

**ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY**  
**SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES**  
**COLLEGE OF SOCIAL SCIENCE AND HUMANITIES**

**THE IMPACT OF RAYYAN DIALECTAL VARIATIONS AND  
AMHARIC ON MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION: THE CASE OF  
ALAMATAN PRIMARY SCHOOLS**

**BY**  
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**MARCH, 2011**  
**ADDIS ABABA**

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**DEPARTMENT OF LINGUISTICS**

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## **A b s t r a c t**

This paper deals with the impact of the Rayyan Dialect (RD) variations and the influence of Amharic on the Medium of Instruction (MOI), particularly in Alamatan primary schools. The study is mainly concerned with the description of the linguistic disparities between the RD and Standard Tigrinya (ST) and analysis of linguistic interferences of the RD and Amharic into the ST. It is also aimed at pointing out the impacts of the linguistic disparities between the two varieties and the influence of Amharic on the LOI, at assessing the attitudes of the students of Alamatan primary schools towards ST as LOI, and at suggesting some measures which can possibly solve or reduce the impacts.

In order to achieve these objectives, a questionnaire, interview, a writing test and personal classroom observations have been used as the main data collection instruments. Six primary schools have been selected using random and purposive sampling method. Grade seven students and their Tigrinya teachers have also been selected as sample subjects of the study using random sampling technique. The data, therefore, have been collected through the aforementioned methods from these subjects during schooling time. Both quantitative and descriptive methods are used in an integrated way to analyze the data.

The data have revealed that there is a gap between the RD and the MOI (ST). The linguistic disparities between the two varieties mainly lie at phonological, grammatical and lexical levels. The data have also shown that the linguistic aspects of the RD are mainly influenced by Amharic. Moreover, it has also been found that there are innovations of linguistic elements in the RD.

It has been noticed that the disparity between the RD and the LOI as well as the influence of Amharic bring about negative effect in classroom communication, on the implementation of the ST as LOI, on the students' academic success and on the general achievement of the instructional objectives. The MOI in the primary education of Tigray is Tigrinya. However there are a large number of students whose MT is entirely Amharic and face difficulty to reflect their ideas during classroom instructional process. The data have also revealed that majority of the students have developed a negative attitude towards using the ST as MOI.

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## SYMBOLS AND ABRIVATIONS

[ä] Mid, central and unrounded vowel

[i̠] High, central and unrounded

[i] High, front and unrounded

[e] Mid, front and unrounded

[a] low, central and unrounded

[o] Mid, back and rounded

[u] High, back and rounded

[ʔ] Glottal, stop and voiceless

[kʼ] Velar, stop and ejective

[čʼ] Palatal, affricative and ejective

[tʼ] Alveolar, stop and ejective

[ħ] Pharyngeal, fricative and voiceless

[š] Palatal, fricative and voiceless

[ž] Palatal, fricative and voiced

[sʼ] alveolar, fricative and ejective

[χ] Velar, fricative and voiceless

[χʼ] velar, fricative and ejective

[ʕ] Pharyngeal, fricative and voiced

[j] Palatal, affricative and voiced

[ɲ] Palatal, nasal and voiced

[y] Palatal, glide, voiced

[pʼ] Bilobial, stop, ejective

[g<sup>w</sup>] Velar, stop, biarticulated, voiced

[k<sup>w</sup>] Velar, stop, biarticulated, voiceless

ALIPFW = Average Linguistic Interference per Fifty Words

D<sub>1</sub>=First Dialect

F = Female

LI= Linguistic Interference

LL = Linguistic Level

M = Male

MOI= Medium of Instruction

MT = Mother Tongue

MTI= Mother Tongue Instruction

NSV=Non-Standard Variety

PL = Plural

PLF = Plural Female

PLM = Plural Male

RD = Rayyan Dialect

SG = Singular

SGF = Singular Female

SGM = Singular Male

ST = Standard Tigrinya

SV=Standard Variety

# CHAPTER ONE

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1. Background of the study

Language is a basic need of human beings to interact with each other. As a tool of communication, people use it to express their needs, ideas, thoughts, and feelings. It can not be separated from the culture or the society to which it belongs because it is an important part of culture. Furthermore, the use of language is pretty much influenced by the culture and it will change along the changes faced by the people. Regarding this, Schendel (2001:55) states that all physical aspects are subject to change and so do languages. Everything in the world is in a state of change; any language like everything else, therefore, shows significant variation in all linguistic levels. Linguistic change takes place at all levels of language: in phonology, morphology, syntax and semantics (Campbell, 2004:6-7; Schendel, 2001:25).

