace and harmony among the nations of people in the country. According to Smith (2004, 19), there are at least three explanations for the contentious nature of language in Ethiopia: historical, which gave a distinctive advantage to native Amharic speakers for years; the pedagogical role of language for widely enhancing early schooling of children in academic subjects; and finally the political and social goods that any language serves: communications, autonomy and recognition.

Smith further maintains that since it is both the vehicle and subject of vital political goods for citizens, language will always have a political nature in Ethiopia. However, the scholar emphasizes that previous language policies in Ethiopia have been violent and destructive to the educational aspirations of non-Amharic speakers who were forced to enter a learning environment in a language not native to them (Smith 2004, 17).

While Patten (2001) identifies three distinct models of language policy (official multilingualism, language rationalization and language maintenance), Smith argues that the current Ethiopian language model lies between the first and the third, implying a combination of models with varied degrees. The scholar further contends that in spite of the multilingual policy that Ethiopia adopts, there is a de facto “linguistic rationalization” in the country which gives more space to the federal working language, Amharic, to maintain its continued dominance in the country. Smith assesses that street signs in Addis Ababa on which none of the other ethnic languages are found could explain this fact. As a result, it is argued that the constitutional provision in article 5 that states the role of Amharic as “working language of the Federal Government” undermines many of the political equality and recognition-based norms behind the more general policy. Smith, however, notes that there are significant democratic costs in the country if language diversity is ignored in favor of pursuing a policy of linguistic domination.

1.7.3 Afaan Oromoo as an official language

It is important to touch on one more point under the context of language policy practices and attitudes in Ethiopia. That is, the Oromoo language, also known by its speakers as Afaan Oromoo. Since it is the subject of this study, it is fundamentally essential to provide the reader with few hints on the past and current status of the language, while its detail coverage shall appear in Chapter 6 (under 6. 5. 1). As noted in the previous parts of this chapter, the annexation of the southern and south-western territories’ populations into the

mainstream/central government during the last quarter of the 19th century, substantially affected the status and development of their languages. Cohen (2000, 2006, 2007) examined that although the mother tongues of a substantial portion of Ethiopians are from the Cushitic family (e.g. Afaan Oromoo, Afar, Somali, Sidama, etc), other than for oral use, these languages were never written or standardized for official purposes prior to 1991. On the other hand, scholars argue that written language is the basis of the knowledge industry that marks not only the beginning of the knowledge divides but also the accession of economic and political power.

Wiley (2006) argues that the historic cognitive divide is related to the development of literacy. The development of alphabetic literacy was also presumed to be the means to both individual development and institutional advancement. All of these have depth and breadth of meaning to Afaan Oromoo and its speakers. Following the change of the political system in the country in 1991, Afaan Oromoo has been one of the languages that got official government recognition to be written and used for all social and political domains in Oromia.

Moreover and as stipulated in the Federal Constitution of 1995 (Articles 5 & 39) and provisions to regional governments, Afaan Oromo was unanimously endorsed by the Parliament of the Oromia Regional Government to become an official regional language and medium of primary education. On the other hand, Cohen (2007) argues that despite the fact that the language is used as mother tongue of a huge population (more than a third of the entire population of Ethiopia), its written form is in its beginning and further standardization still remains far ahead. It must however be noted that attempts to write Afaan Oromoo goes back to around 1840s. It began with two European scholars, Karl Tutschek and Johann Ludwig Krapf. Tutschek produced Oromoo dictionary and written grammar, while Krapf devoted his time to translating the Holy Scriptures to Afaan Oromoo until he was expelled from the country due to his enthusiasm and interest displayed towards the Oromoo and their language (Pankhurst 1976, Mekuria Bulcha 1997). The scholars added that the main reason for the expulsion of Krapf was that the priests of the then Orthodox Church did not wish to see a competing Protestant religion using a different language and written in Latin alphabet.

Another Oromoo literacy pioneer was Onesimos Nasib who contributed a substantial part by producing several secular as well as religious literary materials in Afaan Oromoo. One of Onesimos' land-mark contributions was his translation of the Holy Bible which he named as "Macafa Qulqullu" (an equivalent meaning to the Holy Bible) into Afaan Oromoo for the first time and which was printed in 1899 at St. Chrischona, Switzerland (Mekuria Bulcha 1995, 1997). However, due to the overall character of past Ethiopian governments towards language diversity in general and Afaan Oromoo in particular, all efforts to develop Afaan Oromoo as a viable written variety were not successful at the time. The major cause was that use and development of the language was considered an obstacle to the cultural and linguistic assimilation of the Oromoo.

Past Ethiopian kings and rulers, in consequence, banned Afaan Oromoo from public domains as well as its script (the Qubee). This was done because any script other than that of the Amharic (Geez) was considered a “threat” to the development and expansion of Amharic (McNab 1989; Zitelmann 1994). These unhealthy linguistic attitudes were backed by a series of campaigns to characterize Afaan Oromoo as what Zitelmann (1994, 24) calls the “devil’s tongue” and its alphabet (Qubee), the “devil’s script”. It is from such attitudes of past Ethiopian governments that Krapf (1843, 161) had assessed the situation as follows: “I know that in using foreign characters I shall be opposed by the Abyssinian (Ethiopian) priests, who wish nothing but Ethiopic to be circulated”.

From the limited descriptions given above, it can be understood that problems related to the use and literary development of Afaan Oromoo can be said historic. The problem has been mainly spearheaded by past Ethiopian Governments and their sociocultural institutions. This sociocultural impact could not readily come to resolution even in the post-1991 multilingual policy under operation. It may also be from this that Asafa Jalata (1996) concludes that the underlying problem emanates from the country’s ideology that has been bent on cultural universalism. Asafa argues that past Ethiopian cultural universalism strives for taking control of the social, economic and cultural domains but ignores the overall histories and cultural resources of the Oromoo people, including their language.

In general, there still exist some level of linguistic tensions between the previous dominant language (Amharic) and the rest of diverse languages in the country, which also applies to Afaan Oromoo. Zitelmann (1994) examines the contemporary Ethiopian language policy context, where the use of the Roman alphabet (Qubee) for Afaan Oromoo occurs in a distinctive political environment. The covert linguistic rationalization that favors Amharic in various national domains is also another uphill struggle to the development of Afaan Oromoo and other languages in Ethiopia. This is in addition to the long suppression inflicted against the use and development of the language for its functions in the mainstream.

In consequence, the introduction of Afaan Oromoo as medium of public domains in Oromia and its use of Roman alphabet (Qubee) for writing has been a burning issue since the beginning of 1990s. The status of its practical implementation needs research-based descriptions and analysis to find out its role and impact as medium of instruction in primary education. This and related issues have motivated the researcher to embark on the study under discussion. Thus, a critical investigation into the on-going multilingual education policy in the country, Afaan Oromoo as its focus, justifies the currency of the study.

2 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

The Transitional Government of Ethiopia (TGE), which came to power in 1991, and later the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE), recognized all Ethiopian languages in the country. In the country's constitution, under articles 5 and 39 (1, 2, and 3), the following has been affirmed: "All Ethiopian languages shall enjoy equal state recognition" (FDRE Constitution 1995, 78). Moreover, the 1994 education and training policy of the country made clear the provision that primary level education would be multilingual both for pedagogical validity as well as for the rights of the diverse peoples of the country to promote their languages (ETP 1994, 23). Following the footsteps of these constitutional and policy provisions, the country's primary level curricula have become multilingual for the first time in history. Many nationality (ethnic) languages have become the medium of primary education (Grades 1-8) and corresponding training programs.

According to the report of the Ministry of Education (MOE 2005), more than twenty ethnic languages have become direct school mediums and are also taught as subjects, with varied learning levels. However, the goal of any language planning and policy is only achieved when sound and co-ordinated implementation strategies are put in place and necessary human, institutional and material support are provided. Hornberger (2006) and Fishman (1997) argue that in many countries, the process remains at the level of policy declaration without providing adequate means of implementation. The scholars further hold that while providing neither incentive, an opportunity to be a school language, nor a writing system and standardized grammar, a language policy will not go forward in achieving its stated goals and objectives.

One of the 'new' media of primary education in Ethiopian schools today is Afaan Oromoo (Oromoo language), a language that serves the largest ethnic group, with 34.49 percent of the country's population (Population and Housing Census 2007). As many of the languages in the Ethiopian empire, Afaan Oromoo had been proscribed from official public use for many years. Its institutionalization as a medium of primary education as well as an official language in the Oromia regional state, one of the nine federated regions of the

country, has inspired this researcher to look into the over-all language attitude and its implementation status on the ground. As a person who served many years in the education sector (as a teacher, curriculum expert, director of curriculum and research and later on at a higher education policy level), it has motivated me to investigate into the Ethiopian multilingual education policy implementation process in general but with specific focus on Afaan Oromoo as medium of primary education. I am convinced that this study will shed some light on issues related to the relationship between language and society, language attitude, and above all, language and education as it relates to Afaan Oromoo serving as medium of primary education in Oromia.

2.1 Research Problem

Ethiopia is a multicultural and multilingual nation-state, especially, since it emerged as a modern state (Marcus 1994; Markakis 1974, 1987; Bahru Zewde 1991, 2002; and Hussein Jemma 2004). As hinted under Chapter one (1.7.2), the coming of diverse nation-states under one central rule meant that Ethiopia was constituted as a mosaic of multiethnic nation where its state's populations encompassed culture, economy, and dozens of Semitic languages, 22 Cushitic, 18 Omotic and 18 Nilo-Saharan (Bender et al. 1976, 13). The overall consequence was that imposition of the conquering Abyssinian (the northern core of Semitic language-speaking people) culture on the indigenous peoples in the rest of the country became evident. As any move to centralization of governance presupposes cultural assimilation, where language implicitly and explicitly stands tall, it was the case that Amharic began to mediate the heterogeneous peoples of linguistic background.

Consequently, Amharic inarguably enjoyed the sole status of becoming a national language among the diverse linguistic nation-states. In short, linguistic homogenization through centralized governance created conflicting language culture and attitudes. Educational institutions, especially schools, reproduced such biases where children of non-Amharic background suffered its grim consequences. The so-called one-nation-one-language model was institutionalized in such a way that public institutions used to express the extent of their determination to implement it. Bahru Zewde (2002, 140) examined in the then Government Negarit Gazeta where strong determination of the Ministry of Pen was expressed as follows:

The strength of a country lies in its unity, and unity is born of common language, customs, and religion. Thus, to safeguard the ancient sovereignty of Ethiopia and to reinforce its unity, *our language* and *our religion* (emphasis added) should be proclaimed over the whole of Ethiopia, without which unity will never be attained. Both Amharic and Geez should be made official languages, for secular as well as religious affairs, *all pagan languages should be banned* (emphasis added).¹

¹ Ministry of Pen (1933), a Memorandum from a government official, Sahle Tsedalu.

According to Walleign Mekonnen (1969, 4) all of these made many Ethiopians to accept that the only “true Ethiopian was one who spoke Amharic, listened to Amharic music...wore Amhara dress”. According to Walleign, many had to change their names and hide their true identities. It was not without reason, therefore, that a foreign scholar, Donald Donham (1986, 4), rightly commented on the overall situation as: “To the outside world, the language of Ethiopia is Amharic, and the history and culture of Ethiopia was that of the northern highlands...” Amharic, therefore, began to serve as a gate-keeper for any path of employment and schooling. Cooper (1976, 295) explained the educational opportunity that non-Amharic-speaking children had: “If non-Amharas want an education at public expense, they must learn Amharic”.

The aforementioned linguistic culture and attitudes have come a long way through successive monarchic rules and up until the end of the military regime (1991). Like any other non-Amharic-speaking citizens, Oromoo school children beyond bearing disgusting linguistic stigma, used to face problems that relate to Amharic phonology, lexical and grammatical problems for many years (Negassa Ejeta 1984). In short, there is no doubt that past linguistic homogenization pursued by Ethiopian governments exposed Oromoo children to severe pedagogical experiences such as classroom repetitions and school dropouts.

At the backdrop of the above educational experiences, the Summative Evaluation Report (2002) by the Institute for Curriculum Development and Research (ICDR/MOE) shows two salient points. One is that the “new” media of school instruction have enhanced learning, and second, that the shortage in the supply of educational materials is affecting overall learning in schools. In addition, the 2004 Learning Assessment made by the Organization for National Examinations (NOE/MOE, 2004) also reveals that there were comparable learning achievements in favor of students who used their mother tongue mediums for the entire primary level. These positive learning achievements include Oromoo students as one of the top three achieving groups in the country. This mother tongue-friendly achievement for Oromoo students has continued in the education beyond primary school.

At the broader societal level, however, the current language policy in Ethiopia seems to create an attitude of ambivalence, especially, on the part of parents whose languages have become the medium of instruction for the first time. It is also perceived with an unfavorable attitude and response from some elites of the former dominant linguistic group (native Amharic-speaking elites). Consequently, the problem of supply of educational materials, the dilemma and uncertainty on the part of some parents (as related to their children's academic success), and some of the unfavorable responses from individuals or parties may have impacted on the policy implementation in one way or another. This may have also impacted on the implementation of Afaan Oromoo as medium of primary education.

It is therefore these underlying and seemingly contrasting factors that deserve investigating and describing through systematic research procedures.

As a policy implementation problem, this has to be empirically studied in order to provide possible hints for future policy considerations. The study also attempts to describe and reveal situations (social, historical, political and cultural) that surround language policy implementation in Ethiopia in general and that of Oromia regional state in particular.

2.2 Aims of the Study

Afaan Oromoo officially became the medium of full primary education in the Oromia regional state in 1991. As a new school medium, some problems, including human, material as well as institutional constraints, were expected at various levels of implementation. These problems could be manifested in the attitudes of the Oromoo public in general and others who are found in the front-line of the language policy implementation end in particular.

Hence, the objectives of this study are:

1. To identify if the use of Afaan Oromoo as a medium of instruction has contributed to school enrolment and retention;
2. To investigate to what extent Afaan Oromoo has enhanced learning process and students' quality achievement;
3. To explore whether the use of Afaan Oromoo has promoted school-community relations;
4. To explore if the use of Afaan Oromoo has helped develop Oromoo self-esteem and identity; and
5. To particularly identify major drawbacks that might have affected the implementation of a multilingual education policy in the country and Oromia and suggest possible hints for future policy considerations.

2.3 Significance of the Study

I strongly believe that this study is one of the systematic researches attempted to solely investigate into the implementation of a multilingual education policy in Ethiopia. Until recently, most prior research undertakings were either curricular or a partial treatment of the role of mother tongue in education programs. For example, some evaluative researches (e.g. Summative Evaluation 2002; National Learning Assessments of 2004, 2007 and some others by foreign scholars) carried out in the area of curriculum implementation, learning achievement and sociopolitical outcomes in the country had their own limitations. They mainly focused either on mere learning outcomes or the socioeconomic and political implications of the language policy, without

considering the direct link between educational language and students' access to school and learning achievements.

The study has considerable significance as it is one of the few research exercises on the official use of Afaan Oromoo in the educational domains in Ethiopia. The scientific and pedagogical role of mother tongue in enhancing children's learning, for many years, was either neglected by Ethiopian policy-makers, or parents were unaware of this important learning instrument. Thus, the study can generate some useful theoretical frameworks for educational language policy planning in a multilingual Ethiopia. It can also contribute its due share to the Ethiopian language policy assessment and future reform endeavors.

While the study's direct value goes to the Oromia Regional State education bureau, which is charged with language curriculum development and its execution, most of the theoretical underpinnings and scientific understandings to be reached at may also be of great importance to the implementation of other nationality (ethnic) languages in Ethiopia. I therefore believe that the outcome of this study will instigate more discourse on language policy theme in Ethiopia in general and Oromia regional state in particular. Such discourses may also urge government officials to take timely measures in reorienting the Ethiopian public to develop a multilingual and multicultural attitude in their social and cultural life. This could in turn encourage the use and development of various ethno-languages in the country and the recognition and respect for linguistic human rights. The study also helps to mirror a cohesive social capital that could be achieved through a multilingual policy that can contribute to Ethiopia's future harmonious development in the years to come.

2.4 Scope and Limitations of the Study

The study is framed to examine whether there were gaps in the implementation, between the positive language policy intentions and the practices on the ground. Its main focus is to generate empirical data as to how Afaan Oromoo as medium of instruction in the selected primary schools of Oromia is appraised by teachers, students, parents and other relevant institutions. By so doing, the study critically investigates whether Afaan Oromoo has served to achieve educational goals such as access to quality learning achievement and retention; forged positive community-school relations; instilled positive self-esteem in students; and experienced certain implementation drawbacks.

However, authorities in the area of qualitative research caution using limited data source in order to maximize the depth of the field report and to enhance authenticity. They earnestly remind researchers not to leave aside details or events by categorizing them as 'trivial'. As a consequence, the number

of field sites and respondents had to be limited. This led to investigating the effectiveness of Afaan Oromoo as medium of instruction in selected primary schools in Oromia Regional State. It was not found feasible to investigate all media of instruction that are currently under implementation in the country since the multilingual education policy came to force (1994). Besides the study design, time and resource limitations played a role. The findings of the study, therefore, will have to be examined in view of the institutions and people that were included in the study in Oromia regional state, while the federal policy framework and implications are concurrently examined in the overall scene.

A study on language needs ample knowledge and experience of a multidisciplinary approach in areas such as sociolinguistics, sociology, history, past and present political and cultural life of the people in which the investigation is situated. These help to understand and analyze matters that are encountered at each stage of the study. To this end, having an educational background in pedagogics and curriculum science alone was not found sufficient to describe, analyze and interpret issues related to the medium of learning in schools. To bridge my knowledge-gap, I have taken courses such as sociolinguistics and multicultural policy research in the departments of English and Cultural Policy of the University of Jyväskylä that enabled me deal with some of the complex nature of the subject under study. My policy-level engagements in the last ten years did not give me respite to be versed with some of the available literatures related to language and language policy experiences. Consequently, all I had to do was to keep learning and bridge the knowledge-gap problems that I have encountered during the study.

Sometimes, there is chronic lack of domestic research work on the subject under study. In effect, it was a major problem. Many of the subject's researches undertaken by foreigners and Ethiopians who live abroad are not available in the country. Research status on the current Ethiopian language policy could also be said in its infancy. On top of this, Ethiopia's low level of information technology resource infrastructure could not enable one to access available international research experiences in the area. As a result, my reliance was mainly on classical studies on Ethiopian languages, government decrees, reports and related materials. The most serious problem, however, was related to the language I decided to study, Afaan Oromoo, which was proscribed for years from writing and use in official public domains. The magnitude of proscription was so serious that even official religious teaching in the language was not possible. In consequence, basic research literatures were extremely lacking in the country not only in the language area under consideration but also in the political and cultural spheres.

The period of data collection was not found relaxing and required the researcher's conscientiousness to encourage respondents to freely interact and provide richer responses. Although it could have provided additional reference to data transcription and documentation purposes, the recording of responses from the interviewees was ruled out due to the sensitivity of the issues

discussed at the time and respondents' lack of confidence of their anonymity. As a result, reliance on field notes was a force majeure rather than an option.

Finally, resource limitation and timing also played their parts in this study. The study grant, which was not continuous and reliable, forced the researcher to begin thinking about, at every stage of the work, the possibility of getting grant to continue the project and to plan for a round-trip between Ethiopia and Finland. As a result, in the last two years of this study, there was no research grant and the researcher had to bear all the material burdens which undoubtedly caused considerable distractions in one way or another.

2.5 Organization of the Study

The study is organized into 11 main chapters consisting of units and sub-units. Chapter one, with a short introductory section, treats language and language roles of speakers in the broader sociopolitical environment. In general, the chapter gives overall understanding on the basis of choosing a language and what it means to those whose language is privileged to serve as national or official languages or proscribed from such privilege and use. Chapter two explains the background and to what end the study is aimed at. Chapter three (country context), has two main parts. The first is a brief over-view of Ethiopia, while part two is an extended historical flashback of the Oromoo people and Oromia, where the study was situated.

Chapter four, which could have been combined with chapter three, has been given an independent space or status of its own. The rationale behind is that the reader would be better aided to understand the country's education system as it relates to language of instruction in schools and what impact it had on the children of the country and the basis of current reform, the multilingual education program.

Chapters five and six could generally be taken as reviews of relevant literatures on basic theoretical assumptions of language, language policies and practices on global, African and Ethiopian perspectives. Independent chapters were given due mainly to their relative coverage and each theme's special emphasis on language and language policy designs and practices. In Chapter six, issues on Afaan Oromoo and its brief writing history have been included to create logical connections to the study. By so doing, readers will be placed much closer to subsequent chapters until the end of the study.

Chapter seven covers methodology of the study and the rationale for the choice of research design. This is an important chapter where a reader needs to get hold of the over-all context under which the study has been carried out. Chapters eight and nine are data presentation and discussion and data analysis respectively. Each theme is made to give the reader in-depth knowledge of the subject under study, not only in linguistic terms but also in the broader socio-political and historical perspective. Chapter ten covers the main findings and

conclusions of the study. The last, Chapter eleven, is the way forward, which contains some suggestions for policy considerations at macro (Ethiopia) and micro (Oromia) levels. References and important appendices have also been documented for readers' curiosity on the magnitude of points emphasized in the study. In addition, figures and tables have been incorporated to support ideas and facts presented in the study.

Last, but very importantly, are the varied concepts and names used in the study. For example, it will not be uncommon to find two or more names such as Oromoo and Oromo; Afaan Oromoo, Oromiffa or Oromigna; Oromia and Oromiyaa or Oromiya. Similarly, repetitive terms such as Sabeen scripts, Amharic scripts, Geez scripts or Ethiopic scripts are also frequent in the study. The use "Oromoo" or "Oromo", "Oromiyaa" or "Oromiya" is simply a matter of unsettled orthography due to the fact that Afaan Oromoo has only recently been officially used in written form in the public domains. As a result, different government offices in Oromia still use these variations but almost all would mean the same. In linguistics, they may be called as 'free variations', causing no semantic differences. Thus it is hoped that readers consider them as mere inconsistencies that emanate from lack of standardization of the language in its written form. Moreover, Oromiffa or Oromigna are simply inflections of Afaan Oromoo or Oromoo language. It is also important to note that Oromoo terms and names are either italicized or put within inverted commas to help readers easily identify them from English ones, while Ethiopian authors are referenced without change of position of their last names.

Similar inflections such as the above are common in the study. For example, Amharigna for Amharic and Tigrigna for the language that the Tigray people speak are inflections of the respective languages. The variety of names of scripts would mean the same. The underlying cause is that different scholars use/d/ variety of names to mean the same thing. For example, as domestic literature on Afaan Oromoo was almost non-existent for the last several years, different foreign scholars used the derogatory or exo-definitions of the word *Galla* to mean both the Oromoo people and its language, Afaan Oromoo. On the other hand, there are some domestic operational terms that readers may need to be familiar with in advance. These terms bear political connotations as used both in the federal and local administrative hierarchies in the context of the current federal arrangements in Ethiopia.

1. *Nations, Nationalities and Peoples* are broad nomenclatures and definitions given by the Constitution of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE 1995) to represent the country's ethnic groups who are in different socio-economic and developmental stages. They "are a group of people who have or share a large measure of a common culture or similar customs, mutual intelligibility of language, belief in a common or related identities, a common psychological make-up, and who inhabit an identifiable, predominantly contiguous territory" (FDRE, p. 97).
2. *Region or Regions* are the 9 National Regional States or members that make up the federal government of present Ethiopia (FDRE Constitution, 1995, 103).
3. *Woreda* (district) is the next administrative status or level to each National Regional State.
4. *Kebele* is the lowest administrative unit below the Woreda.

5. *Zone* is an administrative structure between the regional state and the Woreda administration.
6. *FDRE* refers to the nomenclature of the Government of Ethiopia, as *The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia* (FDRE Constitution, 1995, 77).

3 COUNTRY CONTEXT

3.1 Country context: Ethiopia

3.1.1 Location, topography, and calendar

Ethiopia is an ancient country located in the eastern part of Africa. It is one of the oldest nations in sub-Saharan Africa bordering the Sudan in the west, Eritrea in the north, Djibouti and Somalia in the east, and Kenya in the south. The area of the country is 1, 127, 127 square kilometers. Ethiopia's topography consists of a central high plateau bisected by the Ethiopian segment of the Great Rift Valley in to northern and southern highlands and surrounded by low lands. The plateau varies from 1500 to 3000 meters above sea level, where the highest point is Ras Dashen at 4620 meters in the northern highlands. The Afar depression, formerly known as Danakil, also part of the Great Rift Valley, is 115 meters below the sea level and is one of the hottest places on earth. The diversity of the Ethiopian terrains determines regional variations in climate, natural vegetation, soil composition, and settlement patterns (Library of Congress, Ethiopian Country Studies, Federal Research 2005; Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia 2005; One World Net/UK 2007).

Rainfall and temperatures vary because of Ethiopia's location in the tropics and its diverse topography. In general, the highlands above 1,500 meters enjoy pleasant temperatures between 16 and 30 degree Celsius, while the low land areas that are below 1500 meters have got temperatures that range from 30 degree Celsius to upwards 50 degree Celsius. Ethiopia uses a solar calendar which divides the year in to 12 months of 30 days each, while the remaining five days (six in a leap year), constituting a short thirteenth month. The country's new-year commences on September 11 in Gregorian (Western) calendar and ends on the following September 10. Moreover, the Ethiopian calendar runs eight years behind the Gregorian and seven years from September 11 to December 31.

As a result, the Ethiopian year 1997, for example, began on September 11, 2004, and ended on September 10, 2005, in Gregorian calendar. The seven to eight-year gap between the Ethiopian and that of the Gregorian Calendars result from alternate calculations in determining the date of the Annunciation of Jesus (ethiopiancalendar.wikipedia.org/wik/eth_calendar, retrieved on 24 June, 2008). This has made the country to celebrate its unique Millennium on 11 September 2007 along with its New-year. Ethiopia is also located in the International Time Zone of Greenwich Mean Time (GMT) plus three (+3) hours.

3.1.2 People, language, religion, and demographic situations

Ethiopia, also originally known as Abyssinia (Bender et al. 1976), is a multi-ethnic and multicultural nation-state. According to scholars (e.g. Bender et al., 1976 and Markakis 1974, 1987), the name 'Abyssinia' was mostly related to the two main northern core of Tigre and Amhara ethnic groups, while a broader definition of the same term also includes Semitic-speaking Gurages, Harari and the Argoba Peoples. The Cushitic, the Omotic and the Nilo-Saharan language-speaking peoples in the centre, south, southeast and southwest make the bulk of the population of the country. Being a multi-ethnic and multicultural nation-state, Ethiopia is known for its rich cultural mosaic, comprised of 70-80 different languages. According to Bender et al. (1976, 15), languages in Ethiopia fall under four main classifications: Semitic, Cushitic (both classified under the Afro-asiatic family), Omotic, and Nilo-Saharan.

The Cushitic family covers much larger linguistic families of Afaan Oromoo, Somali, Afar, Sidama, Walaita, Hadya, Gedeo, etc. The Semitic family on the other hand, includes Amharic, Tigrigna, Gurage, Harari and Argoba. For further information on the linguistic families in Ethiopia, see appendices 5 & 6 at the end. Among the Cushitic families, the largest and most widespread Ethiopia's ethnic groups are the Oromoo, who are estimated between 35- 40 percent of the country's population (Library of Congress 2005; World Factbook-Ethiopia 2007; One World Guide/UK 2007). However, the recent Ethiopian Population and Housing Census (2007, 66) indicates that the Oromoo are 34% of the total population.

Amharic is currently the working language of the federal government. This is a complete policy as well as status shift, at least in principle, when seen in light of its century-old unassailable position as an official national language in the empire (Smith 2004). The policy implication is that many of the country's languages have now become the media of public business and education in the respective regions and zones. Afaan Oromoo is one of them. English is used as medium of instruction in secondary and higher learning institutions. Arabic, French and Italian are also spoken in the country but their influences are largely felt in the few schools and speech communities they serve other than being considered the media of larger public domains. According to the Ethiopian Central Statistical Agency of the 1994 Population Census result, Orthodox Christians constitute 50.6 ; Muslims 32.8 ; Protestants 10.2; Catholics 0.9 ;

Traditional 4.6; others and not stated 0.9 and 0.1 percent respectively (CSA 1999, 56). The same source indicates the country's main ethnic composition.²

Ethiopia is considered the second populous country in Africa, next to Nigeria. The United Nations Development Program (UNDP 2006) estimation shows that Ethiopia's population was 75.6 million. However, the recent nationwide Population and Housing Census (2007, 1) indicates that the country's total population stands at 73.9 million (male=37.2 million; female=36.6 million). The Census also shows that only 18 percent of the country's population lives in the urban areas, making Ethiopia one of the least urbanized countries in the world.

According to the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA 2003, 6), the country's population structure falls under the following three main categories: ages 1-14 (45.9%); 15-59 (49.5%); and 60 and above (4.6%). It shows that a large proportion of the population is under 15 years of age, a typical characteristic of the sub-Saharan Africa countries.

3.1.3 Economy

Ethiopia's economy is sustained primarily through subsistence farming which engages over 80 percent of the country's total population, but frequent droughts and poor agricultural system had undermined the sector's productivity. According to the World Bank Report (2005, 19), the country's GDP makeup is 50 percent agriculture, 11 percent manufacturing and 39 percent services. Main export items include coffee (65%); hides and skins (12%); oil seeds and pulses (5%) and others (18%). The agricultural sector is responsible for more than 85 percent employment, 45 percent national income and more than 90 percent of the export.

The World Bank report further confirms that one of the reasons for agricultural low productivity was the limited use of inputs and modern technology, which causes consistent low average yields in the country's cereal production. Though Ethiopia was a beneficiary of the 3.3\$ billion debt relief award made in 2004 for the Highly Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) initiative, previous residual heavy debt burden, the volatile coffee prices, etc. hindered further economic growth until the year 2005. The UNDP Human Development Report of 2006 concludes Ethiopia's economic situations in the following main development indexes: per capita GDP 756\$; HDI rank, 177; life expectancy, 47.8 years; percent of population under \$2 per day, 77.8; cellular subscribers, 3/1000; and internet users, 2/1000. According to the 2007 United Nations Human Development Report, Ethiopia ranks 169 out of 177 countries (<http://www.dfid.gov.uk/countries/Africa/Ethiopia.asp> 2007).

² Oromoo (32.1%); Amhara (30.1%); Tigray (6.2%); Somali (5.9%); Gurage (4.3%); Sidama (3.5%); Walaita (2.4%); Afar (1.8%); Hadiya (1.7%), etc. (CSA 1999, 41-43).

3.1.4 Health

According to the UNDP (2006) and World Bank (2005) reports, Ethiopia's health problems are mostly linked to nutritional deficiency and preventable diseases. Access to health care services and low levels of education impede progress in the health sector. As a result, malaria, HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, and women and children's health remain major challenges in the country's health sector. Both agencies estimate that with more than four million cases reported yearly, malaria is the leading cause of death. The World Bank report further shows that both HIV/AIDS and malaria claim 6.2 and 4.5 percent of child deaths respectively.

3.1.5 Education

Education, especially modern educational provision, has been affected by the socio-economic status of the country until recently. Currently, educational provisions are free from primary to the end of general education, Grade ten. As of recent, the educational status of Ethiopia has shown a steady improvement over the past decade, especially in terms of access. The education and training policy that came to force in 1994 has created an enabling environment for the steady growth and expansion of the system. The World Bank report shows that human capabilities have substantially improved in spite of the low levels and a lag in impact on income poverty. Starting from a low base, enrolment rate growth and expansion at all levels has been impressive, with the number of students almost tripled since 1994. Detail coverage on the Ethiopian education system shall appear in Chapter 4.

As far as literacy rate is concerned, it is difficult to get reliable statistics on the subject. The country's literacy profile has not only been inconsistent but has also been extremely low. For example, the UNDP (2001) literacy rate record indicated that Ethiopia remained lagging far behind most African countries. Accordingly, the country's non-disaggregated literacy rate stands at 38.4 percent. UNESCO's recent publication also revealed that Ethiopia's literacy rate stands at 36 percent (M=50; F=23). As a result, the country has been spotted among the countries that had less than 40% of adult literacy in the world (UNESCO 2007, 64). Similarly, the Education for All Development Index (EDI) ranked Ethiopia as one of the "Low EDI" countries, 123 out of 129 countries (UNESCO 2007, 203).

The 2007 national census carried out in the country has not yet been released until the last work of this study (30 March 2010). As a result, use of relatively remote literacy statistical information has become an option to shed some lights on the subject. To this end, the Central Statistical Agency (CSA, 2004, 25) reported that the country's literacy rate stood at 38.3 percent (M=49.9; F=26.6), while rural literacy rate was 30.9 percent (M=43.4; F=18.7). It was further indicated that literacy rate in urban areas is more than two times higher than that of the rural (74.2 percent against 30.9 percent (M=86.2; F=64.4). Figure 1 below shows the status of regional and gender literacy profiles in the country.

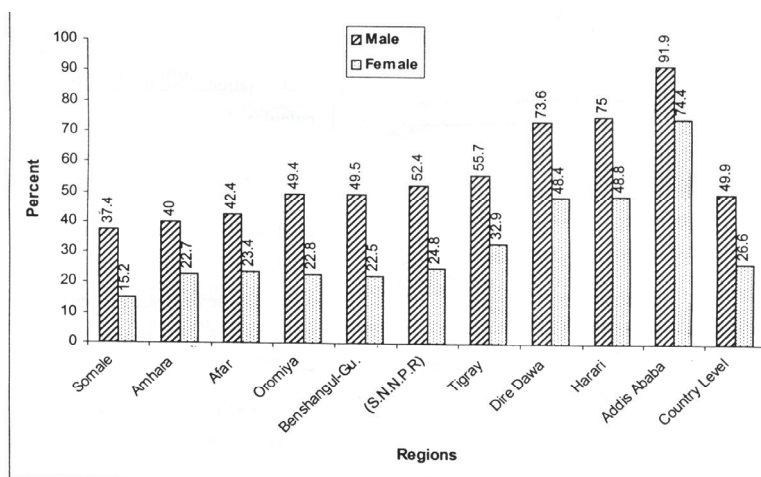


FIGURE 1 Literacy Rate by Regions and Gender (CSA 2004, 25)

3.1.6 Politics

Ethiopia has been an imperial nation-state until recently. The monarch king was overthrown by the combined military forces known as “Dergue” in 1974. The Dergue, which means a committee or council, was in power for 17 years. It was removed in 1991 by the Ethiopian Peoples Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF). In consequence, the EPRDF came to power through a Transitional Government of Ethiopia (TGE 1991) which later became the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE) in 1995. Branches of the government are divided into the legislative, executive, and the judiciary. The legislative body, the parliament, has 548 seats, while the House of Federation has 110 seats. Members of the House of Federation (Upper House) are elected from and by each regional state parliamentary assembly, while members of the Parliament (Lower House) are elected by popular votes.

The term of government and legislature is five years, while that of the head of state is six years (FDRE Constitution 1995). The legislative power is vested in the Lower House (also known as the House of People’s Representatives), while the executive includes the president, prime minister, and the council of ministers at the federal level. The president is elected by both of the aforementioned Houses. The leader of the majority party in the Lower House becomes the prime minister, who submits list of the cabinet ministers to the same for approval. The major executive power is in the hands of the prime minister who is also the commander-in-chief of the armed forces. Ethiopia is a federal state mainly composed of 9 ethnolinguistic states and two city

administrations which are answerable to the federal government. The following map shows the nine national regional states and two city administrations (1 & 5).

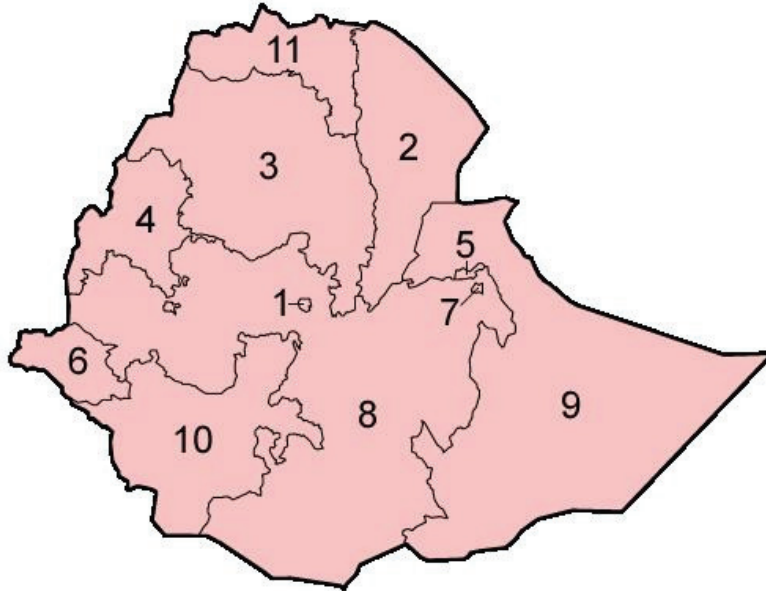


FIGURE 2 The new map of Ethiopia

The nine national regions and two chartered cities of Ethiopia are numbered alphabetically.

- | | |
|---------------------|---|
| 1. Addis Ababa | 7. Harari |
| 2. Afar | 8. Oromia |
| 3. Amhara | 9. Somali |
| 4. Benshangul-Gumuz | 10. Southern Nations, Nationalities, and
People's Region (SNNPR) |
| 5. Dire Dawa | 11. Tigray |
| 6. Gambella | |

3.2 Oromia: geography, population, history and culture

3.2.1 Geography and population

As per the National Regional self-government proclamation No. 7/1992 and Article 47, No. 1 of the Federal Constitution of the land (1995), the geographical

location of Oromia (also Oromiyaa) places it to occupy a central position in Ethiopia. Oromia lies between 500m and 4377m altitude above the sea level. Average temperature in the region ranges from 14 to 25 degree Celsius, while its annual rainfall varies from between 200mm- 2600mm, indicating that Oromia's ecological zones range from Afro-alpine to arid areas. Being in the tropics, Oromia extends from 3 degrees 40'N to 10 degrees 35'N and from 34 degrees 05'E to 43 degrees 55'E. The total land size of the regional state is about 363, 000 sq. kms, covering 30.17 percent of Ethiopia. The regional state is divided in to 18 administrative zones, which are further subdivided in to 246 woredas (districts). Though mostly placed in the central part of Ethiopia, Oromia's territory extends from south-eastern national border with Kenya, across the centre extending to the Sudan border (Regional Atlas of Oromia 1997; Oromia Investment Commission 2006). Because of its location, Oromia borders all of the other regional states in Ethiopia except the Tigray regional state in the north (see also figures 2& 3).

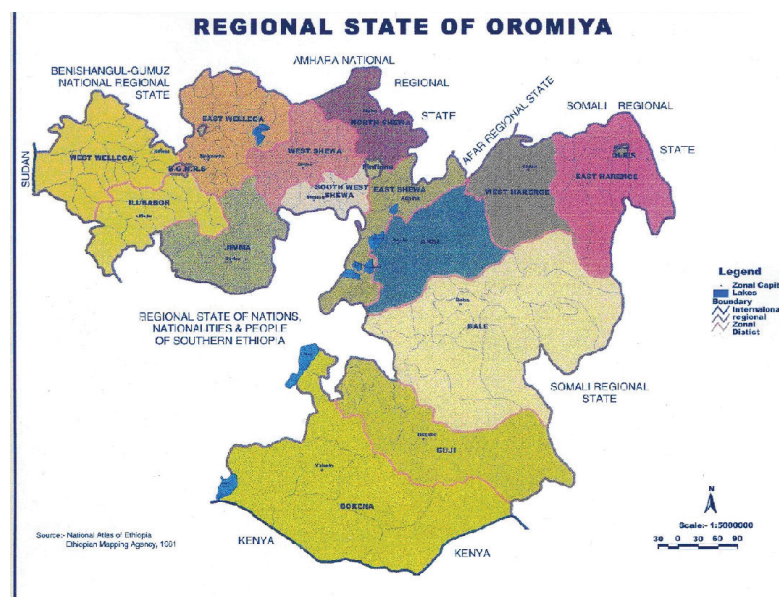


FIGURE 3 Oromia Regional State

As far as population is concerned, Oromia is the most populous regional state in Ethiopia, constituting 34.49 percent of the country's population. Afaan Oromoo or Oromoo language is the official language of the regional state, while Amharic and English are also spoken. The region is almost entirely inhabited by the Oromoo population, though there are people of other ethnic groups engaged in civil services and other private businesses mainly in the urban centers.

3.2.2 Economy and Tourism

Multi-faceted investment activities are being carried out in Oromia out of which floriculture development is recently becoming robust and fast-flourishing in the region. Many believe that Oromia is the ideal site for the cultivation of the best quality flowers in the world due to its fertile soil and favorable weather condition for growing many varieties of flowers. According to the Oromia Investment Commission (2005), foreign investors account for 40% in addition to local and joint-venture investments in the floriculture sector. Besides supplying a lion's share of the country's coffee export, Coffee Arabica and Robusta, Oromia is endowed with livestock and mineral resources. Gold, platinum, tantalum, dolomite, coal, geothermal, gypsum and copper are few examples to cite.

The region is also the home of various wildlife animals, where incredible variety of mammals and bird species harbored, most of which are endemic to the country. The Great African Rift Valley lies across the region with so many splendor lakes potential for tourism development. Oromia also boasts of harboring untouched natural wonders such as the Sof Umar Cave (in Bale). There are historical palaces such as the Abba Jifaar, Kumsaa Moorodaa (western part) palaces and the intangible cultural heritages such as the Oromoo Gadaa System, religious sites of Dirree Shaik Hussen, Maadda Waalaabu, Hooraa Ireechaa, etc. (Oromia Investment Commission 2006, 6-15).

3.2.3 Oromoo Social, Cultural and Political Institutions

The Oromoo are one of the Cushitic families in the Horn of Africa. They are also the most populous people in Ethiopia. Mohammed Hassen (1994), Mekuria Bulcha (1994, 1997), and Asafa Jalata (1996, 1998) contend that the Oromoo people had developed their own cultural, religious, and political institutions in the past many years which shaped their history and expressed their world view. The scholars further accounted that during the 16th century A. D, the Oromoo constituted two powerful confederacies named *Borana* and *Barentu*, where Oromoo was believed to be the father of both.

Though *Borana* and *Barentu* separated during the Oromoo great movement of the last quarter of the 16th century, these two main tribes recognized their cradle land, *Maadda Waalaabu*, present Bale zone, as their nation's spiritual center. For them, the area is considered as a place of pilgrimage just as Mecca is for the Muslims. Thus, the home origin of the Oromoo people is traced back to the cool highlands of present Bale zone. The Oromoo had a dynamic institution, known as the "Gadaa System," that existed for years and to-date. *Gadaa* is the process of adoption, continual migration, conquest, and interaction with other peoples (Mohammed Hassen 1994, 4-5).

"*Waqaa*" was and is still believed by many Oromoo, both as the sky God and the sky itself, manifesting the dual nature of the two moieties within the nation. According to Baxter (1983), *Waqaa* controlled fertility, peace, and life giving rains which were the sine qua non for farming and pastoral society.

Bartels (1989, 14) also notes that to the Oromoo, the traditional divinity is both one and, at the same time, also many. The Supreme Being, whom they call Waqaa (sky/God), is the creator of all things and the source of all life. As a result, Bartels maintains that whether they (Oromoo) became Christians or Muslims, traditional modes of experiencing the divine have continued almost unaffected, in spite of modernity and changes in the social, religious and other ritual institutions. The scholar, therefore, contends that while presently there are two major religions (Islam and Christianity) for the Oromoo, in addition to the Waqaa, the Waqaa (God) is still believed as the creator of all things and the source of life by many.

After the 16th century movement of the Oromoo in different directions, the term “Borana” became a mark of distinction to express feelings of cultural, social and linguistic “purity”, which according to Mohammed Hassen (1994) is more apparent than real. Besides believing in Waqaa, some scholars also characterized the Oromoo who used to believe in a single person whom they call “Abba Muda”, just like the Jews believe in Moses and the Muslims in Mohammed. Asmerom Legesse (1973) conceives the term “Muda” as the name of the ceremony that is celebrated once every 8 years in honor of the *Qallu*, high level priest, who guards the laws of the Waqaa. Since the Oromoo used to consider Abba Muda both as their spiritual leader and prophet, many used to pay pilgrimage to Abba Muda every 8 years by their delegates from all Oromoo clans called *Jila* (religious rituals). Mohammed Hassen further points out that the pilgrims to Abba Muda are inviolable even during war raids between villagers. The aim of the pilgrimage both for the far and the near was to receive blessings from the Abba Muda who is considered very important for their entire wellbeing.

Mohammed Hassen (1994) argues that the pilgrimage to Abba Muda was abolished around 1900, by the then Abyssinian Emperor, Menelik II (1889-1913), whose actions had far-reaching consequences on Oromoo’s political, social and cultural life ever since. The Emperor did it by taking Oromoo unity in this religious practice for a threat or danger to his rule. Another far-reaching institution in Oromoo life, which also played a unifying role, is the Gadaa system which also faced similar threats but is able to survive to-date. The Gadaa System, as mentioned earlier, is a period of years during which a ruling group stays in power.

In views of Asmerom Legesse (1973), the etymology of Gadaa is derived from “gaddisa”, which means shelter, shade, protection from the heat of the sun; place where taking refuge, and adoption. In the Gadaa system, election and transfer of power takes place at the time known as “Jarra” ceremony. It is the time when the last Gadaa event ends and started anew after 8 years in power. Thus, Jarra is the end of one Gadaa era or period and the beginning of another, a period to signify the building of the new future. This is occasioned by a time of feast and extensive ritual activities during which the hopes for the next 8 years are expressed. Mohammed Hassen, therefore, considers Jarra as the pivot of the Oromoo calendar that divides time between the Gadaa periods.

Asmerom Legesse further explains that the term "Gadaa" cannot be given a univocal interpretation in Oromoo life as it stands for several related ideas. In general, Gadaa stands for the way of life and the period which a class stays in power (Asmerom Legesse 1973, 81).

Asmerom Legesse (1973), Lemmu (1993) and Bates (1979) also characterize Gadaa as a unique instrument that maintains the unity, security and integrity of the Oromoo population. The scholars contend that during the 16th century, when different peoples were competing for land, water and power in the Horn of Africa, the Oromoo were under one Gadaa government. Though not successful to the end, the Oromoo used their institution, the Gadaa, to defend themselves from both the Christian and Muslim empire-builders. Holcomb (1991, 4) further notes: "The Gadaa organized the Oromoo people in all-encompassing democratic republic even when the few European pilgrims arrived from England on the shores of North America and only later built a democracy." The scholar adds that Gadaa has not only been an emblem of Oromoo cultural totality but has also been an ideological expression of the Oromoo national movement. Holcomb (1993, 4) thus comments:

Gadaa represented an ideological basis for the expression of the Oromoo nationalism. This expression empowered the Oromoo to resist oppression, become self-conscious as a nation in the twentieth century in the face of intense subjugation...It represents a repository, a storehouse of concepts, values, beliefs and practices that are accessible to all Oromoo.

The Gadaa has various social and spiritual affiliations such as *gadaa nagaa* (gadaa of peace), *gadaa quuufaa* (gadaa of plenty) *gadaa lolaa* (gadaa of war), etc. Asmerom Legesse argues that Gadaa is a system of classes that succeed each other every 8 years to assume military, economic, political and ritual responsibilities. Each Gadaa class remains in power during a specific term, which begins and ends with a formal power transfer ceremony. Asmerom Legesse (1973, 2) also notes that there are three main principles the Gadaa government has to comply with in order to maintain checks and balances to avoid the subordination and exploitation of groups. These are periodic succession, balanced opposition and power sharing. The author further explains that the Gadaa is still in practice among the Oromoo Borana, southern Oromia, and in northern Kenya. In consequence, the Gadaa system can still be considered as a living institution in Oromia and surrounding southern peoples of Ethiopia along with modern governance and living styles.

It must be noted here that the wisdom for settling disputes and taking quick action in difficult situations is one of the main characteristics of the Gadaa system. This is one criterion for the Gadaa leadership to have precluded many forms modern government offices in the area for years. As a single political head spokesperson for the Gadaa confederacy, the assembly is held in the *Caffee* (the meadow) under the life-giving shade of the Odaa (the sycamore tree), traditionally believed to be the most sacred of all trees, the shade of which was considered the source of peace and centre of religion.

Asmerom Legesse (1973) and Mohammed Hassen (1994) further hold that the shade of the Odaa was not only regarded as the “office of government” and the meeting-ground for the elders of the confederacy, but is also believed as sacred place for the religious duties. It is because of such political and spiritual symbolism that Oromoo political organizations, government offices and different cultural groups use Odaa as an emblem of their political, cultural and artistic manifestations to signify their identity, Oromumma (Oromooness). For example, the current Oromia national regional state logo bears Odaa in its centre-most and tri-colour (red, white and black) flag, as indicated in figure 4B below:



FIGURE 4A The Odaa
(Sycamore) Tree



FIGURE 4B Flag and Emblem of the
Regional State of Oromia

It was during their long history that the Oromoo developed their own culture, social and political system, the Gadaa, which is characterized as a democratic political and social institution. As seen in the foregoing paragraphs, it could be said that the Gadaa governed the life of every individual in the society from “birth to death” (Geda Melba 1988, 1). Still today, leaders and elders of the Gadaa (also known as “Abba Gadaas”) serve not only in settling disputes among the Oromoo but have also become instrumental in mobilizing communities against the fight for the deadly disease, HIV/AIDS, prevention and control. The Abba Gadaas are better heard and respected among the communities than formal government structures and their leaders are consulted in the events of social and political crises that need amicable participatory solutions.



FIGURE 5A Abba Gadaa (Gadaa elders) meeting under the Odaa tree



FIGURE 5B Abba Gadaa heading deliberations on HIV/AIDS Prevention and Control

3.2.4 Historical marginalization and the emerging Oromoo studies

In this part, I shall attempt to give some highlights on the historical past and recent trends about the Oromoo people. Of course, I understand that it is not possible to present a complete history and culture of Oromoo people within the scope of this study. However, I believe that this brief highlight can help create some level of contexts and perspective for readers to understand the research under question and its outcomes. If there are distortions of whatsoever, it is not Oromoo people's history and culture but simply my own ignorance. In fact, such problems are also the problems of many prominent Oromoo historians. Reflecting on the major problems that face Oromoo studies, Asafa Jalata comments:

To write about Oromo people is an uphill struggle because Oromo history, culture and civilization have been victimized by Ethiopian colonialism... for more than a century; until recently, the world did not even recognize the existence of Oromia and its people. Because of lack of political power, the history of this largest ethnonation in the Horn of Africa was not known (Asafa Jalata 1993a, xi).

It may be said that the history of Ethiopia and its peoples does not bear much of the role of different ethnic groups who inhabited the country for years. Only a partisan and skewed portraits of the rulers and the people whom the former used to represent were praised and respected. The rest of the Ethiopian peoples' history was undermined or sidelined for years. For example, the following comment by Mekuria Bulcha (1996, 62) makes the situation more vivid as related to the Oromoo people:

Imperial histories are often distorted in favour of the empire builders. In the case of Ethiopia, historical facts often stood on their heads. Even when occasionally mentioned, the Oromoo were consistently depicted as 'newcomers' and intruders in to Ethiopian territory.

According to Asafa Jalata (1996) and Mekuria Bulcha (1994), the basis for the unfair treatment of past Ethiopian historiographies emanates from different rationalizations of the Ethiopian (Abyssinian) rulers. In this regard, the scholars bring into light what they characterized as the “demographic nightmare” of the deep-seated Abyssinian rulers views toward the Oromoo. According to Mekuria Bulcha, past Ethiopian rulers or Abyssinians perceived the Oromoo as a “threat”. The genesis of this fear predates the formation of the modern Ethiopian Empire, and ever since the two people came into contact. Early contacts also involved armed conflicts in which the Abyssinians were defeated repeatedly (Mohammed Hassen 1990). As a result, the Oromoo were not seen as mere ‘enemies’ but were also projected as a “scourge” that God sent to punish the Abyssinians (Bairu Tafla 1988, 83).