Generally, we can say that speakers of any living language can constantly show variations in vocabulary (meaning or lexicon), in pronunciation (sound variation), and in grammar (morphological and syntactic variation) among themselves, mainly due to geographical (regional) and social variations (Asfaw Gebregzabiher, 1991:588). Such language variation among speakers of a particular language, no matter whether the variation is due to geographical, social or other factors, is said to be dialectal variation.

The Tigrinya language which is one of the North Ethio-Semitic languages widely spoken in Tigray and Eritrea (Gerday, 1983:2; Daniel Mehari, 1991: 43-44; Mekonnen, 1991: 57) is not an exception to these universal and fundamental facts of dialectal variations. Hence, its different formal aspects such as phonology, morphology, syntax and lexicon are really subject to dialectal variations.

In Ethiopia, Tigrinya is spoken as first language in almost all parts of Tigray (Shire, Axum, Adwa, Agame, Kilde-Awlaelo, Tembien, Enderta, and Raya- Azebo); in Eritrea, it is spoken in the areas of Hamassen, Serayo and Akale-Guzay as a mother tongue (Daniel Teklemariam, 1991).

In the conference proceedings volume in *mäs'naſtitat K'ädamay Symposium Tigrigna*, Hailemichael and Gebremedhin (1991a) discuss briefly some of the dialectal variations of Tigrigna. The dialects of Tigrinya are mostly subject to geographical (regional) variations though there are not geographical (regional) factors, such as great mountains and rivers, which can cause dialectal variations (Aba-Yakub, 1940) cited in (Daniel Teklemariam, 1991). Aba-Yakub (1940) cited in (Asfaw Gebregzabihier, 1991: 726; Asmerom, 1991:725-6) classified the dialects of Tigrinya into three regional (geographical) localities as follows:

1. The dialect spoken in Tembien, Kilte-Awlaelo, Enderta, and Agame as one part of the Akale-Guzay dialect;
2. The dialect spoken in Adwa, Axum, Shire, Seraye and Hammassien as another part of the Akale-Guzay dialect;
3. The dialect spoken in Rayya- Azebo, Zaemel, Wajerat, Wegera and Woldaya as another dialect, which is different from the above two dialectal categories.

Leslau (1941:108) mention that the dialects of Tigrinya seem to differ much more among themselves than do the dialects of Amharic. Due to its contacts with Amharic, Tigrinya (particularly the dialect spoken in Alamata) shows occasional features influenced by Amharic. One can also notice that Tigrinya spoken in Eritrea is influenced by Arabic and to some extent by Italian (Germay Berhane, 1983:3).

From the above discussion, one can understand that there has been a great variation between the dialects spoken in the southern tip of Tigray, which is highly influenced by Amharic and the dialects spoken in the northern part of Tigray, which are parts of the Akale- Guzay dialect. One can also easily observe significant phonological, morphological, syntactic and lexical variations among Tigrinya speakers of southern Tigray, particularly, (Alamata and Wajerat) and the Tigrinya speakers of Northern, Western, Eastern and Central parts of Tigray including Enderta. According to Tsehaye Kiros (2009: 9), there is a popular proverb in Tigrigna which says “Tigrinya was born in Adwa, became sick in Agame, severely sick in Enderta and finally was buried in Raya”. As to Tsehaye, the proverb is used just to express metaphorically how the dialects vary.

But, according to linguistic point of view, language or dialectal variation does not entail the sickness or death of any variety of language. It is natural for any particular language to show any change due to different social and geographical factors through a course of time. Language variation refers to a disparity in dialect, native language, or second language that results in a different pronunciation, production, or construction of a particular language. Therefore, it must be noticed that any language or dialect variation does not mean that dialect/language death has taken place.

Dialectal variations can affect the quality of education received by some students both academically and socially (Labov, 1995). According to Labov, a child's dialect may interfere with the acquisition of information and with the various educational skills. Tigrinya language was used as medium of instruction during the Italian occupation when the Italian policy granted vernacular language teaching to the colonial subjects for its divide and rule aims (Bender, M. L., Hailu Fulas, and R. Cowley, 1976:108; Pankhurst, 1969:36; Tsehay, 1977:14). However, this was discontinued with the changing policy after liberation until the reintroduction of vernacular education for the literacy campaign conducted in the 1970's and 1980's in the non-formal education program (Marew, 2000:3; Ayalew, 2000:75; McNab, 1989:78). But, starting from 1973 E.C, Tigrinya was used as a language of instruction, as a medium of military training etc, by the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) party (Mesfin, 1991). Starting from 1991, Tigrinya has become the official language and the medium of instruction in the formal and non-formal educational programs of the region (Araya, 1999: 272; Zeray, 2003:3). However, Tigrinya is a language with more than one variety that diverges widely from each other, both from one zone to the next and within a single zone (Tsehay Kiros, 2009: 6).

Therefore, to the best understanding of the researcher, implementing a language policy that allows the use of vernacular languages as medium of instruction in societies whose language is highly influenced by dialectal variations could have its own challenges. This is due to the fact that the medium of instruction can be greatly affected by dialectal interferences at all language levels (phonology, morphology, syntax, and lexicology). The researcher in this study, therefore, tries to investigate such issues in Tigrinya dialectal variations, particularly the dialectal variations between the Tigrinya spoken in Alamata of

Rayya and the Tigrinya which is used as medium of instruction and the impact of such variations on the students' academia as well as on the overall attainment of educational objectives, specifically in the case of Alamatan primary schools, where the influence of Amharic is high.

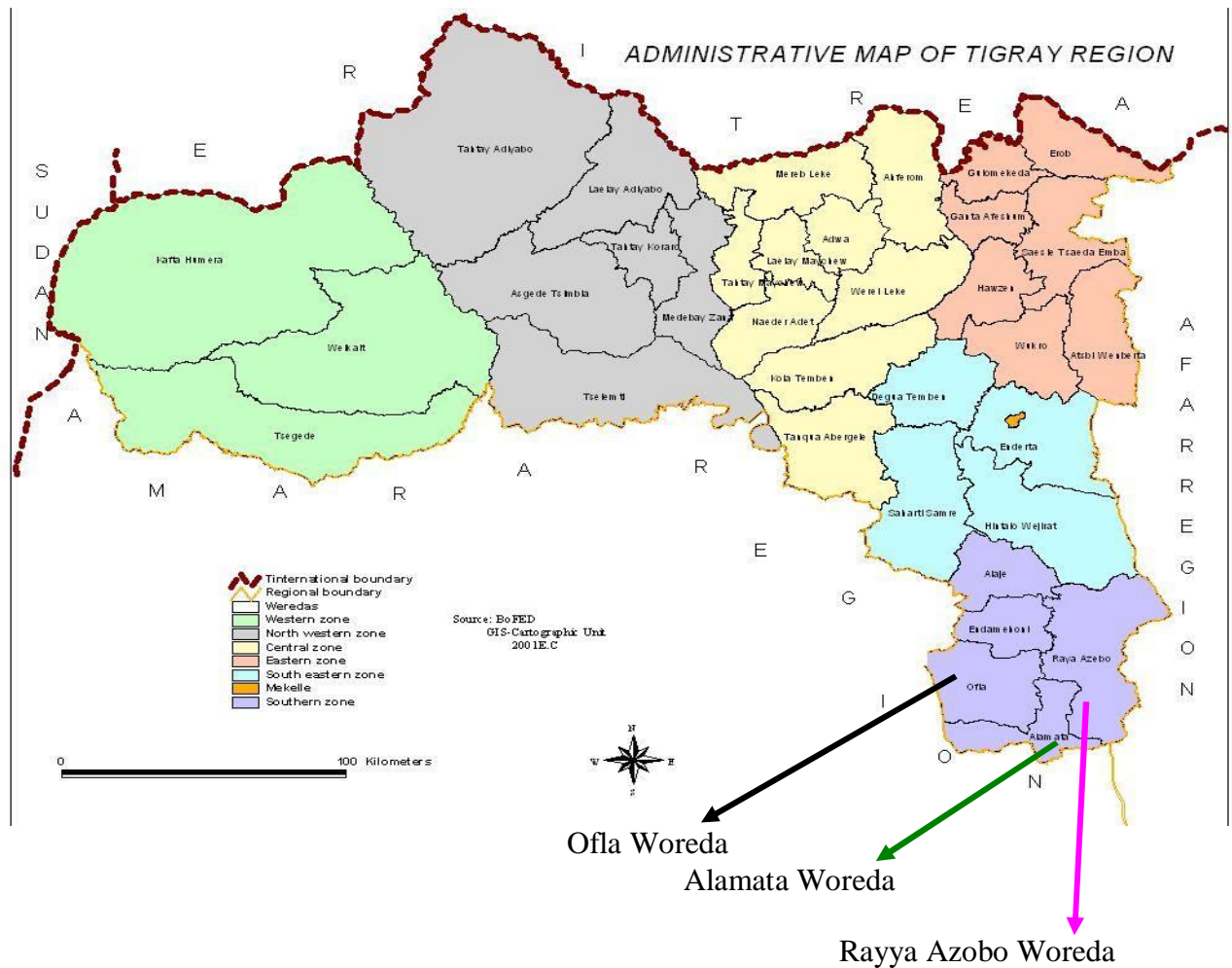
## **1.2. Alamata**

Alamata is one of the 36 woredas in the Tigray region of Ethiopia. Part of the Southern Zone of Tigray, Alamata is bordered on the south and west by the Amhara Region, on the northwest by Ofla and on the northeast by Raya Azebo, both of which are woredas of the present Southern Zone of Tigray. Alamata woreda is located 600 km north of Addis Ababa and about 180 km south of the Tigray Regional capital Mekelle. It is the southern most woreda of the Southern Zone of the present Tigray Region. Alamata has two Woredas: the Rayya Alamata (rural parts of Alamata) and the Alamata town itself. The administrative center of both Woredas, however, is Alamata town.

The statistical data obtained from the public and government relations office of the Alamata woreda, reports the total population of this woreda as follows:

Alamata woreda has a population of 93,639 of whom 45,521 were men and 48,138 were women. The three largest ethnic groups reported in Alamata were the Tigriyan (62.19%), the Amhara (33.91%), and the Oromo (2.24%); the Afar and Agow made up 1.66% of the population. Tigrinya is spoken as a first language by 61.36%, Amharic by 36.48% and Afan Oromo by 1.36%, and the remaining 0.8% speaks Afar and Himtagna (Agew).

The following map shows the border areas where Alamata is located in the administrative regional map of Tigray in which the study areas (kebeles) are also found.



**Figure 1: Map of Alamata in the Regional Administrative State of Tigray**

(Source: Alamata Finance and Development office)

### 1.3. Statement of the problem

There are a number of researches done by different researchers in different times on dialectal variations of the Tigrinya language. Particularly, three researches (*The Phonology of Rayyan Dialect of Tigrinya* by Mohammed Siraj (1983), *The Role of Media in Creating Standard Dialect in the Case of Ofla Woreda* by Yikune-Amlak Mezgebe (2000) and *The Tigrinya Dialectal variations between Rayya and Adwa* by Dagnew Mache (1999) have been conducted on what and how the dialect of Rayya varies from the other dialects of Tigrinya so far. However, any one of them did not attempt to touch the