Some expatriate scholars also shared the views of past Ethiopian ruling classes in an attempt to dehumanize and marginalize the Oromoo from the social, cultural and political mainstream. For example, a renowned historian, Margery Perham (1969, 30), had similar views by regarding the Oromoo as “heathens and enemies fit only for massacre or enslavement.” Since the Oromoo were considered a “threat” in the eyes of past Ethiopian rulers, conquering their land and subjugating their people was found pragmatic. To achieve this goal, the second half of the 19th century was a defining moment when the Abyssinians started to make significant inroads into the Oromoo territory. Asafa Jalata (1996), Mekuria Bulcha (1994), Geda Melba (1988) and Cooper (1989) argued that Menelik II, then king of Shawa, invaded the Oromoo land and fulfilled the age-old Abyssinian dreams to overpower the so-called “Oromoo threat”. Menelik’s acquisition of modern European weapons significantly helped him in the defeat of the Oromoo and other peoples in the southern part of the previous empire. Asafa Jalata (1996) argues that the supply of large number of ammunitions by the Europeans changed the balance of power between the Abyssinians and the Oromoo.

Holcomb and Ibssa (1990, 135) similarly explain that the historical partnership between the Abyssinians and the Europeans of the day as follows: “The gun (from Europe) and the gun-carrier (from Abyssinia) arrived in the colonies as one unit. This unit basically expressed political alliance that created the *neftegna-gabbar* relationship, which lay at the heart of the emerging Ethiopian colonialism.” For the southern peoples, including the Oromoo, and northerners’ relationship was between the gunman (the land lord) and the peasant (the serf). The scholars, therefore, concluded that neither Abyssinians nor any combination of indigenous Africans created Ethiopia, but it was the cooperation between Abyssinia and Europe that fashioned the Ethiopian state, which embodied the needs and interests of both parties.

The conquest of Oromoo land also resulted in deaths of large proportions of their population, and those who survived the war of conquest were subjugated and enslaved. Since that period, the Oromoo and other peoples in the south were extremely dealt with acts of brutality. Even after the conquest, fear of the threat from the Oromoo, due mainly to their number, was not

abated. According to Mekuria Bulcha (1994), the new threat could be perceived because of the transfer of the seat of government which moved to the heart of the Oromoo land, *Finfinne* (now Addis Ababa). This made the Abyssinians numerically smaller amidst the Oromoo population. Perham, who continually echoed the “Oromoo threat”, had to characterize the scene as follows:

The “Gallas” (*derogatory term to identify the Oromoo*) are estimated to outnumber the Amharas and Tigreans, and they quite literally embrace half of the empire. The other conquered races {peoples} are of far less importance in number or in power...and not source of danger (Perham 1969, 303).

Christopher Clapham (1969, 81) argues along the same line and made clear that if any ethnic threat to the unity of the Empire would not come from Eritreans and Tigreans from the north, the likely chance is from the Oromoo who compose probably a good half of the entire Ethiopian population. Since Oromoo demographic issues continued to cause “threat” to the Empire in the eyes of past Ethiopian ruling elites and their expatriate counterparts, assimilation of the Oromoo into the Abyssinian culture, beliefs and norms was found a panacea of the imperial policy. According to Asafa Jalata (1996), Mohammed Hassen (1990) and Mekuria Bulcha (1994), initial assimilation process was through forced collective baptism of the conquered Oromoo communities and co-optation of some elites who submitted to the rule without armed resistance.

However, during the late emperor, Haile Sellassie I (1930-1974), a multifaceted policy was designed to enhance and promote the assimilation drive. One of such designs was the imposition of Amharic language and other cultural institutions on the Oromoo in order to efface Oromoo identity. In effect, this was aimed at undermining and eventually uprooting the Oromoo culture, language, and its all-out encompassing institutions such as the Gadaa system. Strengthening the assimilation drive against the Oromoo was a necessity in the eyes of Perham (1969, 226) “since the true Ethiopian stock was a minority.” To Perham, the more the Oromoo Amharize, the faster the number of Ethiopians with Amhara identity would increase (Mekuria Bulcha 1994, 10).

In consequence, Oromoo identity and their history have been distorted and the people were named as “Galla”, a term that negatively connotes race, slavery, and barbarism. In Ethiopian popular and intellectual discourse, this exo-definition, “Galla,” also carries overtones of race and slavery which fundamentally necessitated Amharization of the Oromoo to “civilize” (Donham, 1986, 130). According to Asafa (1996), it was unfortunate that even scholars sympathetic to the Oromoo also used this derogatory name until recently, until the Oromoo began to intensify their national liberation struggle in the early 1970s.

Thus, all kinds of myths were attributed to the Oromoo as people without history and prejudices that they are “the enemies” of the Amhara. For example, one of the kings’ chroniclers, Abbay Bahrey, writes as follows: “I have begun to write the history of the Galla (Oromoo) in order to make known the number of their tribes, their readiness to kill people, and the brutality of their manners”

(Bahrey 1954, 2). Such purported brutality of the Oromoo depicts them not only as if they were “barbarians”, but also never credited as the creators of their own history, culture, religious and democratic political institutions such as Gadaa. These arbitrary degradations relegated the Oromoo psychologically, socially and politically to a lower social status in the Ethiopian empire for years, while Abyssinian elites kept claiming their expansion as a “civilizing mission” (Donham 1986; Mohammed Hassen 1994).

Some expatriate scholars accepted this civilizing mission to the so-called pagan areas (McClellan 1978). Asafa notes that these scholars have never mentioned about Ethiopian colonization of the Oromoo with the help of the Europeans. Just as any Ethiopian ruling class elites, they (the expatriates) saw the colonization of the Oromoo and other peoples in the south as the reunification of Ethiopia. On the other hand, eminent scholars dispel the myth of the “civilizing mission” as something which is not received without cost. Blaught (1993, 2000) contends that the gift of civilization is a means through which the colonial center drew the resources and wealth of the colonies in exchange of knowledge and inventiveness; so too, contemporary “nation-building” has a price tag. Blaught further makes clear that it is rather the expropriation of the wealth from the colonies which helped to fuel the capitalization and further “modernization” of the West, guaranteeing the continued dominance in the post-colonial era.

Just like the grand narratives of the Western world history which has been rationalized as the center-periphery diffusion model, Abyssinian rulers and their elites also used the same tactics. Sorenson (1993, 12) drew the analogy vividly as follows: “Just as Europeans felt themselves pre-ordained to bring civilization to ‘savages’, so did the Amhara feel themselves possessed of a civilizing mission as they expand their empire into areas occupied by other ethnic groups such as the Oromo.”

As regards the implications and overtones of the disliked word, “Galla”, Hultin (1990, 15) argues that the Abyssinian cultural construction of an Oromoo “other”, i. e. the “Galla”, contains the metaphors of Ethiopian historiography and the myth of “Greater Ethiopia”. This cultural construction resulted in a model of hierarchical relationship which allocated the Oromoo to a perpetually inferior position. Hultin further maintains that such hegemonic and racist construction of a unique Ethiopian “civilizing mission” has lived on until very recently in scholarly and popular writings. Hultin notes that this has been taken for granted by many Ethiopian nationalists and disappointingly by Western political discourse. Baxter et al. (1990) write that many international organizations and agencies use the above derogatory name to designate the Oromoo people. As a result, many writers, anthropologists and historians wittingly or unwittingly have been responsible for perpetuating the “Galla” myth invented by the Abyssinian oppressors of the Oromoo people. Baxter et al. therefore, maintain that the pejorative connotation of the word was not accepted by the Oromoo as they continued to reaffirm their name as Oromoo for years.

Despite the foregoing situations, the Oromoo make up a significant portion of the population occupying the Horn of Africa. According to Geda Melba (1988), the Oromoo are one of the most numerous nations in Africa which enjoy a homogenous culture and share a common language, history and descent. Bates (1997, 7) similarly shares this account. According to him, "The Oromo were a very ancient race, the indigenous stock, perhaps, on which most of the other peoples in this part of eastern Africa had been grafted." The Oromoo also constitute the largest ethnic groups within the borders of present day Ethiopia. Cooper (1989) concurs with this idea. He holds that since the largest of the conquered groups in the south were the Oromoo, they are the largest single language group in Ethiopia accounting for nearly 40 percent of the country's population. This makes them one of the most numerous peoples in the whole of Africa (Bartels 1989, 13). The colonization of the Oromoo by the Abyssinians is unique in the sense that they were colonized by a black African nation. Cooper (1989, 21) explains that unlike other African countries, its (Oromoo) conquerors were not Europeans; they were Africans.

Recent emerging Ethiopian historiography, both by expatriates and Ethiopian scholars, is revealing some neglected histories of the oppressed peoples that have been relegated to the lowest social status since the formation of the modern Empire. The works of some Oromoo scholars is also challenging the centerist historical views that did not take into account the peoples of the 'periphery' who are in the Ethiopian territory. According to Asafa Jalata (1996), the history of the country which had been written both by domestic and some foreign elites did not care to present fair depiction of the Oromoo and other peoples in the Empire. Shack (1974) and Baxter et al. (1990) explain that Ethiopian history is extremely controversial as it has almost all been written from a centralist and imperialist point of view of which, for the Oromoo, is that of their colonizers.

According to Shack (1974, 642), "Ethiopian scholars are much at fault as their Western counterparts for having written Ethiopian history from the perspective of the Christian Amhara and {Tigrinya} peoples." Tesema Ta'a (1994) assesses that old written records of the Oromoo reflect elements of racist ideology and have tremendous influence on some of the scholars of modern Ethiopian history who have not been able to detach themselves from past stereotype views about the Oromoo. One of the causes for the skewed historical accounts against the Oromoo historiography is the process and use of knowledge production in the country.

Scholars argue that the power of the knowledge industry is derived not only from what knowledge is produced and for whom, but also from the growth of new elites who people the knowledge production process (Gaventa 1993). Heaney (1993) contends that with the writing of history, knowledge became power, or rather an expression of power and a tool of maintaining it. History, and later, science, were frequently used not merely to understand, but also to legitimize historically shaped political relationships and institutions. To this end, it can be said that past Ethiopian education policies are responsible for

limiting the access of the Oromoo and other colonized peoples to education and positions of authority and knowledge-making in universities, business and government offices (Tuso, 1982; Markakis 1974; Abir 1970). Baxter (1983) notes that in colonized regions such as Oromia schools were attended mostly by children of the colonial settlers until 1960s.

Asafa Jalata argues that lack of opportunity for a long time delayed the emergence of an Oromoo educated class until recently since they were denied education, their language, culture and history and literature suppressed. But in contrast, Asafa holds that the Ethiopian knowledge elites with the support of the government produced “official” history that denied historical space for the Oromoo and other colonized peoples. The overall attempts of the emerging Oromoo studies is, therefore, both to challenge and identify some deficiencies of the Ethiopian studies that primarily focus on the Amhara and Tigray ethnic groups and their rulers, but which ignore the history of the Oromoo people. In the views of Shack (1994), “lack of critical scholarship has inadvertently distorted the human achievements of conquered peoples like the Oromoo, transformations of their social, cultural, and political institutions.” In consequence, Asafa Jalata (1996) asserts that Ethiopian studies were based on the ideology of what Vansina (1986) and Wallerstein (1983) call as cultural universalism.

This is what the dominant groups in the modern world economy use to look at the world mainly from their own cultural perspective and to control economic and cultural resources of the dominated people. According to Wallerstein, cultural universalism assists in creating and socializing a global intermediate class by subordinating or destroying multicultures in the name of science and technology. Asafa (1996, 97), therefore, argues that the Ethiopian knowledge elites have been guided by the ideology of cultural universalism while distorting or ignoring the histories and cultures of the subordinated and powerless peoples such as the Oromoo. To this end, Hastings (1997) notes that the status of a particular group of people in any given society affects the standing of their languages. It can be argued that Afaan Oromoo had experienced this grim reality for more than a hundred years.

Asafa, for example, categorically criticizes expatriate scholars such as Harold Marcus (1992) who did not want to accept Oromoo scholarship on Oromoo land and its people. Marcus (1992, 20) argues that “the passionate Oromoo quest for political sovereignty...to create a historical nation called Oromia is a fabricated and fictitious history of the non-existent country....” However, Asafa challenges this view that many countries and states that are members of the United Nations to-day are recent historical upheavals. For example, fifty years ago, there was no a Jewish state; ten or fifteen years ago many nations that have become sovereign nations in Eastern Europe were under the Soviet Empire.

Another close living example in the Horn of Africa is the Eritrean state which recently got its independence from the Ethiopian empire. Consequently, Asafa calls for historians both at home and abroad to look at the society from

different centers rather than only from the perspective of the 'nation-state' as the central issue of today's world politics and scholarship. According to the scholar, complete and much deeper explanations are needed by examining into the Ethiopian past history from different cultural centers since old version of the Ethiopian history needs to establish plurality of centers in knowledge production and dissemination.

In the views of Asafa Jalata, current Oromoo cultural and social history should challenge a top-down paradigm to historiography and make the Oromoo subjects than objects of history; and it is only such study paradigms that can help scholars avoid producing false knowledge. The scholar concludes his arguments that since the potent force of politicized and mobilized cultural pluralism is now universally gaining momentum, Ethiopia cannot stop these global changes. Consequently, Ethiopian scholars and their expatriate counterparts are required to accelerate the process of transforming Ethiopian studies which are inclusive of its diverse ethnonation peoples. Wa Thiong'o Ngugi's assertions are found important here: "There could never be only one center from which to view the world but different people in the world had their culture and environment as centers" (Ngugi 1993, 9).

It can be noted from the foregoing descriptions that the Oromoo were not accorded with respect and equality which matches their sociohistorical, cultural and political values and norms they have built through years. However, emerging studies about the Oromoo and other peoples in Ethiopia are challenging the age-old and top-down social and cultural study approaches by calling for a multidimensional point of views. In other words, the centers of studies need to be changed in a fashion to encompass all actors.

4 EDUCATION IN ETHIOPIA

A discussion about the education system in Ethiopia requires looking into the chronological phases it had undergone. Most available documents are government reports and policies at distinct educational milestones that have become the basis for categorization of phases. The chronological development of the system may be debated. However, available scholarships by Tekeste Negash (1990, 1996 and 2006), Teshome Wagaw (1979), Pankhurst (1974), and Woube Kassaye (2002) seem to rest on six broad historical phases: pre-modern education (330 A. D to 1908); modern education from 1908-1913; 1913 to 1941; 1941 to 1974; 1974 to 1991; and post- 1991 to the present. Each phase shall be treated one after the other under subsequent sub-titles.

4.1 Traditional education (330 A. D to 1908)

The education system in Ethiopia was profoundly shaped by the past (Tekeste Negash 1990; Teshome Wagaw 1979) and Teshome Yizengaw 2006). The Ethiopian Orthodox Church was a strong indigenous institution to exercise immense influence on the country's every day life. Having had a virtual monopoly over education in the country, it had to oppose strongly the establishment of secular education lest it would not undermine Church's position. As a result, it remained a guardian of traditional culture and provided education, especially in the high lands of Christian Ethiopia (Perham 1969; Bowen 1976). Traditional education was not confined to the Church's task alone. Quranic education was also practiced in the country where Muslims live. Though missionaries had relatively limited roles in imparting traditional education, they were instrumental to inspire the introduction of modern education into the country. It is appropriate to briefly examine each category of the traditional education forms one after the other.

4.1.1 Church Education

According to Bowen (1976), Perham (1969), and Woube Kassaye (2002), the education given by the Orthodox Church was primarily religious, and consisted of basic stages of learning to read, write and recite a few biblical texts in Geez (also written as Giiz). Geez is the language of the Church just as Latin used to serve the same purpose in Europe. Hence, some scholars call Geez as the “Latin of Ethiopia” (Bowen 1976, 350). A foreign missionary, Samuel Gobat, saw that education of the children of the aristocracy was mediated through Church education in the contemporary Ethiopian empire. Bowen quoted Gobat that “nearly all the great men send their sons in to the convents to learning and to repeat the Psalms from memory; and this is all the education they receive”. The scholar further notes that Ethiopian Church education was ‘entirely gratuitous’ in that, the student has to submit to almost incredible privations of the teacher.

Since priest teachers often appear punitive, majority of the students in Church schools drop-out after doing little more than learn how to read and write. Only the few persevering go through the next higher levels. According to Haile Gabriel Dagne (1976), there were three levels of Church school: *Zema Bet* (school of music); *Qine Bet* (school of poetry); and *Metshaf Bet* (school of reading). Woube Kassaye (2002) indicated that the duration of Church education was too long that it takes nearly twenty five years to complete the programs. Due to its limited reach-out, the rate of literacy in Church education was not promising. Another reason is that instruction was entirely in Geez before it was replaced by Amharic. Even after Amharic assumed the role of instructional medium, the scope of literacy showed a distinct regional variation as Amharic was the only language to be written in public domains.

Bowen, therefore, concludes that the consequence of the low scope of Church literacy was that knowledge of Amharic was made a prerequisite to writing, a language which was not the mother tongue of the entire Ethiopian population. According to a keen foreign observer and who was long resident in Ethiopia (Merab 1921), only half of the then Council of Ministers could read and write with ease; that three could do neither; while two more knew no more than how to sign their names. The observer further examined the situation of women's literacy as follows: “Among the women-folk, the position was even worse, for apart from the princesses, those who could read and write be counted on fingers” (Merab 1921, 344-347). The overall account shows that up to close to the mid twentieth century, education in the country had been far behind to reach even public figures of the time under Church educational programs. This vividly confirmed the limitations of Ethiopian Church education.

4.1.2 Quranic Education

According to Ferguson (1970a, 1970b) Arabic has a special role in Ethiopia because of its importance as a lingua franca used by many Muslim Ethiopians of various mother tongues. To Bender et al. (1976), Arabic, as a religious language of Islam, is also the basis of instruction in Quranic schools in Ethiopia. Haile Gabriel Dagne maintains that Arabic is inseparable from the study of the Quran and Islamic literature. Accordingly, the scholar noted, for the Ethiopian Muslims, with few exceptions, Arabic is a foreign language which also made the teaching of Arabic different from Arabic-speaking countries (Haile Gabriel Dagne 1976, 350).

The Quranic schools mostly operated in the Muslim- inhabited areas of the east and west of the country. The country's earliest relations with Islam dates back to the time of Prophet Muhammad whose followers during a period of persecution in Arabia had their masters' command to take refuge in the then Ethiopian empire. According to Bowen, the existence of Quranic schools in Ethiopia largely escaped the notice of travelers of former times. But they have been culturally important in the making of the Ethiopian nation. To an Egyptian observer of the time, Muhammed Moktar (1877), the city of Harar which is found in the eastern part of the country, had good Quranic schools and a well developed instructional programme. Moktar further reported that children learn to read and write in small schools during the day, while adults studied Muslim law with the Qadis in the evenings. Moreover, it was reported by the same scholar that great numbers of Somalis and Afaris were able to read and write Arabic.

Moreover, a French observer, Montan don (1913), noted that in the west of the country, Jimma, many Muslims could read the Quran in Arabic. Like the Church schools, traditional Quranic schools had two levels of education to achieve their goals. Accordingly, *Tehaji* is a level where Arabic letters and reading of the Quran takes place. This is similar to the 'Metshaf- bet' (reading school) in the Church school. The next higher level, known as the *Badiya* ('ILM'), is the stage of Islamic canon law (*Fiqh*), which consists of Arabic grammar (*Nahew*) and the commentaries (*Tefsir*) that are taught and studied (Haile Gabriel Dagne 1976, 350). Similar to the Church school studies, the higher level of Quranic studies takes longer as well as greater part of one's life.

4.1.3 Missionary Education

The strength of the Orthodox Christianity and to a lesser extent of Islam limited the impact of European missionaries in Ethiopia. As a result, Bowen argues that missionaries were far less successful in Ethiopia than in many parts of Africa. Haile Gabriel Dagne (1976, 339) shares this idea when he says: "The educational activities of the missions were not really significant until late in the twenties." According to Bender et al. (1976), Cooper and McNab (1989), historical, cultural and political circumstances in contemporary Ethiopia blocked the consolidation of missionary schools in Ethiopia. On the other hand,

it is important to note that the first contact with the missionaries began when Portuguese expeditionary force came to the help of a Christian Ethiopian King, Emperor Libna Dingel, in the sixteenth century. It was the war against a Muslim leader known as Ahmed Gran from the eastern part of the country (Pankhurst 1964; Haile Gabriel Dagne 1976).

Portugal was a major European colonial power in the 16th century and its presence was felt in East Africa. This prompted her to help restore the Ethiopian monarch to his throne, after his defeat by Ahmed Gran (Bahru Zewdie 1991). After the defeat of the Muslim leader with the help of the Portuguese forces, the latter as price of assisting the king's victory over his rivals, attempted to establish the Roman Catholic faith in the country. However, the new faith turned popular discontent where the next convert Emperor, Susenyos, was obliged to abandon the faith, Catholicism.

Since then, any missionary attempt in the areas of religion or education was put under serious scrutiny by the country, especially, the Church. Suspicion since the Portuguese Jesuits thus created a climate of isolation on the part of the country and closed missionary activities that were in full operation for the next two centuries. However, governments' contact with Europe since mid-nineteenth century reopened the relations of several missionaries, notably, Protestant and Roman Catholic missionaries who engaged both in religious teaching and formal education. Further contact with the missionaries also led to the departure of a handful of young Ethiopians to be educated abroad, while several others were taken into different countries with the help of the missionaries to be educated.

This helped the country to possess a small but significant number of persons of critical-mass who had received modern education in different countries. The Swedish Evangelical Mission, for example, in 1873, took to Sweden Onesimos Nasib, an ex-slave who later became an Oromoo translator of the Bible, the first five Ethiopians to be ordained in Sweden (Pankhurst 1962). It is, however, important to note that at the beginning missionary education was not received among the larger public as it was conceived primarily to convert the student or to qualify them for the conversion of other religions. As a result, it did not have positive appeal particularly to the leaders of the Ethiopian Orthodox Christianity Church. According to Bowen (1976) and Pankhurst (1964), the Church leaders were content only with the traditional Church education.

On the other hand, Emperor Tewodros (1855-1868), who came to power after the "Zemene Mesafint" (era of princes), wanted and realized the possibility of training his compatriots in various military skills. Until that period, such military skills were the domain of foreigners, especially the Europeans. The Emperor, therefore, appealed to the British Government to send him instructors as well as engineers to make his country 'civilized'. However, Pankhurst noted that the Emperor could not achieve his desires due to his early death in Maqdala in 1868.

4.2 The idea and need for the introduction of modern education

Though traditional education (Church and Quranic in particular) had long history and greater influence over the social, spiritual and psychological life of the population, it was not successful mainly because of limited out-reach. It could not extend or promote literacy beyond its limited stronghold. Girma Amare (1968) and Girma Amare et al. (1974) concluded that traditional education in Ethiopia could not accomplish its missions because of the following: a) lack of standard system; b) low level of enrolment, especially of women-folk; c) longer study time; d) de-emphasis on innovation and critical thinking; e) reliance on memorization; and f) little attention to secular culture and spoken languages.

Dereje Terefe (1991) specifically examined as to why traditional Church education could not satisfy popular needs and its inevitable consequence to give way to modern education. Although the Church had the power to control every segment of popular life, including the country's political life (e.g. resistance to modern education, foreign diplomacy without its consent, etc.), the introduction of modern education was unavoidable. There was a felt need for modern public education during early twentieth century and even before, where neither the Church nor Quranic education was able to satisfy the demands of the time: educational, technological, diplomacy and maintain the country's sovereignty (Dereje Terefe 1991, 12). Despite scholars' favorable arguments (e.g. Tekeste Negash (1990, 2006; Woube Kassaye 2001, 2002), the aforementioned limitations could not save traditional education from becoming redundant in the eyes of moderners of the time. The need for educational change was an uncompromising in the advent of European diplomacy that had significant meaning to the nation.

4.2.1 Education from the period of 1908-1913

The era of a government-sponsored secular education in Ethiopia marks the period of Emperor Menelik II. Menelik II ruled the unified country from 1889 to 1913. The unification was brought about by conquering the southern parts of the country which were not under one central rule. According to Rosen (1907), the Emperor established a school at his own palace to provide instruction of good manners, reading, writing, calligraphy, religion, Ethiopian history, law and Geez. The plan to import teachers from abroad, however, faced strong resistance from the Church. The opposition was not unexpected as all educational activities were under the direct control and influence of the Church until then.

Beyond any doubt, the consent of the Church was in accordance. Mahtema Sellassie (1942) pointed out that the Emperor entered into a concession of recruiting teachers from among the Copts of Egypt to overcome Church's opposition. For the first time, ten of them arrived in 1906. This ushered in the

era of establishment of the first government-operated modern school, the Ecole Imperiale Menelik II, to be officially opened in October 1908. Since the teachers were from the then French colony, French was made the language of instruction. English, Italian, and Amharic, Mathematics, Science, Physical training, and Sports were also made additional subjects to be taught in the new school. Admission to the school was free while reading and writing Amharic was made compulsory. No mention was made as to why Amharic should serve as a gate-keeper to the new school. However, McNab (1987, 15) hinted: "It was an incentive to the Church schools to teach Amharic". Perhaps, it was used as a means to relax resistance towards the introduction of modern education.

Pankhurst (1964) noted that the initiative taken by the Emperor inspired private and other non-government education programs to begin functioning in the capital and big towns where large numbers of children were taught to read and write. In a report by Skinner (1906), the first United States envoy, Menelik was said to have discussed the possibility of sending Ethiopians to study in America. According to the report, young Ethiopians had to be educated to run government bureaucracy which began to face challenges from the European diplomacy. While many schools began to operate in the capital and big towns, girls' education on the other hand, was in a very poor state.

According to Merab (1921), only 'self-respecting parents', who can afford employ priest teachers could be able to educate their daughters while the teachers were treated as members of the family. The scholar explained as to why girls could not be given the opportunity for education. Merab explains: "It was popularly believed that an educated woman would not look after the house, and prejudiced persons even claimed that the husband of a wife who could read would never live long for his spouse would, however, resort to curses or other wicked practices to kill him" (Merab 1921, 127-8). This briefly closes the initial phase of modern education. One can see that it did not take deeper root within an 8-year period of establishment. The basis for this short time span was the death of the Emperor who was the fore-runner of modern education in 1913. Next, I will discuss the fate of modern education in the aftermath of the Emperor's death.

4.2.2 Education from the period of 1913-1941

Although there was resistance both from the Church and some members of the nobility, modern education gradually began to implant itself by the time of the death of Emperor Menelik in 1913. Bowen (1976, 316) characterizes the resistance and the Emperor as "the force which had driven a largely unwilling country along the path of modernization". After the death of the Emperor, there was a slack-of educational activity because of the death and world-wide attention to the First World War. According to Bowen, it was the missionaries that became more active during this period mainly for two reasons. First, the education they provide became increasingly and widely diffused more than that of government education. Government education was not relieved off shortage of materials and trained staff. Second, many state officials were

overtaken by the death of the Emperor and there was no control over the missionaries activities during this period. Although the Emperor's daughter, Queen Zewditu, had reportedly taken over the educational responsibility of the country, official records are either limited or rare to find.

Long after the death of Menelik II, Emperor Haile Sellassie (1930-1974) came to power first as a Regent and an heir to the throne. Teshome Wagaw (1979), Tekeste Negash (1990), Woube Kassaye (2002) and Bowen (1976) noted that the Emperor, as a symbol to his enthusiasm to expand education, opened a school by his own name, Teferi Mekonnen School. The school was said more modern than the former Menelik School which was French-oriented. French maintained its position as one of the major subjects of study. Other subjects such as English, Arabic, Mathematics and Chemistry were also added to the school programme. After becoming a full-fledged *Niguse-Negest* (King of Kings in 1930), the Emperor established, for the first time, a Ministry of Education and Fine Arts that would look after the country's education (Zervos 1936).

Tekeste Negash (1990) explains that the Emperor had an educational advisor, Professor Ernest Work,³ former Muskingum College in the United States. The advisor was instructed to draw up an overall plan of the country's education system. Accordingly, the advisor finally came up with a six-year primary, six-year secondary, and four-years of university education programs, with special emphasis on teacher-training and agriculture. However, Work admitted that there was serious lack of qualified and sufficient staff to implement the plan. Work's plan is believed to have laid an important foundation for the 'ethiopianization' of education in the country (Makin 1935; Pankhurst 1964).

Bowen (1976, 318) considers Haile Sellassie's period up to 1935, a "hitherto unprecedented educational advance". To meet the advancing educational expenditure of the country, a six per cent value-added tax was levied on all imports and export goods. On the other hand, girls' education was still overlooked. This was true since the introduction of modern education. The problem did not get appropriate attention until 1931, when Empress Menen's (King's wife) girls' school became operational.

Fascist Italy invaded Ethiopia amidst the relatively heydays of modern education, in terms of expansion and its comparative reception by the public. The Fascist's invasion (1936) brought about the pre-war efforts to halt. Government schools were either closed down or converted into the military camps. The so-called "native" schools were under closer inspection to prevent them from developing and disseminating 'subversive' ideas. Trainings were meant for entering occupations reserved only for the "nationals" (Italians). According to Markakis (1974), Seyoum Teferra (1996) and Woube Kassaye (2002), Italy's five-year occupation disintegrated the pre-war attempts of expanding education in the country. In short, the period was characterized as the act of "nipping the young modern education in its bud". The impact of the

³ Ernest Work, in a postscript in Tekeste Negash (1990), pp.103-106 was an American advisor to the emperor in the area of education and training.

invasion was significant and far-reaching as educated Ethiopians were systematically eliminated and forced to leave the country. The content of the fascist education was emphasizing political indoctrination and loyalty to the Fascist ruler, Duce, while schooling was limited to elementary level to avoid “over-educating” the natives (Edwards 1938, 110).

The Italians changed the official language of the country to Italian and employed a multilingual education, as per the Fascist's “edict of 1936”, a directive which empowers Italian regional rulers to implement indigenous languages for their subjects in Africa⁴. In consequence, it was during this period that some major languages (e.g., Afaan Oromoo, Tigrigna, Somali, Harari and Kafficho) came to serve as school media in addition to Amharic (McNab 1987, 15). According to Markakis (1974), the educational process was significantly retarded for the five-year period, while foreign teachers and missionaries of other than the Roman Catholic origin were forced to flee the country. Consequently, it can be said that what had been started in the area of education were made to stagnate during the occupation period.

4.2.3 Education from the period of 1941- 1974

After the country regained its independence in 1941, educational reconstruction began nearly from a scratch. Fascist invasion caused the disruption of the education system and death of many educated young Ethiopians (Haile Woldemikael 1976, 324). The main objective of education after the independence was “the creation of a mass education system capable of providing the country with a corps of educated personnel to replace the traditional nobility in critical government positions throughout the country” (Lipsky 1962, 90). Unlike the pre-war period, where foreign languages were dominant in the school time-table, post-war educational objectives have been reoriented in a way to produce civil servants to man the government bureaucracy. In other words, it was understood that knowledge of a foreign language alone was not sufficient for the country's development.

Teachers, educated personnel who could give leadership and other professional experts had to be educated (Assefa Bequele 1967; Tadesse Terefe 1964). Fulfilling these objectives was not found easy, as educating and deploying these personnel could not come overnight. Since school curricula were not standardized, they could not meet Ethiopian development needs. As a result, the core task in the education sector was to standardize the curriculum, especially, the primary school curriculum, which then had direct influence of each foreigner's country of origin. Nevertheless, there was lack of curriculum reference to start with. As a response, the curriculum, the educational structure and the textbooks were taken from the East African British colonies' office (Tekeste Negash 1990). British support in driving Italians from Ethiopia created a matching coincidence in this regard. This made the medium of instruction to

⁴ Italy, Ministero delle Colonie, bollettino ufficiale (1936); Italy, Ministero dell'Africa Italiana, Scuole elementari per indigeni, Il libro delle terza classe, Florence (1937)

become English: a shift from the previous French medium while Amharic was limited to Grades 1 & 2 as school medium. This brought about the first official state curriculum in 1947 with a 6+6 educational structure model (six year primary and another six year secondary).

Ayalew G. Sellassie (1964) and Maaza Bekele (1966), however, found that the above curriculum proposal became unrealistic first and foremost on the account of trained Ethiopian staff at that time. Problems such as textbooks, teaching aids and important classroom materials also proved the same. In the absence of critical teaching materials, even in Amharic, the situation forced educational authorities to opt for the use of the Bible as a textbook from grades 1 through 4. However, the fact that there are a large number of Muslim populations in the country made the proposition a point of contention. According to Maaza (1966), the teaching of English and through English was not feasible in the primary level of education. Poor fluency of the teaching staff made it further impossible and created negative impacts on students' learning and motivation.

Two years later after the launch of the first curriculum and after accepting the suggestions from advisors, teachers and school principals, primary school educational level moved to two more steps upward and the 8+4 curriculum became operational in 1949 (Ayalew G. Sellassie 1964; Maaza Bekele 1966; and Woube Kassaye 2002). Two main reasons cited were the language factor (use of English medium at earlier level proved learning obstruction) and the need for extending the scope of primary education. The level was an end in itself for most of the students to provide for the middle-level training. Since the curriculum was directly taken from the English colonial neighbouring countries (Kenya and the Sudan), it hardly reflected the Ethiopian reality and was open to criticism from the public. Language difficulty, due to use of English at the early stage, was another point of system critique (Tekeste Negash 1990). In consequence, it was obvious to undertake another curriculum reform through what was known as an "Experimental Curriculum".

This time, the initiative came from the Americans. Since the mid of 1950 to 1974, the Americans began to show interest in shaping the Ethiopian education system through an Advisory Group. The Group also contained other areas of co-operation such as the military, health and the deployment of Peace Corps into the country. Thus some experimental schools were selected from community schools, where a new curriculum package was tried out, presumably, to replace the on-going curriculum after revision. The underlying factor behind the need for the experimental curriculum was lack of qualified Ethiopian staff, even in Amharic. Ayalew G. Sellassie (1964) noted that due to lack of trained teachers, teachers of Amharic were selected from among the priests. Overall, the situation was characterized thus: "The average school had no books except for teaching English, one Bible, one history book in Amharic, and furniture not worth mentioning" (Tesfaye Shewaye and Taylor 1976, 386).

With this as a background, two main things happened: a proposal for the change of the medium of the experimental curriculum in favour of Amharic

and the approval of the outcome of the pilot study before its nation-wide implementation. Both proposals got positive acceptance from the then Ministry of Education and Fine Arts. According to many observers, the desire for the change of the medium to Amharic was so obvious, in a situation where students were made handicapped to learn through English. In the view of Habte-Mariam Markos (1970), the use of Amharic as a medium of education also bore national pride in the eyes of the observers, especially, the foreigners.

The result of the pilot/experimental curriculum with Amharic medium relatively improved both teaching and the learning process, though lack of educational materials was still evident. Hence, in an attempt to alleviate the shortage of educational materials, a Textbook Production Unit was established within the Ministry of Education, Department of Research and Curriculum (Woube Kassaye 2002). The unit was entrusted with the production of textbooks necessary for the Ethiopian primary education in Amharic as this was a priority area in the educational program. This would result in the change of the previous curriculum (8+4 model) to a less study year of primary and more for the secondary (6+2+4 model). The model came to be known as a six-year primary education to be followed by a two-year intermediate between primary and secondary (also called junior secondary) and then a four-year secondary education.⁵

Tekeste Negash (1990, 8) asserts that the 1963/4 curriculum change was “the most significant reform in the decade”. The attempt to reverse the medium of instruction in primary levels of education also paved the way for the establishment of a separate curriculum department, under the auspices of the Ministry of Education and Fine Arts, which gradually evolved into the present Institute of Curriculum Development and Research (ICDR). The 1963/4 curriculum model became a relatively settled one as it continued to operate until the popular uprising of 1974 that overthrew the monarch King who had ruled the country for four decades.

However, modern education was still characterized by several educational problems: lack of access and equity; internal efficiency; and low quality and relevance. For example, Girma Amare et al. (1974), Million et al. (1966) and Abraham Demoz (1968) criticized the country’s educational program for it lacked appropriate relevance and as it was not based on the Ethiopian development aims and objectives. Frequent change of the curricula and educational structures has also precluded settled teaching-learning processes, especially from mid 1940s through the whole years of 1950. Added, problem of unemployed secondary school graduates was a pronounced criticism against the education systems of 1960 to the mid 1970s.

As a response, the government took some initiatives to conduct a nation-wide review of the education system which was known as the Education Sector Review (ESR). According to Teshome Wagaw (1979), many international experts, including the World Bank, UNICEF, UNESCO and other organizations

⁵ Ministry of Education and Fine Arts, Elementary School Curriculum (Years-VI), Addis Ababa 1964a; Handbook for Elementary Schools, Addis Ababa, (1964b)

took part in the study in the early 1970s. While the study was ready for public deliberations, there was already a series of demonstrations by the Addis Ababa University Students' Union⁶. The Emperor did not give due attention to the students' demand of the time: democracy and the self-determination of the Ethiopian Nationalities. As it was a far-reaching and complex issue to deal with, the government tried to respond with the military force to pacify them. The Education Sector Review recommended many options to achieve universal primary education before 2000. Some scholars argued that if implemented, the ESR program could have benefited the rural population that was estimated to more than 90 per cent of country's people. Tekeste Negash (2006, 26) explains the loss of the ESR as follows:

The recommendations of the education sector review (ESR) were far-sighted and, according to my judgment, very sound. The education policy that should have come into operation in 1973 was strenuously opposed by teachers and secondary students and was thus shelved when the Imperial system of governance itself was abolished.

The Education Sector Review program could not enter an implementation phase for the aforementioned circumstances. Moreover, opposition from the students and teachers, and later on from the army, resulted in the overthrow of the King in 1974. The military which took power formed a co-ordinating force known as the "Dergue", literally means a council or a committee. Again, the educational system of the country entered into a new sociopolitical paradigm, which shall be discussed in the sub-chapter to follow.

4.2.4 Education from the period of 1974- 1991

The military group called the Dergue, promised that they would be on power until a constitutionally elected government was realized. Later, they called themselves as "The Provisional Military Administrative Council" (PMAC), despite that they clung to power for seventeen years. The Dergue took education as an important instrument for its new political orientation, socialism. Consequently, prior curricula and educational materials were totally banned with the assumption that they no longer serve the new ideology (Tekeste Negash 1990; Woube Kassaye 2002; Dereje Terefe 1992).

A new education policy was put in place with broader objectives: *education for production; education for class struggle, education for research, and education for socialist consciousness* (emphasis added), as guiding principles of the country's education system. This was made clear in the Government's party document, the National Democratic Revolution of 1976 (Woube Kassaye 2002, 75). Based on the National Democratic Revolution, the Ministry of Education formulated the objectives of education in an attempt to make clear to the teachers, students and the larger public in the 1980s. Tekeste Negash (1990) emphasized that the Dergue tried to make its educational intentions clear in order to produce

⁶ University Students Union of Addis Ababa (USUAA) was a strong student movement opposing the entire socio-political and cultural ideology of the period through their famous publication called *The Struggle*, November 1969.

citizens imbued with the principles of socialism. The following citation makes the military regime's intentions more vivid:

The aim of socialist education is to mould citizens who have an all-rounded personality by inculcating the entire society with socialist ideology thus arming them with required knowledge for socialist reconstruction...The fundamental aim of education is...to cultivate Marxist-Leninist ideology in the young generation, to develop knowledge in science and technology, in the new culture and arts, and to integrate research with production to enable the revolution to move forward and secure productive citizens⁷.

To achieve the objectives, two curriculum packages were designed: transitional and the General Polytechnic Education (GPE) curricula side by side. The transitional curriculum was produced in a hasty and unplanned manner as previous ones could not match with the new ideology. Another curricular package, the General Polytechnic Education (GPE), which had to pass through a pilot process was planned to replace the transitional one (Woube Kassaye 2002; Dereje Terefe 1992).

Although the GPE program went under pilot test throughout the country in selected schools for eight years, it could not be implemented nationwide as expected. Dereje Terefe (1992) examined as to why the government did not implement the program, after such a considerable human and material resource has been expended. According to the findings, there were two underlying factors: economic and political. The economic factor was attributed to the critical shortage of financial resource to be invested. The seminal factor for the resource constraint was that the country's meagre income was being consumed by the civil war waged by the forces fighting for independence and democracy, mainly in the northern part of the country. This partly halted the nation-wide implementation of the GPE program.

Another important point was that of world-wide situation as related to the faith towards Communism. Mid and the end of 1980s was a shaky moment for the collapse of Communism in its place of origins (e.g. the former East Germany and the Soviet Union). The military government then could not have respite and commitment at least in political terms to implement the GPE program. Consequently, students and teachers who laboured for such a long time were extremely disheartened by the course of action taken by the government. At last, students' fate was ended up with registering into the "old" curriculum in secondary schools. The medium of instruction for the students who had been in the pilot schools was Amharic throughout the GPE program. It was hoped that the same educational medium would continue in the high schools (Dereje Terefe 1992, 15).

This resulted in a serious educational crisis in the country. In fact, it could be said that there was no comparable time, in the history of the country's education, when teachers, students and their parents lost trust on a government which failed to implement its own program. Though desperate attempts were

⁷ The Workers Party of Ethiopia (WPE) 1984, pp.12. In effect, the party's central core was filled with high-ranking army staff.

made to patch-up the school curriculum by way of adopting the so-called “mixed economic” policy, it was simply a last hour face-saving measure with short-term impact. The overall consequence was that the military government was overthrown in May 1991, by the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF), the current ruling party in power.

It is important to note here that the education program under the military regime, however, showed significant expansion compared to prior governments, while quality and relevance were in serious jeopardy. For instance, Tekeste Negash (1990, 18) and Woube Kassaye (2002, 72) reported that enrolment in primary school has shown a 15 per cent growth rate per annum at the beginning and later began to indicate a growth rate of 12 per cent annually. The problem of quality was evident with the steady enrolment growth since the latter could not match with available resource supply at disposal. The Dergue itself admitted that the quality of the country's education was affected due to the massive expansion and there was a need to investigate into the quality problems to find timely solutions.

Based on the consent of the military government, the Ministry of Education carried out a study known as the Evaluative Research on the General Education System of Ethiopia (ERGESE) in 1983, whose publication became official in 1986. The overall objective of the study was to find out problems in the main input areas and provide strategies to address them. However, the government took a short-cut path instead of taking measures against the critical recommendations put forward. Tekeste Negash (1990) and Seyoum Teferra (1996) witnessed that the government continued on the general polytechnic education in place of seeking timely solutions. It was noted that the underlying assumption why the government clung to the GPE programme was to produce middle-level skilled labour power via the program under consideration. One of the findings of ERGESE was the limitations posed by the language of instruction both in primary and secondary educational programs. Accordingly, Amharic for children of non-Amharic background and English for all students in the secondary were found as barriers to learning (Woube Kassaye 2002, 72).

To wrap up this sub-chapter, it is possible to draw two main conclusions on the education program during the military regime. First, it could not fulfill the long-awaited access to the level desired. Second, the education during this period was unable to achieve the quality and relevance objectives. Many scholars even tend to argue that educational quality during this period reached its climax of deterioration despite the relative growth rate it scored in the area of access.

On the other hand, there is one main issue which cross-cuts all of the subtitles we have seen thus far: language of education. From the early days on, Geez/Amharic and Arabic served as media of their respective forms of traditional education (Church and Quran). After the introduction of modern education, French, Italian (during the brief occupation), English (after independence) and Amharic since the early 1960s became the media of school instruction respectively in primary levels. English continued to be the medium

of secondary level education and beyond where the trend has continued to-date. What makes the period of the military period a little bit distinct is the attempts to use some nationality/ethnic languages for the non-formal education program but they remained short-lived and the desired goals could not be achieved. (This issue will be further discussed in Chapter 6.)

4.2.5 Post-1991: The Transitional Period and the New Education and Training Policy (ETP)

A. Education during the Transitional Period (1991-1993)

After the fall of the military rule, the current ruling party, the Ethiopian Peoples Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) came to power. Not long after the seizure of power, a national conference was convened where various nationality (ethnic) groups came together in July 1991 in the capital. At the end of the conference, a Transitional Period Charter was drafted that guides the country's Transitional Government (TGE) on how to go about in the interim period. From the educational point of view, the Transitional period was not, in effect, a full-fledged time on its own. It was rather a period of accomplishing some urgent tasks that could serve as a take-off towards the preparation for future and sustainable educational plan. One clear example was the birth of the new education and training policy that immediately succeeded the former.

According to Vaughan (2003), the Transitional Period Charter⁸ of the interim Government recognized the self-determination of the Ethiopian ethnic groups, also called as *nations, nationalities* and *peoples of Ethiopia* (emphasis added). One of the top priorities put in the Transitional Period Charter, in the area of Education, was the medium of instruction. It was made clear that education in the primary schools in the country was to be given in mother tongues for those who have made the necessary preparations, while others may use whichever language they preferred before having had developed their own school medium (Dereje Terefe 1998, 2005). In consequence, translation and adaptation of existing educational materials into different mother tongues continued, while a simultaneous alignment of the curricula was called upon in the areas of contents and linguistic connotations. To this end, the languages, history, geography and arts were targeted as these subjects are more prone to past social and cultural stereotypes. The alignment for the geography subject was mainly in relation to neighboring de facto government that took power in Eritrea almost the same time.

These political measures were necessary in an attempt to scrap some of the past prejudices and stigma implied against the country's diverse ethnic groups. The Charter signalled the translation and adaptation of educational materials into about eight mother tongues at the beginning: Afaan Oromoo; Sidamigna;

⁸ Sarah Vaughan (2003), in her 'Power and Ethnicity in Ethiopia', explained that there were 14 different political organizations that took part in designing the Transitional Charter in addition to EPRDF and the Southern nationalities and peoples, p. 27.

Tigrigna, Welaytigna, Hadygna; Kambatigna; Gedeogna; Kafficho (Tekeste Negash 1996; Dereje Terefe 1998, 2005). In fact, the work in Tigrigna was more of evaluative than mere translations as the language was already used in the armed struggle. The other languages also followed suit. It must be noted that the introduction of a multilingual policy began to take shape for the first time since the military regime made some attempts in this direction. However, as it was a short time span, it was not possible to assess the impact of the transitional period educational program.

B. The education and training policy (ETP 1994)

Woube Kassaye (2002) and Tekeste Negash (1996) saw that three years later, the new education policy, called the Education and Training Policy, came to force in April 1994. The rationale behind the new policy was to replace both the transitional and the previous educational programs with new paradigm shifts (e.g., multilingual media, decentralized governance, etc.) and also overcome the multifaceted educational problems that persisted for years. Critical interventions have been pinpointed in the five general objectives as given below:

1. To develop the physical and mental and the problem-solving capacity of individuals by expanding education and in particular by providing basic education for all;
2. To bring up citizens who can take care of and utilize resources wisely, trained in various skills, by realising private and social benefits of education;
3. To bring up citizens who respect human rights, stand for the well-being of people, equality, justice and peace, endowed with democratic culture and discipline;
4. To bring up citizens who differentiate harmful practices from useful ones, who seek and stand for truth, appreciate aesthetics and show positive attitude towards the development and dissemination of science and technology in the society; and
5. To cultivate the cognitive, creative, productive and appreciative potential of citizens by appropriately relating education to environment and societal needs (ETP 1994, 7-8).

Owing to the new education and training policy, educational leadership and management was decentralized. In accordance with the 1995 Constitution and the consequent establishment of the nine federal states and two city administrations, educational management and leadership had to follow the following hierarchies of governance: federal or central Ministry (MOE); regional (REB) and woreda education office (WEO). The zonal offices are mostly engaged in the coordination of overall tasks. It is also important to note that teacher education programs are made to run both by the federal and regional governments. Teacher recruitment, training and promotion for the entire primary comes under the jurisdiction of regional education bureaus (REBs),

while those for the secondary and tertiary levels are under the federal ministry of education (MOE). In both levels of the teacher education programs, the federal government (MOE) is the locus of national policy and capacity building, especially for the regional teacher education programs.

The current system of education is composed of preschool (4-6 age group); primary (1-8); general secondary (9-10); technical/vocational of 1-3 years education and training (runs parallel to the general education); and higher education (colleges and universities). Primary education is divided into basic education of four years (1-4) and another four years (5-8) that enjoins to the next general education after grade eight (see appendix 3). The media of instruction for both levels are the mother tongues, a new policy direction since the introduction of modern education into the country, except for Amharic (ETP 1994, 23-24) that is taught as a subject (L2) from Grade 3 onwards for non-Amharic speaking children. The medium for secondary and higher education is English. The education and training policy augments the prior stand and determination by the Transitional Charter and thus heralds:

Cognizant of the pedagogical advantage of the child in learning in mother tongue and the rights of nationalities to promote the use of their languages, primary education will be given in nationality languages...Making the necessary preparations, nations and nationalities can either learn in their own languages or can choose from among those selected on the basis of national and country-wide distribution (ETP 1994, 23).⁹

The general secondary education (9-10) is offered for two years after the completion of primary level, while the senior secondary (11-12) is a preparatory level for the higher education program. Both levels have distinct goals. General education may be a terminal point for most students. As a result, it is a pivotal point where students make their decisions either to join vocational streams or to prepare themselves adequately for the higher education program. This level also makes students ready for a middle-level education and training program that would lead to the world of work. The preparatory or pre-college level (Grades 11-12) prepares students for the higher education and training program which can respond to the country's demand for advance skilled personnel (also see appendix 3).

The technical/vocational education and training (TVET) program, which runs parallel to the general education, absorbs many of the grade ten graduates who have the interest in the first place. But as the pre-college or preparatory program is competitive, majority of students had to join the TVET. It is important to note that this sub-sector has been one of the most neglected programs in the country. From the beginning, modern education was bent on

⁹ The policy also made clear that the language of teacher training in kindergarten and primary educational levels was to be the mother tongue, that Amharic would be the national language of communication, with English as medium of instruction for secondary and higher education and also as a subject from grade one. It was also suggested that one more nationality language will be chosen by a student and one foreign language for cultural and international relations (ETP, 1994, Art. 3.5, 3.5.1-3.5.8).

pure academic orientation until recently and the country's education system has been criticized as being elitist that nurtures "white-collars" (Teklehaimanot Haile-Sellassie 1996; Teshome Yizengaw 2006). This undermined the development of skilled labour power quantitatively and qualitatively.

4.3 Strategies set to implement the new education and training policy (1994)

One of the most urgent tasks of the education and training policy was the change of curriculum. This was among the three designated "areas of special attention and action priority", under section four sub-article one, of the policy. They are: change of curriculum and preparation of educational materials; focus on teacher training and overall professional development of teachers and other educational personnel; and change of the educational organization and management (ETP 1994, 33).

As noted before, one dramatic shift made in the preparation of the new curriculum was the distinction made between the roles of the Center (Federal level) and that of the Regional Education Bureaus (REBs). In other words, the center and the regional states had to divide roles in the area of curriculum development, evaluation and revision. This and other mandates of both levels were included in the Proclamation No. 41/ 1993 according to which Regional Education Bureaus had to assume the following responsibilities: a) prepare and implement the curriculum of the primary education; b) ensure the quality of education in the region; c) provide textbooks and other teaching-learning materials; d) regulate and issue licenses for educational establishments; e) render special supports to minority nationalities and other disadvantaged groups in the educational provision; f) support the education by the mass media; and g) co-ordinate community initiatives in the expansion of educational activities (Woube Kassaye 2002, 78).

The central curriculum institute, Institute for Curriculum Development and Research (ICDR), on the other hand, designs basic curricular documents such as flow-charts, syllabi, supplementary manuals, while the development of textbooks and teachers' guides for secondary and technical/vocational education and training was again mandated to the same. Moreover, the proclamation makes clear that the central Ministry is mandated to formulate policies, maintains educational standards, accredits curricula of non-government schools upon request, and provides professional assistance to the regional education bureaus as they were newly established. One lately mandate entrusted to the federal Ministry is the expansion of higher education as there are no regional universities as yet (MOE/ ESDP III ¹⁰2005).

¹⁰ Education Sector Development Program III is part of a 20-year educational plan that covers sector-wide education and training activities designed by the Ministry since 1997/8. ESDP III is the third round of such plans.