impact of the Rayyan dialect on the implementation of the medium of instruction in the Southern Zone, particularly in the primary schools of the Alamata woreda, where the interference of Amharic is high. This study, therefore, has been conducted to fill this gap.

As far as the researcher's knowledge about the dialect speakers of Tigrinya is concerned, it is possible to say that there is no such great variation, which can result in communication gap among the Western, Central, Eastern, and Enderta Tigrinya dialects speakers. Even though there are some phonological and lexical variations, the speakers of these dialects can easily communicate to each other. The dialects spoken in Alamata woreda and Wajerat, however, deviate greatly from the rest of the dialects of Tigrinya, and they are most likely to bring communication gap. Especially, most people from Western, Central, and Eastern parts of Tigray face difficulty to understand the dialects spoken in Wajerat and Alamata woreda and vice versa. This is mainly due to the fact that the dialect spoken in Wajerat is nearest to Ge'ez (Tsehaye Kiros, 2009:9) and the dialect spoken in Alamata Woreda is highly influenced by the contact with the neighboring language called Amharic (Moges Ali, 1993). Most of the Alamatan people are always observed facing difficulties to speak and understand the dialects spoken in the other parts of the Tigray Region.

Within this great difficulty, the medium of instruction in the primary education of the present Tigray Region is Tigrinya. There is a great linguistic variation between the Tigrinya which is assumed as a standard dialect and used as medium of instruction in primary education, and the Tigrinya dialect, which is spoken in Rayya, particularly in Alamata and its surroundings. This linguistic variation has motivated the researcher to look into it and its impact on the medium of instruction in the case of Alamatan primary schools. To this end, the researcher has raised the following research questions to be answered throughout the study.

1. What are the dialectal variations between the Tigrinya spoken in Rayya, specifically Alamata and the variety used as language of instruction in primary education of Tigray?

2. What is the impact of these variations and the influence of Amharic on the medium of instruction and on the academic success of the students of Alamatan primary schools?
3. What is the attitude of the children of the Alamatan primary schools towards the use of the RD, the ST, Amharic and English as language of instruction in their schools?
4. What measures have to be taken to solve/reduce the problems?