Based on the national educational goals and objectives, the Institute for Curriculum Development and Research prepares a draft syllabus for each level of education and training programs and have it validated by regional curriculum experts and teachers of each level through a nationally organized workshop. The endorsed syllabi or curriculum blue-print will be the basis for the educational materials development at regional states with desirable flexibility to respond to each regional and further local situation. It is also this agreed-upon document that will be the basis for monitoring and maintaining educational quality standards in the country.

The new primary curriculum did not get into direct implementation process. It took place through the trial-implementation phases. In other words, each year, two grade levels (e.g. 1 & 5; 2 & 6; 3 & 7; and 4 & 8) were piloted. Based on the formative evaluative feedbacks, the revised curricula will be implemented nation-wide the year ahead. However, as the two grade level materials were to be evaluated and revised just within a year, there were concerns with quality issues at the beginning. The materials, therefore, gradually got refined in a phased manner in the course of time (ICDR 1996, 2002). Both formative and summative evaluation mechanisms were used to ensure quality and relevance of the curricula as much as possible.

On the other hand, the secondary curriculum did not undergo direct pilot testing. It was developed and implemented based on the curriculum profiles of both primary and secondary levels. Moreover, the level's curriculum was not implemented at a time but on a step-by-step basis, one grade each year. Draft syllabi for the textbook construction are always validated by the teachers of each level. It is also true with the draft textbooks prepared by the ICDR for each level. Therefore, for each level textbook development, the teachers are the clearing-house for the quality and relevance of the curricula. The technical/vocational and higher education curricula almost followed similar procedures. As regards the partnership between the centre and the regional educational bureaus, there is an official annual education conference hosted by the Ministry and the Regions alternatively where issues related the country's education and training programmes progress and problems are reported to the conference and solutions are sought jointly.

Besides this official conference, various technical meetings are convened by different departments of the Ministry of which the curriculum councils for general education and the technical/vocational programs are among them. Membership of the councils includes heads of regional education bureaus, universities and important personalities who deliberate on and advise the Ministry to design strategies to ensure quality, relevance and equity of the education and training in the country. Chaired by the Minister of education, the council's secretariat is housed in the Ministry itself (MOE/ ESDP III 2005).

4.4 Measures taken to expand education and training since 1994

Back in the early 1990s, the Ethiopian Government formulated a twenty-year general plan which could be implemented within a span of five years, each leading to the achievement of the goal of universal primary education by 2015. Consequently, the first education sector development program (ESDP) was launched for a period of five years (1997/8- 2001/2002). The program includes all levels of education and training levels with respective components such as curriculum, teacher training, organization and management, access to and equity, internal efficiency of the sector and finance (ESDP III 2005).

ESDP was, therefore, taken for a main strategy that could translate the twenty-year education and training targets as it can be monitorable both internally and jointly. Internally, it is monitored by the federal Ministry and Regional Education Bureaus, while it is also jointly monitored with education or development partners such as The World Bank, EU, USAID, ADB, DFID and other Non-Governmental Organizations which provide support to the same.

The main thrust of the ESDP was to reverse and improve all of the historical educational problems of the country mentioned earlier but with special emphasis to expanding primary education to the rural and past-underserved areas to meet UPE in 2015 (ESDP III 2005, 6). It also targets the promotion of girls' education as there is a significant gender disparity in all levels of education and training programs. ESDP III ranges from 2005/6- 2010/11. So far, two rounds or phases have been completed, while the third round/phase of the education sector development program (ESDP III) is in its third year of implementation. The sector development program also adopted a revitalized vision and mission of the country's education. It is, therefore, important first to look at the sector program's vision and missions, the achievement so far gained and the problem the education program has encountered.

Vision of the Education Sector:

To see all school-age children get access to quality primary education by the year 2015 and realize the creation of trained and skilled human power at all levels who will be the driving forces in the promotion of democracy and the development in the country.

Missions:

1. Extend quality and relevant primary education to all school-age children and expand standardized education and training programs at all levels to bring about rapid and sustainable development with increased involvement of different stakeholders (the community, private investors, NGOs, etc);
2. Ensure that educational establishments are centers for upbringing all-round, competent, disciplined and educated human power at all levels through the inclusion of civic and ethical education with trained, competent and committed teachers;
3. Take affirmative actions to ensure equity of female participation, pastoral and agro-pastoral and those with special needs in all education and training

programs and increase their role and participation in development (MOE, ESDP III 2005, 6).

During the past two rounds of the education sector development programs, the Ministry reported that encouraging results have been achieved, especially, in the area of access and equity. For example, the access target for ESDP I was to raise enrolment from 3.7 million to 7 million between 1997/8-2001/2002. Actual achievement, however, was 8.1 million primary school students to be reached. Similarly, ESDP II which ran for three years (2002/3-2004/5), to be aligned to the government term of office, had also enabled to enrol 11.4 million students in the primary education.

The number of primary schools grew substantially from 10, 394 in the base year (1997/8) to 16, 078 in 2004/5. This was a 54. 7 per cent increase, out of which 85 per cent of them had been established in the rural areas, where the same percentage of the country's population resides (MOE/ESDP III 2005, 7). Pre-primary education level enrolment was incredibly negligible as it is not a direct government-sponsored program, due mainly to resource constraints and a priority to reach school-aged children first. As a result, the sector document revealed that only 2. 3 per cent of the age group (4-6) could be reached most of which were in the main urban centres.

During ESDP II, gross enrolment rate of primary education (GER), stood at 79.8 per cent (female 71.5 percent and boys 88 per cent), while the net enrolment (NER) was 67.8 per cent (MOE/ESDP 2005). Many factors significantly affected the progress of access in the Ethiopian education system: regional variations; gender disparity; and the rural-urban gap.

As far as regional variation is concerned, two examples alone make the magnitude of the problem more concrete. For example, in the two pastoral regions, Afar and Somali, enrolment has remained very low: 17.1 and 20 per cent respectively until the end of ESDP I (2001/2). During the end of ESDP II (2004-5) gross enrolment progressed to 22.1 per cent (Afar, 20. 9%; Somali, 23.3%) in both regions (MOE 2005, 25). Areas such as Harari, Addis Ababa and other main urban centers, on the other hand, have got a gross enrolment rate of about hundred per cent or more and the range between the two was very high and difficult to account. However, it is clear that the former are one of the under-served areas in the past. Unless extra efforts are exerted, there is a likelihood of failing to achieve the set goals of the Education for All (EFA) by the year 2015.

The rural-urban gap still stood at 85. 3 percentage points while that of gender was 16.4 percentage points. The problem of the gender gap has been 20 percentage points when ESDP I began. In light of the rapid expansion program, the problem of attaining quality education is becoming a challenge just as it used to be in the era of the military rule. Quality inputs in the areas of teaching staff, student-book ratio, student-class room ratio and student-teacher ratios are still major challenges that remain critical stumbling-blocks for sometime to come. Student-textbook ratio is 2: 1 for primary level, while this is 1:1 in the secondary. Similar problems are seen in the student-teacher and student-section ratios. It must be noted that these figures are given by the Ministry and

Regional Education Bureaus. Since they are expressed as national averages, realities may be different at the grass-roots.

Another chronic problem of the education sector is the low internal efficiency due to considerable dropout and repetition rates. For instance, grade one dropout in 2001/2 was 27.9 per cent while it has been reduced to 22.4 per cent in 2004/5. Similarly, it was 17.1 per cent for the total primary in 202/3 and reduced to 14.4 per cent. The target for the same year was 8.9 per cent. On the other hand, average dropout of girls for the total primary has been improved from 16.9 per cent in 2001/2 to 13.6 per cent in 2004/5, though the target was 8.5 per cent. For ESDP II, quality indicators and their achievement, please, see appendix 2 at the end (note also that many of the figures constantly vary since the original ESDP III document of 2004 until its revised version in August 2005).

As ESDP covers all of the educational sub-sectors, similar efforts have been made in the areas of secondary, technical/vocational and higher education and training levels. For instance, in the secondary level, student enrolment has increased from 426, 495 in the base year of ESDP to 942, 578 in 2004/5. In the general secondary (9-10), gross enrolment for girls and boys and its total has become 19.6, 34.2 and 27 per cent respectively in 2004/5.

The number of schools for the entire secondary level (9-12) has increased from 369 in 1997/8 to 690 in 2004 (ESDP III 2005, 9). Technical/vocational program, as mentioned earlier, was the most neglected sub program in the past. The basis for the problem is the age-old attitude that existed against labor and laborers. A recent commentary from Walta Information Center, a private media in the country, more explains the situation as follows:

One of the challenges of secular education during the inception of modern education was that most Ethiopians had negative attitudes towards skilled manual labor, which prevailed till the end of 1970s. This was the major obstacle to fostering creativity. Second, there was a tendency by Ethiopian graduates to seek for white-collar jobs. It is a new phenomenon (now) to see Ethiopian architects running their own business.¹¹

ESDP III has committed itself to raising quality education and training by intervening in the following quality main areas: revising curricula; conducting quality assessment and educational inspection; improving pupil-textbook ratios; deploying qualified and committed teachers; employing continuous assessment; providing effective leadership; and empowering the community to govern and support schools (MOE/ESDP III 2005, 25-28). To implement the five-year program, a total of 53, 743.3 billion Ethiopian Birr has been allocated. This is made up of 21, 839.7 capital and 31, 903.6 recurrent (Birr) budget. One dollar is approximately between 8.60 to 8.70 Birr when the program was launched. As a target put forward to be achieved in 2015, the share of primary education is 54.76 per cent of the total budget (see appendix 3).

The current education and training policy, as previous educational programs, is not challenge-free. Some problems were already detected during the formative and summative evaluation phases of the new curricula in the area

¹¹ Desta Berhe, a commentary entitled, 'Some reflections on our education systems', posted by Walta Information Centre, 12 January 2007.

of educational materials, teachers' quality, student-teacher and section-ratios (ICDR 2002). ESDP III has also summarized challenges that were negatively affecting the education system in the country. The main ones are the following: a) mismatch between access to education and the desired quality; b) lack of sufficient and qualified teaching staff at especially upper primary (5-8) and secondary educational levels; c) high turnover of qualified educational personnel in the lower levels of administration; d) weak program management and implementation capacity to utilize available resources; e) inadequate planning and management capacity at the lower organizational structures; f) lack of textbook management and inefficient procurement and distribution systems; g) double-burden over the education system (an estimated 4,000,000 additional children who are over the conventional school entry age); and h) lack of harmonization among education sector partners (especially donors) with government procedures and delays of financial release to the committed program (s) (ESDP III 2005, 24).

A Joint Review Mission (JRM), a body composed of government and development partners, after having assessed the primary educational programs in the country has summarized the following:

There are too many children in one classroom for an effective teaching-learning process to take place. There are not enough textbooks in order to provide each child with the necessary basic written information. Physical conditions of classrooms are often not conducive for a high quality teaching/learning process to take place. There is a shortage of well qualified and experienced teachers, especially in the second cycle level.¹²

Challenges facing Ethiopia's education system are not only the ones mentioned above. There are also other historical problems. One of them is the problem of internal efficiency. As indicated in the ESDP III, this historic problem could not still get a pragmatic solution. The JRM in its assessments has found similar problems in the areas of dropout and repetition as follows: "dropout at Grade 1 in 1996/7, 29.0% and in 2001/2, 27.5%; dropout rate at primary (1-8) in 1996/7, 15.8% and in 2001/2, 16.2%. Average Grades 4 to 8 repetition rate in 1996/7, 10.5% and in 2001/2, 10.4% ; average Grades 4 to 8 repetition rate for girls 13.3% in 1996/7, and 13.6% in 2001/2" (JRM 2003, 4).

The major underlying reasons for the unchanged scenarios and even worsening in the areas of dropouts and repetition rates seemed to emanate from high student-teacher and student-classroom ratios which limit teachers' close pedagogical support to students. Shortage of key educational materials such as textbooks also plays major roles. Another problem of the education sector is the investment capacity of the country that could not match the ever increasing demand for education. Many years back, Million et al. (1966) and Haile Woldmikael (1976) saw that the state of educational finance in Ethiopia shows a picture very much less than what was desirable. Moreover, the scholars argued that the bulk of financial outlay was not spent on school equipment but on

¹² Report of the Joint Review Mission (JRM) on the Education Sector Development Program One (ESDP I), 10-28, February 2003, p. 9 (Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, Ministry of Education).

recurrent, especially, on salaries for the educational personnel. It is because of the latter problem that ESDP III now plans to separately earmark non-salary budget that would directly go to the conduct of school programs.

A commentary posted on February 12, 2007 by Walta Information Center entitled as "Some Reflections on our Education systems" by Desta Berhe, reinforces the problems around the country's educational inputs. According to the commentary, the core quality problem in the country's education system is the economic incapability to finance it throughout its hundred years' history. Lack of this essential input leads to shortage of educational facilities, qualified educational personnel such as teachers, school administrators, college professors, researchers, etc.

The problems mentioned above did not only cause limitations in the quality of the curricula and curricular materials supply but also forced teachers to provide incomplete instruction to the country's children and youth. Desta Berhe thus believes that this dysfunctional practice emanated mainly from the country's underdevelopment. Although the quantitative expansion of the education system that began back in the 1950s is still an unfinished project, the scholar believes that reaching every corner of the nation will not take many more years. The main uphill struggle for the country is financing a quality education system. And as long as the country does not have the capacity to finance its education system, the problem of quality will remain an issue for some years to come (Desta Berhe 2007).

Desta Berhe concludes that, as it stands, the country's education systems are marginally financed and unable to provide contexts for theoretical and practical learning experiences. The main discourse pertinent to the education system should, therefore, focus on this real problem. He also adds that the industrial and technological developments in the country have to play a significant role to support the education programs in the provision of quality instruction, while responsibility from the Ethiopian scientists and educators has to focus on research, evaluation and make necessary critiques that will help bring the education system into some level of comparable quality.

Tekeste Negash's (2006) reaction on the problem of education in Ethiopia relates to quality as well as financing it. In the area of quality, the acute problems are the dilemma between the growth of enrolment and the student-classroom ratios that have become unmanageable. He observes classrooms of 75 and 85 students. He further reiterates: "Sections up to 100 students each are by no means rare... the unplanned and underfinanced expansion of the sector was a marked decline in the quality of education" (Tekeste Negash 2006, 28). The scholar also reflects on the World Bank's Report of 2004, that though the government was committed to expanding primary education and this has led to the growth of gross enrolment in primary and higher education, the irony was that the higher education sector takes the lion's share both in terms of enrolment and costs.¹³

¹³ World Bank, 2004a: 82. Ethiopia spends more than one hundred times as much per student in higher education as a pupil in grades 1-4.

Tekeste Negash (2006, 29) summarizes the current major problems facing the present education and training programs in Ethiopia as follows: i) a severe shortage of teachers and classrooms throughout the system leading to very high pupil-teacher ratios, ii) a sizeable share of schools with very large enrolments, iii) large share of teachers in grades 5-8 and 9-12 who do not meet the standard, iv) very limited spending on school administration, and v) non-salary pedagogical resources. Critiques against the current education and training policy are not only these ones. Issues related to the structure of education, especially at secondary and tertiary levels, higher education cost-sharing scheme and the decentralization of educational management have raised significant controversies during the 2005 national election campaigns. Similar campaigns against ethnic federalism and language as basis of the current federal arrangement are also hot political debates going on by some opposition parties for the 2010 national election due in May.

Of all the critiques and publications, however, issues on the medium of instruction was the most seductive and controversial one. More of this shall be treated under the sub-chapter for language policy and language of education in Ethiopia. Tekeste Negash (1996, 82), however notes: "What distinguishes this policy is the close association in the recognition of political rights of linguistic groups and the subsequent rights of such entities to use their language as a medium of Instruction."

Consequently, despite the aforementioned challenges and criticisms, it is undeniable that there are positive trends in the current education system. Positive regards to the policy under discussion have been emphasized in the formative and summative evaluation reports. These include the decentralized educational management; the use of mother tongues as medium of primary education; community's participation in school management and material support from the same; and the abolition of school fees. As previous and recent studies reveal, the use of mother tongue medium in the primary schools has shown significant advantages both in raising access to and quality of learning achievements in Ethiopian schools. The multilingual policy under discussion is also considered exemplary to the Continent (Heugh et al. 2007), that has been grappling with language policy issues since the time of independence. More of this and others shall appear in chapter 6 (under 6.5 and 6.5.1 respectively).

In conclusion, it can be said that the present education and training policy has won the support and mobilization of a robust community initiative for at least two main reasons: the decentralized educational management and the use of regional/local languages for the primary level education. If government and communities' commitments continue with current momentum, the education and training programs in the country will bring about desired changes in the sector, of course, notwithstanding the critical attention to be squarely paid to the quality challenges at all levels.

5 LANGUAGE, SOCIETY AND CULTURE

5.1 Language and society

Most scholars argue that language and society are inseparable. According to Reame (2000), Crystal (1987, 1997) and Wiley (1996, 2006), language not only involves social behavior, but it also enters a realm in which there are norms for behavior, that is either based upon a consensus or on the ability of some individuals to impose their standards on others. It is from this point of view that language is considered as public behavior and no part of society or social behavior is exempted. Thus, linguistic factors influence our judgments of personality, intelligence, social status, educational standards, job aptitude, and many areas of identity and social survival. As a result, it is easy to hurt, and to be hurt, when language use is unfeelingly attacked.

According to Edward Sapier (1929), language combines two main principles: linguistic determinism and linguistic relativity. Linguistic determinism in its strongest form states that language determines our way of thinking; that whatever we do and produce are reflections of our language. This idea assumes the arguable notion that language builds and shapes our thoughts, not the other way round. Linguistic relativity, on the other hand, upholds the view that ideas encoded in one language cannot exactly be found with the same taste and flavor and equal meaning of each part in another. In other words, equal representation of one language by another is very difficult, if not impossible. Sapier cites an example of a Hopi, an Amerindian language, where there is one word (*masa'yataka*), for everything that flies except birds, including insects, airplanes and pilots. Similarly, the English language has one word for snow while Eskimos have got different words for the snow: snow that falls on the ground, snow packed hard like ice and slushy snow (English *slush*).

From the foregoing introductory explanations, it is obvious that language has an essential role in the life, development and career of human beings. It can also be considered an enabling or a limiting factor for an individual, a group, and society's cultural, social, economic, and political development. Bernard

Spolsky (1998) maintains that language reflects society and serves them to pass on to social structures. This upholds the view that language is a means of socializing citizens. The British sociolinguist, Leslie Milroy (1992), upholds the view that the best way to observe the relationship between language and society is when language is used in a societal context. This leads to the view that it is impossible to see language independently of society. The preceding assertions help us examine the strong bondage between language and society. It also follows that the relation and influence between the two is not uni-directional; it is rather bi-directional.

In consequence, both society and language equally influence one another. In effect, the truth about language is that all humans use it to accomplish their objectives and meet particular ends. According to Eastman (1983, 1), every language has people behind, known as the speech community, "a set of individuals who share the knowledge of what is appropriate conduct and interpretation of speech and share the understanding of at least one language so that they may communicate with each other". To this end, recognition of language rights can serve to unite societies; whereas violations of the same can trigger and inflame conflicts among people.

5.2 Language and Culture

The relationship between language and culture is well recognized and established by anthropologists and linguists alike. According to Ronald Wardhaugh (1986), culture is what a person must know in order to function in a society. While knowledge is socially acquired, the necessary behaviors are also learned. Culture, therefore, is the "know-how" that a person is expected to possess to get through the task of daily living (Wardhaugh 1986, 217). Similarly, Fishman (1991) and Corson (1990) argue that language indexes its culture. The scholars hold that though not critical enough to justify distinctly, language is a highly visible marker and central component of people's identity to facilitate their communication and sentiment. In consequence, both language and its attendant, culture, have grown up together over a long period of history, and are in harmony with each other. Indeed, scholars further extend this position that as language grows around culture, its vocabulary, idioms and metaphors are the ones that best explain that culture at cognitive and emotive level. Fishman equally believes that it is not only the case that language symbolizes culture but culture is also created for language.

The claim is that human culture, history, wisdom and all ideals are wrapped up in their language. Language also symbolizes the culture and status of a given language. For instance, Fishman (1991) recounts the situation in Kuwait after which Saddam Hussein of Iraq was defeated. Kuwait's victory over Saddam Hussien was followed by English being widely spoken in the country. The implication was that speaking English symbolized money,

modernity, affluence and achievement. Fishman conversely sees that any language that is dying may symbolize low status and low income. On a similar account, Bernstein (1960) regards language as something which influences both culture and is in turn influenced by the same.

There is, therefore, quite clearly a direct and reciprocal relationship to draw between a particular kind of linguistic behavior and its culture. This behavior in turn enables individuals to learn their social roles through the process of communication. This leads to the belief that a better choice for learning would have been the use of mother tongue, the “language of the heart” which represents the familiar home culture, traditional values, and experiences of the child. Thus, mother tongue education creates a situation where necessary educational facilities, curriculum and teaching-learning methodology become more relevant to the linguistic and cultural needs of the child (Benson 2001, 24). Benson further notes that when books are written in an unfamiliar language, they carry and bring in unfamiliar cultural notions.

Because of the close bondage between language and culture, when a society or community loses its language and culture, they are likely to feel the pain. The hurt is symptomatic of the social injustice towards the community in charge, while such suffering requires remedying. Fishman (1991) contends that an ethnic or cultural group that has lost its language is different from the group with their language and culture. In consequence, loss of one’s language results in cultural change or loss. It is equally a substantial form of cost on the part of the group. As a response, language restoration should involve a call for cultural revival and greater cultural self-determination. Fishman also holds that having local cultural and linguistic roots is a necessary precondition before integrating into a global village.

In general, the value of language in culture is beyond one can express. It is a deep-seated cultural wealth and pride of any society. Depriving the society of this invaluable cultural capital means a lot to the society on which this act is perpetrated. Former UN Secretary General, Javier Perez de Cuellar (1996, 178) in “Our Creative Diversity” has the following to reiterate about language:

Put a people in chains, strip them, plug their mouths they are still free. Take away their job, their passport, the tables they eat on, the bed they sleep in, they are still rich. A people become poor and enslaved when they are robbed of the tongue left to them by their ancestors, they are lost for ever.

From the foregoing explanations and the above citation, it is possible to draw conclusions that language and culture are inseparable human fabric that determine people’s identity and integrity. If peoples are forced to abandon them, especially their language, the damage can become irreversibly harmful. That is why diversity has to be celebrated rather than perceived as threat.

5.3 Bilingual education and the role of mother tongue

In the area of education and medium of instruction, bilingual education occupies a central position of debate and research. Krashen (1997), Cummins (1987, 2002), Baker and Jones (1998), and Garcia and Baker (1995) explain that the history of bilingual education goes back to 1968 with the Bilingual Education Act in the United States. According to Casanova (1995), the early experimental efforts culminated in the passage of the 1974 Bilingual Education Act. The policy mostly targeted the needs of non-English speaking students. In the late sixties and early seventies, bilingual education was a popular and friendly concept in the United States, especially in political circles. It is argued that the 1968 Bilingual Education Act was not a pedagogical response to a previously documented problem but rather the result of political strategies designed to funnel federal poverty funds to the Southwest.

Despite the problems in the implementation of Bilingual Education Act, there was no great demand for the type of federal political intervention. Following the pressures of the acceptance of the Title VII Amendments and the presence of many hundreds of Cuban immigrants in the US, the experimental programme of Bilingual Education Act began to draw attention. According to Schneider (1976), the Civil Rights Movements began to inspire demands for equal educational opportunities from other linguistic minorities, including Native Americans. To Schneider, those pressures contributed to the extension of bilingual education beyond the original Hispanic target to the Mexican border. Consequently, poor children from homes where English was not the dominant language became beneficiaries. All of these gradually led to the passage of Public Law 90-247, which revitalized bilingual education programs for children of Indian, Puerto Rican and Mexican descendents.

Casanova (1995) contends that from its conception, bilingual education was a political artefact; born not of knowledge, or an even expressed need, but of political manoeuvring heavily laced with a sense of social responsibility. In contrast, scholars such as Baker and Jones (1998), Willig (1985), Krashen (1997) and Cummins (1987) believed that bilingual education rapidly became a rallying point for many immigrants in the US, especially the Hispanics. It was this cause to unite Hispanic people across the United States in the areas of cultural, educational and even class barriers. Casanova, therefore, finds that there was a drastic change in the political climate that resulted in the Education Amendments of 1974.

This in turn brought about a situation in which the Supreme Court ruled that students were denied equal educational opportunity and school officials took no steps to help speakers of other languages to participate meaningfully in the school program. The Court legitimized the need for bilingual instruction as follows: "...there is no equality of treatment merely by providing students the same facilities, textbooks, teachers, and curriculum; for students who do not understand English are certain to find their classroom experiences wholly

incomprehensible and in no way meaningful” (Lau Nicholas 1974). Because of the Court's commonsensical decision, previous political actions by the Congress were translated into a pedagogical need (Casanova 1995, 16).

From the foregoing introduction, we can see that the genesis of bilingual education in the United States was a means of political intervention. Later on, however, pressures by Civil Movements and finally the Court were able to shape it as a pedagogical imperative. Next, I shall give an overview of some scholarly approaches and the controversies that surround the different forms of bilingual education and finally, the role of mother tongue in the interplay of the former.

5.3.1 Truths and controversies about bilingual education

To begin with, it is quite important to know who a bilingual is. There is no simple answer as it involves a number of dimensions. Baker and Jones (1998) maintain that there is a difference between language and the use of a language. A person may be able to speak two languages, but tends to speak only one language in practice. Alternatively, an individual may regularly speak two languages but can have fluency in one language. This shows that people's ability or proficiency in two languages may be different from their use of languages, causing what is known as the difference between the degree (proficiency or competence in a language) and function. Thus, an individual's language proficiency may vary across the four language skills: speaking, listening, reading, and writing.

Cummins (1987) and Krashen (1997) argued that there may be a tendency of using one language for conversation and be fluent in that. On the other hand, one may switch to another language for reading or writing which may become a preferred one. All these differences on bilingualism show that it would be difficult to come to a concise or an inclusive definition as to who exactly a bilingual is. As our main concern in bilingual education has to be focused on the educational or pedagogical value and its underlying effect, we shall now turn to it. Many scholars have consistently advocated the importance of bilingual education to learning. To this end, Baker and Jones (1998) identified three major advantages of bilingual education: communicative, cultural, and cognitive.

a. **Communicative advantage:** It is an advantage for children whose parents have different first languages as the children have the possibility to communicate in parent's preferred language. Scholars believe that this helps create a good relationship between the child and their parent (s). While children may alternatively communicate with their parents in one language and with their friends in another, it facilitates their communication skills further. Their relationship is also extended across the extended family, community, and transnational communication. This helps solve the communication barriers between nations and ethnic groups to create friendly relationships of mutual respect and benefits. Moreover, bilinguals are believed to be more language

sensitive and constantly monitor their language not to misunderstand or cause disappointment between or among their bilingual colleagues.

b. Cultural advantage: Bilingual education helps individuals to have two or more worlds of experience: two or more cultures. Bilingualism, therefore, paves ways to penetrate the cultural fabric of others and participate in the culture without much difficulty as compared to some one who does not have this skill or potential. Consequently, bilingualism is considered to have economic advantages, as a person with two languages may have a wider portfolio of jobs.

c. Cognitive advantage: Apart from social, cultural, economic, personal relationship and communicative advantages, Krashen (1997) and Cummins (2002) confirm that research has shown that bilinguals have advantages in thinking better and learning faster. According to the scholars, possible advantages range from creative thinking to faster progress in early cognitive development and greater sensitivity in communication. Baker and Jones also uphold the view that the bilingual may be able to think more flexibly and creatively than a monolingual, which may result in a bilingual to have the possibility of greater awareness of language, more fluency, flexibility and elaboration in thinking than the monolingual counterpart. To this end, maintaining what is known as the "Threshold Hypothesis" is essential that connects linguistic abilities to children's cognition. This enhances the development of bilingualism so that transition from mother tongue to the second language becomes gradual and smooth (Skutnabb-Kangas & Toukoma 1976).

On the other hand, there are controversies and tendencies of associating bilingualism with disadvantages. For example, when a child exhibits some language problems, such as delayed speech or low esteem, bilingualism is blamed and falsely attributed. In addition, educational failure may also be attributed to bilingualism when a child lacks success at school both by the monolingual parent or teacher. Contrary to this, scholars in the area maintain that bilingualism itself does not result in educational failure as potential problems may be related to the amount of effort often required by some parents and teachers in raising and supporting the bilingual child. There could also be non-linguistic factors (e.g. social, psychological etc.) which lack timely and due attendance.

According to Ruiz (1984), language as a right and language as resource do not seem to get appropriate understanding among many members in the community and political leaderships. Perceived problems such as split identity, cultural dislocation, and issues of national unity usually take precedence. On the other hand, Baker and Jones (1998) assessed that the orientation, "language-as -problem", is an attempt to perpetuate language minorities and language diversity as causing less integration, less cohesiveness, more antagonism and more conflict in society. Nevertheless, scholars consider this as a perceived notion only. The notion, however, leads to the idea that in order for the

perceived complication of language minority and diversity to get solution, assimilation into the majority language is set as a precondition.

In contrast, scholars argue that the co-existence of two or more languages is rarely a cause of tension, disunity, conflict or strife. Otheguy (1982) illuminates the idea that the history of society suggests that economic, political and religious differences are prominent causes of conflict and that language, in and by itself, is rarely a cause of civil strife. Fishman (1968, 45) also upholds this view and thus cautions: "If national integration is hard to achieve, language is not the only factor to blame. It is not language that divides, but the attitude of speakers and the sentiments and symbolism attached to language".

According to scholars, responses to the aforementioned misconceived ideas are strong in that bilingual education leads to a better integration, harmony, and social peace. Fishman (1989), Ruiz (1984) and Cummins (1987) maintained the view that bilingualism and biliteracy is educationally feasible and can lead to higher achievement across the curriculum for minority language children. It can also maintain the home language culture, foster self-esteem, self-identity and a more positive attitude to schooling. Baker and Jones (1998, 277) further add: "Higher achievement may enable better usage of human resources in a country's economy and less wastage of talent. Higher self-esteem is also related to increased social harmony and peace".

5.3.2 The role of mother tongue in the context of bilingual education

Several findings in developing countries attested the role of bilingual education via the child's mother tongue as an important pedagogical value. For example, in Nigeria, Bamgbose (1984, 95) and Ejieh (2004, 75) found that in an experimental program (of Yoruba-mediated group) carried out for six years, students whose mother tongue were Yoruba and who learned in the same obtained better results across the board, at the end of primary education, in both the arts and sciences, than others who studied in English. According to these scholars, even a specialist English teacher did not make any significant difference to the result. The study made clear that the differences in achievement in view of the use of mother tongue as medium of instruction cannot be ascribed to teachers or educational aids, which were already there before. The most plausible explanation is the use of Yoruba as the language of instruction. Yates (1995) further confirms that children educated in Yoruba mother tongue in Nigeria were better at self-expression than those educated in English. Nevertheless, the scholar noted that language preference is not only a matter of pedagogical effectiveness but is also linked to wider political and social factors with the perceived status of language under consideration at any point in time.

As regards the special role of mother tongue in learning achievements, Mehrotra (1998) brings into light an equivocal lesson from high-achieving countries in many of the international tests. In other words, it was revealed that mother tongues were used as media of instruction in the high-achieving countries. Naumann (2001) further made clear that over the past fifty years and

since the large internationally comparable empirical surveys on school achievement and proficiency began, the results on language and mathematics have suggested that the average achievement level in the developing countries was far lower than the average in the industrialized (Western) countries of the North.

According to Naumann, one of the causes for students' high or low achievement could be the language of instruction. The scholar further argues that the cause for the achievement gap is that majority of pupils in most Western countries have or use language of instruction that is also simultaneously spoken at home. This has been the case since the periods of traditional nationalism and the extension of modern education in the West. On the same issue, Colin Baker (1993) and Santosh Mehrotra (1998) further argued that the problem with the intelligence test results resides in the language of the test itself. As many verbal Intelligent Quotient (IQ) tests were administered in English only, they tended to be to the disadvantage of bilingual students, because they were tested in English, their weaker language (Baker 1993, 109). As a result, they under-performed in the IQ tests. Mehrotra (1998, 479) on the same subject further comments as follows:

The experience of high-achievers has been unequivocal: the mother tongue was used as the medium of instruction at the primary level in all classes...Students who have learned to read in their mother tongue learn to read in a second language more quickly than do those who are first taught to read in the second language.

Similarly, a World Bank Report (1995) affirms that children learning in a language other than their own are at a disadvantage. They are confronted with a substantial barrier in the crucial early grades where they are forced to acquire basic literacy as well as to adjust to the demands of the school setting. Inability to speak the language of instruction also makes a difference between succeeding and failing in school. According to Corson (1985b, 1990), any language apart from the child's mother tongue creates a "lexical bar" which makes it difficult to acquire a high-status vocabulary to learn. Consequently, having a foreign language earlier as language of instruction will often mean that the language becomes a barrier to knowledge (Brock-Utne 2001).

Negligent use of mother tongue in the early years of schooling causes a great deal of school wastage. Such wastages are usually unattended by schools and classroom teachers as they have seldom been thought of a problem of school achievement and retention. However, Benson (2001) strongly argues that repetition, dropout and related school problems, if not wholly, are partly common facts in a situation where students do not learn in their mother tongue. The author relates the experience of Mozambique, where less than 2% of the estimated population speaks Portuguese and the language of school instruction is the same and its scholastic consequences. On the other hand, Skutnabb-Kangas (2000, 568-9) summarizes the values of a bilingual/ multilingual education as follows: a) it creates greater mobility and employment opportunity; b) engenders innovativeness and a creative expression of a plural

society; c) combats illiteracy; d) encourages respect for another's point of view; and e) enhances greater participation in the democratic process.

Contrary to what we have seen so far in this sub-chapter, many developing countries, especially in Africa, are tempted to use foreign languages as medium of primary education. Such policy measures affect the attitudes, beliefs and decisions of teachers, students and parents. This has direct pedagogical as well as cognitive influence on learning. For example, Ejie's attitude survey (2004) on the use of mother tongue found in Nigeria that a majority of student-teachers (84%) consulted held a strong opinion that it was not possible to teach their subjects fully in their mother tongues. They were neither willing to teach in their mother tongue nor want to undergo special training in it. Asked why, their responses were found to be related to academic or pedagogical bases: students' likely weak English performance; weak academic foundation; and problem of translating concepts into their mother tongues were considered major obstacles (Ejeh 2004, 79). Ejeh concluded that the underlying cause for the negative attitude was the inferiority status accorded to the indigenous Nigerian languages during the colonial era and ever since.

The paradox was that Ejie's findings came when a six-year project on Yoruba clearly revealed favorable results of the experimental group students who excelled compared to the control group in all school subjects at the end of primary education. In a similar case, in a study carried out by M. J. Muthwii in Kenya, students were found to have objected the suggestion of learning in their mother tongue, Kalenjin. Reasons cited were more or less similar to what has been revealed in Nigeria, including the inability to pass national exams. Few monolingual students consented, the reason being that their mother tongue is the language they have been learning and using for a long time. As a result, most students preferred English and Swahili because of the "advantage" these languages "offered" them employment and an avenue to higher learning opportunities (Muthwii 2004, 22).

Another interesting finding about the above languages of instruction was that most parents' preferences concurred with those of the students. Many multilingual parents were not convinced that their children would perform better when taught in their mother tongue because students do not take education seriously, for example, in Kalenjin language. Parents who favored English attributed it to the advantage of reading books, signboards and letters in English, employment, wider link to information, and further studies (Muthwii 2004, 23). The parents are much concerned that learning in mother tongue would "cut" their children off from future participation in the national projects, higher education and the like.

In contrast, many teachers in the same study preferred the use of the mother tongue that students could perform better and also be examined in it. Some teachers, who were opposed to this view, claimed that the use of Kalenjin as a medium of school instruction is not only a failure but is also tantamount to "killing" children, or in a moderate sense, taking them through darkness. In

conclusion, Muthwii expresses that most Kenyans were “volunteering to be compelled” into using English (Muthwii 2004, 26).

Themba Moyo (2002) in post-apartheid South Africa also investigated parents’ attitudes with regard to the use of mother tongue in education. He found that indigenous languages in South Africa are still forced to take the back bench just as was in the past. This is not only on educational fronts but also in the share of media air time. A similar study by Kamwangamalu (2002) in the University of Natal, in Durban, South Africa, found that it was impossible to convince parents and pupils that African indigenous languages could be used as media of instruction in the education system. The study revealed that the choice of English over African languages had to be understood against the background of negative attitudes people had towards the latter.

While many people in developing countries argue that minority or even national languages cannot help teach scientific concepts, scholars in the area of bilingual education have a different view point. Ranaweera (1976) declines this view and contends that in order to achieve wider objectives of science education, the use of mother tongue medium contributes greatly, particularly in inculcating scientific methods and studies, scientific dialogue and inquiry, and discussion and interaction between the pupil and the teacher. The scholar maintains that the great advantage the population of Sri Lanka got by introducing Sinhala and Tamil languages, instead of English, as the language of instruction in general and the teaching of science and technology in particular is that:

The transition from English to the national languages as medium of instruction in science helped to destroy the great barrier that existed between the privileged English educated classes and the ordinary people; between the science educated elite and the non-science educated masses; between science itself and the people. It gave confidence to the common man that science is within his reach and to the teachers and pupils that knowledge of English need not necessarily be a prerequisite for learning science (Ranaweera 1976, 423).

To conclude this section, bilingual education via mother tongue has been a consistent debate with abounding controversies. The issue of bilingual education is not pedagogical alone. It is also loaded with political interests. In developing countries (e.g. in Africa), controversies on bilingual education mainly emanate from two basic factors: colonial legacies that shaped popular as well as elite attitudes and uninformed choices of educational languages. The elites never seem to leave their comfort zones nor do political leaders come up with alternate decisions which they consider suicidal and fatal to their professional and political careers (Ouedraogo 2000, 30).

Both trends are detrimental in terms of education and development. As argued by scholars (e.g. Idris, Legere and Rosendal 2007, 44), the trends reduce the majority of population to “silent objects” to their country’s development. It also follows that the very notions of democracy, justice and equity have little meaning in a context where majority of the population is excluded from public life, decision-making and management of public affairs. UNESCO’s assessment since 1970s also attests that such tragic causes emanate simply because of the

inability to read and write in the languages that are used for official business (Ouedraogo 2000).

5.4 Language as identity and power

Language as identity and power is still a living-debate among scholars (Pennycook and Byram 2006; Blommaert 2006; Fishman 1991; and Baker and Jones 1998). The debate is not only confined to the elites of majoritarian views, but is also common among many of the sociolinguists. The underlying theoretical framework holds that language serves both as identity marker and power, while this emanates from the hierarchization of languages and their role in the public domains. According to Norton (2000), this notion is inevitable especially in a heterogenous society and where inequality is structured in gender, race, class and ethnicity. As a result, second language learners are marginalized from services in the mainstream. The scholar thus adds that language teaching in such circumstances is not neutral but is rather a highly political one. Overt and covert role of languages in the society also reflects the social and group positioning of citizens in the cultural, political and social spectrum. According to Schiffman (2006) and Wiley (1996, 2006), it is this linguistic culture and their implied language politics (e.g. nation-building, national unity, modernism, etc.) that are associated with citizens' identity and power.

5.4.1 Language and ethnic identity

Baker and Jones (1998) expound that the concept of "ethnic identity" overlaps with the idea of nationalism. Ethnic identity may be historically deep and collectively felt with a sense of rootedness and togetherness. Some scholars consider ethnicity as common ways of understanding, group history, common values and life experiences, common meanings, and common ways of organizing or viewing the world (Vaughan 2003; Gellner 1987). Others consider ethnicity as something that lacks clear meaning and reliability. For example, Vail (1989), Glazer and Moynihan (1975) argue that political scientists endeavor to probe at ethnicity, but do so endlessly, without consensus. The scholars maintain that if one disapproves of the phenomenon, ethnicity is regarded as "tribalism"; when one is judgmental, it is "ethnicity". As a result, ethnicity is regarded as a "mobile" term, which refers to different things to different people.

To Eriksen (2002), for ethnicity to come into being, two distinct groups must have minimum contacts with each other, and they must entertain ideas of being culturally different from others. Ethnicity also presupposes group or national identities that are both visible and to be recognized. Taylor (1994) in his "Politics of Recognition" relates identity with the notion of authenticity, the

demand for recognition, the idea of difference and the principle of equality. Authenticity connotes the idea that each of us should live in a way that is true to oneself, not conforming to a way of life simply because it is accepted by others, while recognition is the idea that others should be sensitive to our quest for authenticity.

Jan Blommaert (2006) believes that there is an effective relationship between language policy and national identity because of the relation between language and the state, where the ideological relationship takes larger shares. Blommaert recounts his own experience in the Flanders region of Belgium, where there is an unshakable perception of Dutch monolingualism in public life that denotes the Flemish-nationalist victory over Belgian Francophone imperialism (Blommaert 2006, 243). Blommaert further reveals that the monoglot ideology being applied in the two regions of Belgium clearly shows that each subscribes to their own linguistic identity. It follows that the monoglot ideology rests on the ideologically configured belief that society is monolingual and therefore monolingualism is a fact of life. This context has been explained by Gogolin (2002) as “monolingual habitus” or “habitus” by Bourdieu (1991).

In view of Blommaert, such monoglot ideology is a denial to the sociolinguistic truism since societies are almost by necessity multilingual where many language varieties, genres, styles, and codes occur, despite self-perceptions of societal monolingualism. Skutnabb-Kangas (2000) takes this point further. She argues that language policy is invariably based on linguistic ideologies derived from larger sociopolitical ideologies. This often places state as the guardian of the monoglot idealization in the “language-people-country” link. The state then takes the mandate to impose ascriptive ethnolinguistic identities for its citizens. Blommaert examines this ascriptive nature having a very widespread phenomenon and cites the following concrete examples: “Since this is Indonesia, people speak Bahasa; since this is Tanzania, people speak Swahili; since this is Flanders, people speak Dutch”, etc. (Blommaert 2006, 244). This “automatic” approach gives states the power to determine peoples' identities. Foucault (1991) characterized this scenario as “governmentality”, a situation where the network of measures is aimed at regulating people's lives. In this view, national identity is almost invariably an 'ascriptive' element attributed by the state or state-affiliated institutions such as education systems. National identity most often also revolves around a monolingually imagined one-to-one relation between national-administrative belonging and language use.

Barth (1969) believes that as language is one of the markers of ethnic boundaries, it also reflects an identity at the same time. For example, ethnic groups speaking Walloon in Belgium or Welsh in Wales establish boundaries between groups and the language speakers in those countries. Through language, ethnic identity may be expressed, enacted and symbolized. In an attitude survey to Irish language, Baker and Jones (1998) reported that Irish was seen as a symbol of ethnic or national identity. The survey further shows that the population of Ireland tended to believe that their language was necessary to

their ethnic and cultural integrity, a symbol of separate culture, heritage and identity.

Liebersson (1981) expounds this position by examining the relationship between language and ethnic identity. The scholar cites the Indian language policy as a case in point in which English was made to remain as an official language after independence. Liebersson further notes that efforts to create a unilingual society met a challenge. The nationalistic campaign to spread Hindi as India's national language ran into severe obstacles and internal conflict not only because of the attachment that other languages held but because "language was confounded with ethnic loyalties" (Liebersson 1981, 7).

With a similar viewpoint, Määttä (2005) argues that language is a quintessential element of a nation. First, language, in the form of an idealized, standard language whose homogeneity is based on the written form, serves as a symbol of a nation. Second, corresponding to another conception of the nature of language, discourse brings the nation into being by forming the object 'nation', and ultimately transforming this object into a subject (Määttä, 2005, 180). On the other hand, Blommaert (2006) doubts to the placement of language and ethnic identity on a perfect matching scale since ethnolinguistic identity can only become part of a broader repertoire of identities. As a result, he advances the view that one's identity is best seen not as one item, but as a repertoire of different possible identities, each of which has a particular range or scope and function. If taken into account as dominant or overwhelming (single), language does not help much in understanding the multiple, unpredictable and volatile identity work we effectively perform upon interacting with others.

In view of multiple identities being assumed in the globalizing world, Myers-Scotton (1990) considers the language-ethnic identity match as "simplistic associations" as it overlooks the multiplicity of identity-work on the ground. In conclusion, Blommaert (2006) thus notes that just like official belonging or being a citizen of a state is becoming a poor indicator of sociolinguistic belonging, so is language for ethnic identity; it is less straight forward because of the elusiveness of identity, especially in the era of globalization.

The foregoing discussions define the relationship or difference between language and ethnic identity. As there is still unresolved discourse going on, there seems no clear-cut point to determine which arguments are right or wrong. In consequence, some scholars are not ready to consider language as an identity marker. Pennycook (2004), for example, contends that language performance cannot imply identity as language is more a reconstruction than a reproduction. While this is opposed to the sociolinguistics viewpoint of language status and varieties (e.g. Wardhaugh 1986 and Spolsky 1998), Pennycook further argues that language identification is more plausible across and beyond languages instead of linking it to ethnic, territorial, or national boundaries. Pennycook's argument goes alongside Lynch's view (1992), which upholds the need to develop a pluralist identity in this age of globalization.

According to Lynch (1992), there have been historical developments of identity from family or ethnic group since the age of city-state and single-state nationalism to the present age of global rights and responsibilities, and the internationalization of lives of all inhabitants of this planet. The scholar therefore maintains that we no longer choose between local and ethnic loyalties, national citizenship and global community as we are well on the way to recognizing three major levels of group affiliation: local community membership, national citizenship, and international citizenship. These draw on the overlapping constellations to which all members of the world community belong. This notion bears the concept of an international citizenship with some elements of multiculturalism. It can also be related to the ideas of Manuel Castells (1998) who strongly argues that in the era of globalization, contemporary social processes, notably in the fields of labor and culture, transnational networks no longer respond to national dynamics of labor division and identity categorization.

Similarly, Michael Byram (2006) endorses the foregoing positions. Byram strongly emphasizes that the correlation between language and identity is unreliable. The scholar contends that upon having one's language, it may seem that there is an ending link with the identity of an individual but this is only until another language is learned, when the scope of identity begins to expand. While there is a strong link between language and the sense of belonging to a national group, the sense of national identity, in most cases are, however, complex.

Byram relates the situation of Switzerland as a case in point, where there is more than one language and some of these languages are linked to more than one national identity (i.e. German, French). This shows that individuals can have many social identities and language identities as well. In this sense, individuals who speak language varieties can be a member of a family; sports club, a nation, and speak in each group a variety that makes communication/relations easier. It follows that speaking the "correct" variety makes an individual an "insider" while inability to speak correctly may posit one in an "out-group". Byram finally concludes that since people keep acquiring new languages and identities throughout their lives (i.e. as students of Economics, Mathematics, Physics, members of professional associations, etc.), all of these make a person's identity not only multiple but more complex.

It can be said that most of the discourse presented thus far advances the view that people acquire their identities in many fronts and the way of acquisition also varies. However, the subject of identity, ethnic identity vis-à-vis language in particular, needs to be examined in the context it is addressed. In unique sociohistorical circumstances where inequalities have prevailed long, the question of identity undoubtedly emerges. One of its manifestations is, of course, language. This is vividly felt and experienced in a multilingual society where the perception of monolingualism is both latent and strong. In particular, in the scenes where monolingualism is associated with economic and political

power, language identity is inevitable until the contradictions between the two get solved.

5.4.2 Language as power

Many scholars emphasize the relationship between power and language. Power is said to be a useful concept that helps explain the linguistic behavior of a given socio-political circumstance. Spolsky (1998) holds the view that power, as something to achieve and something to resist, exerts considerable influence on language choices that many people make. From the critical language policy research view points, Tollefson (1991, 2006) argues that power refers to the ability to control events in order to achieve one's aims.

However, the scholar notes that power is usually seen as implicit in all social relationships and policy-making processes, where language policies are considered as important mechanisms by which the state and other policy-making institutions seek to influence people's language behavior. Critical language policy researchers, therefore, assume an adversarial model for social change in which struggle is a prerequisite for social justice that includes language (Tollefson 2006). Similarly, Cummins (2001) argues that societal power relations influence the negotiation of identity between educators and students.

In societies characterized by unequal power relations among groups, the teaching-learning process (pedagogy) can never be neutral. According to Cummins, the interaction between the educators and pupils always either reinforces coercive or promotes collaborative relations of power that are reflected in the broader societal contexts. To Bourdieu (1991), schools are affected by society's cultural capital which inadvertently change *de facto* inequalities into *de jure* ones. The effect bestows on the dominant cultural groups symbolic power that in turn inflicts symbolic violence upon the non-dominant groups. The symbolic violence itself is a form of oppression imposing arbitrary symbols of knowledge and expression upon those who do not recognize it but who rather tend to believe that their educational failure was due to their low esteemed social status and language.

In the views of Thomas and Wareing (1999), power is often demonstrated, achieved, and done through language. Clear examples include that political power itself exists by means of language, through speeches, debates, and the rules of who may speak and how debates are to be conducted. Laws are written and discussed in language, and individuals give orders through language. Having the most control over many things, scholars agree that language often times serves the interests of the dominant social groups. Politicians and lawyers, owners of the media, and other influential high-profile figures all convey their programs, aspirations and interest through language.

In his famous article, "Teachers are not miracle workers", Cummins (1988c) observes that there is no classroom or school immune to the influence of the coercive power relations that characterize societal debates about diversity and national identity. It is also in these complex power relations and their

moment-to-moment interactions with culturally diverse pupils, that educators or teachers “sketch their ideological stance”. Cummins further notes that the science and the practice of pedagogy can never be neutral, including its learning outcomes. It is therefore interesting to note that many developed countries of the West such as the US, UK, Russia, and France were not free from such coercive linguistic practices. For instance, Evans (1978) and Auerbach (1995) recount historical events that took place in Britain's 1870s Education Act of “Welsh not” which threatened any child heard of speaking Welsh in school.

Furthermore, a famous Kenyan literary artist, Wa Thiong’o Ngugi (1986, 11), shares a similar experience. According to Ngugi, Children of Kikuyu linguistic background had undergone what he calls “one of the most humiliating experiences” when caught speaking Gikuyu language in the vicinity of the school. The scholar noted that “the culprit” was given corporal punishment of three to five strokes of the cane on bare buttocks or was made to carry a metal plate around the neck with inscriptions such as “I am stupid” or “I am a donkey”. He added in his recounts that sometimes, students were fined money which they could hardly afford. No wonder, therefore, children from many parts of the world were humiliated, beaten and had their mouths washed with lye soap, simply because they spoke their languages in schools (Norgren and Nanda 1988, 186).

Consequently, Cummins (1994) assesses that in each of the teaching-learning relationship, students from the oppressed group are frequently forced to “renounce” themselves, which *Okonkwo* (1983, 377) also labeled it as “self-depreciation.” When repression of such a magnitude is elevated, students are forced to cast off their old skins and become who they are expected to be, while others reject it by mentally withdrawing and looking for their identity affirmation on the streets rather than in the classroom. Cummins quoted Antti Jalava (1988, 164) who recounted the experiences of the rejection of his Finnish identity in Swedish schools¹⁴ as follows:

When the idea had eaten itself deeply enough in to my soul that it was despicable to be a Finn, I began to feel ashamed of my origins... A Swede was what I had to become, and that meant I could not continue to be a Finn. Everything I had held dear and self-evident had to be destroyed...My mother tongue was worthless- this I realized at last; on the contrary it made me the butt of abuse and ridicule. So down with Finnish language! I spat on my self, gradually committed internal suicide.

Two main points can be drawn from the above encounters. One, in view of such widespread encounters, Jalava's experience may only be seen as a tip of the iceberg. What makes the recount seriously deeper is the person has undergone an internal suicide, more than the physical suicide they cannot reconcile with their conscience. But it always keeps itching and bleeding internally as a malignant psychological trauma. Second, there are so many hundreds of

¹⁴ The number of Swedish-speaking Finns amounts to almost 300,000 people (5.6 percent of the total population of five million). Under the 1919 Constitution, Finnish and Swedish are the national languages of the Republic of Finland.

thousands of this type of deprivations that force students to cast off their skins or to self-depreciate.

Similar experiences of African-American pupils in the USA and Afro-Caribbean pupils in the UK were recounted. Billigs (1995) and Fordham (1990) assessed the problem that African-American students face in constant devaluation of their cultures both in school and in the larger society. Black adolescents consciously and unconsciously give up aspects of their identities and their indigenous cultural system in order to achieve "success" as defined by the elites of the mainstream. In the British context, Morgan (1995) noted that children of African-Caribbean origin were caught up between two cultures: devalued and superior. All of these experiences vividly reveal that educators' interactions with their pupils reflect the ways these individuals define their own goals.

It can therefore be said that educators constantly sketch a triangular set of images in their interactions with their pupils: an image of their own identities as educators; an image of the identity options that are being highlighted for pupils (e.g. the contrasting messages conveyed to pupils in the classrooms); and an image of the society into which pupils will graduate and are prepared to contribute (Cummins 1994, 109). In short, educators have every opportunity to influence their pupils. The micro-interactions educators have with their students in the classrooms are reflections of the macro-interactions between the dominant and the oppressed groups in the wider society.

Nevertheless, Cummins (1994) hopes that if educators communicate to the pupils that their bilingualism is a valuable asset both to themselves and their society, then their society starts to challenge societal discourse that advances the view that "bilingualism shuts doors" (Schlesinger 1992, 108-9). In this way, schools can succeed in bringing issues related to cultural and linguistic diversity from the periphery to the center of their missions. This again prepares pupils to thrive in the interdependent global society in which they live. Alex McLeod (1984) supports Cummins' suggestions and contends that individual educators are not powerless to reverse the coercive pedagogical relations between their pupils and themselves. They can become advocates for the promotion of pupils' linguistic rights by forging strong partnerships with the culturally diverse parents and communities to challenge skewed societal power structures. Corson (1990) also argues that schools are not inevitably the willing dupes of power forces outside their control but can do much to end the injustices by widening children's mastery over their own language. All of these can help bridge the gap between the home and school cultures. However, this is only possible when educators start to define their roles in terms of promoting social justice and equality of opportunity. Such positive interactions with culturally diverse pupils are more likely to embody a transformative potential that challenges coercive relations of power as they are manifested in the school contexts.

The foregoing discussions indicate that schools are not only learning institutions but are also strategic power centers that can contribute to the

reversal of unequal pedagogical relations. If schools and educators are determined to change past unequal treatment of languages, the pupils will be empowered both academically and psychologically. Communities will also begin to value schools and this in turn contributes to the social capital of societies in their endeavor toward peace and development.

6 LANGUAGE POLICY AND LANGUAGE PLANNING

In this part, the genesis of language policy in general and that of Africa, Ethiopia in particular, will be discussed. Although literatures on language planning and language policy (LLP) are immense and varied, my treatment cannot go beyond highlighting key discourses on the subject. To begin with, scholars agree that language policy and planning is the function of applied linguistics. However, the world of linguistics has been under serious criticism for not taking into account the social and political situations in which language operates. Consequently, Wardhaugh (1986) and May (2006) argue that for years, linguistics has been preoccupied with idealist and abstracted approaches to the study of language. It was this ahistorical and apolitical approach to language study that spurred the emergence of sociolinguistics as a new discipline in 1960s.

Language planning was a widespread and long-standing practice. It was, however, in the 1960s when a large number of newly independent nations in Africa and Asia faced the question of selection of national language(s) that language policy and planning emerged as an area of sociolinguistic enquiry (Mesthrie et al. 2000; May 2003a; Hornberger, Tollefson and Ricento 2006). During the 1960s to 1970s, many scholars considered language policy and planning as a non-political, non-ideological, pragmatic, and a technicist paradigm (May 2006). The primary aim or preoccupation of the linguists during this early period was to solve the immediate language problems of the newly-emerged post-colonial states in many parts of the world.

As a result, concern was focused mainly on the establishment of “stable diglossia” where ‘majority’ languages (usually ex-colonial ones) and a co-official national language were promoted as a means of public communication. The latter, however, was assigned for limited purposes. This stable diglossia thus created a situation where languages are made to have functional differentiations. The so-called language of wider communication (LWC, mostly colonial languages) were officially given the status of serving in public domains, while indigenous languages were asymmetrically assigned to non-

official or domestic purposes, but still continue to function side by side (Fishman 1980; Skutnabb-Kangas 2006). This seems to have been settled for many years in many of the developing countries. It, however, inadvertently made several indigenous languages to be limited to private and home-based domains. According to Fishman (1968), Rubin and Jernudd (1971), although concern was expressed for the maintenance of these 'minority' languages, the principal emphasis was on the establishment and promotion of a "unifying" language in the aftermath of the colonial periods.

It can therefore be seen that early efforts of language policy and planning did not address the wider historical, social, and political issues attendant upon these processes and the particular ideologies that underlie language and language use. The omission of these determinant factors from the language policy and planning exercise evidently brought about a number of problems. According to May (2006), first and foremost, it did not question or critique the very specific historical processes that led to the hierarchization of majority and minority languages. The main focus in this direction was the politics of modernization and its emphasis on the establishment of national language and public linguistic homogeneity, as central tenets that were appealing to Westernization (May 2006). This normative ascendancy gave relative weighting statuses to the ex-colonial and few indigenous languages in post-colonial countries of Africa and Asia in the main. In other words, the ex-colonial languages continued to enjoy special privileges to rise over the indigenous ones while this practice was perceived as the *modus operandi* state of affairs.

Secondly, the notion of linguistic complementarity, which was central to early language planners to establish stable diglossia, became problematic. In other words, the level of mutuality and reciprocity between the languages could not be maintained as time goes. Essentially, the dominant languages continued to develop and enjoy symbolic significance, leaving their indigenous counterparts with limited or no space to function. This espoused majority languages to be consistently constructed as languages of the "wider communication", while minority languages were perceived merely as carriers of "tradition" or "historical identity". The consequence was that those who had command of the declared national language(s) tended to enjoy greater recognition and socio-economic status than those who did not speak or write the national or official languages (May 2006, 231).

Such historical asymmetric treatment consequentially resulted in the emergence of the majority-minority language dichotomy problems, which led to the politics of nationalism. As a response, advocates of Minority Language Rights (MLRs) began to argue that the establishment of majority-minority language relations was neither a natural process nor primarily linguistic; it was a historically, socially, and politically constructed process (Hamel 1997b; May 2003a). In short, it could be argued that linguistic hierarchy was rather man-made and relative. Sometimes, it depends on the existing context. For example, Spanish is a majority language in Spain and in several Latin American countries, while it is a minority language in the United States. That is also why

the terms 'language' and 'dialect' are controversial. Both terms are based on the views of individuals who label languages either as 'language' or 'dialect' to mean a 'developed' or 'standard', while dialects are not perceived to fulfill such a status (May 2006, 256). In this regard, it can be said that any language policy and planning has its own goals: it is linguistically, politically and economically motivated.

It is from this point of view that Rubin (1983) characterizes status planning as “wicked”, implying lack of rational decision. It was after the multilingual experiences in India, Thailand, Nepal and other developing countries that challenges against the ideological notion of “one-language-one nation” had to be faced head-on. On the other hand, scholars argue that existing social institutions spearhead the majority-minority language relationships. One of them is schools where education is evoked as a primary site and where inequality is reproduced as well as challenged. According to Heller and Martin-Jones (2001), classrooms in a multilingual setting are significant sites for the production and reproduction of cultural identity and social inequality.

In the foregoing paragraphs, we examined the emergence of language policy and planning and some of the factors that gave rise to the majority-minority hierarchies in the multilingual societies. This introductory part also gave us some hints as to how social realities and operating power relations affect language status configurations in the society. The following sections briefly look at what it means to perform language policy and language planning.

6.1 Language policy and planning (LPP): Conceptual frameworks

The term 'language planning' was first introduced by an American linguist, Einar Haugen, in the late 1950s. Haugen referred all conscious efforts aimed at changing the linguistic behavior or use of a speech community to language planning. He further expounds:

By language planning I understand the activity preparing a normative orthography, grammar, and dictionary for the guidance of writers and speakers in a non-homogeneous speech community. In this practical application of linguistic knowledge we are proceeding beyond descriptive linguistics in to an area in the form of choices among available linguistic forms (Haugen 1958, 8).

The scope of language policy and planning has changed significantly in its breadth since its emergence as an area of study. Arguments and practices have gone beyond the issues of orthographic, grammar and lexical codification. According to Hornberger (2006), the tension between theoretical and applied knowledge has brought the subject beyond describing and making choices. This tension and debate has maintained itself as an important continuing thread in the development of the field over the last half-century.

Haugen's pioneering work on language planning was followed by the Ford Foundation which funded the International Research Project on language planning processes in the 1960s. It was carried out by a group of scholars, namely, Fishman, Das Gupta, Rubin, and Jernudd, each of whom focused on a national LPP case study on Israel, India, Indonesia, and Sweden, respectively (Rubin et al. 1977). This research exercise resulted in the publication known as *Language Planning Processes*. The publication became classic in providing accounts of early empirical efforts and descriptive explorations in the field of national language policy and planning (LPP) processes. Since then research in language policy and planning continued to provide rational bases for national decisions as it relates to language and language-affiliated matters.

One important conceptual overlapping which has not yet had final resolution among many scholars are the terms, 'language policy' and 'language planning'. It is important to note here that the term, 'language planning' was borrowed from city planners (Rittle and Webber 1973). Rubin (1983), who was said to have used the term, also added that determining a certain language's status as national or regional was not based on rational decisions. The current dominant term in the area of language issues is language policy. According to Mesthrie et al. (2000, 384) language policy is synonymous to language planning. It refers to the general linguistic, political and social goals that underlie the actual language planning process. To Cooper (1989), language policy refers to the deliberate efforts of influencing the behavior of language users with respect to the acquisition, structure and functional allocation of their language codes. The scholar assesses that many of the definitions about language policy and planning resonate around government and government-authorized agencies as main agents in the activities. This planning approach is criticized as it capitalizes on a top-down approach.

Hornberger (2006) argues that language planning has to be linked to the critical evaluation of language policy: the former provides standards of rationality and effectiveness, while the latter tests these ideas against the actual practice. This shows that language policy and planning are linked to one another. Consequently, some scholars preferred to conceptualize it as "language policy and planning". However, it is not clear which one precedes and which one follows in practice (Fettes 1997, 14). It is argued that language policy is not always the direct output of planning. In other words, it rarely conforms to the ideal process such as the understanding of relevant social, cultural, political and historical factors, knowledge of language attitudes and the direction of social change. Underlying causes for such problems are that language planning, more often than not, is guided by "ad-hoc and messy" practices (Cooper 1989, 41). Wardhaugh's observation also makes the preceding statement more vivid when he says: "Even though it is possible to recognize most of the relevant parameters, language planning is far from being science" (Wardhaugh 1986, 347).

From the above scholars' arguments, it could be observed that there is no commonly agreed terminology for decisions and activities pertaining to

language policy and planning. Despite the lack of consensus among scholars, however, many policy makers and practitioners predominantly use the term, “language policy”. For example, in Ethiopia, across the education and training platforms, language policy is the most frequent concept to characterize the multilingual education policy that came to effect since the early 1990s. Perhaps the term “language planning” seems to have been assigned to the category of practitioners at various levels who are supposed to design alternative implementation strategies, while language status determination falls in the political domain.

To deal with the problem of lack of common understanding and conceptualization on language policy and planning, a group of scholars have reached a consensus on what is known as “an integrative framework”. This decision was important because there was widespread dissatisfaction in the field of LPP due to further injections of new theoretical and empirical perspectives without having common understanding and procedures to pursue. The framework was originally proposed by Hornberger in 1994. According to the scholar, this took two decades of scholarship to come out with one coherent framework or blueprint. The framework presented in Table 1 below has two main axes (vertical and horizontal) and outlines the types of policy plans and approaches to carry out a sound language policy and planning process.

Under the types of language planning, there are three levels: status, acquisition and corpus. Status and corpus are typologies of language planning named by Heinz Kloss (1969). Status planning is the allocation of functions for a given language/literacy in a given language community, while corpus planning refers to activities or efforts related to the adequacy of the form of language use and structure. Acquisition planning, which was the contribution of Cooper (1989), is an effort exerted to influence the allocation of users or the distribution of language/literacy, by means of creating or improving the opportunity or incentive to learn. It must be emphasized again that the integrative framework is the contributions of many scholars in the field at different times as indicated in the footnote. The three types of planning are particularly shown on the vertical axis as shown in the table below.

TABLE 1 Language policy and planning goals: An integrative framework¹⁵

Approaches	Policy planning (on form)	Cultivation planning (on function)
Types	Goals	Goals
Status planning (about uses of language)	Standardization status Officialization Nationalization Proscription	Revival Maintenance Interlingual communication: International International Spread
Acquisition planning (about users of language)	Group Education/ school Literature Religion Mass media Work	Reacquisition Maintenance Foreign language/ second language Shift
Corpus planning (about language)	Standardization: Corpus Auxiliary code Graphization	Modernization: Lexical Stylistic Renovation: Purification Reform, Stylistic simplification, Terminology unification

As noted above, the framework is a synthesis of prior language planning attempts and a further consolidation to be pursued by policy-makers, language planners, and educators in a multilingual context. The framework is also known as an integrative approach in the sense that prior theories and practices are put together to serve as a model for language policy and planning exercise (Hornberger 2006, 27; Ricento 2002, 198). This is, however, despite the fact that actual language policy and planning practices are militated by social, cultural, political, economic and linguistic goals (Mesthrie et al. 2000; Wiley 1996). Nevertheless, the framework can be of help to multilingual countries such as Ethiopia in order to learn, rather than to copy it in its entirety, to plan and implement sound language policies based on the objective realities they found.

¹⁵ Based on Cooper (1989); Ferguson (1968); Haugen (1983); Kloss (1968); Nahir (1984); Neustupny (1974); and Stewart (1968). In Ricento (2006, 293).

6.2 Language policy and planning choices

Choices or decisions on language planning and policy depend on various factors. This is because language choice in any society is the outcome of its historical and political traditions (WCEFA 1990, 48). Fishman (1971) identifies three major language policies: A, B, and C. Three of them hinge on the notion of "Great Tradition" and their relationship to the twin goals of nationalism and nationism. The Great Tradition school of thought holds the view that the existence of a set of cultural features such as law, government, religion, and history shared by the nation helps to integrate members of a state into a cohesive body. Moreover, people with literary traditions of long-standing consider it as part of their cultural heritage (Fishman 1969a). Such thought is almost certain to help declare one of their manifestations, largely language, as official or national.

Accordingly, type A language policy is made when the elites find no available Great Tradition at their disposal, which can serve to unite the nation. In such circumstances, the policy tends to create what is known as an "exoglossic state", a system of adopting the language of ex-colonial rulers as national official language (NOL). The decision is based on a greater valuation of operational efficiency in an attempt to bring about authenticity in building nationalism. On the other hand, critiques argue that the negative outcome of this policy rests on two impact dimensions. One, the elites who opt for this policy must be proficient in the language chosen, but there is a greater probability of incapability as it is not their mother tongue. Secondly, and the extreme case, is that the elites will be incapable of communicating with the mass of the population whom they primarily have to serve. In addition, the elites cannot serve as a resource group to expand this language both for education and related business services. In consequence, it results in waiting for the intervention of the colonial rulers instead of taking self-determined initiatives.

Fishman (1971) considers type B language policy as a concern for a 'respectable' ancestry to create and cultivate myths and genealogies to the origin and development of their standard language varieties. Decision in this type of policy is reached by the elites and in some cases the whole population may agree that there exists a Great Tradition with a related language. According to Bell (1976), this type of decision has got a considerable sociocultural and deeper political unity implication. Examples in this category include Israel, Somalia, Ethiopia and Thailand. However, this notion of Great Tradition conceals the inner dynamics of language and ethnic standings in some countries such as Ethiopia where there are several ethnolinguistic groups.

Type C language policy results from the recognition that there are several competing Great Traditions, each with its own social, religious or geographic base and linguistic tradition. The main challenge in this policy is the balancing of interests between nationalism, regional or sectional nationalisms and overall

national efficiency against existing local political systems. If the interests are not fairly balanced and dissatisfaction grows beyond limit, regions or sections of the community group may take steps to withdraw their region out of the federation: to secede and set up their own nation-state. Pakistan's example (1971) is a lesson, where it separated itself from India and set up its own government.

Scholars therefore advise that in a situation where there are so many Great Traditions (regional, religious, ethnic or social groups) in a state, the language policy has to strike the balance between nationalism and nationism and aim between the twin goals. To this effect, nations or nationalities in the state must be permitted a desirable autonomy where local languages are used as mediums of regional official languages (ROL), having official status within their regions.

Juan Cobarrubias (1983) and Wardhaugh (1986) also identify four major ideologies that underlie the development of language policies: linguistic assimilation, linguistic pluralism, vernacularization and internationalization. The ideology of linguistic assimilation is based on the belief that everyone should be able to speak and function in the dominant language of the nation. In other words, it is the belief that everyone, regardless of origin, should learn the dominant language in the society.

According to Coulmas (1992), this ideology is the most common and also the easiest method, as monolingualism is believed to be a cost-effective way of development and economic growth. Assimilationists believe that linguistic, cultural and ethnic variations obstruct communication and generate social and political conflicts. In contrast, linguistic pluralism recognizes the multilingual reality of societies and involves the "coexistence of different language groups and their right to maintain and cultivate their languages on equitable basis" (Cobarrubias 1983, 65). India is a good example where more than a dozen languages are officially recognized and all of these are used regionally, while Hindi and English are two officially used languages nation-wide (Bhattacharyya 2004).

Today, many language-planning theorists are of the view that both cultural pluralism and multiculturalism have become sociolinguistic facts that have to be seen positively as resources upon which language planning must be made. To the view of Lo Bianco (1996), linguistic pluralism facilitates economic development in a global economy where multi-skilling, consumerism, negotiation and communication are realities of our time. Consequently, Bianco believes that verbal mastery and discursive power in many different languages or language varieties are important for citizens' economic success. Many also argue that pluralism is a central issue in realizing global economy. Aggarwal (1991) commends the aforementioned views. To him, "a nation grows richer by adopting more languages than dropping a few. Children of the future generation must not be deprived of learning more languages in a multilingual world" (p. 285).

6.3 Postmodernism and Language Policy

The notion of postmodern language policy refers to the concern with the state of languages in the new millennium, with implications for the survival of many of the world's languages. This is perceived under the current economic and political relations. Alastair Pennycook (2006) argues that postmodern language policy is about mapping language policy against changing economic and political conditions of the time. Postmodernist language policy examines the causes and effects of the spread and promotion of major languages, such as English, and how and why language policies continued to shift from the colonial period to the post-colonial eras and to-date. Taking postmodernism as an intellectual inquiry or enlightenment rather than the acceptance of the givens and totalization of concepts and ideas, Pennycook fully agrees on the development of bilingualism and multilingualism where moral as well as legal frameworks and language rights are to be maintained.

Pennycook holds the view that language policy has always been about far more than choosing a language and its purpose. The scholar contends that language policy had to do much with the use of language and its governmentality. In other words, Pennycook focuses on how power at micro-level rather than macro-level affects the implementation of any language policy. For example, in view of Foucault (1991), decisions on how languages are assigned across a diverse range of institutions (e.g., law, education, medicine, media, etc.) regulate postmodern language practices. These are manifested on the level of language use, thought, and action of different people, groups and organizations. The postmodernist viewpoint, therefore, foreshadows the governmentality of language policy to move away from the state, an intentional actor that imposes it on its people, to a more localized and sometimes contradictory operation of power. Another important issue about language in the postmodernist era is its relation to ethnicity, territory, birth or nations.

Pennycook (2006) again urges us to develop an anti-foundationalist view of language as an emergent property of social interaction rather than primarily tied to the above factors. The scholar rejects the view that language serves as identity marker on the ground that language performativity is not applicable. Pennycook further contests that since language performed at one time is not constantly maintained, it cannot serve as an identity marker of an individual or ethnic group. The argument goes that since language is basically a reconstruction rather than reproduction, it cannot keep identifying an individual, a group or an ethnic member's background. This line of argument advances the view that today's identities have become varied: national, regional (e.g., European, African, etc.) and global.

However, Pennycook's position on the relationship between language and ethnic identity faces challenges from the views of many sociolinguists (e.g. Fishman 1968a, 1991; Eastman 1983; Wardhaugh 1986; Spolsky 1998, Baker and Jones 1998) who believe in language as identity marker of groups, ethnicity,

class, gender, and urban-rural residents. For example, to Fishman, language is an important element of ethnic identity. He argues that language is the most significant marker of identity for ethnicity, and this is why people often instinctively take it as the badge of nationality. Cohen (2006) holds similar views. To Cohen, in the absence of anymore reliable markers, language often remains ethnicity's most visible characteristic, where the use of a particular language is the most easily observed feature of belonging to a particular ethnic group. Turton further believes: "Language is considered the most reliable indicator of ethnic identity. It is also the focus of public debate and political mobilization" (Turton 2006, 19).

Finally, Pennycook critiques the positions of Robert Phillipson's linguistic imperialism (1999) as it relates to the spread of English worldwide and that of Skutnabb-Kangas' (2000) position of maintaining linguistic heterogeneity and diversity as opposing one another. The arguments, which lie on the juxtaposition of linguistic imperialism and language rights advocated by both scholars, have created a challenge. In consequence, Pennycook maintains that it is essential to move away from this dichotomy and understand ways of how language resources can be mobilized for development ends. The scholar concludes that a postmodernist approach of language policy and planning must suggest a rethinking of our social, economic, and political resources in a more localized and inclusive mode of lifestyle and its due governmentality (Pennycook 2006, 71).

6.4 Language Policies in Africa

This sub-chapter briefly looks at both past and current language policies adopted in Africa. It also tries to reflect on some of the causal factors affecting language policy discourse and implementation exercises on the continent, and recent developments underway. To begin with, African scholars in particular, agree that any language policy discourse in Africa is strongly related to the colonial and postcolonial episodes for two interlocked reasons. First, issues about language policies and their genesis is, by and large, related to the independence of many of the countries in Africa, Asia and elsewhere, while that of the developed world is more classic and related to the nation-state building process, especially after the Second World War (Kontra et al. 1999; Mesthrie et al. 2000; Ricento, 2006). Second, the orientation of most African states to adopting ex-colonial languages (English, French, and Portuguese) as official languages and mediums of school instruction has sustained language policy discourse between the colonial languages and that of the indigenous ones. Thus, issues related to language policies in Africa, in one way or another, cannot go much further from these and related historical precedents.

Against the backdrop of the above exo-glossic political decision, however, Africa harbors the highest number of language varieties. According to Batibo

(2001), Heine and Nurse (2000) and Grimes (1992, 1996), there are between 2000 and 2500 language varieties in Africa. Thus, it could be said that multilingualism is more prevalent in Africa than in any other part of the world. This level of linguistic diversity has had its impacts on the political, cultural, socio-economic and educational policy decisions in the continent. Batibo (2001) assesses that despite most African countries having played-down the realities of multilingualism and multiculturalism, the impact remained contentious as it relates to national unity, group identity, and language choice and community culture. This in turn impacted on nationhood, state democracy, equality and harmonious development.

One important question to be raised is how all of this happened and began to affect the continent's public and private spheres of life. According to Seyoum Hameso (1997) and Wardhaugh (1986), with independence and inherited political colonial rule, the diverse population groups and distinct languages and cultures, were made to unite under given boundaries. In other words, it was not found important to redraw political boundaries. As a result, all previous colonies with their peculiar amalgams of language and ethnic groups became independent whole states. Many of the resultant states have no common language, no common ethnicity, and strong internal linguistic and ethnic rivalries, making national planning and consensus difficult to achieve. To the views of Wardhaugh, there were no successful separations like in Asia (e.g. Pakistan, Sri Lanka, etc), while in contrast there were unsuccessful attempts of secessions such as Biafra from Nigeria and Katanga from the then Zaire.

In addition, late 1950s and early 1960s socio-political situations forced many African leaders to be influenced by the ideas of modernization and nation-building. Thus when most African countries gained their independence between late 1950s and early 1960s, they were confronted with many challenges in forming their nationhood. Apart from dismantling the colonial legacies inherited, the states had to satisfy three important national needs that Fishman (1971) referred to as unification, authenticity and modernity.

The New States of Africa, however, preferred unity of the diverse ethnic groups, who until then enjoyed semi-autonomous ethnolinguistic entities and the identity of their sovereignties as states in their own right (Batibo 2007, 20). Most of the countries then took a short-cut in adopting an exo-glossic language policy where the ex-colonial languages were made to serve as official, and in some cases, as national languages. Only a handful of African countries adopted an endoglossic policy in which one or some major indigenous languages had to play certain national roles. Bamgbose (1991) examined the overall result that most of the language policies in the continent lacked explicit strategies to implement. Its overall consequence was that many African states were forced to remain as prisoners of past attitudes. Bamgbose further characterizes language policies in many African countries by the following problems: avoidance; vagueness; arbitrariness; fluctuation; and declaration without implementation (*ibid.* p. 111). These have created a situation in which African linguistic resources remained under-utilized while most of its citizens were denied of true

democracy and equality; either because they lacked sufficient proficiency in the ex-colonial languages or because they are not mother tongue speakers of the dominant national languages (Batibo 2007).

It followed that the tendency to homogenize diverse cultures and languages discouraged educational policies that embodies discourse on language of education. Thus, meaningful and African-based language policy was forestalled, which resulted in choosing foreign languages. Robinson (1996), Seyoum (1997) and Shimelis (2006) examined that when African States took the decision to make foreign languages official languages, there were no clear provisions in reference to the place of indigenous languages. Faced with such problems, responses to African language policies could be characterized as inexplicit or full of silence or hesitation especially as related to the role of indigenous languages. In some African countries where there were presumably dominant national languages (e.g. in Tanzania, Ethiopia, Botswana and Zimbabwe), the rest were not given any chance to operate as they were considered hindrances to the desired monolingual nation-building and national unity objectives (Batibo 2001; Heugh 2006).

The underlying problems that affected and still keep affecting the use of many African indigenous languages include the following: writing system and standardization, undeveloped technical terminologies, legacies of domination by national and/or official languages, speakers' low self-esteem, and the effects of the globalizing world (Batibo 2001, 124). The overall consequence was that the new states remained multilingual as the results of their histories; bred elites who speak European languages; and where the positions of leadership continued to go only to those who have access to them unless existing conditions change (Wardhaugh 1986, 356). However, owing to the change of political climate (e.g. moving into the multi-party systems, and multi-ethnic and multicultural representations in governance), the use of African languages in public domains has become inevitable.

It is, however, important to note that African governments did not leave aside concerns for their languages and cultures after the countries won independence. Just a decade and a half following independence, African Heads of State and Government came to recognize that for the continent's development, the use of indigenous languages and the development of African cultures was crucial and imperative. Under the leadership of the continental organization, then the Organization for African Unity (OAU), a manifesto known as the "Cultural Charter for Africa" was drawn. The historic Charter was drafted by the Heads of State and Government of the OAU in its 13th Ordinary Session, held in Port Louis, Mauritius, in July, 1976. As one of its aims and objectives, the Charter stated the need for the rehabilitation, restoration, preservation and promotion of African cultural heritage.

Moreover, under the priority section, the first point under letter "a" that reads "the transcription, teaching and development of national languages with a variety to using them for the dissemination and development of science and technology" shows that a clear understanding was reached on the use and

development of African indigenous languages. Similarly, under part V, article 17, the African States recognized the need to develop African languages to ensure their cultural advancement in order to accelerate their economic and social development. To this end, the States would endeavor to formulate a national policy (OAU Cultural Charter 1976, 10). Furthermore, Article 19 of the same Charter urged that the institutionalization of African languages at all levels of education should have to be hand-in-hand with literacy programs among the people at large.

Unfortunately, the Cultural Charter for Africa did not progress as stipulated. In consequence, and a decade later (1986), a similar meeting took place in the OAU's Headquarters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The Heads of State and Government met in their 22nd Ordinary Session from 28-30 July 1986 in order to adopt the Language Plan of Action for Africa. Part one of the Plan of Action stated the aims, objectives and principles of the same. Some of the aims, objectives and principles are given below:

- a. To encourage each and every Member State to have a clearly defined language policy;
- b. To ensure that all languages within the boundaries of Member States are recognized and accepted as a source of mutual enrichment;
- c. To liberate the African peoples from undue reliance on the utilization of non-indigenous languages as dominant, official languages of the state in favour of the gradual take-over of appropriate and clearly selected indigenous African languages in this domain;
- d. To ensure that African languages, by appropriate legal provision and practical promotions, assume their rightful role as the means of official communications in the public affairs of each Member State in replacement of European languages which have hitherto played this role;
- e. To encourage the increased use of African languages as vehicles of instruction at all educational levels; etc. (Chimhundu 1998, 51).

Priorities set for the implementation of the Plan of Action were four-staged tasks: a) policy formulation, b) implementation and promotion, c) modernization, and d) mobilization of resources. The Plan of Action also called for the OAU's seriousness of purpose on the matter, where all levels of educational programmes had to begin to use African languages. Universities and relevant research institutions were given a unique role in the realization of the Plan of Action. Finally and most importantly, a promotion work was called upon in view of the historical legacies which played-down the use and importance of African languages in order to bring about positive attitudinal change among educators, parents and the general public.

From the aims, objectives and principles of the Plan of Action given above, the replacement of European languages has not only been an ambitious plan but it did not take into account each country's specific conditions and problems.

As has been witnessed earlier, any language policy is closely linked to an ultimate political decision and commitment. While many African States tried to respond to the principles of the Plan of Action, none of the Member State had fully replaced the European languages with indigenous languages in one way or another, except at basic education (1-4) or sometimes at the primary levels (1-6 or 1-8). Education at secondary and beyond still employs European languages despite that learning outcome is reportedly and seriously affected which "authorities fight shy of admitting it" (Clegg 2001, 212).

Still a decade later, a Pan-African Seminar was carried out in Accra, Ghana. The theme of the seminar was: "The Problems and Prospects of the Use of African National Languages in Education." The Seminar, attended by African Ministers, examined previous declarations and also found that achievement in the area was not promising. The Seminar came up with another charter, "Charter for the Promotion and Use of African Languages in Education, August 1996, Accra". According to Chimhundu (1998), there were ten goals and orientations to the Charter. The main goal of the Charter was *the promotion of African languages in all normal and specialized situations and functions* (emphasis added).

Some of the goals are summarized as follows: conduct national awareness campaigns, begin to use national lingua francas and major community languages for all public domains, provide both formal and non-formal quality education in community languages at all levels and launching mass literacy, use the languages in various multi media, and develop a realistic plan for achieving the goals (Accra Charter 1996, 58). The Accra Charter also called for adopting a clear language policy in each of the member countries, the training of journalists, translators, educators and other literacy personnel. Moreover, mobilization and training of teachers, development of syllabuses and curricula, etc. were identified as main actions that were considered to translate the Accra Charter goals.

Another Intergovernmental Conference on African Language Policies was held in Harare, Zimbabwe from 17-21 March 1997. The Conference background was from the year 1995, when UNESCO passed Resolution 3.1 requesting the Director General to convene an Intergovernmental Conference on Language Policies in Africa. The Harare conference, therefore, took place with close collaboration between UNESCO and the Government of Zimbabwe. Fifty-one of the fifty-four African member countries attended the conference. Furthermore, with special invitation of UNESCO, India and Switzerland sent delegates to the conference, for sharing experience, while some former colonial countries such as France, Germany, and the United Kingdom were official observers. As usual, the general aim of the Zimbabwe Conference was to draw up strategies and define prospects for the political and technical arrangement of the African linguistic context to be implemented by each African state. This common understanding was to serve as a basis for drafting a national language policy in each member states.

The Conference for the first time admitted the weaknesses in the lack of implementation of prior plans as follows: "The evaluation of development policies has shown us that one reason for the failure of development plans is that the population concerned have not been actively associated with them, and this is because the plans are drawn up using a language and terminology to populations who do not understand" (Chimhundu 1998, 4). During the conference it was made clear for the first time that Africa's underlying problems in failing to implement the nearly two-decade long Charter were attitudinal, material, professional and political. At the end of the Conference, delegates came up with "The Harare Declaration" that contained six topical issues: vision for Africa, guidelines for policy formulation; policy options, strategies for implementation, commitments and appeals, and plan of action (Harare Declaration 1997, 45-46).

The delegates of the Harare Conference further admitted that there were three main problems that have not been taken into account seriously: that most of the previous recommendations have not been implemented, that there were few African states that have attempted to have language policies but have not enshrined them in their Constitutions, and that language policy decisions are matters of political commitment that could only be taken by national governments. The Harare Declaration was thought to correct the anomalies of the use and development of African languages for developmental aims. The Declaration drew a three-level strategy implementation modality (Pan-African, Regional and Governmental or National) were put in place. Under the Governmental level, tasks such as the training of language practitioners, development of language databases/language banks, establishment of a central language planning institute that would be charged with the responsibility of translation services and compilation of terminologies, etc. were outlined.

Moreover, under the commitments and appeals, the delegates promised to commit themselves to undertake the language policies work, while African regional institutions were similarly called upon to support the realization of the Harare Declaration. Although it did not reach the desired level of progress, the plan to use and develop African indigenous languages continued in various fronts. UNESCO's relentless support for achieving the set goals by African Heads of State and Government was instrumental. One such area of support was the establishment of an African Academy of Languages (ACA LAN). ACA LAN is a Pan-African organization founded in 2001, by the then Mali's President Alpha Oumar Konare, under the auspices of the African Union for the harmonization of Africa's many-spoken languages (ACLAN: www.acalan.org), retrieved in April 2008. Also available at: <http://web.uct.ac.za/depts/praesa/YoAL.htm>).

The Academy declared the year 2006 as the "Year of African Languages" (YoAL), with the inauguration of the interim Governing of ACA LAN Board in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia on June 21st of the same year. The executive summary of the Year of African Languages (2006) shows that the African Union (AU) has proclaimed the year for the commemoration of the language plan for Africa

which was adopted in 1986. As a result, there was a need to renew the commitment by carrying out a series of activities designed to give high visibility to the language plan and intensify the promotion of African languages. The motto selected was to capture the significance of African languages for Africa's development. However, having all of these efforts exerted, complete solutions for language problems in Africa still seem to remain one of the unresolved agendas of the Continent. The problems mainly emanate from past historical and political circumstances where language inequality was created and the indigenous languages were despised and relegated to the lower social and cultural roles. It is, however, important to note what Roy-Campbell assessment looks like on the overall language situation and its prospects in Africa.

As long as African countries continue to educate the Continent's future leaders primarily through foreign languages, they will remain dependent. Education for liberation and self-reliance must begin with the use of languages that do not impede the acquisition of knowledge. This is a challenge for the 21st century (Roy-Campbell, 1998 (cited in Brock-Utne 2000, 173)).

Despite the above reiterations, however, comprehensive language policy in favor of African indigenous languages still remains a long journey. It was from such state of affairs that Bamgbose (1991, 70) expressed his critical observation that the status, roles and places of both European and African languages have remained unchanged since the colonial rule.

6.5 Language policy and language of education in Ethiopia

Language policy and language of education in Ethiopia has become an area of debate and research in recent years. This was triggered by the multilingual education and training policy that came to force in 1994. However, lack of research material makes examining the socio-historical and political positioning of the Ethiopian languages challenging. According to McNab (1989) and Cohen (2001), past Ethiopian language policy has a record of linguistic policy imbalances. In consequence, of the aforementioned number (70-80) of languages, it was Amharic (the largest Semitic family) that had the opportunity to enjoy national status, promotion and development. The rest were implicitly relegated to home and private sphere purposes.

For a language to evolve into such a status, historically 'inducing' factors are important. These include the imperial colonial status, shifts of national boundaries, degrees of nationalistic intensities, severe fluctuations of socio-economic opportunities, or political and religious conditions (Heath 1986, 299). Cooper (1989) argues that Amharic has benefited from some or all of these factors, which helped it to assume such national status and development in the country's political history. The scholar also traces back written Amharic claims to the fourteenth century, mainly in Geez, the old Church language. This

process continued up to the sixteenth century when Portuguese Jesuits reportedly used Amharic in their attempt to preach Catholicism in Ethiopia.

The second and revised constitution of 1955 in its Proclamation of 149th, *Negarit Gazeta* Number 15, article 125 states: "The official language of the Ethiopian Empire is Amharic". With this official and constitutional backing, the development and promotion of Amharic as the language of formal education throughout the country became evident. In the 1955 constitution, however, the fate of other languages in the country was silently by-passed. The measure could also be taken as the languages' complete denial in public domains including education. None of these languages has accorded recognition of whatsoever since this historic period (McNab 1987, 1989; Cooper 1976, 1989).

Cohen (2006) characterizes past Ethiopian education language policy as a total immersion where non-Amharic-speaking children were made to learn in Amharic from their first day in school. With the above constitutional provision, the influence of the missionaries was restricted to what was known as "open areas", areas not reached or accessed by the government, especially by the Orthodox Christian Church. The above source added that missionaries were somehow allowed to use other languages for mere contacts with the local people: "Local languages may be used in the course of ordinary contacts with the local population" (*Negarit Gazeta* 1944, 2).

According to McNab (1989, 1990), the Academy of Ethiopian Languages was established in 1942. McNab however found that it was merely a misnomer as the academy only served for the development of Amharic language through the translation of various English books into the former. As per the government's Third Five-Year Plan (1969-1974), the Imperial Government had been keen enough to promote Amharic to enable it to teach and disseminate science and technology in the country. This brought about the change of name of the academy to the National Amharic Academy in 1972, where the Ministry of Education and the then Haile Sellassie I University were instructed to make full efforts to help achieve Amharic goals (Third Five-Year Plan/ MOE 1969-74, 18). Still, this promotion did not take into account the country's sociolinguistic structure and its demographic reality.

During the seventeen years of military rule, and despite some constitutional provisions for the non-Amharic languages, there were no marked paradigm shifts. Though some timid gestures were made to use few ethnic languages for the literacy campaign, there was no fundamental change either in the sociolinguistic landscape of the country or in the position of Amharic. Other languages were not given any chance to operate in some of the public domains such as education. It is from this point of view that Cohen (2001, 88) characterizes the period of the military rule as "veiled Amharization".

The literacy campaign during the military regime in 15 different ethnic languages had its own limitations. One of them was that the languages had no developed literary tradition as they were not given this opportunity before. Most materials available were only in Amharic. For example, Cooper and McNab argue that corpus available in Afaan Oromoo (mostly religious) could

have been traced but it was available in Latin script. On the other hand, the military government had already declined the use of Latin script for writing Afaan Oromoo upon the petitions forwarded by Oromoo elders in the mid of 1970s. In consequence, Last (1983) observes that all adult literacy materials had to be written in Sabeen (Amharic) script. The overall outcome of the literacy campaign, therefore, could not leave much significant impact for several reasons. For example, voluntary literacy instructors were unable to read materials transcribed in Amharic scripts as they had no previous experience (Gudeta Mammo and Merga Gobena 1984).

Another difficulty was the failure to create sufficient reading materials for the maintenance of the literacy skills of the students in non-Amharic languages. After conducting a thorough study on the military regime's literacy campaign, McNab concludes that the programme under question had faced the following main challenges: a) lack of sufficiently trained instructors, b) lack of competent radio programme producers to reinforce the 'new' languages, and c) the unbalanced allocation of resources between Amharic and other languages and also among these languages (McNab 1990, 81). Still, another limitation of the literacy campaign in the nationality (ethnic) languages was what McNab termed as the "dual language policy", which hindered the transfer of literacy students to the formal schools. While Amharic and English served as media of the formal education program, the non-formal education programs (the literacy campaign and adult education program) were made to use ethnic languages as their medium. This duality created a gap between the two education systems. It also informed literacy students that their language could only serve for the non-formal education.

In general, Smith (2004) assesses that the centralist nature of the military regime and the failure of the literacy campaign contributed to the perpetuation of Amharic language's dominance at all levels. It is from this assessment that Cohen (2007) comes to conclude that the status and role of Amharic in the past has been totally understood by the government and even by some non-Amharic speakers as the continued domination of Amharic. Cohen adds that there was no alternative ideological stance for years where the use of other languages was perceived as complementary rather than antagonistic.

In short, the literacy languages could not transcend to the formal education programs while Amharic continued to play the role of a gatekeeper in the post-literacy programs. McNab (1990) therefore observes that many literacy students who managed to join formal schools faced the chance of dropping out and falling back into illiteracy because the medium of instruction in the formal schools did not change. Attrition of non-Amharic-speaking students in formal schools was considerable. Balsvik (1985, 7) reports that the fact that all instruction was in Amharic severely hampered the learning ability of all those children whose first languages was not Amharic: "The appalling number of primary school dropouts, especially between first and second grade, must to some extent be related to problems of communication".

The scholar further relates the statistical sources of the 1980s Ministry of Education, where 80 percent of the students who started primary education dropped out before they reached sixth grade, while about 40 percent of the dropouts occurred in the first grade. For example, for Oromoo students, learning in Amharic was a daunting task. McNab (1987, 36) discussed the findings from Negassa Ejeta's study on Amharic classroom situation which Oromoo students experienced as follows:

The problems are phonological, lexical and grammatical by nature...Oromoo students have problems in using Amharic due to vocabulary shortage and failure to recognize the grammatical systems of the language...of utmost difficulty are: the use of articles and propositions, the function of adjectives in number, comparison and position, the function of gender in distinguishing second persons singular, number, and the position of object markers in relation to nouns.

Although concerns and some level of sympathy were echoed by curriculum developers of the time, there were equally self-defeating justifications not to use mother tongue languages for school programs. Pretexts such as lack of finance, human power, and the 'underdevelopment' of languages were given as excuses. The Ministry's guideline that was passed to schools to support children of the non-Amharic backgrounds in Grades 1-3 could not be put into practice. For example, the General Polytechnic Education (GPE), which was under trial for 8 years had allocated two learning periods of mother tongue instruction for the non-Amharic students. Instead, however, periods allocated for this purpose were used for teaching Amharic. The basis for lack of compliance was the absence of a binding mother tongue education policy that holds teachers accountable when they failed to do so. Further, the fact that teachers themselves had no training in their mother tongue also contributed to the teachers' failure and non-compliance to help the students.

From the foregoing discussions, it could be understood that language policy in Ethiopia in general and language of education in particular had consistently followed what Cooper (1989, 24) characterizes as the "Amharization policy". Successive Ethiopian governments deliberately upheld this policy with the myth of offering "civilization" to the "benighted", whose language had no written tradition. However, Cooper (ibid.) noted that as much as Amharic symbolized the glory of the imperial tradition, this tradition remained alien for many of the non-Amharic-speaking citizens.

As noted in Chapter one (under 1.7.2), the political reforms that took place in 1991 also changed the rule of the game: the establishment of a federal government triggered the use multilingual varieties in most of the public domains where the education sector grabbed the long-awaited opportunity. The education and training policy (1994) also solidified this base further. Like other Ethiopian languages, Amharic became the medium of primary education largely in Amhara Regional State, while as a second (L2) or as a subject from Grade 3 onwards outside of the State. However, there are exceptions where Amharic still serves its previous role in non-native Amharic speaking areas due mainly to short of preparations in the respective ethnic languages (e.g. Afar,

Benshangual-Gumuz and in some woredas of the SNNPR). This policy reform in view of school medium could be said land-breaking and unique paradigm shift in light of the country's long-standing monolingual tradition in most of the public domains such as education.

After it adopted a multilingual curriculum model, Ethiopia has carried out two rounds of evaluation as regards the relevance of curriculum in the primary schools. Students who had their mother tongue instruction throughout primary school achieved much better than students who were taught in English even in main urban centers, including Addis Ababa (MOE/ICDR 2002¹⁶). Similarly, the Second National Learning Assessment (2004) made clear that students who had sufficient mother tongue school experience at their primary education have shown marked learning achievement in the three regions (Tigray, Amhara and Oromia). Similar track was maintained in the assessment carried out in 2007 by the same agency. These were students whose media of instruction were Tigrigna, Amharic, and Afaan Oromoo respectively. Accordingly, student achievements in Tigray (42.1%), Oromia (37.1%) and Amhara (36.9%) were found higher than the national mean (35.6%) respectively (MOE/NOE 2007, 11). Consequentially, students in the three regional states have shown achievements with clear statistical significance compared to other students who were taught in English or a language other than their mother tongue.

With this background on language policy reforms in Ethiopia, it is now appropriate to look at the attempts made to write Oromoo language, the choice of scripts and its current status as viewed by scholars. The following sub-chapter also addresses the 'why' or rationale of this study.

6.5.1 Afaan Oromoo as medium of education and training

In this subchapter, I shall discuss the beginning of Oromoo literacy, the historical challenges it experienced, and the choice of writing scripts and its present status. Since the fall of the military rule and the establishment of the Transitional Government (TGE) in 1991, Afaan Oromoo has become the official language of the Oromia Regional State in Ethiopia. It is also the medium of education and training in primary schools and teacher education programs ever since. This is in line with the education and training policy (1994) and the country's Constitution (1995). The latter further legitimizes: "Every Nation, Nationality and People in Ethiopia has the right to speak, to write and develop its own language; to express, to develop and promote its culture; and to preserve its history" (FDRE Constitution 1995, Art. 39, No. 2, 96).

¹⁶ Summative Evaluation of the Primary Curriculum

6.5.1.1 The beginning of Oromoo literacy

Ethiopia's linguistic homogenization policy did not allow Afaan Oromoo to function in the public domains for more than one hundred years. It was mainly limited to oral communications. This was against the fact that Afaan Oromoo is one of the most widely spoken languages in Ethiopia. According to Tilahun Ganta (1992), Afaan Oromoo is at the top of the list of distinct and separate 1000 or more languages in Africa, the most polyglot continent on the globe. It is also one of the Cushitic languages spoken in Ethiopia, Somalia, Sudan, Tanzania, and Kenya. Scholars argue that the language is spoken by an estimated 35-40 per cent of the Oromoo population in Ethiopia (Gragg 1982; Cooper 1989; Mekuria Bulcha 1997; FDRE/ CSA 2001). Gragg adds that more than two-thirds of speakers of the Cushitic languages are the Oromoo, or speak Afaan Oromoo, which is the third largest Afro-Asiatic language in the world. In addition to its own speakers, some scholars believe that the Harari, Sidama, Berta, Gumuz, Anuak and several other ethnic Oromoo neighbors use Afaan Oromoo as means of communications and trade (Mekuria Bulcha 1997, 1).

Historical accounts may shed some light as to why the language under study could not acquire its present status for years. According to Mohammed Hassen (1996), an attempt to write Afaan Oromoo goes back to the eighteenth century. During this period, Muslim Oromoo scholars began to produce religious literary works using both Arabic and Geez/Sabean scripts. This helped Afaan Oromoo as the language of correspondence among the Oromoo kings of the time in the area of education, law, culture, business and government administration.

Nevertheless, Oromoo literary work was only available from about the first quarter of the nineteenth century. It was reported that two German scholars produced Oromoo grammar and Oromoo-English Dictionary. The scholars translated parts of the New Testament of the Bible into Oromoo language (Pankhurst 1976). On the other hand, the need to preserve and develop Oromoo language was felt by individuals such as Sheik Bakri Saphaloo who began teaching in the language and who created a script in spite of several shortcomings in 1950 and 1960s in eastern Oromia (Mekuria 1997). As noted under Chapter one (1.7.3), it was through the works of an Oromoo evangelist, Onesimos Nasib, and his Oromoo female counterpart, Aster Ganno, that a wider scope of written Oromoo literature came into being. Onesimos' literary works combined both religious and secular contributions.¹⁷

Onesimos, his original name, Hiikaa, was born sometime in the middle of the 1850s in Ilu Abba Boora, western part of Oromia. While in his early age, he

¹⁷ Onesimos' religious and secular literacy works include: Oromoo-Swedish dictionary (n. d), Galata Waaqayoo Gota Maccaa (1886), Kaku Haaraa, New Testament, (1893), Jalqaba Barsiisa, Oromoo Reader, (1894), and Garaan Namaa Mana Waaqayo yookiis Iddo Bultii Seetana (n. d), etc were published and printed. His female counterpart, Aster Ganno also published from her memory collection of about five hundred Oromoo songs, fables and stories (Mekuria Bulcha, on *Onesimos Nasib's Pioneering Contributions to Oromoo Writing* (1995, 42-43) Nordic Journal of African Studies, 4(1):36-61 (1995).

was kidnapped by slave-traffickers of the time and taken to the Red sea port of Massawa. He was freed from slavery by Werner Munzinger, a Swiss scholar and adventurer and who used to serve as a consular agent of the French, British and Egyptians at the port of Massawa. Onesimos was sold four times and given the name Nasib by one of the persons who sold and bought him. Since Munzinger's role was to buy slaves from the traffickers and set them free, he handed over Onesimos to the Swedish missionary stationed in Massawa in 1870. Serving in the missionaries, Onesimos became a convert of the Protestant Christian religion.

After having him converted to the Protestant religion and completed his education in Massawa, the Swedish Missionary planned to send Onesimos to Oromoo land to spread religion. But it was not possible to reach as all the routes to Oromoo land had been closed by the Abyssinian kings and warlords of the time. At other times, the kings were not willing to give permission for the missionaries to preach religion other than the Orthodox Christianity. As a result, Onesimos and other members of the Swedish missionary team could not get into Oromoo land. Specifically, Emperor Menelik II did not let outsiders enter into the country as he was preparing to conquer Oromoo land (Dahlberg 1932; Aren 1977).

Further being educated in Sweden as a teacher and after years of attempt, Onesimos and his team finally became successful to arrive into Oromoo land, Wallaga (western part of Oromia). The time was around 1889, when they found all conditions changed since Onesimos and his Oromoo colleagues had left. During their arrival, the Oromoo land was already conquered and colonized by the Amhara King, Menelik II that took place between 1875 and 1900. Amharic and Orthodox Christianity religion were in the process of being imposed on the Oromoo population. Onesimos and his team, however, did not give up their mission. They doubled their effort of evangelization and the translation of secular teaching materials. Onesimos' work was embraced by the Oromoo public, as the literary materials reflected their cultural values.

Religious and secular literatures by Onesimos became popular and were the first eye-openers for the people of western Oromia, and he was affectionately named "Abba Gamachiis" (father of entertainment). However, Onesimos' success in his endeavors became a concern for the imperial rule. According to Gustav Aren (1977), the enthusiastic acceptance of the Oromoo evangelists by the people seemed a kind of rejection and defiance of the Amharic language and the Orthodox Christian religion. The consequence was that a series of accusations followed from the Orthodox Church leaders. The case was finally taken to an Amhara local governor, Ras Demise Nasibu, and Onesimos faced trial in 1905. The accusation was taken for a religious offence and Onesimos was described as a heretic and trouble maker.

Although the case was not strong enough for the detention of Onesimos, it was the beginning of red light against his enthusiasm for the evangelical and educational works. Onesimos' case was also reported to the Church and Government authorities in Addis Ababa. The case was brought to the

Archbishop of the Coptic Church (Abba Mathios) and to Emperor Menelik in the following year, June 1906. He was called to Addis Ababa at a short notice and stood trial. Although not a follower, Onesimos was ex-communicated from the Orthodox Church by the Archbishop. This pronouncement led Onesimos to a series of harassments and offences from the clergies and their followers. Menelik however cancelled Onesimos' imprisonment and let him free on condition that he should not continue with his teachings, religious or secular. It was learnt that the imperial court's verdict (imprisonment) against Onesimos was reportedly changed with the help of a Swedish Missionary led by Dahlberg (1932) in Addis Ababa.

During the brief Italian occupation (1936-1941), Oromoo language was made the medium of education in Oromoo land, including Addis Ababa, as the Italians divided the country into six major administrative regions mainly on ethnolinguistic basis (McNab 1989). According to Sbacchi (1985, 85), in Oromia and its surroundings, Oromigna and Kaffigna languages replaced Amharic and began to be taught in schools. Nevertheless, attempts to expand Oromoo writing through evangelical and educational means were short-lived after Emperor Haile Sellassie returned from an exile in 1941. According to Mekuria Bulcha (1997), linguistic homogenization (Amharization) was one of the major policy instruments adopted by the Emperor.

This policy instrument was important as Afaan Oromoo and other languages in the country were considered obstacles to the Emperor's ambitious nation-building mission. To this end, a series of decrees that outlawed the possession of literary materials other than Amharic were put in place. In the same vein, Onesimos' literary works were found illegal and faced banning.

Threats against Oromoo language and culture therefore forced many Oromoo nationals to accept the 'dominant' Amhara culture. This forced-reception resulted in the identity crises of some of the Oromoo elites. However, many of the Amharized Oromoo remained both socially and psychologically marginalized by the mainstream, where they were poised on the edge of the distinct societies without being fully part of either.

Moreover, Oromoo students were consistently reminded that their language was "uncultivated" and could not be used in a "civilized" environment (Mekuria Bulcha 1997, 338). According to the scholar, schools were not a place where the pupils were pedagogically supported. Instead, they were places where students were ridiculed upon making grammatical errors or mispronouncing Amharic words. In short, Amharic as medium of school instruction created what Bourdieu (1991) called as "symbolic violence", where non-Amhara citizens, including the Oromoo, were made to be ashamed of their language, culture, and origins.

6.5.1.2 The choice of Oromoo writing scripts, rationales and oppositions

Though not allowed for official use in public offices, Afaan Oromoo remained a well-developed oral tradition until the early 1970s (Tilahun Gamta 1992). Prior writing attempts were either in Geez or the clandestine Latin scripts. Unlike

most African countries, where Arabic and Roman scripts were widely in use, these scripts were allowed only for writing foreign languages, not indigenous Ethiopian languages (Cooper 1976). Paradoxically, Cooper learned that two Ethiopian languages (Harari and Kunama) were allowed to use Arabic and Roman scripts respectively. Whereas languages such as Hausa and Swahili were written both in Arabic and Roman scripts, almost all Ethiopian languages were written only in the Ethiopian Syllabary. Even when publications were clandestine (clandestine missionary tracts in Afaan Oromoo, for example), the Ethiopian Syllabary was used.

It was surprising to see that in neighboring Kenya, the Kenyan Boraan (also Boran), who have common descendants with the Borana Oromoo in Ethiopia, the dialect of Oromoo language used to be written in Latin alphabet and being used in schools and churches since the early 1940s. Mekuria Bulcha (1994) investigates the reason being purely political in the sense that due to their smaller number, the Oromoo in Kenya do not have strong political leverage to threaten the government in Kenya.

To Cooper (1976), the imposition of Amharic script for all languages in the country was mainly aimed at removing any barrier for the spread of Amharic. After such a long banning period, Afaan Oromoo writing revived in the 1970s. The cause for the revival was associated with the formation of a Pan-Oromoo self-help association in the 1960s. The association, which later transformed itself to Maccaa Tuulama Development Association, began to air its concerns on the socio-political and cultural status of the Oromoo people in the Ethiopian empire. The association's overall objective was to mobilize the Oromoo public for their own development in the areas of education and to do away with neglect of their culture. When the association's development demands appeared a bit challenging in the eyes of the late Emperor, the latter began to perceive it as a threat to his rule.

On the other hand, concern for the status of Afaan Oromoo was highly emphasized by the association as it was a unifying and cross-cutting factor to the Oromoo population. According to Mohammed Hassen (1998), aside from the language, neither religion nor any other issue plays the role of unifying the Oromoo population. As a result, Afaan Oromoo was instrumental for the then regionally divided, religiously diversified and socially stratified Oromoo in the empire.

The imperial regime, however, did not take time to imprison leaders of the Oromoo development association in 1967. Response to this aggressive measure resulted in the birth of an Oromoo organization, the Oromoo Liberation Front (OLF) in 1974, which for the first time announced the use of Latin script, Qubee, to write Afaan Oromoo. However, Qubee was not recognized by the military rule that came to power after the popular uprising in the mid 1970s.

In the aftermath of the fall of the military regime, the long-time clandestine Qubee became an official writing script in 1991. Five months later after the fall of the military regime (3 November 1991), a large meeting was convened under the leadership of the Oromoo Liberation Front (OLF) in the

capital, *Finfinnee* (Addis Ababa). The purpose of the meeting was to deliberate on the importance and suitability of the Latin alphabet, also called *Qubee Oromoo*, and adopt it or suggest alternative script (s).

According to Tilahun Gamta (1992), after a six-hour deliberation among over one thousand participants, it was unanimously decided that the Latin script (Qubee) be used to writing Afaan Oromoo. The three main criteria used to adopt the Latin script in writing Afaan Oromoo were linguistic suitability, pedagogic ease, and practicability. Although the Sabeian Syllabary was suggested as an alternative, its more than 200 characters were found difficult to adapt it to writing the Oromoo language.

In this regard, it is important to note that the Ethiopic/Sabeian script had already been found too cumbersome not only for writing Afaan Oromoo but also had been identified as a burden for writing Amharic itself. Tilahun Gamta (1992), an author of the Oromoo-English Dictionary, noted that the Sabeian/Ethiopic Syllabary not only fails to indicate vowel length and geminated consonants (see examples on pages 125 and 148), but also slows down a writer's speed. In fact, the problem with Sabeian/Ethiopic script was clear as far back as the early 1970s by a group of international experts. Consequently, Bender et al. (1976, 112) found that the Ethiopian writing system consists of a core of thirty-three characters called *Fidel* each of which occurs in a basic form and in six other forms known as orders. The seven orders represent syllable combinations consisting of a consonant and following vowel (see appendix 7).

Bender et al. (1976, 121) further added that the presence of several unneeded *Fidel* in Amharic writing was a problem. It was not a serious problem, "but one which is disturbing to persons who like to have 'correct spellings', one sound, one symbol, and vice versa". Moreover, the irregularity of many of the syllabic characters, the lack of a standard system for quick and legible hand writing, and causing learning to read and write more difficult have been pointed out by the scholars.

Still, two other deficiencies of the Ethiopian writing system were identified, especially for the non-native speakers in learning to read and write. These were lack of marking gemination for the consonants and the ambiguity of the six-order symbols with and without vowel. Shimelis (2006) similarly argued that the inadequacy of Amharic orthography to represent several sounds in many of the nationality languages in the country was one drawback for which different forms of orthography now in use could have become a reality. The following examples from Bender et al. (1976, 125) can clarify the problem of reading Amharic words due to lack of indication of strong and weak syllables:

mefelegachihu	means your wanting
<i>mefelegachihu</i>	means your being wanted
gena	refers to still or yet
<i>genna</i>	refers to Christmas, etc.

Similar problems arise when Geez/ Amharic Syllabary is used to write Oromoo words. The following four pairs of Oromoo words from Tilahun Gamta (1986, 132) are given below as examples:

dhufe	he came
<i>dhuufe</i>	he farted
late	is budding
<i>late</i>	is giving
boba'e	burnt
<i>bobba'e</i>	deployed
oolaa	sheep
<i>olla</i>	neighbour

From the above examples, it is difficult to know whether a consonant or a vowel is to be long or short while reading the words. It is to the above systemic linguistic problems that Afaan Oromoo scholars came up with the idea of using the alphabet system which has characters that represent basic language sounds, technically known as phonemes (Tilahun Gamta 1992). Accordingly, Afaan Oromoo has 34 basic sounds ¹⁸(10 vowels and 24 consonants). Some scholars however argue that there are only 29 characters to write Oromoo language. The difference between these two positions seems to rest on the addition and/or omission of the five long Oromoo vowels (double vowels) that make the total vowels to become ten (e.g. Aadaa, Gadaa, Waqaa, etc.). See appendix 9.

According to Tilahun Gamta (1992), the major advantage for the Oromoo child to learn in Oromoo alphabet (Qubee) is that it is a phonetic language; it is written in the way it is spoken. The script is much easier for children as it enables them to identify Oromoo sounds without ambiguity. It is also argued that children will have a relatively shorter time to learn English scripts due to the association between the two scripts.

Another pedagogic factor for using Latin alphabet is that the characters can be mastered within a short time. For the Oromoo child, the symbols are directly representing the sounds and this makes the task of learning and reading easier. The third criterion, the practical reason, solves some of the problems encountered in the Ethiopic/Sabean Syllabary. One of such advantage is the scripts' adaptability to the computer technology that gives alphabetic writing. In deed, technology is one of the areas of considerations while adopting a given writing system. Eastman (1983) holds that if special letters and diacritics are required, they may raise cost and availability of typing and printing equipment. Such costs may likely inflate in situations where newly literate societies are limited in their demographic profile.

The fact that Latin alphabet has been adapted to many world languages (e. g. English, German, Swedish, Danish, Norwegian, Finno-Ugric languages, Romance languages, Baltic languages, Somali, Swahili, etc.), shows that it is more convenient for many languages, including Afaan Oromoo, than other

¹⁸ [http://www.sas.upenn.edu/African Studies/Hornet/Afaan Oromo 19777](http://www.sas.upenn.edu/African_Studies/Hornet/Afaan_Oromo_19777), or Omniglot.

scripts. According to Defrancis (1989, 268), alphabetic writing is “an edge over”. Similarly, Eastman (1983) argues that alphabets are the most common choice for new writing systems for languages in the modern world. This is because often times, new alphabets are devised rather than old ones are adapted. To this end, Roman or Latin script is the basis of most of the symbols in the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA). The scholar further adds: “In most of Africa south of the Sahara, the writing systems developed have used the Roman script” (Eastman 1983, 19).

On the other hand, the choice of Latin alphabet for writing Afaan Oromoo has invited serious criticisms from many quarters, mainly, from the advocates of the Sabeen/Ethiopic Syllabary. Some of these critiques expressed their dissatisfactions on the use of Qubee with sarcastic remarks such as “Oromoo foreign”, which implies that the Latin script is foreign to Ethiopia as opposed to Amharic Syllabary or *Fidel*. However, it is equally argued that Amharic itself had evolved through years by adopting several foreign words and writing systems. It can be counter argued that the basis of the opposition against the use of Latin script was not much different from accepting or not accepting linguistic pluralism in the country. Most of the criticisms, though not explicit often, resonate the “Amharic-only” attitude and a concern for the “loss of national unity”.

For example, Teshome Wagaw (1999) strongly argues that the use of Latin alphabet was full of complications and the issue was a matter of controversy over the use of Ethiopic Syllabary. The scholar accuses the central government of its failure to control and regulate the use of Latin alphabet in each regional state as follows: “Since the decision would have political implications and since the constitution limits the power given to the central government, any action taken potentially has grave consequences for communal development...for the national polity” (Teshome Wagaw 1999, 76). Teshome Wagaw also criticizes Oromoo intellectuals for choosing Latin alphabet instead of the Ethiopic Syllabary. His concerns were further expressed as follows:

The use of Latin alphabet is 'circumventing' the national language of Amharic... adopting the Latin alphabet would create further confusion in a multilingual nation and could compound the inequalities that exist between Ethiopian languages, which would be detrimental to the lasting interests of all concerned (Teshome Wagaw 1999, 78).

Despite Teshome Wagaw’s worries, it is interesting to note that except the Semitic languages (Tigrigna, Amharic, and Harari) almost all Cushitic language-speaking ethnonations in Ethiopia indiscriminately adopted the Latin alphabet for writing, showing a clear geolinguistic shift from the situation during the country’s unitary governance periods. The underlying rationale behind such a dramatic script or alphabetical change was nothing more than the three main orthographic criteria mentioned above to write a language.

This clearly attests Labov’s (1982, 186) argument that linguistic autonomy is the responsibility of a given community. Consequently, the choice of what language or dialect to use is “reserved to members of that community”. For

instance, an American journalist, Ben Barber (1994) asked an Oromoo peasant whether he was happy to send his child to an Oromoo-medium school. The peasant's answer was short and precise: "Who hates his own?" The response further showed that the language issue is not only left to the elites, but is equally the concern of ordinary men and women as all are directly and indirectly affected by language. The peasant's reply also testifies that the symbolic value of a given language is an expression of group solidarity and identity, which is sometimes ignored by scholars (Tauli 1968).

One important point to be looked into is the current status of Afaan Oromoo, its sociolinguistic landscape in Ethiopia and to what extent it has influenced the general perception of the Oromoo public. In general, it can be said that research in this area is in its infancy. However, in one of the empirical researches carried out by Fisseha Mekonnen (1994), it was found out that students who learn in Afaan Oromoo had positive attitudes. Students and teachers gave their reasons that the use of Afaan Oromoo helps meaningful learning in schools. The scholar concludes that the use of the language was unanimously favored by both students and teachers in view of maintaining learning relevance, developing culture, enhancing student learning achievement, and establishing positive relationships between schools and the community (Fisseha Mekonnen 1994, 173-4).

The same scholar has also carried out an investigation in the area of teacher education programs. Through his observations into the classroom, the author found that the attitude scores of student-teachers were highly positive and significant in favor of Afaan Oromoo. The underlying cause for the positive findings were that teaching in one's mother tongue was considered both an incentive and advantage for people's culture, social, economic, and political life can easily be understood through shared mother tongue (Fisseha 1994, 174).

Moreover, Kifle Djote (1993) assessed that despite long years of suppression, its use and writing (Qubee) has been significantly felt among the Oromoo populations. Kifle Djote also added that the Ethiopian Orthodox Church began to organize a choir in Afaan Oromoo, which he considered a "dramatic response" and departure from the past when seen in light of the period when the Church considered the language "profane" (Kifle 1993, 21). According to Kifle's assessment, the dramatic attitudinal change of the Oromoo populations toward language consciousness and the works that followed to the revival of the same is considerable in such a short period of time. Barber (1994, 3) also sums up the situation after 1991, as it relates to Afaan Oromoo and the Oromoo population as follows: "Ordinary Oromoo people are savoring the return of cultural freedom".

In conclusion, it can be understood that language policy and language of education in Ethiopian schools have been facing and still face tensions and contradictions against old traditions. No doubt that the tensions are spearheaded by the monolingual ideology on the pretext of maintaining "national unity". In such monolingual-bent and "one fits all" policy, several languages in the Ethiopian territory were marginalized for years from the

mainstream. It follows that many millions of people were unwisely pushed away from the development mainstream. Afaan Oromoo, as any other Ethiopian language (except Amharic) has traveled all of the difficult terrains and finally got official recognition by the constitutions of both federal and regional governments in the mid 1990s. Thus, subsequent chapters of this study examine whether the status of its implementation is in accordance with the multilingual education and training policy and the country's constitutional provisions.

7 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

7.1 Rationales for methodology of the study

In conducting the study theme, "The Implementation of a Multilingual Education Policy in Ethiopia: The Case of Afaan Oromoo in Primary Schools of Oromia", I adopted a qualitative research methodology design. I came to choose this research design after attending courses on qualitative and quantitative, lately also ethnographic researches at the Jyväskylä University. Although I have used many sources, David Silverman's (2001) "Interpreting Qualitative Data" and Bogdan Biklen's (1992) "Qualitative Research for Education: An Introduction to Theory and Methods" have greatly influenced my choice. According to Silverman, the aim of a qualitative research is to understand the participants' categories and to see how these are explained in concrete activities. These activities are mostly obtained through observation, textual analysis, open-ended interviews for small samples, audio and video recordings. The techniques also enable one to understand how participants view and feel about the situation under study.

Biklen's views as related to qualitative research are not much different from that of Silverman's either. According to Biklen, the qualitative researcher's primary goal is to add to knowledge, not to pass judgment on a setting. As a result, Biklen emphasizes that the concern for a qualitative researcher need not rest on whether their findings are generalizable or not. For both scholars, the worth of a qualitative study is the degree to which it generates ideas that relate to theory, description, or understanding of a given phenomenon. To this end, authenticity of a research is the main focus more than its reliability.

Drawing upon the two scholars' views and my understanding on the ethnographic research, I had to relate some of the research situations that I was going to operate through, and my inclination and decision to use a qualitative research model finally became evident. Two other major reasons are worth mentioning as far as preference to the qualitative model is concerned. First, the

issue of multilingual education policy, as an official practice, is the first of its kind in the history of the country, Ethiopia.

It may, perhaps, be characterized as a “revolt” against the age-old monolingual governmental business in general and the education system in particular. Only one language, Amharic, has been espoused to function as official as well as medium of primary education throughout the country. While there are between seventy and eighty different nationalities (ethnolinguistic groups), languages that account for over 90 per cent of the country’s population (Neil 2005; Cooper 1989), they were relegated to oral and home status. As a result, there are still some grey areas that seem to indicate that a given part of the population who wishes to uphold the status quo does not want to recognize the multilingual policy under implementation since the early 1990s.

The consequence is that speaking aloud about the language policy under question was perceived as orchestrating the government’s political agenda rather than taking it for a solution for the age-old linguistic problem in the country. These are not only my own assessment or perception from the public domains. The subject has been a bone of contention since the days of the Transitional Charter in August 1991 that heralded the multilingual education policy in the country. However, the transitional government’s position on the same was stabilized by two official documents in 1994 and 1995 respectively, the Ethiopian Education and Training Policy (ETP) and the Federal Constitution. Despite these two fundamental educational and legal provisions, the unfavorable latency towards the language policy manifested itself during the 2005 National Election and whose aftermath met with considerable human tragedies and material loss. Indeed, the current campaigns for the May 2010 national election has not shown change of perception and attitudes on the country’s multilingual education policy in the eyes of some hardline political groups in the country.

Second and because of the above, the subject of educational language or language policy had to be either avoided or remain a soft-spoken agenda. This has been partly reflected during my field interviews and informal discussions with some of the informants. There was either a sense of forced restraint on the part of some of the beneficiaries or a complete disapproval from some circles of the elites who favor the bygone days. Some of those who felt that they have lost the command of the socio-political and economic positions do not seem to feel at ease to recognize this reform while some of the beneficiaries (of the reform) do not equally seem to be confident to officially defend that they are the real owners of their own gains and destinies.

The latter are very much cautious for two reasons. One, because of the recency of the policy, they could not be free of doubt of the view that the multilingual policy under implementation may face reversal. Two, if reversed, they consider it not only a futile exercise that does not bring about desired change but may also result in a sprained relationship, some times, a conflict between their “old” friends, the Amharic-speaking friends with whom they live side by side.

As a result, any political and cultural self-assertion of Oromoo intellectuals and the youth is considered advancing a “separatist” move. It is due to this political disharmony and at times loss of confidence in many parts of Oromia that a quantitative research approach was found to be either mechanical to maintain allegiance to the central or regional government, or be indifferent to the research response in order not to be labeled as ‘opposing’ the on-going political process in the country. Thus, the researcher, after weighing the pros and cons of the over-all situation decided to employ a qualitative research approach to describe the status of implementation of the multilingual education policy using relevant data gathering instruments and techniques.

7.2 Research Sites

Oromia Regional State is the largest land mass in the country. Because of the nature of the study design, there was a need to determine the sites and size of the study subjects. As schools are the main targets of this study, they were to be identified from urban, semi-urban and rural setups. In light of the fact that Ethiopia’s 82 percent population lives in the rural areas (Population and Housing Census 2007), the dichotomy may be considered insignificant. In addition to that, more than 90 percent of the Oromoo population lives on agriculture in the rural areas (Investment in Oromia, 2005).

The 2007 Ethiopia’s Population and Housing Census similarly shows that more than 88 per cent of the Oromoo population still lives in the rural areas. Though it may sense somewhat less important to consider semi-and urban schools in the light of the above demographic facts, urban centers in Oromia can be characterized as “mini-odds”. In other words, it is in these centers that mixed linguistic groups live and the omni-presence of Amharic is widely felt. As a consequence, Amharic cuts across all the communication means regardless of the demographic considerations of native Amharic speakers and Afaan Oromoo being a constitutionally backed regional state medium of public domains. To investigate the impact of Amharic over Afaan Oromoo speaking-students in the semi-and urban centres will thus help to know the linguistic attitudes borne by urban and rural dwellers through the responses obtained from the field work.

To identify the schools to be studied, first of all, I paid a visit into four directions from the capital city, Finfinne (Addis Ababa) up to 120 kilometers for four days of a round-trip. On my travel routes, I visited about 12 schools which were full (1-8) and partial primary (1-4). As my study had to give preference to full primary education and schools that have grades 7 and 8, I had to consult with the Oromia Bureau of Education. This was necessary not only to select the schools to be included in the study but it was also part of getting an official approval from the bureau to begin the actual research data gathering process. Finally, we agreed that the selection of schools to be included in the study had to take into account the following main points:

1. Primary school or schools having partial or lower (1-4) and upper primary (5-8) or both (full primary of 1-8), where their medium of instruction is the regional language, Afaan Oromoo;
2. Schools had to be located no less than 40 kilometers radius distance from the capital city (Finfinnee/Addis Ababa) so that the status of implementation of Afaan Oromoo as medium of instruction could be understood better; and
3. Schools to be selected had to be in four geographical locations (east, west, north and south) and within urban and rural setups, in order to obtain a balanced field data for the study.

The third point could be considered my own preference in a bid to look at schools spread out in four locations instead of limiting data to one or two research sites and locations. On the other hand, it is important to give some clues about the terms “urban” and “rural” as they relate to data gathering sites. As indicated under the Country context, Ethiopia could generally be considered an agrarian country, as 82% of its population still resides in the rural areas. It could also be said that almost all of the rural section of the country’s population is engaged in agricultural activities.

What makes a typical part of rural Ethiopia different from the urban centers is the existence of some government offices and main public services such as education, health, and some business activities in the latter. Nevertheless, the level of these public services differs depending on the presence of main roads and utilities such as water, electricity, and telephone services. In contrast, the broad definition of an urban setting by the Central Statistical Agency is as follows: “Urban areas refer to all capitals of regions, zones, and woredas, and it also includes localities with urban Kebeles whose inhabitants are primarily engaged in non-agricultural activities” (CSA, 2005, 20). Accordingly, the semi-urban areas are the ones that are located between the two broad categories but more rural than otherwise.

Schools that have been selected in consultation with the education bureau planning department have been found either fully Afaan Oromoo medium or having mixed classes where Amharic is also used for the same purpose. In one research site, (Dukam), Grades 1-6 students had a separate compound where the other two upper primary classes (grades 7 & 8) were housed in the Odaa Nabee secondary school. As can be seen in the figure below, 8 schools were finally selected, while four among the original visits were omitted. The basis for the omission was due to distance factors. For example, Wasarbi was too near to Chanco (Caancoo) and much closer to the capital, Finfinnee/Addis Ababa. Moreover, Asella primary was dropped on the ground of distance as well as urban schools seemed to have been over-represented and the chance was given to Gudino primary school located in a rural setup. Similarly, Booru Jawee primary school was dropped due to distance factor.

The last school, Laga Bolloo, was a newly established lower primary (1-4) whose staff and educational facilities were not fulfilled. From two perspectives, the number of schools finally selected for the study was considerable. First, there are no linguistically diverse schools in the region except the few Amharic-medium sections which are few in the semi-urban or urban settings. The

number would have mattered a lot if it were in regions such as the Southern Regional State where more than 50 different linguistic groups and 15 mother tongues are currently used as media of instruction (WIC 2007). Second, for an in-depth study that fits a qualitative research design, the number of schools included in the study had to be convincingly limited. Table 2 below shows the schools included in the study.

TABLE 2 Schools included into the study (Oromia)

No	Name of the Schools	Level	Location	Setup: urban, rural, semi-urban	Remark
1	Holota Hamle 1967	1-8	West Shewa	<i>Semi-urban</i>	
2	Dukam	1-6 and 7-12 (Odaa Nabee Sec. school)	East Shewa	<i>Semi-urban</i>	Grades 7 & 8 classes within secondary school
3	Mulugeta Gedile	1-8	Southwest Shewa	<i>Semi-Urban</i>	
4	Bakkee	1-8	Northeast Shewa	<i>Rural</i>	
5	Chancho (Caancoo)	1-4 & 5-8	North Shewa	<i>Rural</i>	Both levels in separate schools
6	Siiga-meedaa	1-8	West Shewa	<i>Rural</i>	
7	Tafkkii	1-8	Southwest Shewa	<i>Rural</i>	
8	Gudino	1-8	East Shewa	<i>Rural</i>	

7.3 Data Sources

The data sources for the study were relevant historical documents, educational and related documents, teachers, students, parents, officials and experts of two government offices (Education and Culture and Tourism) that have direct bearing on the multilingual education policy and its implementation status. To give an historical perspective to the research under discussion, I used some secondary sources that describe the social, political and cultural life of the Oromoo people in general and Afaan Oromoo in particular. This has considerably helped me to make a link between the Oromoo people and their

language which many sociolinguists (Spolsky 1998; Milroy 1991; Kontra et al. 1999; Mesthrie et al. 2000) also uphold. From research document sources, a pioneer language study in the country by M. L. Bender and his associates (1976), Christine McNab's two language studies in Ethiopia (1987, 1989), Sarah Vaughan's doctoral thesis on 'Power and Identity in Ethiopia' (2003), and Gideon P. E. Cohen's 'Identity and Opportunity' (2001) all of which dealt with past and present linguistic situations of the country have been useful for this research work.

Lately, additional works on the current Ethiopian language policy have been obtained from domestic sources. The works of Mekuria Bulcha (1997) and Teshome Wagaw (1999) were used to show divergent thoughts and historical accounts of language policies in Ethiopia, past and present. Though both are away from the country, their studies represent topical domestic research from an inner perspective on matters related to language use and language policy in Ethiopia. Some more divergent schools of thought on language use and language policies in general and African experience in particular have also been included as forms of reviewed literatures.

Though limited, the domestic documents I referred to have been greatly helpful. In particular, the brief socio-historical and linguistic survey of the Oromoo people, current attempts and struggle to restore their culture and language, and the progress in the education sector since 1990s, have enabled me to come up with a chapter (Chapter 9) devoted to the analysis and synthesis of the implementation of language policy in Ethiopia in general and Oromia in particular. As one of the venues to implement the multilingual education and training policy, primary schools and teacher education institutions have been used as data sources. Moreover, the regional Culture and Tourism and Education bureaus of Oromia, where the study was situated, were also consulted with much more in-depth interviews as they are front-line institutions that formulate guidelines and regulatory frameworks as related to the language policy implementation drive in Oromia.

Research data were, therefore, collected from primary school teachers and primary school teacher-educators. Most teachers have served between 5-20 years in the schools and teacher education institutions. However, teachers' year of service may not be similar in other schools and teacher education institutions, as there are beginning teachers who could be assigned with less than five -years of service as one goes away from the main city. Majority of the teachers have been on duty since the beginning of the implementation of the language policy in the country.

Primary school teachers' qualifications range from a one-year certificate to a first degree, while that of the teacher educators is from first to second degrees. Only few in the aesthetics (music, physical education and health and fine arts) are diploma-level graduates in the teacher education institutions. Student respondents are drawn from grades 7 and 8 (aged 14-15). This age bracket is not absolute as the country's education system has not yet achieved 100 per cent net enrollment as it relates to age and gender. Current net enrollment (with 7 year-

old school entry) as seen under the Chapter on education stands at 67.8 per cent (ESDP III, 2005). It is because of this that the Ethiopian education system prefers to use the term 'grade' or 'level' as educational provision is not fully based on an age bracket criterion.

The rationales behind selecting grades 7 and 8 students should be made clear. First, they are learning in Afaan Oromoo in place of the former mediums, Amharic or English. Second, they are in a relatively mature age-level to respond to some of the general questions about the use of their mother tongue as medium of learning. Thus from each school, between 4 and 6 student respondents took part in the group interviews. The number was limited to four or six students to enhance their active participation in the interviews. The reason for the use of even numbers was to balance the representation of both sexes. Sometimes, it could be the only available number of sections in the school.

The use of group interviews had facilitated students' participation by building confidence among their peers. It may have not been so easy if it were carried out individually as it might have seemed a kind of special probing mission whose purpose was uncertain. Moreover, individual students may not be found feeling at ease to respond to the interview questions and further probing on some points. The group interview helped each student respondent to easily interact with the researcher and their peers. In other words, the group interview created a situation where what one student-respondent began to explain was further supplemented, elaborated or opposed by another or others. In this manner, a peer's 'slip-of- the tongue' was straightened or corrected on the spot. Such live peer interactions have helped the researcher to draw a kind of consensus at the end of each discussion theme.

David Silverman (2001, 12) points out that one likely limitations of the qualitative research is the use of smaller samples, which may leave the interviewer-interviewee relations to be inclined towards individual and political matters rather than focusing on a manner of scientific deliberations. To this end, the use of group interviews rather than consulting each individual respondent had helped the researcher to be guarded against such problems as much as possible, though every point of discussion could not be absolutely insulated from some elements of political allusions. This perhaps emanates from the nature of the subject matter as language issue is inextricably entrenched deeper into the speakers' socio-political life.

The student-teachers' (would-be teachers) age profile was expected to be 18 and above because they were from the age group who completed the general education program at the end of grade ten, two years later and after completing their primary education. The student-teachers were consulted from three teacher training colleges: Neqempte, Jimma and Asella. Neqemte and Asella are located on the opposite geographical directions in Oromia, west and east. Jimma is located on southwest of the regional state. There are no teacher education colleges in the northern part of Oromia as yet and students from the latter join institutions that are away from their zonal administration. But as of

recent, a new teacher education college is under construction in this northern part, Fichee town, and will serve the students in their vicinities.

The interview procedures used for this group was similar to that of the other students. If there were any difference, it was the depth of the interaction during the interview sessions. Primary school teachers and the Teacher educators were purposely identified. They were teachers and teacher educators of Afaan Oromoo, Sciences (basic sciences in lower primary, Biology, Chemistry and Physics in the two upper primary grades) and Social sciences (history and civic subjects in the main). These teachers were selected in order to get relevant interview responses on whether Afaan Oromoo as a learning medium has enhanced or limited classroom instructional process and thereby effective learning. In particular, the selection of the natural science teachers was to draw useful information as these subjects were the main points of controversy among various levels of the elites. The main cause of the controversy lies on whether mother tongue languages, including Afaan Oromoo, could enable learning science subjects.

It has to be noted that teachers' interviews also took place in group. The use of group interviews again helped to tap experiences teachers have undergone while implementing Afaan Oromoo as medium of instruction and their past personal experiences. Furthermore, the group interview was helpful to arrive at what teachers seemed to hold as a consensus on each of the discussion themes. Other respondents such as the student parents, government experts and heads of bureaus' professional background were varied. Almost all of the heads and experts in the bureaus of education and culture to whom the researcher consulted had earned their second degrees in their respective specialties.

Parent respondents were contacted on the recommendations made by the school principals regardless of their academic backgrounds. Having a child in the school was not also mandatory in getting them. However, students' parents were consulted only from four schools out of the 8 visited because of a series of meetings during the visit and some times head masters' call was not properly communicated. As mentioned above, students' interviews included both sexes. Though gender parity is one of the challenges of the Ethiopian education system, it was not difficult to find 4-6 girls in each classroom of the visited schools.

Despite that languages usually bear gender references in the society, this study did not take it into account as the content of the interview is in a different context. As a result, it was not found compelling to divide the students on ground of sex. The researcher felt that there was no significant inhibiting element to either sex nor were personal or group value judgments attributable to sex. The interviews on mother tongue was, therefore, felt a gender-free subject by the interviewees in the sense that what was actually required was to know their attitudes and beliefs on the role and value of their own language. The researcher did not also identify marked restraints on the basis of gender by girl respondents during the process. The idea cited under 8.2.1 in the study that

girls are particularly reserved in classroom interactions refers to a context where the medium of instruction was in “other” language (e.g. Amharic or English) and this study has proved the opposite with the change of the medium into Afaan Oromoo.

Gender parity with teachers, parents and representatives of government offices could not be maintained. The cause for the relative low female participation in the schools and other government institutions could explain nothing more than the under-representation of the female population in the country. As a result, cultural self-restraint on the part of the female staff to volunteer for the interviews was not unexpected. Just like some male staff members do, female staff may not also want to place themselves in the discussion of government’s language policy that was much talked about, not officially but in limited circles. In such instances, the researcher could not help other than requesting the school principals or their assistants to ensure gender parity in the interviews. Besides asymmetrical representations and cultural self-restraint of the female staff, the timing of the interview was not also trustworthy because of the political unrest in the country in the aftermath of the May 2005 national election. The following table depicts the overall data sources of the study.

TABLE 3 Data sources included into the study

S/No.	Data Sources	No. of the group interview respondents	Remark
1	Primary school teachers	40	Sometimes, school principals voluntarily participate uninvited
2	Teacher educators	10	6 from government and 4 from private colleges
3	Primary school students	32	
4	College student-teachers	18	
5	Parents	12	
6	Education bureau respondents	4	Bureau head, curriculum department head, and 2 experts
7	Culture and tourism bureau respondents	2	1 department head, and 1 senior expert
8	Total respondents	118	

Note: Secondary school students and teachers (Grade 9) were not included in the above Table as they were consulted for additional information on my way.

7.4 Data gathering procedures and instruments used

It can be said that the field work started in the month of January 2006, when the first contacts began with the Oromia Bureaus of Culture and Education. The Oromia Bureau of Culture and Tourism was consulted in advance for two main reasons. First, it is a venue where one could get literary sources and historical documents about the Oromoo culture, history and language studies and publications. The bureau has a library and documentation center where Oromoo literary works can be accessed. The library has a documentation section, where volumes of copied historical documents since the 18th and 19th centuries to-date are available. Moreover, recent books and commentaries produced by national as well as foreign scholars have been bought and made available. However, language and language policy study materials are barely available or could be said non-existent in the centre. Instead, collection of reports of different government departments, regional decrees and directives are available at the center while access to these documents is free.

At times, a letter of co-operation is written for any eventualities to access the materials. However, checking out the documents is not allowed because the materials are rare and may be lost for good. Documents or books are allowed for a photocopy service on permission and with limited time. Sometimes, a person from the documentation center escorts the documents until they are photocopied and returned to their places. In all cases, workers at the center are ready and co-operative to any help or request brought to them. They deserve due appreciation and thanks for such services.

Secondly, the Culture and Tourism Bureau was also important in this study as it has a special wing or department to carry out important studies on the standardization of Afaan Oromoo dialects. Though it is believed by most foreign and Oromoo scholars that almost all Oromoo dialects are comprehensible among the Oromoo populations (Bender et al. 1976; Baxter et al. 1996; Mohammed Hassen 1996; Mekuria Bulcha 1996, 1997) from different geographical locations, there is still a need to produce Oromoo dictionaries (*Gaalme Jeechootaa*). Currently, there are 7 different volumes of folk-lore (Jiildi 1-7) that can further enhance the elaboration of Oromoo language and its use. The department now serves as a future cell of Oromoo language academy that is expected to be established soon (currently under construction). A corner-stone was laid in the 26th of March 2006, where the researcher informally attended the jubilation of the highest esteem of Oromoo population on the occasion. A state of spiritual delight being manifested through the traditional Oromoo cultural events depicted the deep-seated and intrinsic connection between the Oromoo people and their once neglected cultural values.

The decision to construct the Oromoo cultural center in the country's capital, *Finfinne*, the original name of Addis Ababa, was something of a litmus test for the regional government's political response to restore the cultural identity of the Oromoo in the capital after being denied for more than a century.

This was as a result of Emperor Menelik's occupying forces and highland Amhara expansion to the south (Cooper 1989; Baxter et al. 1996; Mekuria 1997; Vaughan 2003).

In general, I had a warm welcome from the bureaus of culture and education as my research exercise had to coincide with the overall search for Oromoo culture and identity. It also seemed to coincide with a study commissioned by the Oromia Regional Government to decide on the medium of instruction used at grades 7 and 8. The study was entrusted to the bureau of education to arrive at a decision to either continue with Afaan Oromoo or revert to an English medium in the said grades. The study was instigated by the May 2005 national election which was said to have shown to the ruling party that there were several "public complaints" to be attended by the same. One of such complaints was the medium of instruction in the upper primary schools.

The "feasibility" study (emphasis added) in the aforementioned grade levels was considered to "address public complaints" (my emphasis) though the outcome of the study did not bring about a change of the school medium from the one under implementation since the early 1990s. It must, however, be noted that the study on which the decision of the medium of instruction for the two upper primary grade levels was to be made could not wait for my study as it was a matter of political urgency. On the other hand, as can be seen in Chapter 8, I have benefited a lot from the study under discussion.

Thus, when I began to contact the two most relevant bureaus (culture and education), it gave me a good opportunity to exploit the situation and able to gather relevant documents, publications, and relevant government directives as regards the use and development of the language. Fliers published for the occasion of laying down the corner-stone for the Oromoo Cultural Center have helped me to further understand some remote historical machinations made in the country in the name of modern state-building. Similarly, I enjoyed a warm reception from the schools and colleges (despite the fact that time was a big constraint to get some of their heads) and to access materials I considered important to my research.

The Oromia education bureau offered me a favorably-toned accompanying letter down to the zonal and school officials. Zonal heads and school principals on their turn have made all possible efforts to respond to my needs. The letter, however, did not have any mention of my previous position (as deputy minister) other than informing people down the line to render necessary help to my study. Nor have I ventured to mention it as a means of obtaining both positive and ready-made data only. This is mostly as related to teachers, students, teacher educators and parent respondents. As regards respondents in the sector offices (education and culture), some of the heads and their experts know me in person and others on the media during my tenancy as deputy minister or director of the curriculum institute in the capital. Nevertheless, their knowledge did not go beyond any collegial cooperation. In general, there has not been any sign of authoritative profile due to my previous

post. Furthermore, no special treatment was rendered more than taking the research work as a common endeavor to the development of Afaan Oromoo.

I believe that this code of conduct served two main purposes: easy and frank mutual interaction and also gave respondents the confidence to unreservedly identify some of the policy implementation bottlenecks such as material and institutional problems, limited government support, unhealthy political pressures and some unwelcoming linguistic attitudes in some corners, and lack of capacity building programs for teachers. Perhaps, all of these could have been withheld if my previous post was revealed with the assumption that the responses could be directed to an uncalled-for scrutiny other than for professional/research purpose. As a result, respondents did not refrain themselves from providing honest and relevant responses for the research and nor did they bear the attitudes of sharing with me positive or negative ideas in an intention to appease or disappoint me.

The school principals, on their part, did everything possible by arranging time for teachers, students, students' parents for my interviews and classroom observations. In general, no school principal or their assistants were found unco-operative or hesitant to accept my request to carry out classroom observations, visit libraries, school pedagogical centers, and co-curricular clubs in the researched schools. Some of the school principals even voluntarily participated in the group interviews and shared teachers' views on the implementation of Afaan Oromoo as medium of instruction. Despite that the accompanying letter did not have any mention of my previous position, the basis for positive reception at the schools might be partially related to my relative long-time service in the education sector (close to 30 years) as a teacher and a curriculum expert. I believe that this might have served as a catalyst at least for those who knew my name in the media for rendering me unreserved co-operation to my requests.

As mentioned earlier, research sites were chosen on the basis of relative availability of transport services, rural-urban and their influence by Amharic language in the semi-urban and urban settings. Amharic is believed to have left deeper imprints in the minds of many Oromoo populations, while its current position and influence is not also negligible. With the help of the education bureau's school map, therefore, I had to travel to two primary schools in each route which cater for grades or standards 1-8. A separate travel program was arranged to the teacher education institutions to obtain complementary information or data from teacher educators and student teachers in the selected institutions.

The first series of interviews and observations were carried out with teachers and students in the selected primary schools and parents in the surroundings. My last visited school combined a junior secondary which encompassed students and teachers from grades 7-12, where I also chanced upon to carry out very fruitful discussions with students and teachers of Grade nine students and their principal. Though drawing information from the secondary level education was not in my data gathering plan, this last

discussion gave me additional and ample understanding to many of my research questions. The transport mode used to reach the schools varies from public transport to using carts. Covering a walking distance of 5-10 kilometers on foot when schools are away from the main roads was normal. Intermittent spring rains and warmer temperatures of about 26 degree centigrade have been experienced daily.

Nevertheless, these did not preclude my research data gathering from reaching all the planned research sites and accomplishing set activities. A break-off field activity ranging from few days to a week was used after every visit made in each research route. This was to summon ideas and responses so that they may not be forgotten or lost due to the passage of time. Such breaks helped to regain one's energy and enthusiasm. The break-times were used to make rough comparisons between the data collected from each research site and what I need to reinforce or improve in the next interviews and observation schedules.

In general, the time for the field work was divided between the first day, which is always an introduction and a time-fixing day. It is to be followed by a day or days of interviews and observations. In a situation where the school principal or his/her assistant are not available, one has to wait for a day-long or come back the next day to fix the interview time. This is usually the case that without the permission (*kajeelcha*, to mean guidance) of either of the mentioned individuals, any interview or observational activities can not proceed. As a result, from the introduction day through a 4-5 classroom observations and the independent interviews of the three groups (teachers, students and parents), it could take an average of 3-4 days in each school. Classroom observations were conducted at any time of schooling day, when the three independent groups' interviews were not held. Additional observation includes school support sections such as the library, subject clubs, school mini-media and the general school plant. Informal discussions with teachers, students, and school principals were also part of the data gathering process which served as sort of impressionistic data for the later parts of the study. In general, it can be said that the field work plan was concluded without much difficulty.

On the other hand, it is appropriate to note that after completing the field work in the selected schools in Oromia, I got a chance to travel to five additional Regional States. The main objective of the travel was not to add more data to the already gathered but to simply get a wider perspective on the overall implementation status of the language policy in the country. In particular, the travel I made to the South Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples Regional State (SNNPRS) was very helpful as this is one of the most diverse regional states, with over 50 different languages spoken. Research instruments used to gather the field data were interviews, observation check lists, and relevant documents (official government reports, policies and legislatives) that were thought to have important bearing to the study.

In all the research sites mentioned earlier, interviews were conducted collectively or in form of focus group discussion. The observation activities

included mainly the following school situations: teacher-student classroom interactions, teacher-student communications, student-to-student interactions in and outside classrooms, teacher-to-teacher communication medium, school principals' general perception and attitudes to the language policy and overall educational process, status of school libraries and reference materials, language clubs (especially Afaan Oromoo), and use of school mini-media.

Although I had a separate checklist for the observation of out-of-classroom inputs, in most of the visited schools they were not fully available and at times totally non-existent. As a result, it was only the classroom and out-of-the-classroom observations that I found effective in carrying out the research analysis. The lists of items in the observation checklist, on the other hand, have helped the researcher to investigate and describe connections or compliance with some of the policy intentions and the practice on the ground.

The interviews (see Appendix 1) were unstructured. In other words, they were guides or leading ideas to introduce the theme of the subject matter to the respondents, while detail and extensive probing ideas were to be generated in the course of the discussions. This was made to avoid limiting or confining respondents to express their views in accordance with the researcher's predetermined objectives of eliciting expected data information. Before beginning the interviews, I had to introduce myself and my whereabouts and to what end I am using the research outcome. Explaining the objective of the research was very important to the respondents especially after the recent tense situations in the country. The need for their participation to influence the policy as front-line actors, implementers, beneficiaries and as stakeholders in general, could give them some sense of partnership and security in the research.

At times, the school principals provided additional explanations on the need for teachers and students' participation in the research as they are important stakeholders to air out their beliefs and positions for the betterment of the multilingual education policy under study. The principals also added that I have got an accompanying letter from *Obbo* (means Mr.) Dereje Asfaw, head of the regional education bureau, to help that confidence would prevail during the interview sessions. Respondents were also clearly informed that their responses would remain anonymous and would not be accessible to any third party that would interfere with their job or integrity.

Hence, confirmation for their willingness to share ideas about the study was made at the very beginning and before proceeding further into the main discussion. All of these introductions were important for some of the respondents who had negative reminiscence about Oromoo language and culture in the past. It helped to ease some levels of restraint that could have largely limited the type of rapport and confidence experienced, to a given degree, during the interview processes.

In general, there was a need to get what David Silverman (2001) called "informant consent". Though attempt was made to use a tape-recorder to record responses of the interviewees, I was not successful in this regard. Only in one occasion, parent respondents consented but their response was deliberately

made away from the recorder's microphone and could not be heard clearly. Many of the respondents, especially teachers, did not feel at ease with having their voice recorded in spite of the fact that the objective of the study was explained as impersonal and anonymity would be kept. For the students, use of tape recorder was felt unnecessary for two main reasons: not to add more psychological stress and for no difficulty to cope with response flows. Though I do not regret or believe that I have missed a lot due to lack of recording the interview responses, it might have played a distracting role on my overall concentration to pause and raise questions on each of the responses for further probing and elaboration.

As Afaan Oromoo is my mother tongue, I did not need to use a translator. All I had to do was to translate and transcribe the responses into English after every interview sessions ended. I considered this an advantage because I believe that this opportunity has ruled out some of the uncalled-for mistranslations and uncertainties in the responses that may have had impacts on the findings. Hence, whenever I felt slight dialectic differences that might tend to be unclear, I could immediately make a pause and ask for clarifications and strengthened my notions about the specific point under discussion. Perhaps, one problem faced during all the interview sessions was that when each lead interview question was introduced, respondents touched upon most of the questions as many of the issues were much more related to each other. This sometimes caused lack of maintaining order for each of the questions.

The solution was to repeat the questions again if there were additions, confirmations or reserved ideas. Though these techniques helped to make sure that some questions were not left unaddressed, such attempts were not free from feeling of boredom or question-fatigue situations unless handled carefully. Overall, the actual interview process was more flexible where simultaneous responses were allowed in a bid to avoid disruption unless found too much digressive from the main topic. For example, in one of the visited schools (e.g. Bakkee primary), one of the parent respondents dwelt on the problems of drinking water and the distracting nature of cash crops on students' learning behavior.

The aim was to inform the researcher to help solve such practical school problems though the issues do not have direct bearing with the research objectives. Although I have made enough introductions about my mission and the school principals did the same, some of the interviewees still took me for a government fact-finding person who would take up school problems to the former and help get solutions.

Most student and teacher-respondents were frank in most of the discussions to express their views even in the presence of their school principals. The latter have never appeared to be protective or in defense of government's language policy implementation drawbacks. Taking response notes included scribbling full sentences and short-hand symbols in order to capture the main points of the interview responses. After each interviews, abbreviations and short-hand notes had to be expanded into full ideas not to be

forgotten. This was done everyday after the interview sessions and during the break-off field work. Interview responses had to be further expanded after the completion of the entire field work and to be entered as full research data.

8 RESEARCH DATA PRESENTATION

8.1 Data Entry and Analysis Procedure

As a qualitative research design, data description, analysis and interpretation techniques have been applied. Some quantitative data were drawn through document inspection or analysis. Most of these were obtained from government institutions in the areas of education and training plans and programs, and assessment of learning achievements. Some of the respondents' critical concerns and personal experiences were entered or used without change to show the scope of issue or issues under discussion. A bulk of the research data were drawn through the different interviews conducted and participant observation techniques in and outside the classrooms. Research data were presented in two separate chapters: a) data presentation, and b) critical data analyses and discussions that were believed to give depth of scope to the study using an interpretive technique.

It can be said that this latter chapter has been used as a means of substantiating issues that have been covered through the interviews, observations, document sources, formal and informal interactions made with the research environment. Salient factors that seem to affect the implementation of the language policy in the country in general, and in Oromia regional state in particular, could be discerned clearly in the latter chapter. As much as possible, respondents' view points and some of the critical analyses made on certain issues have been related to the theoretical principles or research findings in similar or different settings. This association technique will greatly help readers to look into matters as to whether there is some level of parallelism or contrasting views between the findings of this study and other studies. It also helps to appraise the underlying linguistic, pedagogical and other related factors that are in the interplay between language and language policy agendas.

8.2 Teachers' interview responses

In this sub-heading, the views expressed by teacher respondents will be presented. As mentioned in the preceding chapter, the teachers' group was categorized into two: primary school teachers and teacher educators (see Table 4). Since they are in two different working environments (in terms of student types, learning levels, educational and training objectives), both categories were consulted independently and one after the other.

8.2.1 Primary school teachers' interviews and discussions

The beginning interview question for this level of teachers was an indirect and a general type: What do you think of can help conduct an active classroom learning process between students and a teacher to take place? At the beginning, respondents meditated many options in their responses as follows: "if the teacher were ready with the lesson plan; if students were ready and active to learn; if the subject matter were not difficult; if educational materials were available", etc.

The question, 'What else?' brought about the underlying issue, the role of mother tongue as one of the variables to active classroom interaction, into the main discussion point: "if the medium of instruction is the one used by both the teacher and students". This was followed by the 'how' probe from the researcher whose explanations varied. In sum, teacher respondents believed and also knew from their daily experiences that what the teacher passes on to children in a language they know can be understood much better. This means, that "both can understand each other". After this common understanding reached, the response for the next question (whether mother tongue was an important learning medium) was nearly automatic. It was in the affirmative. "Yes, no doubt".

These preliminary interview exercises led the discussion to its full-fledged process on the use and value of Afaan Oromoo as learning and teaching medium. The teachers are of the opinion that this medium facilitates students' active participation in the classroom. Their justification is expressed as follows:

Since what students learn in the primary education level is part of their social and cultural environment, via their mother tongue, they [students] can easily understand it. Assignments, projects and classroom activities will not become new and difficult to them.

Teacher respondents therefore have the conviction that many of the school lessons lie in the linguistic and cultural milieu of the community and the students. Even if students do not know the concept, "they can freely ask the teacher without fear and inhibition". Perhaps, this is what the teachers ascribe to the advantage of first language to learning. The teachers asserted that students were not only encouraged to asking questions as a result of the use of Afaan Oromoo, which dealt with the language barrier, it also gave them the

opportunity to express their views and beliefs regardless of the concepts or answers being right or wrong. This may imply an atmosphere of pedagogical confidence being nurtured in the students, which is one of the essential learning ingredients in a classroom. In this line of argument, the use of mother tongue as the teaching medium helps teachers to employ the classic but most important pedagogical principles: going from the known to the unknown; concrete to abstract or complex and so on.

It is further argued that most of what the teacher brings into the classroom as concepts or examples are familiar to the students. This enables them “learn and understand concepts easily”. When things to be learned have ascriptions to something familiar or derivative of related experiences, learning will be more facilitated. Teacher respondents also believed that when learning in their own languages, “students draw certain relationships and connections to what is going-on in their cultural environment”. This is facilitated through popular expressions, folk stories, praises, condemnations or sanctions practiced by the community where the students live. In the areas students have prior knowledge and experience, they are the makers of their own knowledge and learning experience.

The language factor might have played a role in this regard. For example, the researcher while observing a social science classroom instruction in Chancho School of Grade five, a student rose up and asked: “Does community participation mean development work alone?” The student in question wanted the teacher to make some distinctions between the various community participations. The student's reference was if there were community's political participations in areas such as periodic elections and staging peaceful demonstrations in the event that local government bodies have failed to fulfill community's social services (e.g. education, health, water, road, etc.).

The teacher was not able to properly address the question until after many repeated elaborations came to the point the student was after. Similar challenging scene was observed in the science classroom instruction in the same grade. A student wanted to make sure from the teacher's explanation that “both amphibians and reptilians have the same mode of breathing”. The student tracked the teacher's “slip-of-the-tongue” where the latter had to set the distinction and the similarity of the two classes of animals.

The issue behind these typical examples may not lead one to conclude that language of instruction alone (mother tongue medium in particular) had played a role in the active participation of students in the classroom. However, it sheds some light that when a given language of instruction that is familiar to the students is used, it effectively mediates learning and students appear keener than it were otherwise. This makes true what a Bakkee primary school teacher comments: “Sometimes, our students correct us since they know the language of instruction and are more attentive to what we teach.” If this were always true, a two-way communication will have made students' learning more meaningful and practical. It in turn corroborates teachers' previous responses

that students come to school with “prior knowledge and experience” from their cultural and linguistic environment.

If this happens, school's task will become the systematization of prior knowledge and experience which is not only the task of the teacher, but is equally that of the learners. Teacher respondents further argued that student's home knowledge makes classroom drills “much easier, builds his/her confidence and their active participation in the classroom”. Respondents held that home-based knowledge and experience mediated by their language in schools enables students to become more attentive in the classroom and academically competing or achieving. The teachers asserted that from their recent professional experiences, education in Afaan Oromoo has contributed to produce academically stronger students in the higher learning institutions (colleges and universities). One of the teacher respondents in Holota primary school explains:

In this school (Holota), there were academically active and stronger students in the last ten years who have completed their education in Afaan Oromoo. I know most of these students have completed their college and university education in good grades.

Many teacher respondents related such academic success stories as it relates to the use of the mother tongue (Afaan Oromoo) at primary education level. On the other hand, whether the language students had in their primary school (Afaan Oromoo) had served all purposes or part of the success story implied is something to be explored further.

Teacher respondents' argument was a response to one of my interview questions as related to academic success, impacts and the potential of Oromoo language as a medium of science education. This was important because there have been hot popular discourse and dilemmas going on in the country in general and as it relates to Afaan Oromoo in particular. The point was related to the limitations some mother tongues, such as Afaan Oromoo, experience in scientific terminologies to define and explain certain concepts. The overall popular concern was that this limitation may have negative impacts both on the teaching-learning process and students' future academic achievements. However, teacher respondents had a different view in this connection. They recall the time when the medium of school instruction was not Afaan Oromoo (Amharic or English). Commenting their classroom experience in the past, they explain it as follows: “Many of the students in the classroom were passive and it was the teacher and few students who interact and take active part in the teaching-learning processes.”

This implies that most students in the classroom could not interact either because of the level of the difficulty of the subject matter or the language of instruction that was not the current medium under discussion. Teacher respondents also confirmed that students' classroom interaction is now active regardless of the interaction being meaningful or not. This shows that lack of an appropriate medium of instruction plays a deterring role in the communication between the teacher and students. Another justification that teacher

respondents drew was that the current science teaching materials (textbooks and teacher's guides) have used direct borrowing of scientific terms and concepts from English to facilitate learning and teaching in Afaan Oromoo.

The borrowing of these terms was considered to reducing (if not able to completely solve) the problem of lack of ready scientific terms and concepts in Oromoo language. Science teachers of grades 7 and 8 in Holota, Gudino, and Chanco held that the following scientific terms and concepts were examples of direct borrowing: *atom, electrons, nucleus, carbon, oxygen, hydrogen, amphibians, reptilian, photosynthesis, acceleration, power, force*, etc. (emphasis added). These terms have been maintained as the language under discussion could not develop its own equivalent terminologies for now. Although how much direct borrowing of these scientific terms and concepts helped science learning is not exactly known, teacher respondents believed that maintaining them "has facilitated learning science education". Science teacher-respondents further consider borrowing of the scientific terms advantageous as they would be featured again in the immediate secondary school science classes (Grades 9 & 10). As a consequence, it is argued that the students "only face minor spelling differences" which can be overcome after repeated writing drills. Respondents also seemed to value it as a "positive transfer" (Ellis 1985, 22) which denotes similarities of terms or concepts between the two languages (Afaan Oromoo and English).

Science teachers interviewed also stressed that for a meaningful teaching-learning process to occur, communication is basic and central. This is best done in one's mother tongue. If children were to learn in a language other than they know, communication or learning is obstructed. According to the respondents, this is "detrimental" to learning science as science subject requires communication, discussion, elaboration and defending one's position. The teachers then argued that "there is no reason why Afaan Oromoo can not be a language of science, technology and research given that it is further used and developed through use". As noted above, ascription to learning sciences in English has been a debate in the country since the multilingual education policy came to force.

The issue of learning Grades 7 and 8 educational subjects in general and science subjects in mother tongue, in particular, remains contentious to-date. On the other hand, English language lacks an enabling linguistic environment in Ethiopia because of its four-walled classroom encounters. This makes the language the least acquired skills in the country (Schmied 1991). Respondent teachers thus totally disagree with the view that Afaan Oromoo "can not help learn and teach science education", unless Amharic or English were used. Science teachers rather contended that learning science in Afaan Oromoo has helped both teachers and students in the following ways:

For the teachers, it has given them ample opportunity to explain some of the concepts in the subject matter in a much easier and amicable way to their students. For students, it has enabled them to better understand science and develop practical scientific inquiry (e.g. collecting specimen, describing their classification, developing rational thinking and arguments in their own capacity, etc.) about what they learn.

Whether it perfectly fits to the above arguments or not, the Ethiopian Third National Learning Assessment (2007) has come up with achievement results that confirm teacher respondents' views as follows: "Those who took the test in Afaan Oromoo performed better than others in biology, physics and chemistry" (MOE/NOE 2007, 50). It is good to note that this result is more or less similar to that of the 2004 national learning assessment by the same. The Third National Learning Assessment was a continuation of the previous assessments by the Ministry of Education every three years. The reference in the achievement was a Grade 8 learning assessment in the areas of language, mathematics and sciences. The overall assessment result shows that students who took the test in their mother tongue, Oromoo students included, significantly achieved better than others who pursued their education other than their mother tongue (e.g. Amharic or English).

Students' attitude towards learning (in) Afaan Oromoo was another discussion point presented to the teacher respondents. They held the view that students have developed greater enthusiasm both to write and learn in the language. "They (students) find it simpler writing in Oromoo alphabet, *Qubee*". Qubee writing, according to the respondents, was more direct in graphic (also more phonetic) than Amharic or English for a child of Oromoo linguistic background. As seen under the Oromoo writing, Amharic syllabary/alphabets are numerous (231 regular sounds and many other additions) that are used to pronounce the consonants. Qubee, on the other hand, has only 34 alphabets. The vowels are usually combined and in-built to pronounce the consonants as every beginning alphabet is paired with a vowel. Teachers in Mulugeta Gedile primary school showed me the following direct phonological and orthographic relationship as presented in Table 4 below.

TABLE 4 Sample Oromoo words in their orthographic representations

Qubee/Oromo Alphabet	English Alphabet	Afaan Oromoo	English
Aa	A	Aadaa	Culture
Ba	B	Baalaa	Danger/ Catastrophe
Ca	C	Caalmaa	Greatness
Da	D	Daallaa	Fence
Bee	B	Beekumsa	Knowledge

As can be seen from the examples, Afaan Oromoo is written in a more direct way as per the utterances/sounds and even easier than English, where some words are not pronounced as they are written (e.g. enough, calf, half, etc.). Similarly, while writing Oromoo language, long vowels and gemination of consonants are clearly indicated by doubling them as per their pronunciation (see also Chapter 6). Consequently, teacher respondents held the view that this direct writing system adds to Oromoo children's motivation and their students "can master Oromoo literacy in a very short time".

One teacher from Chanco lower primary (1-4) explained that students who complete grades 3 and 4 can successfully write letters for their parents. According to this respondent, students only needed "guidance" from the teacher, as teaching is not expected to begin from a scratch. Asked whether students identify themselves with positive self-esteem as a result of learning in their mother tongue (Afaan Oromoo), the teachers explained that there is observable positive self-esteem where feeling of pride and self-assertions are common. They added: "Students have now recognized that there is equality of language and culture in the country and Afaan Oromoo has ceased this opportunity".

Unlike in the past, students do not any more feel ashamed of their language while speaking or interacting in it. It was further argued that students realized from the mass media that "the time when one was ashamed of and humiliated by speaking their language has become past history". As a result, they have become assertive and began to develop positive self-esteem and confidence in themselves. According to the respondents, students now think that "their language is no less than any language". This attitude seems a reaction against the age-old neglect directed against Afaan Oromoo. It is also to this end now that teacher respondents express their practical observations that their students "do not excuse them (their teachers) in the event of unconscious code-mixing". Students were also reported "not have heard their teachers or known what they have actually said", which is an implicit demand for repeating the word or phrase in Afaan Oromoo. Moreover, there were many students who the teachers explained "criticize" them when they code-mix while they could speak or explain words or concepts in Afaan Oromoo.

Back in the early 1990s, there was a mixed feeling among students and their parents. Questions such as "why do we learn in Afaan Oromoo when we knew it already" were common. A female teaching staff from Bakkee primary school, who also participated in the interviews, recounted her experience in another school where she once coordinated a literacy program for the Oromoo adults. She explains what literacy adults have said to her this way: "We will come when the literacy is taught in Amharic". It shows that literacy in Afaan Oromoo was not useful as is in Amharic. The respondent added that there was a gradual change but she was still in doubt whether such deep-seated attitudes have been fully changed in the urban areas of Oromia, especially where members of the previously dominant language-speaking group live.

One of the important interview questions was this: Has learning in Afaan Oromoo helped in raising school enrolment? Teacher respondents were of the opinion that student enrolment has increased significantly as of recent. They substantiated their arguments by citing examples of the number of students in their classrooms and the number of new schools constructed and being under construction in their woreda. Respondents believed that one of the reasons for the increase of school enrolment was the use of the mother tongue medium, reduction of classroom repetition and school dropouts.

Though there could be many factors in the interplay of classroom repetitions and school dropouts, teacher respondents argued that Afaan Oromoo as a medium of school instruction has played an important role in the retention of students in schools. They asserted that active classroom interaction where students take a leading role results in better learning and this implies "better learning achievement". According to this argument, scholastic success attracts students instead of playing the role of what many educationists call a "push factor" that does not encourage students to come back once they left school compounds with resentful academic attitudes. Respondents, therefore, contend that a suitable medium of instruction enhances good teaching-learning process and this in turn facilitates student's promotion from one level of learning to the next. Though the problems of school dropout are more of social than academic, teacher-respondents believe that most of the problems and solutions of classroom repetition lie in the teaching-learning process and the medium of learning in schools.

Indeed, school enrolment has improved significantly. In one visited school (Bakkee primary school), enrolment has grown nearly three folds from 700 to 1800 students within three years. According to the report by the Oromia education bureau, gross enrolment has rocketed from below 20 percent in the early 1990s to more than 80 percent in 2005, while girls' enrolment ratio has substantially increased both nation-wide and in Oromia (73 percent) as will be seen later in Table 7. Increase in girls' enrolment has additional initiatives. Female teaching staff from both Holota and Bakkee primary schools remarked: "Girls' clubs in each school have contributed to the growth of girls' school enrolment". These clubs played dual roles. First, they raise girls' awareness with the help of teacher mentors in schools. This awareness helps girls to be encouraged in their academic performance and to develop assertive skills. Second and very importantly, is that these girls serve as change agents between schools and the rural women. The girls raise awareness of the rural women in the area of general health, sanitation, and on how to fight against harmful practices that affect their reproductive health. For example, early marriage and abduction practices are common in the rural areas where the level of literacy is very low. These practices especially affect rural girls not to further pursue their education without fear and confidence. After having enrolled into schools, "tutorial supports are provided to enhance girls' academic achievements".

As far as girls' classroom participation is concerned, it was found during the classroom observations that they actively took part in their learning. While

many Ethiopian schools have been reportedly characterized by low classroom interaction, due mainly to medium of instruction, girls' classroom interaction was even much lower owing to the cultural stereotypes and the medium of instruction. Kathleen Heugh (2006), in one of her reviews found that girls are the most inhibited students in the classroom due the English medium in Tanzanian schools. The study vividly indicates that English played the role of a learning barrier for non-English speaking Tanzanian students and the same analogy could be drawn for Oromoo students when the school medium was not their mother tongue. In this regard, teacher-respondents admitted that it was not only the students who could acquire better learning and understanding of the school subjects as a result of the change of learning medium. They commented: "As teachers, we also benefited from critically examining what we teach, its methodological and instructional techniques which we need to be improved from time to time".

In exactly one science teacher's expression, the knowledge they used to impart to their students was "mechanical", lacking in critical conceptualization and scientific objectivity, when the medium of instruction was English in the upper primary level. Now, their understanding of scientific concepts has become "deeper" with the new medium of instruction. The implication was that Afaan Oromoo as an instructional medium has helped them present their lessons in a way their students could understand better and participate actively. Finally, teacher respondents were asked of their opinions as to how the implementation of the language policy and Afaan Oromoo as school medium could be improved. Their suggestions are summarized as follows:

- Afaan Oromoo's educational material production and supply must be enhanced;
- The use and development of Oromoo language must continue;
- Government support must be increased;
- Language policy in Oromia must be fully implemented as per the constitutional provision (in all public offices just like in schools). This also calls for the proper observance of the region's language code of conduct as per its constitution and amended proclamation of 46/2001, Art. 5: "Oromo language shall be the working language of the regional State. It shall be written in the Latin Alphabet."
- "Pressure" (emphasis added) against the language must stop (refers to attitudinal and political one);
- Adult education in Qubee must be given priority for the rural Oromoo population;
- Lack of uniform language use in some government offices must to be corrected; and
- Teachers' professional development in Afaan Oromoo and other subject areas taught in the same has to be given prime importance.

8.2.2 Teacher educators' views on Afaan Oromoo as medium of teacher preparation

As pointed out under the methodology section, one area of obtaining information about the role and suitability of Afaan Oromoo as medium of teacher education/preparation was the colleges of teacher education. Presently, most primary teacher education institutions have been upgraded to a college status granting a three-year diploma studies. When this research was carried out, there were already 40 private teacher education institutions in Oromia while that of the government were only six.

The rationale behind the speedy upgrading of the former teacher training institutes was that the Regional Government decided to leave the 1-4 teacher education program space to the private sector while the Education Bureau plays a supervisory role in the quality assurance fronts. Private teacher education programs basically pursue government curriculum but differ in their management, financing and status of quality observance.

Interview respondents were drawn from government and private teacher education colleges to find out if there were differences or conformity of opinions on the use and importance of Afaan Oromoo as medium of teacher preparation/education program. Responses from teacher educators of both institutions have been organized under one response theme (teacher educators) and will be presented in the paragraphs that follow. The first question concerned the importance and suitability of the medium of instruction in the preparation of teachers: How far has it helped? Responses began as follows:

Education in the primary school is largely about basic knowledge and experience that children are made to know and practice. It introduces them to their social, cultural and environmental phenomena to which students have had prior knowledge and experience. Preparing teachers in the language that expresses these experiences will become more appropriate.

The above pedagogic responses imply that use of a medium that can describe the social, cultural and environmental activities will facilitate students' learning. Likewise, using Afaan Oromoo as the medium of preparing teachers will also create meaningful links between the learning environment, where the would-be teachers will be deployed and the preparing institutions (teacher education institutions). Teacher educators therefore assert that the prospective teachers would have a better opportunity while having their training in the teacher education institutions and go out for their teaching career using the same instructional medium (Afaan Oromoo). This understanding squarely fits into the findings made by Mekonnen (2005) which confirms that the mismatch between the language used to prepare teachers at colleges and that of school medium has made the teachers to become handicapped over their career assignments in Tigray.

Teacher educators further maintain that the student-teachers have 'done away with the problem of language barrier but only concentrate on "generating or expressing their ideas" in training programs. As a result, with the exception

of student-teachers having some Amharic backgrounds, most Oromoo trainees developed “positive attitude” toward Afaan Oromoo as medium of teacher preparation. Consequently, teacher educators asserted that the use of Afaan Oromoo as medium of teacher preparation has developed in the student-teachers “self-confidence” in the following ways: “active classroom participation, completion of individual and group assignments within set time and quality level, and presentation of projects and defending one’s position.”

In assessing their student-teachers' attitudes and their future career, teacher educators also believed that besides their teaching career, the student-teachers have developed ambitions to advocate and raise awareness of the Oromoo public to use and value their language. How can the teacher educators verify these attitudinal attributes was further probed. The proofs include the way student-teachers expressed cases and defend their positions without inhibitions, their varied academic participations (e.g. in the student council, study area clubs and reports, field teaching practice, classroom micro-teaching, etc.).

Moreover, students-teachers’ “self-initiatives” to accomplish tasks within deadlines was accounted as additional manifestations by these respondents. Most teacher educators who participated in the interviews have had years of reminiscence of their teacher education classrooms, when the medium was either Amharic or English. They characterized those classroom days as “low student-teachers interaction with many dropouts”. The respondents associated the problem largely with the medium of teacher preparation. Comparing it with the current classroom situation, there is now “more classroom participation and interactivity” between the student-teachers and their instructors. One teacher educator who was an instructor of both Afaan Oromoo and English had these comments:

During the English lesson, participation is very low and limited to few student-teachers and myself. In the Afaan Oromoo lesson, participation is very high and trainees' confidence is clearly felt and observable.

As observed in the primary school teachers' interviews, change in the medium of teacher education program has also benefited teacher educators to run interactive classroom sessions. They relate the smooth instructional process to the quality of preparing competent student-teachers and their achievement. A college English instructor who did not participate in the group interview, privately told me the following with regard to student-teachers' academic achievement in the subjects mediated in Afaan Oromoo as follows: “While A and B grades (marks) are very common in the subjects taught in Afaan Oromoo, C, D and F are more frequent for subjects taught in English”. The researcher has proved this assertion through the observation he conducted from the College’s bulletin boards where student final grades (marks) are posted. Indeed, there is a significant discrepancy between the grades earned by students taught in Afaan Oromoo and those taught in English.

Issues related to learning science subjects in Afaan Oromoo were another areas of discussion in the interviews made with the teacher educators. It was an attempt to find out the views of these front-line actors in response to some of the popular debates on the subject. The response of a biology instructor (respondent) from Asella Teachers College is presented as follows:

I don't see significant problems in teaching or learning science in Afaan Oromoo. I have been teaching biology in English before. When the medium changed to Afaan Oromoo, I continued to carry out my teaching activity without difficulty. Now the student-teachers understand and work out every biology assignments in their mother tongue because they had not experienced a break in the medium of learning which most instructors, including myself, faced before.

The instructor rather challenges and tries to disprove some of the popular attitudes that learning sciences in Afaan Oromoo is either difficult or impossible. Teacher educators also believed that Afaan Oromoo as medium of teacher preparation has "simplified their instructional process and built in them more professional confidence". From the respondents' views, it could be inferred that the change of medium for the preparation of teachers has not negatively affected the training program. They believed that it rather created conducive grounds both for the instructors and student-teachers' classroom interaction. These responses go in line with the belief that "the more teachers are prepared in their mother tongues and understand their local cultures, the more practical and effective will the teaching-learning process in the classroom be" (Neil, Dessalegn and Bahru 2005, 22).

There are, however, two commonly identified problems while using Afaan Oromoo as medium of a teacher preparation program: a) lack of sufficient materials supply in the medium of teacher preparation (in Afaan Oromoo), and b) students' low English proficiency. Respondents were concerned about the supply of training and supplementary materials that could not keep pace with the change of the training medium. The researcher had the chance to visit the teacher colleges' libraries which were mainly full of English materials. Afaan Oromoo materials were limited to one copy (teaching module) for each of the disciplines without having additional references to be used by the trainees.

Since most available reference materials in the colleges' libraries were in English, teacher educators held that with Afaan Oromoo continuing to be the medium of teacher education program, sufficient training materials should have been produced and made ready for use by the instructors and student-teachers. Teacher educator respondents finally forwarded the following comments by way of warning: "Continuing to furnish teacher colleges with English materials while the medium is Afaan Oromoo makes the teacher education program to compromise with the quality envisioned in the same". The remark simply demonstrates a clear indication of the disharmony between the language policy objectives on the paper and their actual practice on the ground.

8.3 Students' Interview Responses

Group interviews were also organized to consult with selected primary school students and student-teachers in the colleges. It must be noted that the groups were interviewed separately at different time and place, while responses of both groups were organized under a common theme: students' interview responses. The underlying objective was to know their overall reaction or attitudes toward the use of Afaan Oromoo as medium of instruction and teacher preparation. Thus, Responses for the following two questions: Do you like learning and why? How many languages do you learn in your school/college? Both questions did not demand much probing as they were short and precise. The students unanimously replied: "Yes, because learning is important, to get knowledge, to earn one's livelihood and change of way of life," etc. Student respondents similarly confirmed that they learn (in) three school languages: Afaan Oromoo, Amharic and English. Their response fulfills the trilingual education and training policy of the country that recognizes mother tongue, the federal working language (Amharic), and English. English is taught both as a subject from grade one onwards, while it also serves as medium of learning in secondary schools and beyond.

For the Oromoo students, Afaan Oromoo, Amharic, and English were the expected responses, while these responses may differ for some students in the main urban centres and other regional states. Students' response for the following questions (Which language or languages do you frequently encounter with and which of them do you use most?) opens the door for further discussion and probing.

Both student groups confirmed that they frequently encounter with and use Afaan Oromoo most. Reasons were given as follows: "Because it is our language; it is our parents' language; and it is easier for us than Amharic or English". As to why it is important to learn in one's language, responses were pedagogically convincing: for ease of communication while learning. There were also more advanced views for the 'why' question as follows: "Learning [in] Afaan Oromoo means learning Oromoo culture and history", implying language as a vehicle for recognizing one's identity.

The student-teachers in particular seemed to regret the neglect inflicted on Afaan Oromoo and its perceived inferior status in the past. According to their views, if the language under discussion had not been neglected, it could have developed and become a language of teaching and learning much earlier. In particular, student-teachers claimed that "Afaan Oromoo could have become one of the official or national languages in Ethiopia". Moreover, both student group respondents added that to learn or learn in one's language is considered a "pride".

Student-respondents also highlighted reasons and examples. For instance, it is a pride because "the Amhara give value to Amharic; Tigriyans value Tigrigna. Both peoples speak and learn in their respective language. Valuing

and learning (in) Afaan Oromoo is no exception". The same respondents believed that the use of Afaan Oromoo both at home and in schools makes their learning easier. But they have mentioned that students in some urban areas are constrained by the variety of language use. The level of language use therefore depends on where an individual student lives. It is important to note that semi- and urban areas in Oromia are inhabited by peoples of different multilingual backgrounds where Amharic plays an intermediary role.

To some extent, this affects the level of Afaan Oromoo linguistic skills of urban resident Oromoo students. Nevertheless, scholars believe that the home is an important factor in the use of language. According to Edwards (1976, 19) the "home world" (the neighborhood, the church, congregations, etc.) will help people not to drop their languages but maintain them through active and constant use. As regards their parents' attitude towards learning (in) Afaan Oromoo, students' response goes to the extent of examining the level of awareness of the former to support or down-play the opportunity.

In this regard, an assessment expressed by one of the student respondents was worth mentioning: "Some of our parents do not understand the value of learning {in} Afaan Oromoo because what they knew to-date is Amharic and it is 'more valuable' (emphasis added) to them than Afaan Oromoo". Some of the respondents rationalized the issue that Oromoo parents have every reason to believe that Amharic is more important than Afaan Oromoo as the latter has not been seen in use in the major public domains for years.

Asked to give their opinions as to why some Oromoo parents send their children to Amharic medium schools, student respondents believed that it was due to "lack of awareness" about their culture and identity. According to these respondents, some parents are not quite sure whether the change (the language policy reform) would continue to operate or there would still be another change in the language of instruction in schools or colleges.

It is important to add another student respondent's reaction against the current language of instruction. In Mulugeta Gedile primary school, one of the student group interviewees argued to the last that English must have been made the learning medium for grades 7 and 8, where many of his colleagues did not share his view. The student's reaction seemed to emanate out of concern for the subsequent studies and their academic success in secondary and tertiary levels. This concern was frequently heard among the larger public and most students' parents in particular if Afaan Oromoo continued to be a medium in both of the upper levels of primary school (Grades 7 & 8). Though the argument is not based on scientific research, there is no doubt that the student's attitudes towards English medium plays a "backwash" effect on the implementation of a mother tongue medium policy (Heugh et al. 2006) such as Afaan Oromoo.

Indeed, similar concerns will continue to reside deeper into some of the students and their parents' mind until the present language policy proves itself to dispel such doubts. Similar doubts may also be borne by other stakeholders, including some members of the teaching staff. The perceived assumption was that the current media of primary education, Afaan Oromoo included, are "not

sufficient” to provide quality education and training that may call for policy change or reversal. According to the students, the solution for the problem was “education, especially adult education,” for raising awareness among the larger Oromoo population. In this regard, the students’ recommendation was of significant relevance in view of two aspects. First, most Oromoo rural population is in acute illiteracy.

Second, Oromoo writing system (Qubee alphabet) is only familiar among the educated circles and largely confined to government offices and educational institutions. Finally, student respondents were allowed to express their views and aspirations as related to the language under discussion. Their suggestions are summarized as follows: Oromoo public consciousness needs to be enhanced further on the value of their language. There is a need to conduct awareness creation programs while students and all educated Oromoo nationals have to help the rural population to take part in the literacy program. Respondents added that political pressure and “political dubbing” on the use of Afaan Oromoo has to stop and educational materials (especially, textbooks) have to be produced in sufficient quantity and distributed in time. Finally, respondents pointed out some of the mismatches between the language policy in question and its implementation process in Oromia regional state. This last point is related to the lack of uniform use and implementation of Afaan Oromoo in some government offices in the region.

8.4 Parents’ interview responses

Language planning and policy in the multilingual societies is believed to solve communication problems in addition to serving certain non-linguistic ends. In particular, the former is meant to create further social integration and mobilize the public for the common good and development. It is also one of the means for the political stability and peace which are considered preconditions for fulfilling these social objectives. The inclusion of parents as one of the data sources is considered important to know their attitudes towards the language under study. Both Eastman (1983, 106) and R. L. Cooper (1989, 34-35) held the view that language attitudes affect language policy implementation in a multilingual and multicultural setting. People’s attitude towards the use of a given language has significant impacts on the level of acquisition and development of the language. It has also significant impacts on the scope and quality of implementation. Moreover, there can be unfavorable prejudices from other people who do not speak or know the language that has been given the status of a national, regional or medium of school instruction.

While language planners are required to attend to such individual, group as well as and social attitudes, the interest of this study was that of the attitudes of parents as related to their own language, Afaan Oromoo. The interviews took place with groups of parents in the four of the visited schools. The beginning of

the interview question was whether the parents had registered their children in Afaan Oromoo operating-schools or classrooms and as to why they have decided to do so. Reaction to this question was important because this helps to consciously or unconsciously elicit respondents' attitudes about the language under consideration. Most parent-respondents confirmed that they had either children/students attending in the Oromoo medium schools while the interview was carried out or in the near past. All the same, most of them had their children registered in schools where Afaan Oromoo is a medium.

The parents were inquired of their attitudes toward the use of Afaan Oromoo as medium of instruction in schools. In their responses, other than recounting their past traumatic experiences, all of them believed that learning in Afaan Oromoo benefits a lot. They asserted this way: "It is important to learn in one's language". Their justification included that for a long time Afaan Oromoo has been suppressed from official use and now is its "resurrection" (emphasis added). According to the parents, present day students have a good opportunity more than any of their parents in the past to know their culture, language and value their identity. Student parents, therefore, approved and valued the use of Afaan Oromoo as medium of school instruction. They added that not able to know and use one's own language is like "going in the dark". To them, present Oromoo nationals have the opportunity to assert themselves and value their identities. When examined, this assertion seems to bear two inseparable psychological ambivalences: a feeling of regret and loss for the past and equally envy of the present and future as it relates to Afaan Oromoo.

Parent respondents further believed that Oromoo children can easily understand their teachers and pursue their learning without much difficulty. During the interviews, some sense of regrets were clearly manifested as related to the years when the Oromoo population was undermined and named with the derogatory term, "Galla", an abusive tone and expression that relegates the Oromoo to an inferior social position in the country. Respondents characterized this traumatic psychological treatment of the Oromoo as a "scar that takes time to regain Oromumma (Oromooness) and a wound that needs careful healing". Some parent interviewees recounted their grim experiences during the past regimes in which they had no opportunity to become eligible for career promotions simply because they were Oromoo. For example, a veteran parent interviewee who was serving in the royal body guard during the late Emperor had once got nominated to escort the Emperor. However, he was not successful to hold the position and recounted his experiences as follows:

I was nominated on the basis of good service and physical fitness for the post. However, when the final question, 'where are you from?' was asked, my response was 'Salalee' (northern Oromia). My engagement to the post was suddenly cancelled and it was given to someone else whose linguistic background was Amharic.

This above respondent's recounts remind us of Cooper's (1989) observation when he indicated that the Oromoo were not in equal footing in acquiring such top government positions in the army and other related posts. As a result, the scholar concludes that most of the top positions in the army and other posts were

occupied by the Amhara and Tigre nationals. He goes on: "Relatively few, in view of their number in the population at large, were held by Oromoo, and fewer still, by Muslims who were, and still are, about as numerous as Christians in the empire as a whole" (Cooper 1989, 22). Another parent interviewee, a woman respondent, had similarly shared her severe encounter that she had once met during the imperial regime. Her saddening incident was narrated as follows:

I went to an army hospital in the capital looking for treatments of my child. But I could not speak Amharic except Afaan Oromoo. As I could not explain the symptom of the child's illness to the doctor, I was slapped on both sides of my cheeks. Though I burst into tears, nobody came to my rescue; even an Oromoo nurse witnessing the scene could not come to my help.

In consequence, she said that she hated being an Oromoo and her language. Since that very day, she began trying to learn to speak Amharic but has never been able to speak a single word correctly. She added: "Many people made me an object of laughter at my Amharic speech for many years." The same woman respondent told that none of her children were able to learn Afaan Oromoo, because of the linguistic stigma and humiliation that was being inflicted on their parents and other Oromoo families. This may also be related to McGroarty's assessment (1996) of the attitudes of some parents' personal histories that when their language is stigmatized, they insist that their children learn or acquire a 'standard' language. Consequently, their language is assigned to home purpose or functions only.

The woman (parent) interviewee thus felt that today's Oromoo children "are lucky to benefit from the current language policy", noting that this victory has been the dear sacrifices paid by the Oromoo martyrs. Nevertheless, she deeply regretted: "My children could not be a beneficiary of this 'redemptive' (emphasis added) opportunity", to imply that current Oromoo cultural and linguistic renaissance is tantamount to self-reassertion or regaining of Oromumma (Oromooness).

Whether the use of Afaan Oromoo as medium of school has contributed to bridging the school-community relationship, parent interviewees unanimously responded in the affirmative. They recalled that before some years, Oromoo parents did not have direct school contact because the schools were in 'other tongue' which most of them could not hear or speak. An old man who participated in the parents' interviews recalled that there was no entry to the school compound without having the knowledge of Amharic language or having an interpreter to whom payment (bribery) is made to intercede. As a result, the community never felt schools as their institutions. Parent respondents further recalled that many children were forced to be absent or dropout from school because there was no understanding (intelligibility) between the teacher and their students. They believed that since the launching of the language policy there is a close relationship between the community and the schools to support the latter in many ways.

The respondents, therefore, asserted that there are now people who speak their 'word' and who can listen to their problems in their 'tongues'. Indeed, in

almost all of the schools visited, principals invited the researcher to the spectacular community participation in building additional new classrooms, libraries, laboratories, auditoriums and the school pedagogical centers. For example, in Tafkki primary school alone, the principal showed me 8 newly constructed classrooms, a library, teachers' staff-room and an assembly hall fully financed by the community. In addition, a school fence has been constructed by the community's participation in labour, material and financial support. Community financing of additionally employed staff (teaching and administrative) has been very common in the visited schools. Respondents were of the view that the current school-community relationship trend differed from what it was before, when school was considered the responsibility of government only.

It was recounted that in the past, when school medium was not Afaan Oromoo, many children did not dare go to school. One of the parent respondents in Bakkee primary school expressed his deep regret as follows: "The main reason why I remained 'uneducated' and unable to read or write to-date was that schools were not child-friendly". According to this respondent, both the language of instruction and the handling of children did not motivate him to go to school and learn. Now, he felt happy that his sons and daughters learn in Afaan Oromoo.

The same parent respondent believed that the use of the language in school helps children develop positive attitudes about their language, culture and appreciate their Oromooness as opposed to the past. If all what the respondents just explained were true, why then, did some Oromoo parents send their children to Amharic-medium schools? Indeed, this was an important point that deserved discussion with the parent interviewees. The respondents have indicated the following plausible reasons to which government bodies had to carefully pay attention to: a) the recency of the policy, b) low awareness on the part of the general public as related to the language policy objectives, c) the gap between the policy and constitutional provision and the practice on the ground, d) the uncertainty over the sustainability of the language policy in question, and e) lack of credibility on the success rate of Afaan Oromoo-run schools.

It is important to reflect the responses of a parent interviewee from Bakkee primary school again. When the implementation of the language policy began and Afaan Oromoo was declared the school medium, he witnessed: "Our school was too weak to guide and control the teaching learning process. As a result, we registered our children in Amharic-medium school". He further explained that many parents felt that learning in Afaan Oromoo does not help provide good or quality education.

The same parent interviewee also explained that there is still subtle language suppression by members of the past dominant linguistic group, while local Oromoo administrators are "weak to defend" the language and other rights of the Oromoo people. Over all, parents' attitude toward Oromoo language as medium of learning could be said positive in general, with the

exception of certain reservations by the same which would be treated in detail in the next chapter.

8.5 Interview responses from the education bureau of Oromia regional state

The education bureau is an office in charge of the education and training programs in the regional state of Oromia. It is a government agency that directs and controls education and training matters below the university level programs, where the latter is the responsibility of the Federal Ministry of Education. Consulting this front-line institution was found quite necessary in view of the role it plays in facilitating and supporting the implementation of the language policy under consideration. Though the researcher and the bureau head set a common and suitable day and time to meet for the interview, the bureau head's appointment time was still full of formal and informal meetings and consultations with his own experts as well as other officials/persons from different organizations.

Even after managing to get him in office, there was another urgent meeting elsewhere outside his office and there were a series of intermittent calls. As a result, we were forced to halt and restart our discussions many times. Since setting another interview day was not found reliable, I preferred to concentrate on the main interview questions that I felt were critical to draw relevant information or responses from “the horse’s mouth”. For more and detail deliberations, we agreed that I had to consult some of his senior experts. The circumstance therefore forced the researcher to conduct two interview sessions in the same institution or bureau but having the same objectives. Following are the interview responses drawn from both parties and are presented one after the other.

8.5.1 Interviews with head of the education bureau

Our first discussion with the bureau head focused on the role of Afaan Oromoo as medium of instruction in the teaching- learning process in Oromia primary schools. The head believed that Afaan Oromoo as a medium of education and training in the regional state has contributed a lot to raising school participation (enrolment), parents and community-school relationship, and facilitation of active learning. He expressed his beliefs as follows: “The community owns and administers schools as they now consider them as their own institutions”. The bureau head argued that since the community considers schools as their own institutions, they had constructed several new schools; expanded classrooms; maintained latrines; upgraded libraries; and built guard houses and school offices. According to the head, implications to such wider community participations, therefore, hinge on the use of Afaan Oromoo as school medium.

The head thus believed that labour, material and financial contributions of the community were “the outcome of the use of the regional (local) language as medium of instruction that motivated the community to be attracted to help achieve school goals”. These goals among others included conducting better teaching-learning process in schools, enhanced enrolment and equity of access to school and reducing school wastages (classroom repetition and school dropouts). Since the school-community relations mentioned by the bureau head has some bearing with the school learning medium under consideration, I tried to probe into the main reason and the extent of community participation in the educational process in the region to which the head referred me to a document on the subject under consideration. Accordingly, I found that community participation and support in the last three consecutive years (2002/3, 2004/5, and 2005/6) alone has shown greater increase in labour, material and financial accounts.

Consequently, Birr 46, 557,888; Birr 95, 845, 502; and Birr 60, 024, 187 respectively had been contributed in the three academic years alone to support schools. Though community contributions increased since recently, the last contribution got behind the previous year. The bureau head ascribed the last round of reduced community contribution to the aftermath of May 2005 national election which was followed by intermittent popular unrest both in the country and the regional state.

Our next discussion point with the bureau head focused on how much of the community’s participation has been voluntary, on their full consent and due to the school medium. Indeed, the communities have been supportive since the introduction of Afaan Oromoo as medium of school instruction. However, the bureau head responded that the Federal Ministry of Education put in place a guideline since 2002, through which maximum community participation is to be tapped. The regional education bureau adapted the guideline and used it to enhance community participation based on their ability and income level. He added: “Those who could not afford financial contributions can participate in material and labour provisions”, while participation was said voluntary.

While there is no doubt that community’s awareness and enthusiasm to educational opportunity had shown greater impetus since the last ten years, the implementation of the education sector development programme (ESDP) is also another government instrument that informs the former to enhance their support in their respective localities. In addition, the head explained that political sensitization has also played significant roles in this popular mobilization process. The underlying drive was that the community does not want to lose any educational opportunity by withdrawing its contributions as government alone cannot ensure the Education for All (EFA) goal in view.

The head further held that learning in one’s language enables that individual to understand concepts easily and clearly. It also “serves as means of enhancing quality education”. As a result, the head was of the opinion that there were considerable popular participations in the educational activities of

the regional state and positive learning result indications on Oromia-wide national examinations and the Federal Ministry's Learning Assessments.

The bureau head asserted that in both the assessments, Oromoo students have achieved better results, in relative terms, when compared to other regions. However, the Oromia-wide grade 8 student achievement results were not made available during the study. Asked whether there were special efforts to help develop and promote Afaan Oromoo in achieving its entrusted roles in the region, the head mentioned that "the bureaus of education and culture and tourism provide additional support". Nevertheless, the researcher proved from both the two bureaus' experts that the joint cooperation formed between the two institutions had been weakened and was nearly non-functional while this research was carried out.

The cause for the weakened-cooperation between the two institutions was ascribed to lack of budget but further probing into the matter rested partly on lack of follow-up and attention to the cause. The education bureau head, however, frankly admitted as follows: "There are no other additional means put in place to promote and develop the language at present other than the joint cooperation". In other words, there has not been a different plan or complementary effort to promote Afaan Oromoo as the medium of education in the regional state. On the other hand, it was learned that the bureau of education established Afaan Oromoo unit whose prime objective was to extend service to school-level Afaan Oromoo clubs to serve as promoting mechanisms. However, when this research was carried out, the visited schools complained that Afaan Oromoo clubs were not functioning well due to what they labeled as "political interventions" from the regional government.

As regards the problem facing the promotion of Afaan Oromoo through the school clubs, the bureau head did not either want to comment on the subject or know much about it. The head responded as follows: "All I know is there were some persons whom I believe misled members of the Afaan Oromoo school clubs, students and teachers, to an undesirable political end". The so-called 'undesirable political end' tacitly implied to the opposition parties (e.g. the Oromoo Liberation Front and other Oromoo political organizations) which are not in good terms with the regional and federal governments. The government perceives these political organizations would dissuade students in the Afaan Oromoo club to mass unrest. According to the bureau head, the case was apprehended by the security forces and persons involved in these "undesirable" acts were put into jails. The reason behind the imprisonment of these individuals was that the latter were allegedly conveying political messages considered "threats" to the people.

From our interview discussions, the bureau head did not want to dwell much on this particular subject as it was considered more of a "political" or "security" matter than educational. But as learned from the visited schools, the issue under discussion was seriously affecting the actual teaching-learning process as teachers who headed Afaan Oromoo clubs and member students were put under political scrutiny in various occasions.

8.5.2 Additional discussions with the education bureau experts

The experts I had additional discussions with were three: head of the curriculum development and two language experts in charge of Afaan Oromoo unit and school clubs. The unit that was established under the regional education bureau was designated as *Gumii daagaagina aadafi afaani* (culture and language development council/unit). The experts contacted also held similar views as regards the importance of Afaan Oromoo as medium of school instruction, that learning (in) Afaan Oromoo has nurtured positive influence on the rural parents. This view emanates from the assumption that through their children, parents have become aware of the value of their language and culture. The experts further asserted: "Though Oromia is a large land mass, the impact of the value of Afaan Oromoo in the educational institutions and other public domains (e.g. as medium of learning, court process, etc.) convinced the rural population the role and importance of the language". It means that this positive understanding and attitude has contributed to the rural parents' knowledge and awareness of their language and identity. However, this view does not fully conform to student respondents' assessments of their parents' attitudes and state of awareness.

The experts believe that the use of Afaan Oromoo as medium of education and working language in the regional state has played a catalytic role by reversing the lowest school gross enrolment rate (GER) of less than 20% in the early 1990s to the current status of beyond 90% in Oromia. That was why the experts strongly asserted that improvement in the access to and quality of learning (students' academic achievements) is associated with the medium of instruction. To this end, improvement in the teaching-learning process and academic achievement of students in Grade 8 regional school leaving examinations was brought as a case in point as follows:

Though a comparative study has not been carried between regions, we believe that a progressive academic improvement has been registered in the region (Oromia) when compared to even the city of Finfinnee (Addis Ababa), where English is the learning medium and better human and material inputs are available.

On the other hand, concrete comparative examples sought by the researcher were not made available during the interview sessions to corroborate the claims of the experts as it relates to Oromoo students' Grade 8 national examination results. Instead, the experts related the national learning assessment carried out by the Federal Ministry of Education in 2004 at Grade 8, in which Oromia was one of the three top achieving regions, with Amhara and Tigray regional states. The national learning assessment report under consideration disclosed: "Tigray (49.07%); Oromia (48.43%); and Amhara (48.32%) respectively scored well above the national mean, 41.34%" (MOE/NOE 2004, 32).

The education bureau experts also brought into light Oromoo students' achievement in the nation-wide Grade 10 terminal examinations over a four consecutive period (1993-1996 E. C). The bureau analyzed these achievements, whose original data were that of the Federal Ministry of Education against the

student achievements in Amhara, Tigray and Southern regional states. The comparative analysis was instigated by the quest from the Oromia Regional Government to decide the medium of instruction in the two upper primary schools (Grades 7 and 8) in order to make credible justification to either change or maintain Afaan Oromoo as an instructional medium. The analysis also aimed to find out the impact of this instructional medium both in primary levels and beyond. As can be seen in Table 5a below, Oromia's relative standing has served to defend and as a point of justification to maintain the use of the instructional language. Moreover, academic success and achievement has also been associated to Afaan Oromoo as medium of instruction. The table shows comparative achievements scored by Oromoo students against their counterparts in Amhara, Tigray and Southern/ SNNP regions.

TABLE 5a Comparison of Oromoo students' terminal examination results at the end of Grade 10

Year in E. C/G. C	GPA	Regional States' Relative Standings in %			
		Oromia	Amhara	Tigray	SNNPR
1993/2001	>2	26.91	23.63	20.41	-----
1994/2001	>2	29.10	22.52	20.32	-----
1995/2003	>2	30.22	21.56	-----	16.4
1996/2004	>2	29.67	23.62	-----	17

Source: Oromia Education Bureau (OEB 2006, 7-8)

According to the bureau experts' views, the above comparative achievement is relevant in view of two factors. One, the Grade ten national examinations are the second immediate achievement measuring tools after the grade 8 regional examinations and some what indicative of the predictive value of the success in mother tongue education. Secondly, Oromia, Amhara, and Tigray regional states used to provide primary education (1-8) in their respective mother tongues during those years while the Southern national state provided education in mother tongues up to Grade six.

While the Oromia regional government's decision favored Afaan Oromoo to be maintained in the two upper primary grades as medium of instruction, the result of the comparison, however, does not exactly indicate whether the four years' Oromia's relative standing was due mainly to the regional students' demographic weight (greater number of candidates) or solely the medium of instruction or a combination of the two. Similarly, it does not show the universe or total population of the group who sat for the national examinations in those years.

Another plausible comparison taken by the education bureau for the decision of the medium of the two upper primary grades was the pass rate of students to the higher learning institutions. Accordingly, in the Ethiopian academic years between 1995 and 1997, Oromoo students' comparative pass rate into higher education institutions is indicated in table 5b below.

TABLE 5b Comparison of Oromoo students' pass rate to higher education

Percentage of student passes into the higher education from the three regional states and one city government				
Year in E. C/ G. C	Addis Ababa	Amhara	Oromia	Tigray
1995/2003	34%	21.47%	18.38%	-----
1996/2004	19.34%	-----	28.47%	19.4%
1997/2005	15.71%	24.6%	31.74%	-----

Source: Oromia Education Bureau (OEB 2006, 8)

The bureau experts also cited the above table as a point of justification for their argument that the use of Afaan Oromoo as the medium of primary education contributed to the competitive learning achievements. The experts believed that Afaan Oromoo has played an important role by providing opportunities to Oromoo students enrol into the higher learning institutions. This has two implications: enhancing enrolment to the primary schools and increasing the number of competent entrants into the higher learning institutions. According to the experts, this was served by Afaan Oromoo by its virtue as medium of instruction in primary education. By citing the rate of entrance into the higher education (Table 5B), the education bureau then argues that the achievement scores were valid for their closer relationship to the educational medium used at the lower levels of schooling in Oromia.

Students from higher learning institutions have been interviewed on the pedagogical as well as academic value of learning in Afaan Oromoo in their primary schooling. Their response was positively significant where 86.2% of them disclosed that having their education in Grades 7 and 8 in Afaan Oromoo enabled them to develop a good learning background.

In an attempt to find out the academic status of 225 students in the higher learning institutions and who also had their primary education in Afaan Oromoo, the bureau's comparative study indicated that 56% of students in the higher learning institutions maintained high level achievement scores, while 30.2% of them earned middle-level grade point averages (GPAs). Similarly, of the 188 consulted teachers of the two upper primary grades (7 & 8), 94.1% of them supported Afaan Oromoo as medium of instruction. In addition, of the 88 target level students (Grades 7 and 8) consulted, 68.2 % of them supported the use of Afaan Oromoo as medium of learning. The students further confirmed that when they learn in Afaan Oromoo, they could understand concepts and ideas much better than if it were in other languages such as Amharic or English: *Barattooni Afaan Oromootiin yoo baratan yaad-rimeen barnootaa caalaatti galuuf ibsan...*(Oromia education bureau, 2006, 6).

Finally, the bureau experts confirmed that the unit that was established to promote Afaan Oromoo under the education bureau and the school-level clubs had stopped functioning for reasons they did not know or which they did not want to explain. The experts unanimously maintained that since almost two years, both the coordinating unit under education bureau and the school clubs have come to a stand-still. Being over-conscientious about the subject under

discussion, the experts did not want to explain details about the underlying reason for the coordinating unit and school clubs not able to function. Their only response was limited to “the government stopped it.” While other school clubs in various subject areas are actively operating, Afaan Oromoo clubs could not have a relaxing opportunity and chance to function in schools with the perceived fear that they will ‘incite political unrest’ in the regional state.

The researcher could draw from the responses of the bureau experts that a ‘slip-of-the-tongue’ on the matter may result in political dubbing that may range to losing government job or related consequences. Their frequent responses, “...don’t know,” also show that they have no pedagogical authority over the subject to reverse the course of action.

8.6 Interview responses from the bureau of culture and tourism

The Oromia bureau of culture and tourism was established for the promotion of Oromoo culture and the expansion of tourist destinations in the regional state. Although I had established my contacts with the bureau head and his deputy from the beginning, both could not be available for the interviews because of continuous meetings elsewhere. At last and upon managing to get the deputy head, he delegated his closest department whom he trusted that necessary information could be provided to the planned interview. Thus, the interviews were carried out with the head of Afaan Oromoo research department and his immediate senior expert in charge of Oromoo folklores. Having obtained recommendation from the deputy bureau head to consult with the two relevant professionals actually gave us a good opportunity to freely interact and deal with most of the subject under consideration.

It is important to note that the Oromia bureau of culture and tourism comprises of Afaan Oromoo research department under the cultural section. The research department collects Oromoo folklores from all over Oromia and disseminates back to the public by publishing them in series of volumes called *Jiildi*. The department further works on the development of Oromoo lexicography and dictionaries (*Galmee Jeechoota*) as related to Amharic and English languages used in contiguity. Moreover, Oromoo grammar (*caasluga Oromoo*) and the standardization of its dialects (*waltina/wiirtu*) have been in full process. A team of standardization (*koore moogaasaa*) was established for this purpose and as a result, there have been 7 volumes or *jiildi* published to serve as standard lexical entries. The department head and the senior expert explained that several data sources and surveys related to Afaan Oromoo have been made accessible to carry out further studies on the language under discussion.

Our interview discussion focused mainly on the objective of the culture sub-sector, under which the Oromoo language research department is made to operate. As to what has been done so far by the research department and its future plans, the respondents believed that language is both a medium and

reflection of societal culture. In this regard, "Afaan Oromoo is the major component of Oromoo culture and identity". The language department has evolved out of a project office in order to enhance the study and dissemination of Oromoo literatures, folklores, riddles, proverbs, etc as they are expected to instill positive values in Oromoo children and the youth. The respondents held the view that "the study and dissemination of Afaan Oromoo folklore is one way of ensuring language maintenance in order to pass it on to the future Oromoo generations". From our discussion, it was possible to note that many literary texts have been produced in the last ten years, though the respondents did not hide the limitations the bureau had such as budget and lack of effective partnership with pertinent offices to publish and distribute these materials.

Asked whether what has been done so far is sufficient in view of the long-time proscription of the language under consideration, the respondents had both "yes" and "no" answers. It implies that much has not been done but there have been some accomplishments. They added: "Though much has not been done as desired, there is a good beginning that Oromoo literary inputs are now reaching its people for the first time in history". In view of the respondents, from the recency of the entire Oromoo cultural reconstruction effort, enabling Afaan Oromoo to become a medium of education and regional working language is a substantial achievement. It was also argued that since Afaan Oromoo has now become an area of study and research in a relatively shorter period, these achievements should not be considered negligible. The respondents believed that if this momentum continues, Afaan Oromoo will reach a stage where it could compete with most dominant African languages as it has a wider speech community in Ethiopia and in some of its neighbours (e.g. Kenya and Somalia).

The respondents, however, explained that there are still some subjective conditions that are affecting the progress of Afaan Oromoo. These include matters related to the awareness of the Oromoo public and the indifference among some Oromoo intellectuals to rally together for the promotion and development of the language. Respondents in particular referred to what some sociolinguists consider as lack of "language loyalty", where in their view, a significant portion of Oromoo elites distance themselves from this cultural reconstruction drive. On the other hand, the respondents appreciated the efforts exerted and the commitments made by some dedicated teachers and students who took their own initiatives in publishing, buying and distributing available published materials by the bureau of Culture.

As far as the working relation between the bureaus of culture and education is concerned, respondents considered it a big "missing-link". They recall when there was a joint expert-committee from the two bureaus to coordinate and support Oromoo language instruction in schools and encourage teachers and students' initiatives to promote the language. The joint expert-committee was supposed to meet every week and work on the standardization of the Oromoo dialects. The committee was given a huge responsibility to serve as a standard-setting committee (*kooree waltteesaa*) for the same purpose. As per

the joint committee's guideline, the education bureau was reportedly given the task of earmarking annual budgets to print and distribute published Oromoo stories/folklores collected by the bureau of culture to serve as supplementary learning materials in schools.

The bureau of culture's respondents, however, commented that the joint committee did not last long and "is no more functional". One of the plausible causes for the failure of the joint expert-committee, in the respondents' views, was the frequent merger and separation of offices and change of leaderships. The respondents held that such abrupt merger and separation of offices reduced the momentum of policy reforms and resulted in loss of immense institutional memories that would have been critically important for development and promotion of the language under study. However, the respondents hoped: "That the current research department would transform itself into the Oromoo Language Academy one day". They admitted that supplementary materials published by their department could not reach schools, especially primary schools in the region.

The materials were supposed to be dispatched via the woreda culture and tourism offices which in practice do not have any means of transport to redistribute them to each school. High schools, colleges and universities, on the other hand, collect the materials directly from the culture and tourism bureau or the latter directly dispatches on its own expense. These institutions have got internal revenues to earmark budgets and buy the supplementary materials for their use. Primary schools, on the other hand, do not have sufficient internal revenues to buy these supplementary materials.

The bureau of culture does not venture to distribute supplementary reading materials mainly because primary schools are not only numerous but some of them are also located in the remotest rural areas where transport services are not easily available. Though the bureau counts on some book stores such as Mega and Addis Ababa University Book Centre to distribute its published materials, all of them do not have book centers closer to each primary schools in the rural areas. The latter does not even have branches in each regional state.

Though respondents argued that they have their own mechanisms to follow up the distribution process, they admitted that this does not also seem feasible in a big land mass such as Oromia where there is limited transport to reach distant places. As it stands and from the interviews conducted with the bureau experts, there is no institution that can readily fill this gap, which implies the acute shortage of Oromoo supplementary learning materials in schools. As to what future plans have been put in place, respondents explained this hope: "The language academy will be realized". To this end, their department will draft rules and procedures for the would-be academy and submit it to the regional government for decision.

According to the statement made during the stone-laying inaugural ceremony of the Oromoo Cultural Center in March 2006, the Center incorporates essential components such as the Oromoo language academy,

theatre halls and art galleries, museum, library and archives. In addition, the cultural center serves as a multipurpose venue where the Oromoo could enjoy and benefit from their long cultural struggle. Furthermore, it provides every opportunity for conducting researches on Oromoo history and culture.

The Cultural Center to be erected in central Oromia, Finfinnee (Addis Ababa), is said to clearly depict the *eenyumma ummata Oromoo*, Oromoo people's identity (Kallacha Oromiyaa 2006). As a final remark and by way of recommendation, the culture bureau respondents underscored the following: "Setting a plan for a region-wide literacy programme and getting Oromoo Cultural Center and the language academy operational". The respondents believed that these measures do not only promote Oromoo culture, language and history, but are also instrumental to the cultural and political unity of the Oromoo people.

From the data presented in Chapter 8, one can clearly visualize the overall status of language policy implementation in Oromia as it relates to Afaan Oromoo as medium of education. From the data presented in the same, it also seems that there are both opportunities and threats in the use of Afaan Oromoo as medium of education in schools. The apparent opportunities emanate from the language's revival as an official medium of the people who are estimated to be more than a third of the country's population. The recognition and endorsement of the language as official regional business and school medium is also considerably applauded by almost all of the informants.

The threats, first and foremost, are linguistic attitudes from some members of the dominant language-speaking groups and some members of the Oromoo community. The former strive for further cultural imposition in which language preoccupies the most central plane in the name of "national unity" and sometimes compassionately expressed in the form of language economics. The latter, on the other hand, are caught between the tradition, uncertainty and jubilation. As it stands, it is difficult to come up with a water-tight attitudinal clarity between traditional and uncertainty and the euphoria about the revival of Afaan Oromoo being expressed within such scope and domain.

However, a cursory understanding from Chapter 8 tells that notwithstanding the multidimensional challenges Afaan Oromoo has been facing and continues to face, there is a flickering hope in favor of the linguistic vitality of the Oromoo public. Having tipped the reader with this much, it is now appropriate to examine major causal factors of the challenges Afaan Oromoo is facing. The next chapter shall partly provide some clues to these historical, cultural and political challenges.

9 ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

In the preceding chapter, we have been able to see the views and conviction of teachers, teacher educators, students, student-teachers, parents, experts, and department heads of relevant institutions. All of them were considered to have direct bearing with the use and development of Afaan Oromoo in the language policy framework under consideration. In general, it may be thought that responses from these main stakeholders have been found positive toward the use of Afaan Oromoo as medium of education and training. On the other hand, clearly visible implementation weak-links were observed during the interaction made with the same stakeholders as well as researcher's own critical examination based on participant observations made during the data gathering processes.

Some of the critical analyses were derived from official government documents, researcher's private and informal deliberations with persons whom he believed had good knowledge about the subject under study, and from recent researches undertaken on the same. International scholarly sources have also been used to substantiate issues chosen for the analysis. It must be made clear, however, that most of the factors or problems to be discussed in depth in this Chapter are reflections of the visited institutions and attitudes of the subjects directly and indirectly involved in the study. They do not necessarily represent the entire educational institutions or people in Ethiopia or in Oromia regional state. Following are some of the salient factors that keep affecting the implementation of language policy in Ethiopia in general, and Afaan Oromoo as medium of education in Oromia in particular.

9.1 Policy-level factors

A. It can be drawn from the data thus far examined that a blanket policy framework has affected the pace of language policy implementation under consideration. In other words, the language policy under implementation did

not have clearly spelt-out implementation strategies by which government good intentions could be materialized at the grass root levels. For example, Article 39, sub article 2 of the Ethiopian Constitution states that “every nation, nationality and people in Ethiopia has the right to speak, to write and develop its own language; to express, to develop and promote its culture; and preserve its history” (FDRE Constitution 1995, 96). Similarly, both the education and cultural policies remained with promises but without clearly articulated detail and practical measures to-date, as far as the implementation strategy of the country’s language policy is concerned. For example, the education and training policy stipulates: “The necessary steps will be taken to strengthen language teaching at all levels” (ETP 1994, 24). The cultural policy in the same vein states: “Laws and regulations necessary to implement the policy [cultural policy] shall be decreed” (Cultural Policy 2003, 39). But all of these provisions did not have corresponding implementation strategies centrally or at regional and local levels. To-date, no specific law or strategy is put in place.

Consequently, some tasks were unduly pushed to the lowest administrative echelons to decide on the use of languages either as the medium of education, as a subject to be taught or both. While a bottom-up decision-making process sounds meaningful, in the Ethiopian reality however, some of the lower administrative echelons do not have the necessary human resource that could define and interpret these constitutional provisions to make smooth implementation process possible. On the other hand, from the above policy citations, it can also be seen that implementation responsibilities are made to rest on various agencies. In the absence of specific parties to guide implementation processes, curriculum experts, textbook writers and classroom teachers are left to be responsible to this effect. This however leads to myriads of confusions as well as room for remaining indifferent to the policy under discussion. Cohen (2001, 104) in his study of language policy implementation in the South regional state, Ethiopia, draws his conclusions from the problems facing the nation as follows:

There is often a great deal of confusion amongst the relevant actors in the process about which powers should be invoked by the woreda, zone or regional authorities, or different departments of the Ministry of Education (MOE). It remains unclear whether decisions can be made without first obtaining some form of permission or acceptance from a higher, even central authority. In many cases, a kind of *laissez faire* attitude has been adopted by regional authorities in the SNNPR.

The scholar further assessed that such implementation scenarios have got several results. Firstly, it places a responsibility that is perhaps too burdensome on local members of the staff who feel that they do not have the necessary experience to make decisions. Secondly, there are situations where decision-making processes are “snagged by misconceptions or fear of taking 'wrong' decisions” (Cohen 2001, 104). As a big national as well as public policy agenda, language decision in diverse nations such as Ethiopia will not be easy to come to concrete decisions and launch actual implementation strategies at lower stages. Even enthusiastic individuals may be forced to think twice before taking

such initiatives for fear of its backlash effect. Such problems are very likely to surface as language issues in Ethiopia have not been, and still are, not politically neutral. In the absence of a clearly set implementation strategy in place, the language policy under study may only remain a political rhetoric, especially for the language “minority” groups, due mainly to “lack of trained human power” (emphasis added) and related intellectualizations.

B. Lack of awareness on the merit and demerit of the language policy has affected the status of implementation. Aside from the Education and Training Policy and later on, the backing accorded with the country’s constitution, the *why* of the language policy and its value in terms of cultural and socioeconomic development, academic and pedagogical enhancement, etc. has not been made clear both to the language communities who use and those who are supposed to recognize and respect the use of the ‘new’ languages put into use. Cohen (2007) critically examined this situation and argues that the overall purpose of the language reform in education was not made known to speakers of the language as well as the wider local communities who would be affected by it in one way or another. The scholar maintains that the overall outcome would likely influence the goals of achieving quality education in the country. He further held that since there are languages which have been better developed as medium of education than others, additional resources are required to standardize these new school media.

For example, the omni-presence of Amharic in semi- and urban areas of the country is evident because of the weight of (past) history. With this background in place, the new language policy would mean a lot to many of the Ethiopian peoples who have been denied their linguistic rights for years on one hand, and others who may not wish to lose their prior linguistic prestige or symbolic power on the other.

To paraphrase Ozolin's (1999, 248) ideas, the current language policy in Ethiopia has partially “overturned” the previous privileges enjoyed by few Ethiopian peoples with the policy of “Amharic-only”. As a response, there has not been a sufficient plan and wide-spread multilingual/multicultural awareness raising program through which the different linguistic groups could gain sufficient knowledge and experience to value their diversity in a common political and economic space. In other words, people had to be rightly convinced that multilingualism is a fact of life. This critical realization is fundamentally essential in today’s Ethiopian context, where the peoples gave their promise to the constitution that they would establish a common economic and political space only on their good will: their equality respected and protected in the spirit of the Constitution they accepted (FDRE Constitution 1995, 75). This guarantees Ethiopia’s peace and development but only when upheld through equality, tolerance and mutual respect among its diverse nations of people.

In the absence of the above subjective conditions in place, there is no wonder as to why some people are led to believe that the policy, by extension, people who use different language varieties in the country may be perceived as

“threats” to past monolingual culture and practice in all of the public domains. In deed, it is this latter attitude which may be a more potential threat to the nation and its diverse peoples since it can not go along with the basic and inalienable human rights of which linguistic human rights stands out.

C. Absence of a ready-hand professional support to the policy implementation process mattered a lot. Besides lack of clear implementation strategies laid down, there were no ready professional institutions, for example, language academies or cultural offices which could be considered “trouble shooters” for any problem that may arise in the implementation arenas. Some of the language academies or departments in higher learning institutions are not only indifferent to the policy under discussion but are also too critical of the policy, rather than taking it for an affirmative cause. Consequently, education bureaus and schools had to face all of the challenges of professional support needs that come from all corners but with little or no solutions at hand. This has undoubtedly affected the quality of implementation reflected in many fronts.

In consequence, students, teachers and parents consulted and the larger public were left somewhat in complete dilemma as to whether the current media of instruction (mother tongues) in primary schools could lead to children’s academic success in the subsequent educational levels. It also seems that some policy decision makers, practitioners included, are not well aware of the critical necessity of using multimedia approach to develop the ‘new’ languages to effectively serve as media of school instruction. In a settled monolingual mind-set such as in Ethiopia, language policy implementation would demand an arduous struggle, support and strenuous follow-up for its success and achieving set goals and objectives. As Fishman (1974) notes, no language policy can successfully be implemented without the support of an authoritative body (e.g. government involvement) which seems quite decisive.

Another important missing-link in the implementation end was the critical language planning stages (corpus and acquisition). While the question of status planning had been answered by the country’s education and training policy (with due political backing by the constitution), the two planning stages have not been given much attention. For example, as far as corpus planning is concerned, there were only few regional educational/cultural bureaus that managed to produce dictionaries, supplementary materials and related folk literatures to augment the regular textbooks. But most of these materials do not get into the hands of teachers and students. For example, in Oromia, even the available supplementary reading materials could not reach the schools visited due to short print copies and lack of distribution mechanisms. Preparation of teachers for the new task could not move in tendon with such grand policy reform. As far as acquisition planning (which is more to do with convincing and mobilizing of the public, etc.) is concerned, it could be said in its much lower scale.

The same could also be said of civic institutions such as professional associations, development associations, faith-based foundations, etc. which were not made to be on board to rally along government plans and initiatives.

This is one of the critical causes for the parents' dilemma as it specifically relates to the academic success and decision to register their children into schools that operate in mother tongue mediums. The observed missing-link between the policy intentions and the reality on the ground could partially be considered as lack of appropriate knowledge and awareness on the overall rationales of the language policy in general and the place of mother tongue education for children's learning in particular. That is why many scholars such as Fishman (1974) argue that the achievement of any language policy goals can not be realized without people's motivation and meaningful language loyalty of each group.

9.2 Pedagogic or academic factors

Schools are one of the institutions that are believed to bring up all-round development in children. Societies also value schools as one of their important social centers where positive attitudes, knowledge and skills are inculcated. However, in the observation carried out in some of the selected schools, the researcher came across some factors that, in one way or another, counteracted with the implementation of the language policy and the positive self-development of children in schools. In the subsequent sub-topics, I will discuss or analyze the results of my close participant observations, formal and informal interactions with teachers, students, principals and other members who were considered to have a meaningful stake with the implementation of Afaan Oromoo as medium of primary education.

9.2.1 Mixed-schools

These are schools that run both Afaan Oromoo and Amharic classrooms in the same compound. They are mainly found in semi-urban and urban centres. Compared to the number of rural schools in the regional state, they pose much lower linguistic influence had it not been for the Amharic language historical position in such centers. In such schools, children from the two linguistic backgrounds come to school but get into their assigned classrooms or sections. The point here is that beyond undesirable linguistic interference at this early learning stage, the impact is much greater on the role and profile of Afaan Oromoo. It causes an uncalled-for rivalry between the two languages which is in fact untimely for Afaan Oromoo. It leaves the language (Afaan Oromoo) at a disadvantage as its school experience is in its infancy. There is also a temptation that seduces Oromoo children and parents to look up to the "other" language, Amharic, for its past socio-historical magnanimity.

Moreover, in the selected schools, where mixed classrooms or sections operate, it was found that no less than one-third of Oromoo students have been registered in the Amharic medium sections where this could have been the

other way round. For example, in Chancho lower primary school, the researcher found out that in 8 sections out of 20 which were supposed to cater for Amharic-speaking children, nearly more than a third of them were from the Oromoo linguistic background. It was not possible to verify whether children's parents took the decision with valid reasons for their preference as parent representatives interviewed in the same schools basically declined the idea of such preferences. Nevertheless, through further investigations into the matter under discussion, the researcher made sample counting of the students' attendance. The counting did not take into account the "neutral" names which may be from Oromoo or Amhara background. Examples of non-neutral Oromoo names are: *Badhaasa*, *Toolaa*, *Urgeessaa*, *Maargaa*, *Kiitilaa*, *Gaamachuu*, *Aagaa*, etc., while neutral names for both could be Bekele, Abebe, Taye, Tsehay, Almaz, Tadesse, etc. all of which are Amhara or Christian names. The latter names may equally be shared by Oromoo students due to past language shift and assimilative project by past Amhara ruling class, a purely historical predicament. As explained in chapters one and six, such change of names are so common especially in semi- and urban centers of Oromia in order that people meet their daily needs.

Cooper (1976, 243) revealed this phenomenon that the impact of Amharic upon Afaan Oromoo speakers has been mostly in towns. As a result, Cooper concluded that most Oromoo speakers in the urban areas had an 'incentive' (emphasis added) to learn Amharic. In fact, the situation was not a question of an incentive but could have been described as "forced marriage". If Afaan Oromoo had an equal status and function to that of Amharic, it could have been a reliable incentive for its speakers. The eventual change from Oromoo to Amhara or Christian names was a desperate survival response for many years until recently.

Another point about the mixed schools has to do with the identity of children and the development of Afaan Oromoo. While children are expected to learn in their own language as per the constitution and the education and training policy of the land, such good policy intentions were not appropriately consented by some members of the former ruling circles. As a result, students may come to school with ambivalent attitudes: negative or positive about their school mate's language or culture. According to some teacher respondents, sometimes unexpected clashes take place between the students on linguistic grounds. Though not getting out of hands, head teachers admitted that there were intermittent but minor clashes between students which are related to each other's languages. For example, in Mulugeta Gedile School, a teacher who was once a member of a parent-teacher association (PTA) explained in the interview that mixed schools experience serious pedagogical as well as managerial problems.

According to the respondent, students frequently get into confrontations even on minor issues related to their languages and identities. For example, in the morning flag ceremony, both federal and regional anthems are made to be sung one after the other. Since both groups of students are not well versed in

each of the respective anthems, there are indistinct utterances that may have negative connotations to each other which could lead to sudden quarrels to erupt. The teacher respondent further recounted instances where two linguistic background staff members get into contradictions. For example, in mixed schools where two heads or principals are assigned from the two linguistic backgrounds, conflicts and disagreements are so frequent. This is common especially in the event of sharing school resources (e.g. new classrooms, books, teaching facilities, etc) as principals see each other as rivals of their group in the same institution.

Limited educational resource materials supply also plays aggravating roles to fanning such types of rivalry among groups who are supposed to stand for a common objective of caring for and educating the child. As a result, school leadership usually lacks in harmony and professional cooperation. It is obvious that this disharmony can not lead to positive and sound teaching-learning environment. The outcome is that unhealthy relationship between and among key educational staff may contribute to lower school performance.

The researcher also observed another seductive factor in the mixed schools. Some Oromoo students and their parents are in a state of uncertainty and confusion. The main cause of the problem was in Grades 7 and 8, where Amhara students' learning medium shifts to English, while their Oromoo counterparts continue with Afaan Oromoo medium. Both students are expected to sit for primary school completion certificate examination at the end of Grade 8. Besides, secondary schooling which runs from grades 9 through 12 is mediated in English. Some parents, though implicit, seemed a bit worrisome and in complete doubt whether their children in Afaan Oromoo sections or schools could become academically successful in their entire secondary education. Part of the doubt and confusion emanates from the two parallel medium classes being run in the same but mixed schools.

Students as well as parents' perceived assumption was that Oromoo students may 'lose' in their academic achievement at the end of primary school and even beyond. In an interview carried out in Mulugeta Gedile primary school with students, the concern of an Oromoo student as it relates to the medium of the two upper primary levels was not without reason. It could be considered a reflection of the concerns of his parent in such mixed schools with parallel mediums. His arguments may also be examined in light of the latent resentment of his parent which tempts the former to draw the assumption that even Amharic, which is considered more 'developed', is not found important to impart education in the levels mentioned. This triggers some remorseful feelings as to "why not for their Oromoo counterparts?"

It is important to relate Mary McGroarty's views in this regard. The scholar holds that the attitudes of parents usually reflect personal histories that frame their own past experiences. Consequently, parents who believe that they may have been stigmatized because of their language are eager to have their children to acquire a "standard language" which may serve as a disguise. This leads them to value their home dialect or language only in limited contexts but

insist their children to get ample opportunity to develop skill in the prestigious language (McGroarty 1996, 19).

The moral of the story behind the mixed schools/classrooms in Oromia is that they are, in one way or another, affecting Oromoo students' attitudes to learn in their language. This may be reflected in their learning outcome to a given degree. The schools may have also created untimely linguistic rivalry which children at this stage may not be able to shoulder. Being in its "teething" stage, Afaan Oromoo may also be left at a disadvantage in the school program. Some headmasters were also of the view that mixed schools are prone to create elements of mistrust among members of school staff by weakening their professional intimacy and co-operation. However, discussions and analyses made thus far under this sub-topic should not in any circumstance lead to withholding the Amharic-speaking children's right to learn in their own language but they could differ in venue (e.g. in separate schools) if both linguistic groups had to benefit more from their respective language policy provisions.

9.2.2 Code-mixing

Code-mixing or code-switching is a sociolinguistic term. According to Spolsky (1998) and Wardhaugh (1986), in a bilingual or multilingual society two speakers having two varieties have the tendency to change their codes from one language to another in the middle of their speeches or conversations. Code-mixing or switching is usually believed to be practiced under subconscious state, which speakers may not be aware of. It is also believed to be situational depending on the person to whom one is communicating with. While code-mixing is unavoidable in a bilingual or multilingual linguistic setting, the gist of the matter is that it is unconsciously affecting the status and use of Afaan Oromoo in the school settings.

One main concern is code-mixing among the teaching staff. The former school medium, Amharic, keeps tempting many teachers the moment they step out of the classrooms. This creates not only unconscious envious feelings in Oromoo students but also passes a pricking signal of the "loss" of something which is "preferred" by their teachers. As a result, the students may be exposed to a feeling of guilt and mistaken decision in opting for learning in Afaan Oromoo particularly when the school is a mixed type. Asked as to why they resort to code-mixing even among Oromoo fellow staff members, the teachers admitted that the deep-seated attitude toward the former school medium was not found easy to break away with. Moreover, the presence of non-Oromoo staff in the schools tempts them even when they are not among the latter. Another reason that teachers attributed to was when "ready-made" Afaan Oromoo vocabulary appears to have been forgotten, the easy way-out was code-mixing. It must be noted that code-mixing is much frequented even in schools where mixed classrooms are not in existence and the experience is not only limited to the latter.

The presence of non-Oromoo school staff, particularly, the Amhara, contributes a lot to the code-mixing problem. While most members of non-Oromoo teaching staff (e.g. Hadiya, Kambata, Gurage, Somali, etc) fairly try to communicate in Afaan Oromoo, many Amhara teaching staff did not think it important to learn speaking Afaan Oromoo for reasons that are not clear. Some school principals hinted that, sometimes, there is an apparent reluctance to accept language equality among some Amhara staff which implicates an attitude of disdain to Afaan Oromoo. Indeed, the deep-seated language ideology some members advance is the famous linguistic assimilation instead of linguistic pluralism (Cobarrubias 1983). The fact that there is no language pressure in favour of Afaan Oromoo also makes the situation more complex. As mentioned before, past Amharic linguistic status forced the Oromoo to learn Amharic by heart. According to Cooper and Horvath (1976), Amharic mother tongue group exerted more consistent pressure on the Oromoo mother tongue group than the latter did on the former. Contrary to this, now, some Oromoo civil servants easily switch codes in favor of Amharic which makes Afaan Oromoo to pay the bill and the former inadvertently neglecting their own.

The basis for past linguistic pressure against the Oromoo was crystal clear: they had to earn their livelihood through the knowledge of Amharic. However, there is no similar “carrot and stick” relationship between the knowledge of Afaan Oromoo and Amhara civil servants in Oromia that compels them to learn and use it (Afaan Oromoo). In this regard, their conscious reluctance can not be considered a surprise other than a deliberate avoidance. As a result, there seems no dire need for integrative or instrumental motivation to these staff to learn and use Afaan Oromoo (Gardner and Lambert 1972).

The situation may also be related to what happened in the Baltic States after the countries regained their independence in the early 1990s from the former Soviet Union. Russian settlers who only used to speak their language during the occupation years despised the minority languages in the settled states. After the countries regained their independence, the settlers began to express their resistance and neglect as follows: “People like us should not be made to learn a Baltic language” (Ozolins, 1999, 248). The issue has more academic implications as such monolingual educators can neither support nor appreciate ‘minority’ children’s learning in their language simply because the former are not exposed to bilingual problems (Garcia 1993).

In principle, members of the once dominant group need to alter the pattern of their language use in the multilingual society such as Ethiopia. Accordingly, they must have prepared themselves to accept and function under the principle of linguistic territoriality (Cartwright 2006) in Oromia. This makes a bilingual education program quite necessary in Oromia for non-Oromoo minority civil servants for the facilitation of public service on one hand and their integration into the wider Oromoo society on the other. According to Skutnabb-Kangas (2000), this helps to avoid the perception that Amharic is still a “majorized” minority language in Oromia.

9.2.3 Establishment of private educational institutions

First of all, I have to make clear that the information or ideas about private educational institutions came about during my interaction with parent respondents and teacher educators in particular. It is the reflection of these information data that I wanted to highlight as these institutions have also got direct bearing on the medium of school instruction in Oromia, especially in the preschool program. To begin with, private educational institutions from kindergarten to university colleges are encouraged in the Ethiopian investment code in a bid to redress previous low school enrolment rate in the country. The governments (both federal and regional) uphold any initiatives to expand education and training (Education and training Policy, articles 3.6.4 and 3.7.5, 1994) by providing special incentive schemes such as land free of lease, duty-free educational materials, and tax holidays.

In most urban centers of Oromia, these private educational institutions run their instruction through the medium of Amharic. Afaan Oromoo is only given as a subject while the rest of subjects are in Amharic. Afaan Oromoo medium private schools in urban areas are not only too few in number but are also to face stiff competitions with other media of instruction. Teacher educators informed me that both residual attitudes toward past national language and excessive quest for English in some urban centers had made some Oromoo pioneers unable to cope with such dismal market competitions. Respondents cited Adaama town as an example. As a consequence, it is not only Amharic but English also stands tall in the competition scenes in the urban private schools and this starts as early as in the kindergarten. The over-riding bottom line, however, is that private schools in the urban centers do not respond to the needs of majority urban dwellers, including Oromoo parents, as they usually charge school fees that is beyond each parent's means of income.

Moreover, according to the information I gathered through the interviews with parents and teacher educators, it is felt that undemocratic messages are subtly injected through some of the lessons against the use of Oromoo language. For example, a secondary school teacher, where mixed primary school sections and a secondary section also operate in the same campus, explained during the general discussion we had that some undemocratic messages are conveyed in Amharic lesson. According to the teacher, while Afaan Oromoo textbooks were "cleansed" (emphasis added) against any elements of ethnic indignation, an Amharic teacher in the next door mixed-classroom teaches students with some archaic sample of proverbs such as shown in Table 6.

TABLE 6 Sample Amharic proverbs

Amharic Version	Rough English translation
<i>Telba binchacha, beand muqecha.</i>	When telba (an edible oil bean) moves here and there, one pound is enough to silence it.
<i>Zinb bisebeseb, meglalit aykeftim.</i>	If all flies gather over a lid, they can't open it, etc.

The above sample Amharic proverbs are so familiar in the Ethiopian common life where former feudal lords used to express their disdain to the poor peasants that the latter cannot do anything how much they try to revolt against the former. Should they attempt, they would be crushed at one blow.

This attests that some mixed and Amharic-mediated schools tacitly convey such provocative messages that undermine the use of Afaan Oromoo in schools and inadvertently its speakers. It seems that the schools serve as silent weapons against the language in use. This characterization is not without reason as the schools tend to arrest the progress of the language in question. In this light, one may say that schools in Oromia, both government and private, may be considered places of implicit political battles to be fought, language serving as a surrogate variable. This may also be related to what UNESCO (2003) quoted from a French author, Louis-Jean Calvet, that the attitudinal war between languages is part of a wider war. In fact, this is despite the fact that the country's education and training policy does not spare rooms to partisan politics and religion as education is secular (ETP 1994, 9). However, the reality on the ground seems to speak louder than what policies or popular intentions would tell.

Still, worse state of affairs is the private kindergartens that are established for children of ages 4-6. Two problems can be cited in this regard. First, Oromoo parents in the main towns and urban centers have no options other than registering their children into these private kindergartens. As government's main attention is limited to the school-age (seven years old on) children, its intervention in this subsector is confined to the professional support such as curriculum development, program supervision and related technical support. Owing to the past socio-economic and political legacies, semi- and urban centers of Oromia are not only largely inhabited by the Amhara and other Ethiopians but Amharic also serves as a mediating language in such multilingual settings. There is no doubt that these private preschool programs (mainly kindergartens) use Amharic as their learning medium. The main problem comes when Oromoo children complete the preschool programs and want to join government primary schools where Afaan Oromoo is the medium of instruction.

The outcome is that children are left with two options: if their parents can afford, the children may continue in the private regular schools which are also run in Amharic medium. If not, they have to join Afaan Oromoo-medium regular schools. In both cases, it is a disadvantage to an Oromoo child. The first choice is at the cost of renouncing their language and culture at this early age of development, especially linguistic development. The second choice, which is no less trying than the first, is that after the children are made to forget their essential communicative skills in their language, they are forced to restart learning in Afaan Oromoo. Again, this is a taxing job for the child. It is equally a learning crisis at this early school age. There is no doubt that urban Oromoo preschoolers face a critical pedagogical difficulty because of this early-exit and re-entry into home language. Scholars argue that minority languages are

susceptible to loss if a good beginning and a high proportion of curriculum time is not allocated.

Amharic medium private educational institutions in semi-and urban areas of Oromia consequently affect Oromoo children's linguistic development and their future educational progress. It is from such type of irregular implementation of the multilingual language policy in Ethiopian urban centers in general and that of Oromia in particular that Cohen (2007) had to comment as follows:

Some urban populations have been 'successful' (emphasis added) in rejecting the use of regional languages in favour of using Amharic as medium for primary education. *This tendency has been most pronounced in Oromiya* (emphasis added) where many of the larger urban centers in Ethiopia are located (Cohen 2007, 93).

It can, however, be noted that the 'success' mentioned by Cohen above is not without cost. Oromoo children are made to pay it dearly. This cost is not limited to the preschool level but it may even transcend to the higher level of learning which Oromoo policy-makers have to thoroughly think about.

9.2.4 The impact of illiteracy

The recent CSA Population and Housing Census report indicates that of the 25, 489, 024 millions, over 22 million (88%) of the Oromoo population lives in the rural area, while only 3 million (12%) reside in urban centers (CSA, 2007, 66). On the other hand, figure 1 under Chapter 3 shows that literacy rate in Oromia stands at 36 percent (M=49.4; F=22.8). It can well be imagined that rural illiteracy in Oromia is so acute because of past monolingual legacy and related social, economic, political and cultural suppressions. The question now comes when looking at the profile of literacy percentages for Amhara (M=40; F=22.7) and Oromia (M=49; F=22.8) in the aforementioned figure 1 (Chapter 3).

Although the difference in the literacy profile between the two regional states is in the average of 4.8% (in favor of Oromia), the underlying reasons as to why Oromia seemed to appear relatively better needs some explanations. First, the reliability of the figures is questionable as different authorities publish different literacy data. Second and most important, may be explained as sociohistorical resultant. As repeatedly discussed in the previous chapters (Chapters 7 & 8 in particular), most Oromia urban centers can be considered a "melting-pot". This is due to past historical and social legacies where the former Amhara ruling class pushed away the Oromoo from urban centers to the periphery.

Still, another glaring testimony is the presence of many non-Oromoo civil servants in Oromia today. According to the report obtained from Oromia Civil Service Commission (2005), there are 34 different ethnic group civil servants (not including the Oromoo) whose number is close to 1.8 million out of which the Amhara civil servants comprise of 11.9 per cent (see appendix 13). The figure does not include people in the private businesses since Oromia

regional state's geographical position pulls large population in-flows from its neighboring states. Thus the literacy figure hides such realities.

In the past, one major hindrance for the Oromoo to read and write was the language of literacy. Literacy in Amharic was a difficult life project for most of the Oromoo populations. Their subsistence livelihood and share-cropping for the land-lord settlers did not motivate the Oromoo to learn in the Amharic medium (Hussein Jemma 2002). This contributed to low level of literacy rate in Ethiopia, where Amharic played the role of a gate-keeper to non-Amharic speaking children in the country.

Still today, Oromoo rural populations, especially the peasants, can not read and write Qubee as literacy programs are left to the responsibility of the lower level of administrative units, woredas and Kebeles. Unfortunately, these institutions do not have sufficient material resources and trained human power to properly execute literacy programs. Moreover, as Qubee reading and writing skills have not been extended to the rural adult population, a big cleavage has been created between the school population and that of the former. Unless a massive literacy breakthrough is made in this most populated part of the country, Qubee may remain not only a major dividing-line but it may also play an impeding role in the development of Afaan Oromoo as well as development of the nation. In a multilingual country such as Ethiopia, a weakened language, due to historical factors, can not attain supremacy in the public administration and the school system. Scholars argue that it will remain simply symbolic. Afaan Oromoo can not be exceptional to such linguistic rules.

According to Wiley (1996), language planning and policy as a factor in promoting mass literacy in developing countries is approached as a technical problem, rather than as a sociohistorical and political one. In the case of Oromia regional state, the technical problem is lack of use of Qubee by the adult rural population. This is because literacy in Qubee has not yet touched ground in rural areas where Oromoo peasants live on subsistence livelihoods. It is this that requires timely solution in order that Oromoo adults can play significant roles both through reading and providing rich oral folk literatures that can enrich the language. This can also empower parents to support their children's school performance in many ways.

9.2.5 Lack of professional development for teachers

Both the 1991 Transitional Period Charter of the Government and the 1994 Education and Training Policy, by implication, guaranteed the use of Afaan Oromoo as medium of instruction. Similarly, the 1995 FDRE constitution endorses this provision. But there was not sufficient plan and preparation for teachers, especially, at the beginning of the multilingual educational program in the country. It can be said that the new curriculum of the ETP, the implementation of Afaan Oromoo as educational medium in schools, and teachers' preparation tasks, all took place simultaneously. Consequently, it could be said that many teachers were not adequately 'qualified' in reading and writing Qubee at the beginning.

Cohen (2001, 2007) in a similar context in the SNNPR assessed that since the introduction of regional and local languages were not based on previously set plans, adequate training of teachers to use these languages in the classroom and the development of sufficient and quality textbooks have not been made possible. Susan J. Hoben (1994, 192) on a similar account described the then country's over-all situation in the following manner:

Up to 1992 it was possible to assign a trained teacher anywhere in the country to teach, but no more! The situation afterward occasioned a frantic reshuffling of teaching staff, various language areas putting out notices begging native sons and daughters to seek local assignment...Even among speakers of the language to be taught, most could not read it adequately or, if they could, they had frequently learned to do it in the Ethiopic, not in Latin. Training and retraining of teachers was as essential as providing teaching materials.

Hoben's assessment of the Southern regional state (SNNPR) in this regard was no exception to Oromia. The only exception was that the clandestine Qubee writing has been made to smuggle among students and teachers of higher learning institutions before 1991 (Cooper 1989, 24). Consequently, some school teachers with underground and tight secret means could access Qubee and have known it somehow.

On the other hand, as Hoben indicates, implementation of the language policy could not have enough time for regular teacher training program. An option left was providing short training programs from few days to a week or two. Many teachers could join teaching Qubee even without having short trainings simply from personal drive and enthusiasm. Students flooding schools after the long recession due to the civil war and its eventual forced military conscription also made the situation to have no solution except using the "teaching through learning" axiom. It was through a gradual process that formally trained teachers began to be deployed into schools.

However, it is expected that there are still substantial number of teachers who have joined the profession by responding to such emergency calls. Most of these teachers have not yet been qualified in the science of teaching and learning Afaan Oromoo. The main problem that persisted was that there were no undergraduate (first degree) teachers up to the end of the academic year of 2006. At the end of June 2006, the first batches of undergraduates came out from the country's two universities, Haromayyaa and Jimma, and began to serve as high school teachers in Afaan Oromoo for the first time in history. On the other hand, the primary level to which this research has utmost interest remains with majority of teachers whose qualification is a one-year certificate.

Though a three-year diploma level training has already become part of the country's education system since 2004, the number of graduates cannot cope with the ever-escalating number of students (4.5 million) and the number of primary schools (6466) in the region (Oromia Education Bureau 2005). There is no doubt that there are untrained teachers who are not only in the profession but did not also get short and continuous professional up-grading, especially in Afaan Oromoo teaching and learning science. Reasons are usually ascribed to

the great number of teachers to be reached in the short summer seasons and budget constraints due mainly to the former.

Many of the teachers interviewed have shown considerable concerns in this regard. They explained that absence of in-service training programs in Afaan Oromoo pedagogy has limited their competence where they could have a forum to learn from each other as Oromia is such a large land mass in the country. Though Afaan Oromoo dialects are comprehensible among most of the Oromoo population, knowledge of them is still believed important for teachers' daily professional activities as many students come from these varied dialect backgrounds. It can be said that from the recency of Oromoo language as medium of education and training, sufficient and conscious focus has not been given in the area of continuous professional development of teachers which parallels its role in the region.

In contrast, repetitive professional skills upgrading has been underway since 2002 in English language, while similar trainings are also being offered in other subjects. The problem generally boils down to two main causes: an unqualified support to the importance of English and the low status accorded to mother tongue mediums. There are also many individuals and perhaps some policy-makers who may believe that continuous professional development of teachers in mother tongue seems redundant since it is already "known". Again, the major underlying issue is lack of planning and an oversight to fairly share available funds among key training programs.

9.2.6 Limitations in instructional materials and support media

Instructional materials supply (textbooks, teacher's guides, supplementary reading and reference materials) have been un-met educational projects in Ethiopian schools. It could be considered historic now because the problem goes back to the introduction of modern education, while getting no viable solution to-date. The main cause is that recurrent expenditure for the sector always goes far beyond the capital expenditure, leaving little space for the quality inputs such as educational materials, teachers training, expansion of schools and classrooms, etc. According to the World Bank report, there is concern about the continuing under-investment in non-salary budget items, those related to quality indicators. The Bank thus reiterates as follows:

Addressing the quality problem adequately in light of the size of the population still to be enrolled in schools, the low GDP level, and still weak planning and management capacities at all levels of the system, is a daunting challenge (World Bank 2005, 14).

A joint study by the Save the Children, UNESCO, and UNICEF (2005, 5), showed that the number of children enrolled in schools overwhelm available resource structures. Spending on educational supplies at primary level is low, ranging from between 8% and 9% in Dire Dawa and Afar to less than 1% in Amhara and SNNPR respectively from the total allocated educational budget. The figure implies the unit cost of investment made for each student in time.

The problem has been evident for years that budget allocated for educational personnel far exceeds essential educational materials or quality inputs such as textbooks, teacher training, and classroom/student ratios. While there is an ever-increasing student population, economic growth has been far behind until very recently. Despite a considerable attempt to down-size administrative staff at all levels, except the teaching staff, change did not seem to have occurred to a satisfactory level where equal or more budget allocation would be in favour of the educational materials that directly contribute to the quality objectives.

Recent budget allocation in favour of distinct cost items for the capital budget (e.g. textbooks, teacher education, and classroom-student and student-teacher ratios) could be said moving in the right direction, yet to be tested during the plan year of the third education sector development program (ESDP III). The student population which keeps increasing along with fast-growing country's population, currently 73, 918,505 (CSA 2007), however, may not be an easy challenge to maintain fair budget allocations in favor of school quality inputs. The impact of this dismal budget allocation between the two budget categories is mainly reflected on the student-text book and student classroom ratios. For example, the country's primary school student-text book ratio was set at 1:1 in 2004/05. However, the actual status was not available by the end of the plan year indicated as 'n. y. a.' (not yet available); student-section ratio was 69, while pupil-teacher ratio stood at 66 (MOE 2005, 24-25).

The figure in Oromia is no better than that of the national average. Pupil-section ratio stands at 73.2, while pupil-teacher ratio is 76.6. Similarly, pupil-text book ratio has been found to be 2:1 (Oromia Regional State Perspective plan for the UPE 2005, 20-25). The above joint study carried out in 2005 has even indicated the textbook-student ratio to be 1: 5 in many parts of the country. Though the figures might have changed or improved ever since, the study further stated that in most cases, teachers are the ones who have the textbooks which are used as the only available reference. Despite that the figure shows a national status result, there is no doubt that it also applies to Oromia, as it is both one of the seven sampled study areas and a regional state where the largest student population, 4. 5 million is found (OEB 2005).

Though education budget expenditure at the federal and regional levels has shown annual growth in the last five years (from 2.1 to 4.6 billion Birr), classroom expansion and educational materials supply could not grow at an equal pace with student population. According to the report of the Joint Review Mission (government- donors' group joint forum), Ethiopia spent 17.2% of its national budget on education, while the target for the 2004/05 was 19% (JRM 2003, 15). While official statistics mostly indicates a somewhat appeasing situation on the quality indicators, realities on the ground are far from achievement. Of all the proxy quality indicators, this study has tried to gather information on the text-book/student ratios. In the visited schools in Oromia, from grades 1-4, text-book/ student ratio ranges from 1:1 to 1:3, while it is 1: 4 to 1: 6 for grades 5-8 respectively.

In Ethiopian school system, a single title text-book is used in most cases where supplementary learning materials are either little or non-existent due to economic pressures. This also holds true to Afaan Oromoo textbook/student ratios. Most Oromoo students do not have choices for reading supplementary and reference materials out of their classroom encounters or at home. In most cases, textbooks are given individually or shared between class-mates, who may not live in the same area. There is no exception to Afaan Oromoo student-textbook ratios which could have been given special attention in view of Afaan Oromoo's school role and its recent introduction into the school program.

It must also be noted that the allocation of weekly periods for Afaan Oromoo has no difference from other subjects which have been there for years on the school time table. According to the information I obtained from both the visited schools and bureau of education, Afaan Oromoo weekly period allocation is 5 and 3 for grades 1-4 and 5-8 respectively. This allocation is exactly the same with English, Amharic, mathematics and other subjects. The argument is that there is no special preference made to Afaan Oromoo that can match its role both in schools and the regional state.

School libraries visited by the researcher are there only in names and books are extremely limited both in quantity and quality. As just mentioned above, the only and also scarcely available book (owned or shared), is the single-title graded textbooks. As a result, it can safely be said without exaggeration that textbooks represent all of the instructional materials needed for the Ethiopian students. Their absence means the absence of learning in its entirety, as there are no other easily available educational media at the disposal of students and teachers.

Reference materials published by the Oromia bureaus of education and culture are usually in small print copies, while most of these do not reach schools due to a number of reasons. The result is that it is only in the two visited schools (Tafkki and Bakkee primary) that the researcher found three ungraded materials published by the bureau of culture (*Seena Oromoo Hanga Jarra 16ffu*; *Galmee Jeechoota Afaan Oromoofi Inglizii and Caasluga Afaan Oromoo Jildii I*). These three are out of the seven volumes the bureau of culture claims to have published and dispatched to schools for supplementary reading purpose in Afaan Oromoo.

A recent study carried out by the Ministry of education (2008) vividly shows the above critical challenges both as related to lack of school libraries and related educational materials supply. It reads:

Most primary schools in Ethiopia have either none or inadequate library and laboratory facilities that ought to facilitate and increase the quality of the implementation of the new curriculum...Therefore, one can qualitatively and safely assert that practically all primary schools, particularly those found in rural areas and peripheral regions, are suffering from the absence or inadequacy of most curricular input materials (MOE 2008, 71).

Problems related to publishing and distribution of supplementary materials in Oromia is manifold. For one, as confirmed by the bureaus of education and

culture, there is no sufficient budget allocated for this project. According to the information obtained from curriculum department of Oromia education bureau, conviction in and awareness of the value of supplementary reading materials is very low among top decision-makers. This greatly impacts on budget allocation by these individuals. For another, private publishers are not encouraged for they are not trusted due mainly to political reasons. As learned from the informants, what goes into these supplementary materials in terms of content is the cause of the mistrusts, especially on the part of the regional government. As a result, curriculum experts explained that literary competitions which were once popular among the students, teachers and individual writers, were discouraged and totally halted.

In consequence, non-governmental organizations such as the Canadian Overseas Development/ Ethiopia (CODE) and the German Technical Co-operation (GTZ) did not find it easy to take the responsibility of the implicit political censorship to qualify manuscripts through literary competitions. The above organizations' pioneer works to bridge the gap between government educational materials supply and their initiatives to target these "new" school media should have been appreciated and encouraged. If the momentum were kept to continue, the problem of supplementary reading materials supply could have been minimized, if not fundamentally solved. Not able to solve such basic problems, the government-donor annual review meetings always report and discuss the educational materials supply problem in vein. In a situation where radio and television programs were much limited and both are not at the service of the larger Oromoo populations, it is not difficult to imagine that learning how to read and write Afaan Oromoo is still under complete jeopardy.

Although educational radio programs transmit selected contents of the core curriculum, the programs are constrained by a host of technical and material problems: a) radio program centers can not cover all schools due to the region's expansive land mass, b) media facilities and studio equipment are old enough and as a result do not work with full capacity, and c) intermittent power failure or lack of dry cell batteries in the schools, etc. (OEB 2005, 24).

Newspapers published in Afaan Oromoo by the regional government are perceived as political organs of the regional ruling party, Oromoo Peoples Democratic Party (OPDO) which many educated Oromoo nationals are not appetized to read. Besides limited educational materials provisions, there are no theatre or cinema houses for children and adults where the language under discussion could be learned and promoted. The recently inaugurated Oromia regional radio and television studios in Adamaa, 100 kilometers away from its capital city, Finfinnee, may fill this media gap at least in the long run.

The moral of the story is that the media, whether print or electronic, are not fully developed to support the enhancement of Afaan Oromoo in view of its long absence from public media. While continuous dissemination of Oromoo cultural values could have further helped building positive attitudes and raising people's awareness, this cannot be said smoothly moving forward to the level desired. In many countries, faith organizations play important roles to advance language

development. For example, Pesonen and Riihinen in their "Dynamic Finland" (2002) noted that among several institutions that united the Finns in Western Europe was religion (Lutheranism). In this, language was considered a unique foundation for the revival of the Finnish culture which also laid an essential precondition for national awareness and identity of the people (p. 26).

In Ethiopia, too, Geez and later on Amharic were church languages for many years to-date, still remaining as additional learning media. On the other hand, Oromoo language still seems to face an impasse in some of the religious institutions. For example, in urban centers such as Addis Ababa, there is still open and hidden resistance as it relates to the use of Afaan Oromoo for Church medium. Sometimes, disagreements over the medium result in rescheduling prayer times in some Protestant Churches in the capital. The medium for the Orthodox Church in many areas is still Amharic in most cases except in rural areas where non-Amharic-speaking believers predominate. In consequence, it can be said that the institution has maintained its "great tradition" in this front (Fishman 1971). This is despite the fact that the Bible has been translated into Afaan Oromoo many years ago first in Sabean script and lately into Qubee. In general, until very recently, perhaps five to ten years now, it can be said there was lack of institutional (source) as well as functional (use) completeness of modern media for Afaan Oromoo and its speakers.

Thus, it may be concluded that Afaan Oromoo teaching and learning process, both in and out of schools, is not in a relaxed condition despite the fact that the constitution and related policies in the country are crystal clear on the use and development of the country's languages. Consequently, the problems thus far mentioned in this chapter are profoundly affecting its revival and development as a medium of education and public business in Oromia regional state. It can also be said that there are several challenges that tend to nip the functioning of the language in its bud. On the part of the regional state government, too, it seems that there is a relative political retreat compared to the early days of mid 1990s. In other words, the situation seems to lack in what Aodan MacPoilin (1996) calls as "linguistic momentum", from people in the political circles. As a result, responses obtained from many of the educational institutions visited resonate such feeling of retreat by the same.

The force of history, direct and indirect influences of the past, has also made language policy implementation in Oromia a bit complex. McNab (1989, 206) characterizes it as "historical imbalance" that has hampered language prestige and functions in Ethiopia. In contrast, one would argue that linguistic pluralism and multilingualism should enjoy recognition where nations, nationalities and peoples of Ethiopia need to start to develop a harmonious and cohesive cultural life. To this end, the promotion and development of Afaan Oromoo needs excessive professional support and political commitment. It is only in this way that it can revive as a viable language for public service in Oromia. Afaan Oromoo also desperately needs popular linguistic vitality from its speakers, the Oromoo public in particular, to flourish. Equally, the old

mainstream linguistic ideology should give way to multilingual space without which peace and development will remain simply wishful in Ethiopia.

10 FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

This chapter brings together ideas or issues that the study has uncovered in the process of direct interaction with target respondents, school and classroom observations, and formal and informal discussions made with individuals having bearing with the language policy under implementation. As a qualitative research design, some of the results were also based on the researcher's valid interpretations and mainly on the acquired data sources.

A. Findings

10.1 Main Findings

This sub-section presents the main findings of the study under three sub-titles: positive as well as threatening trends, and policy implementation drawbacks. It is not uncommon sometimes to come up with such threatening or unintended results in a study directly related to people's social, economic, political, and cultural lives. For example, Nancy Hornberger (2001, 30) once came up with positive results on one hand and what she also called "policy failure" on the other, in the implementation of Peru's Quechua language as medium of instruction in primary school. Following are some of the salient findings of the study.

10.1.1 Positive Findings/Outcomes

a. Afaan Oromoo as medium of primary education has played a role in enhancing access to schooling. It also positively influenced the hitherto disparity problem between males and females and urban-rural settings. Consequently, primary education enrolment rate progressed from as low as 900,000 students in the mid 1990s, to 4.5 million students in 2005 in Oromia

regional state (Oromia education bureau 2005). The following sample enrolment rate in Table 7 vividly shows how much access to primary education has significantly improved between 2000/2001 to 2005/2006.

TABLE 7 Gross Enrolment Rate (GER) of Six-years (2000/2001-2005/2006) in Oromia Primary schools

Year	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Both (%)
2000/2001	73	41.8	57.6
2001/2002	77	46	62
2002/2003	82	51	66.5
2003/2004	86.6	58.2	72.5
2004/2005	97	73	85
2005/2006	98	77.4	88

Source: Education Statistics Annual Abstracts of Oromia Education Bureau (OEB)

In Oromia, of the 4,523,102 total primary enrolment, girls' share has grown to 1,905, 948 (73 percent) in 2004/5. This latter figure was much less than 20 percent in the mid 1990s. From the above table, it is also evident that the gender gap which was 31.2% in 2000/01 has been narrowed to 25 % in 2004/05. This raised the gender parity gap from 0.57 to 0.75 respectively in the same years. Enrolment in rural areas in Oromia also showed a remarkable surge: 3,496,935 students (M=2053359; F=1,443,576); the corresponding urban share was 1,026,167 (M=563795; F=462,372 (OEB 2004/05, 69). This can also be easily inferred from the number of primary schools established in both urban and rural areas. Accordingly, of the 6,466 schools, 5785 (89.5% were constructed in the rural areas, while 681 (10.5%) of them were in the urban areas (Oromia Education Bureau 2005, 1). According to the Federal Ministry of Education, the number of schools in Oromia has steadily increased to 7, 488 and 7,952 respectively in the years 2005/06 and 2006/07 (MOE 2007, 74). The share of rural setting was 6788 schools, while that of the urban was 758.

It can therefore be safely said that the medium of school instruction has positively influenced the rise of the number of schools which in turn implies steady growth of student enrolment in the level under consideration. Hence, other things being equal, it could be said that Afaan Oromoo as medium of primary education has played a catalytic role in the dramatic growth of school enrolment rate in Oromia. This is because almost all of the commonly known educational inputs (e.g. teachers, educational materials, schools, etc.) had been there for years and it was only the language factor that was then at odds. The moment the medium of learning was switched, school programs began to show an incredible enrolment surge within a decade and half. It might have been difficult, if not impossible, to raise school enrolment to this level if things were left to continue as usual/before.

b. It can also be equally argued that the use of Afaan Oromoo as medium of primary education has influenced the quality of learning. From a 2-3

classroom observations I made in each school, classroom interactions have been found live and students' active participation was a clear manifestation to meaningful learning. My field observation further showed that both teachers and students have done away with the problem of learning medium in schools. Instead, students were observed actively investing their mental efforts into the understanding of basic concepts, elaborating ideas, and engaging themselves in the conscious and active learning tasks. In other words, it could be said that schools have become more child-friendly and a democratic classroom atmosphere between teachers and students is being nurtured. Again, as a facilitative learning component, as medium of instruction, Afaan Oromoo has encouraged active learning experience.

In a recent study carried out by ICDR/MOE (2007, 27) to find out the status of implementation of mother tongue education in seven sample regional states (including Oromia), students' classroom participation has also been found very high in speaking, discussion, question and answer during the classroom observations made. Though quality is relative and dependent on various factors, the results of national examinations, quality-based research outputs and pass-rates at main terminal learning levels could be considered proxy indicators. In fact, these are distinct from educational end goals which are long-term knowledge, skills acquisitions and accompanying attitudinal changes. In Oromia, as explained under Chapter 8, Oromoo students' positive learning assessments of Grade 8, Grade 10 and entry to higher learning institutions have been associated or taken for proxy quality indicators.

In particular, the 2004 and 2007 Grade 8 learning assessments showed not only Oromoo students' relative achievements via their mother tongue but also clearly testified that students who learned in their mother tongues other than English (e.g. Amharic and Tigrigna) equally benefited from their languages. It was from this viewpoint that both primary school teachers and teacher educators interviewed expressed their positive support to the medium of instruction as follows: "The decision made by the Oromia regional government in favor of Afaan Oromoo as medium of the two upper primary grades (7 & 8) was in the right direction". This could also be explained that in maintaining students' good academic performance beyond primary education, at secondary and tertiary education and training levels (see Chapter 8), the medium of learning has played a positive transformative role.

Again, all other things being equal, these quality-related assessment reports could be considered indicative of the value of the medium of education in Oromia primary schools. In effect, the above quality-based findings are substantially congruent with other findings by Mekonnen (2005) in Tigray and Heugh et al. (2007) in Ethiopia as a whole. Further, a recent study by the Ministry of education (MOE 2008, 219) has rated the multilingual policy of the country as strongly appropriate. It justifies the use of mother tongue medium on the account of student learning achievements scored in recent years:

Given the pedagogical, psychological, and cultural advantages of learning in the mother tongue, there is no justification for not to use the mother tongue education.

The Ethiopian National Learning Assessments have also shown the positive impact of learning in the mother tongue on student academic achievement. Thus, this policy needs to be followed without hesitation.

c. Community-school relationship has been enhanced. In the past (see Chapter 8), Oromoo communities could not consider schools as their own institutions because of a communication break-down. The problem was specifically acute in the rural areas where the majority of Oromoo population lives. However, change in the school medium has ushered in a new beneficial relationship between these two important stakeholders, the school and the community. As witnessed in the previous two chapters, the change of school mediums into Afaan Oromoo gave the community considerable empowerment and confidence to invest in their own institutions, schools. In consequence, the financial support made to schools could only be considered as the tip of the iceberg in light of the material supplies they provide for school construction and the labour they invest in the same.

From the information gathered from the heads of visited schools, it was revealed that members of the community were voluntarily serving as school boards in their respective woredas and as Teacher-Parent Associations (PTAs) at each school. The PTAs provide general guidance and serve as bridges between the community and the schools. This type of mutual and amicable relationship between the two stakeholders could not have been imagined some years back. Hence, current positive relationship could definitely be associated to the supportive school environment which equally contributes to an enabling learning process and better scholastic achievements of students.

d. Teachers, students and parents' attitude toward the use of Afaan Oromoo as school medium could be rated both as positive and favorable. Teachers found it positive in terms of the pedagogical ease the language medium has created in the classroom interaction between their students and themselves. They have assessed the level of students' active learning, better achievement and improvement in school retention (decline in repetition and dropout rates). Parents saw it from the point of view of revaluing their cultures and language to a great extent. They have expressed their psychological satisfaction as their language is valued to serve in the public sphere as any other language (implies to Amharic). From this assertion, we can understand that sense of being ashamed of one's language (symbolic violence), as seen in the past, has begun to vanish.

Students' attitudes and self-esteem during the interviews was even more revealing and positive with an assertive vigor. They strongly stood to justify that their language is as valuable as any other Ethiopian languages in the country. It was due to past sociopolitical imbalances that their language was made to be "left behind" and they now want to see it developed to a higher level in order that past linguistic inequalities could be redressed. In short, the students were happy and anxious to assert their Oromumma (Oromo-ness) through their language which they consider as their important identity marker. At this stage, it is again important to reflect upon language both as an identity

marker and also a symbolic resource (Norton 2002) in a society where inequality has persisted for years.

On the other hand, many scholars, such as Alastair Pennycook, Jan Blommaert, and Michael Byram (2006) are opposed to the one-to-one linguistic identity relationship in the era of globalization with the view that people are made to have a variety of identities (e.g. professional identities, etc.). However, Oromoo identity via Afaan Oromoo must be seen in a different perspective. Quest for the Oromoo identity has to be seen in the context of past socio-political and cultural precedents and present power dynamics operating in Ethiopia. For a people that had been under long linguistic and cultural suppressions, they need some time to make others recognize that their presence in the public domains is a reality to be faced head-on. This may be related to what Charles Taylor (1994) characterized as “politics of recognition”. The moment this immediate goal is achieved, the Oromoo shall begin to claim for additional and multiple identities: regional and international. This time, it will be an additive identity rather than being subtractive.

Most of the West's quest for multi-identity basically hinges on this additive principle. For instance, common sense tells that no European Union member state will demand a European identity at the cost of their national identity. The issue of a common currency, for instance, is not realized in some of the member states. The same may be said about the debate over a “common language” at the EU forums. In a study carried out by Pesonen and Riihinen (2002, 57), they found that one of the factors that strengthened Finnish identity and nationalism was the presence of a common language spoken by the great majority of the population, which was very dissimilar to other European languages, except for Estonia and to some extent to Hungarian. Moreover, Mc Rae (1997) in an opinion survey how the Finnish and Swedish speakers have felt about each other, or about other groups in Finland and abroad, a sympathy score was used in 1983. It was aimed to compare people's feelings toward selected ethnolinguistic groups.

The findings showed that both Finnish and Swedish speakers placed their own language group at the top (Mc Rae, 1997, 156). Lastly, the 2000 Eurobarometer survey on the EU countries showed that while citizens in 8 countries and out of them (e.g. Luxemburg, Sweden, and Spain) were attached more to European, majority of Finns identified with only their own nation, while no more than 5 percent of them felt more European than Finnish (Eurobarometer, 54, 13; B, 13-16).

It can, therefore, be argued that Oromoo identity, more and beyond other variables (e. g. religion), is anchored to their language. The Oromoo need to mark themselves as belonging to their territory, Oromia. This is expressed more through speaking their most convincing marker, Afaan Oromoo. As a result, for some years to come, Afaan Oromoo may continue to serve as an Oromoo identity marker in the Ethiopian socio-political and cultural landscape. In other words, one needs to wait for a situation where meaningful mutual respect starts to prevail: when one starts to learn their mother tongue and also learn the

language of the country and further strengthen one's language through studying other languages.

As to the overall positive attitudes observed towards the use of Afaan Oromoo as medium of primary education and training programs, few points are worthy of mention. According to Egginton and Baldauf (1990, 100), a language must "fill a hole" in the community in order that it can remain viable and meaningful. It is also logical to think that learning and teaching (in) Afaan Oromoo has filled certain economic holes as it ensures graduates employment. The multilingual policy has helped each individual to use their professional capacities in their local areas. In a similar study she carried out in the Southern region, Hoben (1994, 194) reported that language policy in Ethiopia has created economic values as follows: "...Becoming literate in one's mother tongue could actually open up job opportunities since people who could read and write the regional languages were the ones to fill the new regional government posts".

No doubt that similar opportunities have positively affected the life of many millions of Oromoo populations in the regional state. This in turn contributes to the development of more positive attitudes towards the language in addition to its intrinsic value. In general, it can be said that Afaan Oromoo has served both the psychological (identity and self-esteem) and utilitarian objectives. However, findings in this study are not congruent with many of the researches elsewhere (see Chapters 5 & 6). One cause for the attitudinal ambivalence and shunning one's own mother tongue in many of the developing countries may be explained by the "economics factor" or its pay-off role (Kamwangamalu, 2001, 141).

10.2 Some policy threatening issues

The current Ethiopian language policy under implementation has aroused an antagonistic attitude especially in the elite circles, those who wish to maintain the monolingual policy and those that favour the current multilingual policy. The monolingual group upholds the age-old "one-nation-one-language" policy. The Ethnolinguistic group, now a great majority as distinguished from the past, on the other hand, takes the current reform packages (decentralized governance, use of one's language in each regional/local level, etc.) as a redemptive opportunity in political, economic, social and cultural terms. This strong position perhaps seems to uphold Skutnabb-Kangas' belief (2000) that language is not only used for control and implicit domination of minority groups, but is also part of subduing resistance and refusing self-determination. In consequence, such tensions have brought about divergent attitudes towards the language policy under consideration.

From the majoritarian viewpoints, any move in the direction of the language policy under discussion is considered a "separatist" (emphasis added) move and at worst, an act of "treason" (emphasis added). The over-all situation

therefore seems to have called for hidden and latent inharmonious attitudes which may affect not only the language policy implementation pace but also become an obstacle to national integration goals through the prevalence of linguistic pluralism.

Among the lower profiles of both groups, the problem is not as such ideological but low level of understanding the pedagogical value of mother tongue education. To this end, some non-Amhara nationals, the Oromoo included, tend to prefer their children being taught in Amharic, with the assumption that Amharic still plays the role of both private and public life ubiquitously. Although this attitude lingers among some portions of the non-Amharic populations due to historical precedents, it is dominantly reflected in many of the demographically smaller ethnic groups in the country, where Amharic still serves as a working language between and across ethnic zones (Cohen 2001).

10.3 Some general drawbacks on the implementation of language policy in Ethiopia

a. The language policy under discussion did not have detail and articulated implementation strategies either at federal level or clear mandates given to the regional states and lower level state organs. This prevented local initiatives and creativity to enhance policy implementation pace. Each linguistic group did not seize the opportunity to realize their linguistic vitality. In consequence, the blanket policy might have affected ethnic minority groups, in particular, who have limited decision power and trained human resource that can translate the policy into action.

b. There is no technical/professional/ back-stopping (human as well as institutional) that could support curriculum developers, textbook writers, and classroom teachers. Responsibility mostly rests on the classroom teacher who is far from the decision makers or educational resource institutions (e. g. teacher colleges, universities, research centers, etc.) that could have provided ready professional support and solve administrative and technical problems related to the policy implementation. This affects the day-to-day pedagogical process in schools.

c. Lack of public awareness and clearly spelt-out role to reinforce government initiatives has greatly affected the breadth and depth of the language policy implementation. In consequence, this has made the government to be seen to carry on "its own agenda", while discouraging others from filling the gap. In particular, lack of awareness on the *why* of the policy and how each linguistic community needs to behave to others has played a deterring role among the various linguistic groups in the country. Respect for others' language and the culture of tolerance has not been duly developed. People's self-determination, as one of the democratic ideals, is sometimes taken

for a simplistic concept and mere intention of “encouraging separatist stance” (emphasis added). Failure to reverse such monolingual diehard-attitudes may pose a threat to all of the linguistic communities in the country.

10.4 Major drawbacks of language policy implementation in Oromia

a. Basic educational materials (e.g. textbooks, supplementary and reference reading materials) are still in acute shortage. While the regional state collects many millions of textbook copies from printing houses annually, educational materials supply could still not cope with the student population and the new schools continuously built by the community's own-force each year. Moreover, being a large land mass, distribution of educational materials in Oromia has created its own shortage, i.e. books are stored in one centre without reaching schools in the other end due to transport problems. That is partially why there is a discrepancy between the official textbook ratios and the actual school situations.

Moreover, production of Afaan Oromoo educational materials has not been given special attention owing to their recency in school time table. Supply of supplementary and relevant reference materials could be described as almost entirely absent in the visited schools. The researcher believes that similar problems may occur in many of the schools in Oromia, provided that budget allocation for the production of supplementary educational materials are played-down at decision-making points.

b. Lack of seriousness in the enforcement of the regional language code of conduct in some of the government offices indirectly affects school level policy implementation. Such offices were not found exemplary to schools. Change of working-language and wide-spread code-switching in public offices induces the same linguistic behavior to operate in the educational institutions and at worst discourages all positive efforts in the latter. Teachers and students interviewed expressed their critical concerns at such public offices that are playing a “backwash-effect” role.

c. Planned and continuous teacher professional development programs have not been put in place. As many of the teachers voluntarily committed themselves to teaching Afaan Oromoo at the beginning, continuous professional upgrading was quite necessary. Its absence meant low level of quality of the teaching-learning process, which in turn affects students’ cognitive development for the other subjects to be mediated by Afaan Oromoo.

d. Lack of a strong and sustained literacy program in the regional state under study has created two distinct zones of individuals: those who are literate in Qubee and those who are either exposed to the former literacy medium (which may have faded away with time) or those who are in complete illiteracy. The result is that many parents or adults could not have valued what

their children learn as education through Qubee script. As a result, it is not surprising if parents or adults may have opposed the school medium or resorted to registering their children in the non-Oromoo medium schools. The fact that majority of the adult Oromoo population lives in the rural area and deployed on the country's mainstay, agriculture, means a great loss to tap this huge human resource. It is tantamount to voluntary closure of the gate to a considerable development force of this rural population.

B Conclusion

The main aim of this study was to find out the role and status of Afaan Oromoo as medium of instruction (MOI) in the primary schools of Oromia Regional State, Ethiopia, and the overall views of its speakers (especially teachers, students, parents and people at policy levels). By doing so, it was to explore the gap between the policy intentions and the actual status of implementation on the ground and forward possible suggestions for future plan of action.

Thus from the preceding research findings, two competing conclusions can be drawn. First, it can be said that the language policy under implementation in Ethiopia has enjoyed official political backing as well as policy-clear support. The country's Constitution (1995), the Education and Training Policy (1994) and the Cultural Policy (2002) are case points to mention a few. Support accorded to the multilingual policy by these official government documents places the policy into a complete paradigm shift in view of past strongly-held monolingual attitude and practice in most of the public domains. More so, it gave the country an opportunity to "redefine" (my emphasis) itself as a home of diverse nations of people who have their own rich cultural values, language and history.

The multilingual education policy has also been accorded due acclamations recently by a team of national and international researchers commissioned by the Federal Ministry of Education in 2006. The research outcome by these lead researchers unquestionably confirmed: "...the policy of eight years of mother tongue medium schooling is one of the best on the continent that can promote sound educational practice... (Heugh et al. 2007, 7).

Second, since the policy under consideration did not have articulated implementation strategies, different agencies could not come aboard to play their part. This is sometimes perceived by many that the task of policy implementation mainly resides in government domain as a drive to "its political goals". Moreover, critical limitations observed in the areas of human, institutional and material (financial and educational) partly emanate from lack of clear implementation strategies and accountabilities to be met at various levels. In a similar vein, the team of researchers led by Heugh et al. (p. 8) conveyed concerns as to how investment in mother tongue education is being channeled and suggested for similar resource allocations as that of the English education development programs for positive returns. Further, the age-old

language attitudes borne by some “dominant” and “minority” linguistic groups is also an uphill struggle to the policy paradigm shift.

As a result, the policy seems to be caught between good policy intentions and implementation bottlenecks. The latter have been clearly observed in the implementation of Afaan Oromoo as medium of education in Oromia regional state. Despite positive attitudes and response revealed in this study, implementation problems at educational institutions visited and implied levels of uncertainties among major players are abounding. In the researcher’s view, these have affected the scope and quality of language policy implementation in Oromia. They need immediate and concerted solutions.

11 THE WAY FORWARD

In this study, attempts have been made to describe and show that the Ethiopian government has initiated a landmark language policy in the country. Government's good will is something to be applauded and considered a clear paradigm shift seen in light of the age-old monolingual practice in all of the public domains in general and that of educational institutions in particular. In this regard, it is important to once again appreciate the Constitution of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE 1995) and the Education and Training Policy of 1994, which for the first time came up with such a bold and an unflinching political as well as pedagogical stance.

It could be said that constitutional recognitions accorded to the equality of Ethiopian languages meant the equality of its diverse peoples. As a result, it may not be an exaggeration to use Joshua A. Fishman's expression (2006, 313) that the Ethiopian language policy is no less than a "Magna Charta" of languages and its speakers to reserve the rights to decide on their language as school medium as well as other social and cultural domains. The country's multilingual policy under consideration can also be considered as a distributive policy which has much deeper social, economic, political and cultural implications for its constituencies.

Finally, the study has come up with positive findings as well as some problematic factors both at the level of policy explication and implementation end of the scale. Again, this study describes and lists some salient problems to be looked into by respective policy-makers at all levels. However, the researcher guards himself from considering these recommendations as absolute or final as they are only suggestions for future policy appraisals and possible reforms deemed if any. The problems could be treated at two administrative levels: federal and regional. The researcher believes that this two-level solution approach helps to explore and design relevant and practical strategies at each stage based on the constitutional mandates vested with each level of governance in the federation.

11.1 Federal level

a. The multilingual policy under discussion has been found lacking clear implementation strategies. This made many of the implementers, especially front-line practitioners, not to confidently take own initiatives at all levels. As a response, setting clear implementation strategies and empowering lower level agencies seems essential in order that they can take active part in the planning and implementation processes of the policy under consideration.

b. The multilingual language policy could not have sufficient time for carrying out corpus and acquisition planning. This has created two implementation problems. One, sufficient learning materials, references and supplementary readers could not be produced in each of the new medium of instruction. Secondly, language acquisition awareness campaigns were not carried out to enable all linguistic groups understand and believe in the pedagogical value of mother tongues and the long-term social capital it entails. To this end, a multicultural/multilingual education program needs to be designed to each linguistic community both to value their languages and respect the multilingual reality of the country and its peoples.

In this regard, the celebration of the “Day of Ethiopian nations, nationalities and peoples” which has begun since 2006 and observed every year on 7th of December should be taken as a symbol of positive self-esteem building and mutual cultural and linguistic recognition in the country. The annual celebration of the event may also be complemented with public deliberations on the fundamental essence of multiculturalism and multilingualism and the modalities to appreciate and value them for social harmony and development. Overall, it has to be underscored that mutual respect among national citizens starts when each begins to recognize and appreciate the existence and function of other languages as their own.

c. The multilingual policy under question lacks ready institutional and professional support needed by practitioners and front-line implementers at grassroots. This has affected the quality of implementation. Competent national institutions have to, therefore, be identified and given professional and technical responsibility to provide necessary support to regional educational and cultural bureaus, teacher education colleges and language academies or departments. Such provisions will particularly build implementers’ policy as well as professional confidence and contribute to impart quality education to learners. Moreover, it may be important to learn the experiences of countries such as Australia and South Africa, where language policy advisory councils or boards could look after the status of policy implementation processes and report to higher public bodies for timely interventions.

11.2 Oromia regional state level

The regional state governments are the front-line implementers of a policy, be it from the federal government or of their own. According to Ethiopia's federal constitution, policy formulation is one of the domains of the federal government. It is only in rare cases that broad strategies are set at the federal level. Detail implementation strategies that suit the regional states are usually expected at each of these levels. As per the federal constitution (Art. 52, No. 2, c), regional states are also entitled to formulate their own social policies and design implementation strategies that suit specific objective realities in the same. It is therefore in this perspective that this study draws conclusions and possible suggestions as related to the Regional State of Oromia, where the research was carried out. Followings are some of the implementation drawbacks and hints or suggestions that may be considered in response to the former.

a. Afaan Oromoo has become an official language of the Oromia regional state government and medium of education and training for the primary level since the early 1990s. Despite this, however, the language seems to be caught between two competing factors: determination and ambivalence. Critical respondents in particular, argue that such state of affairs is affecting the status of implementation of language policy in the region which in turn has negative bearing with the quality of learning in schools. As a response, heightened political commitment and determination to purpose needs to be exhibited by the Oromia regional government. This may significantly enhance the language policy implementation process in Oromia.

b. Lack of sufficient resource allocation has affected the implementation of Afaan Oromoo as medium of education in the schools visited. Though resources are allocated for the entire educational program, special preference has not been made in light of the recency of the language and its "new" roles in the region. Authorities however warn that mere positive attitude towards language policy without positive action cannot serve the purpose. For example, Fishman (1991, 91) argues that the road to societal language death is paved with the good intentions called "positive attitudes". It therefore goes without saying that a critical and timely review of the resource allocation modality (human, material, etc.) be developed to overcome some of the current implementation bottlenecks that arise from lack of critical input supplies.

c. As it stands, it may be argued that the Oromoo are not empowered to complement government efforts in the implementation of the language policy under discussion. By and large, the policy still keeps rolling in the government's court. Meaningful and decisive linguistic partnership has not come forth from Oromoo civic and voluntary organizations in the promotion and development of the language. As a result, sufficient popular resources could not be tapped for this cause.

However, it should be known that reversing the plight of a suppressed language depends on the encouragement of language life at the daily participative level. To this end, the Oromoo have to be made to rally along with government efforts in order to realize Oromoo language vitality. It is such broad popular participation that can inform the Oromoo that their language can be further promoted and developed when they actively take part in its corpus planning, both as readers and writers.

d. As there was no academically entrusted institution in place in the regional state, lack of professional support was a problem to enhance language policy implementation processes on the ground. On the other hand, the number of educational institutions in Oromia is relatively large that the staff and students to be supported are beyond the professional capacity of the regional education bureau experts. Absence of an agency that could look after the language policy under consideration and provide timely solution has immensely affected the rate of implementation and quality of school instruction. Thus there is a dire need to intensify the establishment and full functioning of an Oromoo language academy. The establishment and official functioning of the academy will gradually solve some of the hitherto human and material resource problems the language has been and is still facing.

e. Sustained capacity building programs for front-line policy implementers are not in place. Many teachers and head teachers have not had in-service professional development opportunities in Afaan Oromoo teaching-learning sciences. Consequently, in-service professional up-grading programs need to be considered a rule rather than an exception. This would have been used as a stop-gap measure for teachers who have been voluntarily deployed for teaching the language. Thus, a continuous professional development program needs to be planned and executed region-wide.

f. Shortage of educational materials is one of the major hiccups for the implementation of the language policy in Oromia. Many curriculum experts, teachers, and students consulted complained that educational materials ranging from textbooks to supplementary materials are not reaching them in time and in sufficient quantity. From the interviews conducted with the curriculum experts, budget approval for supplementary materials does not also get positive and timely response from top decision makers.

The assumption that single title textbooks could serve all purposes is significantly affecting the educational processes in Oromia, too. The problem has not been addressed by encouraging individual writers and private publishers either. Hence, in addition to government's renewed commitments, there is also a need to design incentive packages to motivate individual and private publishers to reinforce existing government efforts. Staging literary contests through which teachers, students and members of the public actively take part may also bring positive results in the production and supply of additional materials that could contribute to quality of learning in the regional state.

g. Parallel adult literacy is not in place to augment formal educational programs. Since the launching of Qubee (Oromoo alphabet), two zones of communities (those educated in Qubee and those who are not) have become evident in Oromia regional state. As a matter of fact, this was not a deliberate making of any institution but the outcome of the language reform in Oromia and other regional states which used the same path (use of Latin script as opposed to Ethiopic/Sabean).

The literacy dichotomy between the educated and non-educated Oromoo population has countervailed the development of the language. To solve the problem under consideration, adult education program in Qubee could be used to bridge the gap. This can contribute to the development of the language both at home and in schools. It can also positively influence the over-all quality of leaning. Thus, a resource-based adult literacy program in Afaan Oromoo, via Qubee scripts, needs to be planned and put in to action.

h. Use of multi-media approaches to develop the language under discussion had been limited long before and even since the multilingual policy came to force. As a language that was out of major media networks for years, Afaan Oromoo has every reason to have been literarily forgotten. In the face of acute literary materials, the roles that major media (e.g. radio, newspapers, and television, etc.) play to promoting and developing the language can not be considered sufficient. Moreover, there are no marked complementary or alternative media channels (e.g. theaters, the cinema, the church, etc.) that target to promote Afaan Oromoo. As a response, Oromoo regional radio and television programs have to be fully launched in order that the promotion and development of the language can have a good deal of air time.

Thus, the recently inaugurated media studios in Adamaa town have to be made to fully assume this responsibility. It is also important to license private media that can further enhance and supplement government efforts in this area. Publishing and distribution of newspapers, magazines, and educational, historical and cultural books need to be planned in short-and long-terms as language development and maintenance such as Afaan Oromoo is difficult, if not impossible, without aggressive and sustained literary works.

i. Lack of enforcement of the language code of conduct among government offices affects the pace, status and quality of language policy implementation. As long as Afaan Oromoo is the official language of the region, it should affect all government offices to operate in accordance with language policy meant for the regional state. However, current use of the official region's language in some of the government offices seems arbitrary to the extent that some look like as though they would be 'alien' offices within an office. As a response, timely rectifying measures need to be taken as per the region's constitution, as it pertains to the official state language. It is also essential that the Oromia regional government provides necessary institutional protection and support to Afaan Oromoo speakers.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Lead Field Interviews and Observation Checklists

March, 2006

Research Field Work Interviews

Introduction

These field interviews are only lead ideas for the discussion that will take place between the respondents and the researcher. Detail issues about the research theme are only related and are made to come in to light through continuous probing. Hence, these interviews can be considered as lead or introductory to the in-depth discussion that takes place in the real situations between the researcher and the respondents.

Lead Interviews A: Teachers and Teacher educators' Group Interviews

1. What do you think can help conduct an active and interactive class room learning between students and a teacher?
2. Do you think that instructional languages (mother tongues in particular) can facilitate effective learning?
3. Do you think that the use of Afaan Oromoo language facilitates students learning?
4. How do students feel when learning in their own language (Afaan Oromoo)?
5. Do you think that there could be a barrier if students were made to learn in a language other than Afaan Oromoo?
6. How fast do students understand new concepts and ideas in Afaan Oromoo?
7. Do you think that learning in Afaan Oromoo as mother tongue had positive impacts (e.g. active learning, smooth classroom interaction with the teacher and their fellow students, better academic achievement, etc) on both students and teachers?
8. Do you think that learning in Afaan Oromoo has contributed to enhancing school enrolment, retention and positive school-community relations?
9. Do students feel sense of confidence and seem to develop positive self-esteem of their own identity as a result of learning in Afaan Oromoo?
10. Are there things that you can suggest will have to be supplemented or fulfilled in order to further promote the use of Afaan Oromoo as medium of learning?
11. If you can add more ideas and forward some future recommendations.....

Lead Interviews B: Students and Student-teachers' Group Interviews

1. Do you like your leaning? Why?
2. How many languages do you learn?
3. Which language (s) do you encounter most in your learning?
4. Which language (s) do you use most? Why do you think is it so?
5. In which of the language(s) do you feel at ease while learning, communicating to your teacher (s), or your class mates or other friends? Why?
6. Do you think that learning in one's own language is easier and important? Explain it further?
7. In which of the language (s) can you understand new concepts better; solve problems; answer questions correctly? Why?
8. Do your parents feel happy about your learning in Afaan Oromoo? Why?
9. If your parents are not happy about your education in Afaan Oromoo, what do you think is the reason?
10. Do you think that learning in Afaan Oromoo has helped you know well about yourself and others?
11. If you have more comments and suggestions.....

Lead Interviews C: Parents' Interviews

1. Are there schools in your community?
2. Do you have a child (children) in this or other school?
3. In which language do children learn in your community?
4. Do you think that it is important to learn in one's own language (e.g. Afaan Oromoo)? Why?
5. If you think that it is not important to learn in Afaan Oromoo, what is the main reason?
6. How do you relate or compare past experiences (when not using one's language for learning) to the present (when learning in one's own language)?
7. Do you think that the use of Afaan Oromo language in schools has helped parents and schools to easily interact and discuss education and related development matters?
8. Do you believe in the idea or saying that learning in one's own language helps promote and develop one's language and culture? Explain?
9. In your opinion, what should be done to further promote the use of Afaan Oromo for education and related social, economic and cultural activities?
10. If there are additional comments or suggestions you may want to make.....

Lead Interviews D: Oromia Regional Education Bureau Head

1. What is the role of Afaan Oromoo in education and training programmes in Oromia Regional State?
2. What preparations have been made to enable Afaan Oromoo serve as medium of instruction?
3. How much has Oromoo language as medium of instruction helped learning?
4. How much do you think is that Afaan Oromoo language has bridged home-school and school-community relationships?
5. What does the attitude of students look like toward using their own language for learning?
6. What does the attitude of teachers look like?
7. What does the attitude of children's parents and the Oromoo public in general looks like towards the use of Afaan Oromoo language as medium of instruction?
8. What are some of the achievements (educational achievements) as a result of using Afaan Oromoo language as medium of instruction?
9. What future plans and activities are put in place to further develop Afaan Oromoo as one school subject?
 - a. E.g. textbooks supply, supplementary reading materials, dictionaries, literary competitions, Oromoo language development clubs, etc
10. Additional suggestions and recommendations, etc. to be made...

Lead Interviews E: Interviews for Culture & Tourism Bureau Head

1. What do you think is the role of language in a given culture?
2. Do you agree that of the Oromoo cultures, Afaan Oromoo language is one of the major components? Why?
3. How did the Oromoo people manage to maintain its language for years?
4. Do you think that the efforts so far exerted alone can fully help restore Oromoo identity and language equality in the country? Explain further.
5. How does the Bureau weigh that Oromoo people value the restoration of its language and culture?
6. Do you think that the use of Oromoo language in schools and training institutions can help develop Oromoo language? How?
7. What type of networking and support system is put in place to reinforce the efforts going on in the education and training institutions to develop and further enrich Afaan Oromoo language?
8. What strategies and goals are set both in the medium- and long-terms to develop or promote the status and function of Afaan Oromoo language?
9. In view of the recent role of Afaan Oromoo language as a language of political, social, cultural, and economic activities in the Oromia

National Regional State, and in view of its relative short period literary tradition, what should be the roles of the following parties?

- a. government
- b. civil societies (associations, NGOs, committees)
- c. institutions (schools, teachers colleges, universities, cultural bureaus, theatres, radio and televisions, newspapers, etc. cultural and especially, language academy or agency that looks after the development and modernization of the language, etc

10. Additional comments and suggestions (if any).....

Lead Observation Checklist in Schools and Classrooms (F)

1. Students' interactions in school compounds (out of classrooms, in the play fields, informal conversations on personal or study subjects, regional or national issues, etc.)
2. Students' classroom interactions among themselves, with the teacher
3. Feelings (facial expressions and confidence or avoidance in response to questions)
4. Confidence of self expressions and level of substantiating concepts; defending own positions with convincing points
5. Linguistic mastery and confidence of students
6. Literary competitions, clubs, dramas, debate, etc.
7. Pedagogical supplements in a bid to develop the language
8. Afaan Oromoo department, unit or club
9. Enough textbooks for each subjects and Afaan Oromoo in particular
10. Supplementary materials in the school library or at the disposal of teachers and students for the development of Afaan Oromoo skills
11. Role of Zonal or Woreda culture bureau (if any) in support of Afaan Oromoo development in schools and in the surroundings, etc.

Appendix 2: ESDP II Performance Indicators

Indicators	Base Year EC 1993 (2000/1)	Result EC 1995 (2002/3)	Result EC 1997 (2004/5)	Target set for EC 1997 (2004/5)
BUDGET AND EXPENDITURE				
Education share of total budget	13.8%	17.2%	N/A	19%
ACCESS				
GER Primary 1 - 8	57.4%	64.4%	79.2%	70%*
Boys	67.3%	74.6%	87.3%	78%*
Girls	47.0%	53.8%	70.9%	62%*
Total no of primary schools	11,780	12,471	16,078	13,201
GER Secondary 9 - 10	12.8%	19.3%	27.0%	16.0%
Boys	14.8%	24.0%	34.2%	17.0%
Girls	10.8%	14.3%	19.6%	14.4%
QUALITY				
Share of lower primary (1-4) teachers qualified	96.6%	97.1%	97.06%	99.0%
Share of upper primary (5-8) teachers qualified	21.1%	28.7%	54.6%	80.0%
Share of secondary (9-12) teachers qualified	36.9%	39%	40.7%	73.2%
EFFICIENCY				
Primary school student: section ratio	70	73	69	60
Secondary school (9-12) student: section ratio	78	77	78	60
Grade 1 drop out	27.9%	28.7	22.8%	14.2%
Total primary school drop-out ***	17.8%	17.1	14.7%	8.9%
Average primary drop-out for girls ***	16.9%	17.8	14.1%	8.5%
Average grade 4 - 8 repetition rate ***	10.3%	11.00	2.9%	6.4%
Average grade 4 - 8 repetition rate for girls ***	13.4%	14.1	3.01%	8.1%
Coefficient of primary school efficiency	31.8%	39.1	48.8%	50.0%
EQUITY				
Primary GER in two most underserved Regions	10.8%	14.8	17.1%	20.0%
Share of girls in primary school enrollment (Grades 1-8)	40.6%	41.2	44.1%	43.3%
Share of female teachers in primary education	29.4%	31.1	35.6%	N/A

These are revised targets. The original targets were 65.0% for both sexes, which is 72.8% and 57.0% for boys and girls respectively.

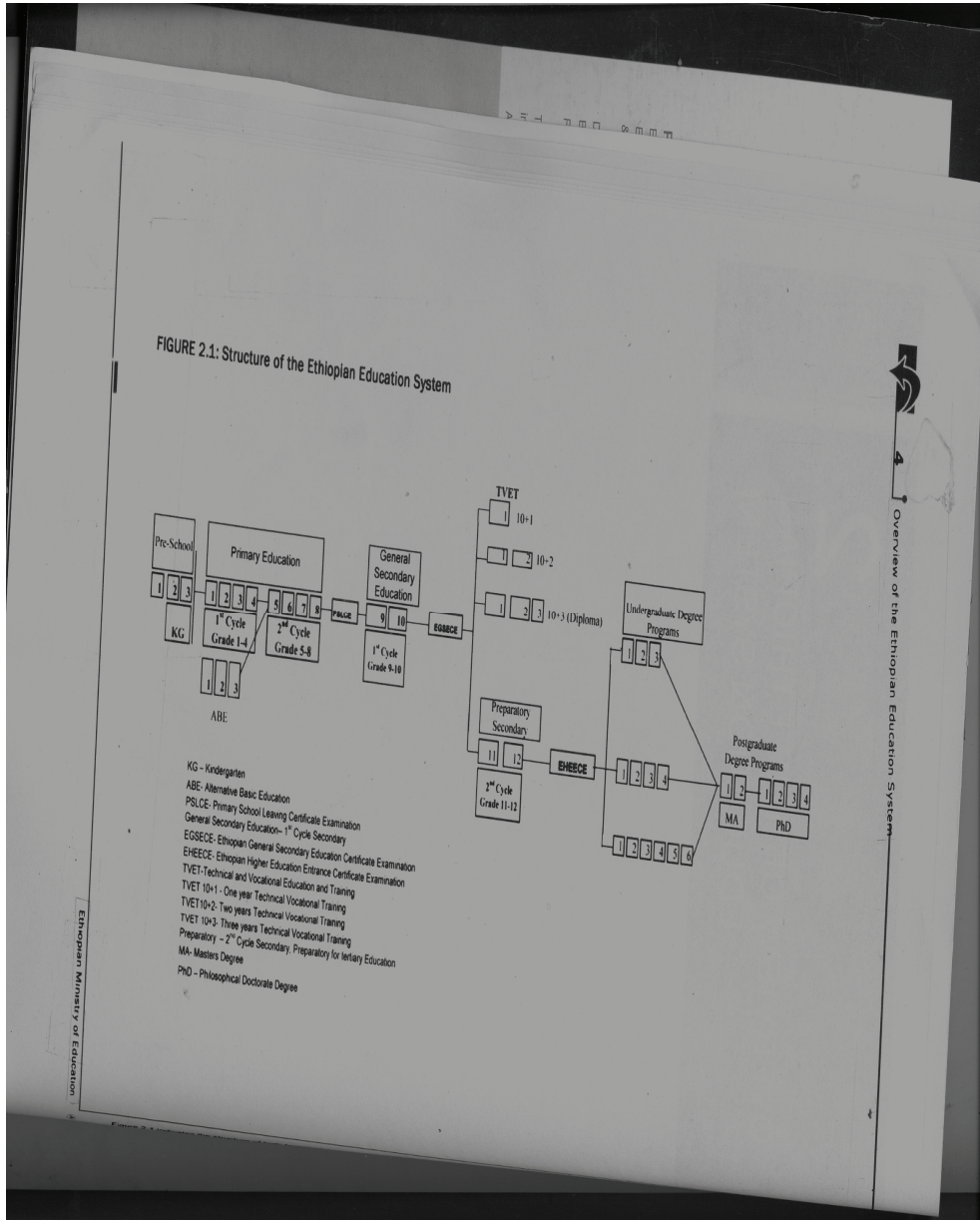
Source: ESDP III (MOE 2005)

Appendix 3: ESDP III Recurrent and Capital Cost by Sub-Programs
(Million Birr)

Sub-Program	Capital	Recurrent	Total	Percentage Share
Primary Education	11,866.0	16,161.7	28,027.7	54.76
Primary Education (Formal & ABE)	11,866.0	14,660.4	26,526.4	51.83
Teacher Training (TTI & TTC)	0.0	1,213.1	1,213.1	2.37
Adult & Non-Formal Education	0.0	288.2	288.2	0.56
Secondary Education	2,895.1	1,893.3	4,788.4	9.36
Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET)	1,729.7	1,269.8	2,999.5	5.86
Tertiary Education	4,106.9	8,830.8	12,937.6	25.28
Special Needs Education	2.0	3.0	5.0	0.01
Capacity Building	139.0	21.0	160.0	0.31
Administration and Others	61.0	2,204.9	2,265.9	4.43
Total	20,799.7	30,384.4	51,184.1	100.0
Contingency (5%)	1,040.0	1,519.2	2,559.2	
Grand Total	21,839.7	31,903.6	53,743.3	

Source: MOE/ ESDP III (2005)

Appendix 4: Structure of the Ethiopian Education System (MOE, 2004)



Appendix 5: Ethnic Groups (100,000 +) in Ethiopia, 1994

Ethnic Group	Population	% of Total Population
Oromo	17,080,318	32.1
Amhara	16,007,933	30.1
Tigraway	3,284,568	6.2
Somali	3,160,540	5.9
Guragie	2,290,274	4.3
Sidama	1,842,314	3.5
Welaita	1,269,216	2.4
Afar	979,367	1.8
Hadiya	927,933	1.7
Gamo	719,847	1.4
Gedeo	639,905	1.2
Keffa	599,188	1.1
Kembata	499,825	0.9
Agew/Awingi	397,491	0.7
Kulo	331,483	0.6
Goffa	241,530	0.5
Bench	173,123	0.3
Kemant	172,327	0.3
Yemsa	165,184	0.3
Agew/Kamyr	158,231	0.3
Ari	155,002	0.3
Konso	153,419	0.3
Alaba	125,900	0.2
Gumuz	121,487	0.2
Jebelawa	118,530	0.2
Koyra	107,595	0.2
All Others (incl. 53 ethnic groups)	1,409,766	3.0
Total	53,132,296	100.0

Source: FDRE Central Statistical Authority, The 1994 Population and Housing Census of Ethiopia Results at Country Level Volume II Analytical Report. Addis Ababa: CSA, June 1999, pp. 41-43.

Appendix 6: Languages in Ethiopia (Bender et al. 1976)

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TABLE 1. *Mother-tongue populations in Ethiopia*
Ethio-Semitic

	Population		Population
Amharic	7,800,400	Harari	13,000?
(includes urban	934,267)	Tigre	117,000*
-Argobba	1,000?	Tigrinya	3,559,300
Gurage languages	542,400	(includes urban	368,950)
(includes urban	96,900)		
Total Ethio-Semitic: 12,033,100*			
<i>Cushitic</i>			
Afar	363,000*	Galla cont.	
Arbore	1,500?†	Tulema	1,946,000
Awngi-	50,000	Wello	75,000)
-Kunfel	2,000?	Gawwada	4,000?†
Bayso	500?	-Gobeze	22,000??
Beja	19,000*	-Werize	22,000??
Bilen	32,000*	Gidole	5,000?
Burji	15,000†	Hadiyya-Libido	700,000†
Bussa	1,000?	Kembata-Timbaro	250,000†
Dasenech	18,000†	-Alaba	44,500†
Deres	250,000†	Konso-Gato	60,000†
Galla total	6,810,200	Qimant	17,000
(includes urban	167,026)	Saho	121,000
(Arusi	1,331,000	Sidamo	857,000??
Borena	132,000	Somali	888,000
Eastern	1,077,000	T'amay	6,500?†
Guji	380,000	Xamtanga	5,000?
Mecha	1,869,200		
Total Cushitic: 10,559,200*			
<i>Omotic</i>			
Ari	32,000†	Male	12,000†
Banna	11,000†	Nao	5,000?
-Hamer	11,500†	Sheko	23,000?†
-Karo	600?†	Shinasha	4,000?†
Basketo	9,000?	Southern Mao	1,000?
Chara	1,000?	Welamo dialect	
Dime	2,000?	cluster	908,000
Gimira	42,000†	(Dorze	3,000?
Janjero	1,000?	Gemu-Gofa	295,000
Kachama	500?	Kullo-Konta	82,000†
Kefa-Mocha	170,000	Malo	5,000?
Koyra	5,000?	Oyda	3,000?
-Gidicho	500?†	Welamo	520,000†
Maji	18,000?†	Zayse-Zergula	21,000?
Total Omotic: 1,278,100			
<i>Nilo-Saharan</i>			
Anyuak	56,000†	Kwegu	250†
Gumuz	53,000	Langa	2,000??
Koma, Central	1,000??	Mabaan	2,000??
Koma, N. & S.	6,000	Mesengo	28,000?†
Kunama	40,000†	Me'en	38,000?†
-Ilit	500*	Mursi	8,500†

Appendix 7: Mother Tongues (100,000 +) and Second Languages in Ethiopia (1994)

Mother Tongue	Population	% of Total Population	Second Language Pop.	% of Total Population
Amharic	17,372,913	32.70	5,104,150	9.61
Oromiffa	16,777,976	31.58	1,535,434	2.89
Tigrinya	3,224,875	6.07	146,933	0.28
Somali	3,187,053	6.00	95,572	0.18
Guragigna	1,881,574	3.54	208,358	0.39
Sidamigna	1,876,329	3.53	101,340	0.19
Welaitigna	1,231,673	2.32	89,801	0.17
Afarigna	965,462	1.82	22,848	0.04
Hadiyigna	923,958	1.74	150,889	0.28
Gamogna	690,069	1.30	24,438	0.05
Gedeogna	637,082	1.20	47,950	0.09
Keffigna	569,626	1.07	46,720	0.09
Kembatigna	487,655	0.92	68,607	0.13
Agew/Awingiga	356,980	0.67	64,425	0.12
Kulogna	313,228	0.59	19,996	0.04
Goffigna	233,340	0.44	33,449	0.06
Benchigna	173,586	0.33	22,640	0.04
Arigna	158,857	0.30	13,319	0.03
Konsogna	149,508	0.28	5,658	0.01
Agew/Kamyrgna	143,369	0.27	11,026	0.02
Alabigna	126,257	0.24	25,271	0.05
Gumuzigna	120,424	0.23	4,379	0.01
Jebelawigna	116,084	0.22	15,738	0.03
Kovrigna	103,879	0.20	2,371	0.00

Source: FDRE Central Statistical Authority, The 1994 Population and Housing Census of Ethiopia Results at Country Level Volume II Analytical Report. Addis Ababa: CSA, June 1999, pp. 46-48.

Appendix 8: Amharic/ Ethiopic/ Syllabary

TABLE 1. The Amharic characters (Fidel)

Basic character	Order							Labialized				
	1st ε	2nd u	3rd i	4th a	5th e	6th i	7th o	-we	-wi	-wa	-we	-wi
h	ሀ	ሁ	ሂ	ሃ	ሄ	ህ	ሆ					
l	ለ	ሉ	ሊ	ላ	ሌ	ሎ	ሎ			ሊ		
h	ሐ	ሑ	ሒ	ሓ	ሔ	ሕ	ሖ					
m	መ	ሙ	ሚ	ማ	ሜ	ሞ	ሟ			ሚ		
s	ሠ	ሡ	ሢ	ሣ	ሤ	ሥ	ሦ			ሢ		
r	ረ	ሩ	ሪ	ራ	ራ	ራ	ራ			ሪ		
s	ሰ	ሱ	ሲ	ሳ	ሴ	ስ	ሶ			ሲ		
š	ሸ	ሹ	ሺ	ሻ	ሼ	ሽ	ሾ			ሺ		
k'	ቀ	ቁ	ቂ	ቃ	ቄ	ቅ	ቆ	ቁ	ቁ	ቁ	ቁ	ቁ
b	በ	ቡ	ቢ	ባ	ቤ	ብ	ቦ			ቢ		
t	ተ	ቱ	ቲ	ታ	ቴ	ት	ቶ			ቲ		
c	ቸ	ቹ	ቺ	ቻ	ቼ	ች	ቾ			ቺ		
h	ከ	ከ	ከ	ከ	ከ	ከ	ከ	ከ	ከ	ከ	ከ	ከ
n	ነ	ነ	ነ	ነ	ነ	ነ	ነ	ነ	ነ	ነ	ነ	ነ
h	ከ	ከ	ከ	ከ	ከ	ከ	ከ			ከ		
w	ወ	ወ	ወ	ወ	ወ	ወ	ወ					
(a)	ዐ	ዐ	ዐ	ዐ	ዐ	ዐ	ዐ					
z	ዘ	ዘ	ዘ	ዘ	ዘ	ዘ	ዘ			ዘ		
ž	ዠ	ዠ	ዠ	ዠ	ዠ	ዠ	ዠ			ዠ		
y	የ	የ	የ	የ	የ	የ	የ					
d	ደ	ደ	ደ	ደ	ደ	ደ	ደ			ደ		
j	ገ	ገ	ገ	ገ	ገ	ገ	ገ			ገ		
g	ገ	ገ	ገ	ገ	ገ	ገ	ገ	ገ	ገ	ገ	ገ	ገ
t'	ጠ	ጠ	ጠ	ጠ	ጠ	ጠ	ጠ			ጠ		
c'	ጠ	ጠ	ጠ	ጠ	ጠ	ጠ	ጠ			ጠ		
p'	ሰ	ሰ	ሰ	ሰ	ሰ	ሰ	ሰ			ሰ		
s'	ሰ	ሰ	ሰ	ሰ	ሰ	ሰ	ሰ			ሰ		
s'	ፀ	ፀ	ፀ	ፀ	ፀ	ፀ	ፀ					
f	ፈ	ፈ	ፈ	ፈ	ፈ	ፈ	ፈ			ፈ		
p	ፕ	ፕ	ፕ	ፕ	ፕ	ፕ	ፕ					

	Punctuation marks			Numerals						
:	word/divider	?	question mark (?)	1	፩	6	፮	20	፳	:
,	comma (,)	!	exclamation point (!)	2	፪	7	፯	30	፺	;
;	semi-colon (;)	“ ”	quotes (“ ”)	3	፫	8	፰	40	፼	!
::	end of a sentence	()	parentheses ()	4	፬	9	፱	50	፽	!
!	old form of question mark, rare (?)			5	፭	10	፲	60	፿	1,0

Source: M.L. Bender et al. (1976)

Appendix 9: Qubee/Afaan Oromoo/ Alphabets

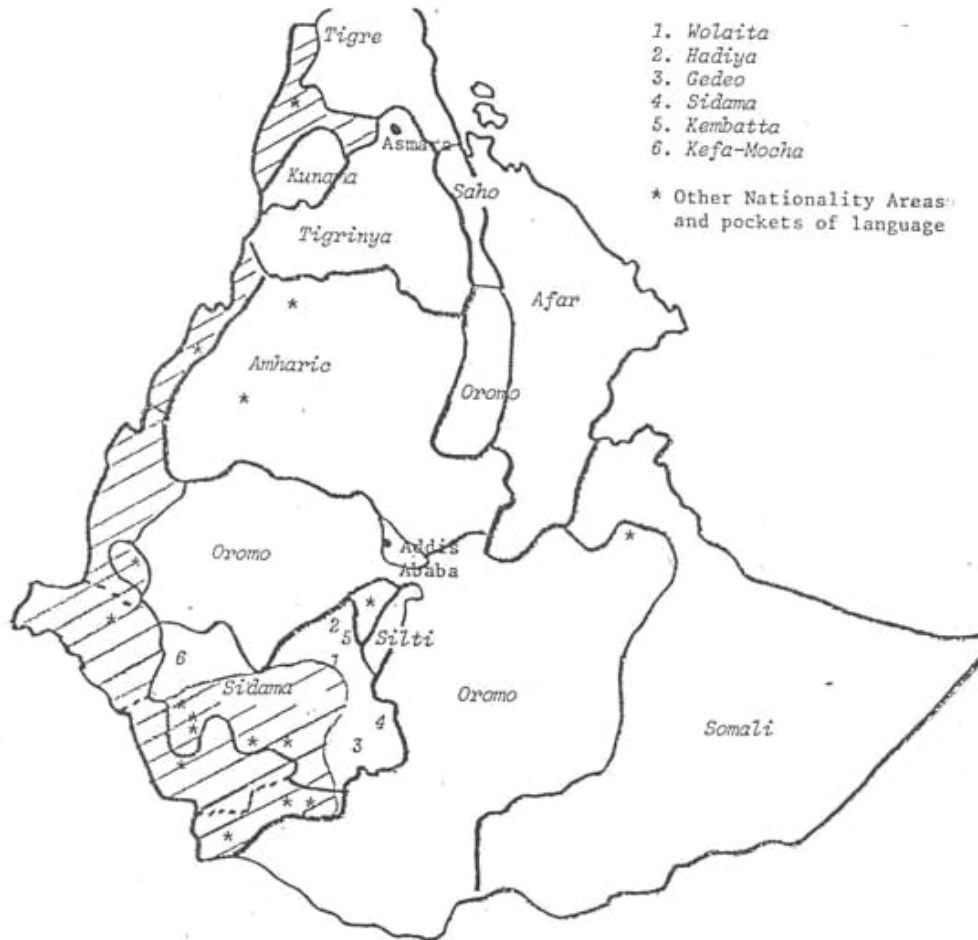
Afaan Oromo alphabet (Qube Afaan Oromo)

A a	B b	C c	CH ch	D d	DH dh	E e	F f	G g	H h	I i
[a]	[b]	[ɕ]	[ɕ]	[d]	[d̥]	[e]	[f]	[g]	[h]	[i]
J j	K k	L l	M m	N n	NY ny	O o	P p	PH ph	Q q	R r
[ɕ]	[k]	[l]	[m]	[n]	[ɲ]	[o]	[p]	[pʰ]	[kʰ]	[r]
S s	SH sh	T t	U u	V v	W w	X x	Y y	Z z		
[s]	[ʃ]	[t]	[u]	[v]	[w]	[tʰ]	[j]	[z]		

Source:

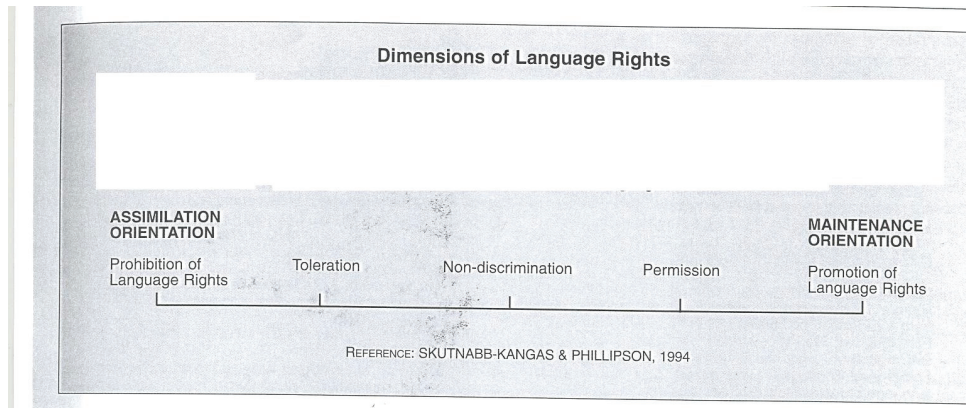
www.sas.upenn.edu/African_Studies/Hornet/Afaan_Oromo_19777.html

Appendix 10: Languages of the Literacy Campaign during the Military Period



Source: As adapted by McNab (1987, 61) from "Education in Socialist Ethiopia", Ministry of Education (1984, 43), Addis Ababa

Appendix 11: Dimension of Language Rights



Appendix 12: Main Religions in Ethiopia

Religion	Population	% of Total Population
Orthodox	26,877,660	50.6
Protestant	5,405,107	10.2
Catholic	459,548	0.9
Muslim	17,412,431	32.8
Traditional	2,455,053	4.6
Others	478,226	0.9
Not Stated	42,756	0.1
Total	53,132,296	100.0

Source: FDRE Central Statistical Authority, The 1994 Population and Housing Census of Ethiopia Results at Country Level Volume II Analytical Report. Addis Ababa: CSA, June 1999, p. 56.

Appendix 13: Oromia Civil Service Commission (2005)

Nationality/Ethnic and Gender in Oromia Civil Service

Lakk ተቆይታ	ጾታ ጾታ	ጠቅላይ ጠቅላይ	ጠቅላይ ጠቅላይ	ጠቅላይ ጠቅላይ	ጠቅላይ ጠቅላይ
1	Oromoo ኦሮሞ	82293	30927	113220	85.83
2	Amaara አማራ	9865	5836	15701	11.90
3	Guraagee ጉራጌ	797	442	1239	0.94
4	Tigree ትግሬ	355	185	540	0.41
5	Yem የም	169	30	199	0.15
6	Daawuroo ዳውሮ	132	42	174	0.13
7	Kambaataa ከምባታ	137	33	170	0.13
8	Kafichoo ካፍቸ	96	39	135	0.10
9	Walayta ወላይታ	96	26	122	0.09
10	Hadiyyaa ሀዲያ	64	13	77	0.06
11	Silxee ስልጠ.	55	12	67	0.05
12	Sidaamaa ሲዳሞ	41	16	57	0.04
13	Burjii ቡርጂ	35	8	43	0.03
14	Kuulloo ኩሎ	21	8	29	0.02
15	Shakkichoo ሸክቸ	15	7	22	0.02
16	Zayyee ዘዩ	13	4	17	0.01
17	Somaalee ሶማሊ	10	2	12	0.01
18	Anyuwaki አንዋክ	11	1	12	0.01
19	Geediyoo ጌዳዩ	10	1	11	0.01
20	Argobbaa አርጎባ	5	4	9	0.01
21	Gaamoo ጋሞ	7	1	8	0.01
22	Konsoo ኮንሶ	5	2	7	0.01
23	Agawoo አገም	6	1	7	0.01
24	Warjii ወርጂ	2	4	6	0.00
25	Alabaa ላላባ	5	1	6	0.00
26	Hararee ሀራራ	4	1	5	0.00
27	Beenchi ቤንቸ	5	0	5	0.00
28	Goffaa ጉፋ	3	1	4	0.00
29	Soddoe ሶዶ	2	0	2	0.00
30	Adaree አደራ	0	2	2	0.00
31	Koyraa ኮየራ	1	0	1	0.00
32	Dorzee ዶርዜ	1	0	1	0.00
33	Diizii ዲዚ	1	0	1	0.00
34	Affaar አፋር	1	0	1	0.00
35	kan hinibsamne ያልተገለጸ	1	0	1	0.00
Ida'aa ጾምር		94264	37649	131913	