## **1.4. Objectives of the study**

### **1.4.1. General objective**

The overall objective of this study is to survey the existence of the dialectal variations between the Tigrinya spoken in Rayya particularly Alamata and its surroundings and the Tigrinya which is taken as a standard, and to go through the impacts of such variations on the implementation of the medium of instruction.

### **1.4.2. Specific objectives**

The specific objectives of under taking this study are:

- to describe the dialectal variations between the Tigrinya spoken in Rayya, particularly, in Alamata and the Tigrinya variety which is developed as a standard one and used as MOI in primary education of the region;
- to critically analyze the impact of these dialectal variations and the influence of Amharic on the medium of instruction and on the overall academic success of the students particularly in the case of Alamatan primary schools;
- to assess the attitudes of the children of the Alamatan primary schools towards the use of R D, the ST, Amharic and English as MOI in their schools;
- to offer (recommend) some strategies that can possibly overcome or reduce the problem.

## 1.5. Significance of the Study

As to the best knowledge of the researcher, most of the times, negative attitudes about speech have started with the belief that vernacular dialects are linguistically inferior to standard versions of a particular language. In fact, the language systems of various groups of speakers may differ, but in reality, no one system is inherently better than any other. This study, therefore, may:

- ✚ play a great role to create awareness for the different dialect speakers of Tigrinya to appreciate the reality in dialectal variations.
- ✚ serve as a reference and pave the way for other researchers who are interested in conducting study on this or other similar areas.
- ✚ serve as a reference material for language planners in Tigray and decision makers, Tigrinya curriculum designers, teachers of Alamatan primary schools and other concerned bodies for any required action.
- ✚ give feedback to Tigray Regional Education Bureau (TREB) so that it may be able to re-consider the Alamatan dialect in the curriculum.

## 1.6. Scope and delimitation of the study

Had it been possible to carry out the study at the Zone level, the result obtained would have been representative of the southern zone as a whole. However, the researcher has found that it would be very difficult to widen the study to include all the primary schools of the Southern Zone of Tigray in this study owing to time constraints. Hence, in order to make the study manageable, the researcher has limited his study only to investigate how the RD particularly, the Tigrinya variety spoken in Alamata varies from the Tigrinya being used as medium of instruction, and to describe its impact on the implementation of that medium of instruction and on the academic achievement of the students specifically in the primary schools of Alamata woreda. It was also quite difficult to conduct the study in all the 61 primary schools of the woreda because of the financial and time constraints. Therefore, the researcher has intended to select six primary schools: three from the Alamata town and three from the rural areas (Rayya- Alamata), which are believed to represent the whole primary schools of the woreda.

## **1.7. Operational Definition of Terms**

**Dialect:** The variety of language used by a group of people whose linguistic habit patterns both reflect and are determined by shared regional, social, or cultural perspectives; the users of a specific dialect employ the phonological, grammatical and lexical variations. In this study the terms dialect and variety of language are interchangeably used.

**Standard Dialect:** A variety of language which has codified and written forms; and is used as medium of instruction.

**Standard Tigrinya:** The Tigrinya variety which is used as Medium of Instruction in the primary education of the present Regional State of Tigray.

**Mother Tongue:** It is the child's first language in which he/she starts listening and speaking for the first time in his/her life and uses it at home for communication. In this study the terms Mother Tongue and Vernacular are used interchangeably.

**Medium of Instruction:** It is a language used in the school for the teaching-learning process or the language used by students and teachers in the school communication. The terms Medium of Instruction, Language of Instruction and Language of Learning are interchangeably used.

**Mother Tongue Instruction:** Any Instruction offered using the Mother Tongue.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **2. Review of Literature**

#### **2.1. Previous works on the History of Tigrinya and its Dialectology**

Tigrinya is one of the Ethio-Semitic Languages; the original name of the language is Tigray (Daniel Mehari, 1991: 45). As to Daniel Mehari, Tigrinya is a written language with a certain amount of literature; it is the most widely spoken Semitic language next to Arabic and Amharic.

According to Daniel Mehari, the people who are now the inhabitants of Tigray and Eritrea are descendent of the Habeshites or Abyssinians. He also argues that those people were hailed from the south west coast of Arabia and Yemen; Habeshites or Abyssinians were Semites. Daniel Mehari (1991: 46) states that the language of these people belongs to the Semitic family, and the name “Semitic” is conventional applied to a group of languages spoken in western Asia. Hence, according to Daniel Mehari, the evolution of the Ethiopian languages can be stated as follows:

A group of South Semites crossed the Red sea in the early times, settled down in Eritrea and Tigray, mixed with the indigenous people mainly Cushitic population. The Semites, therefore, imposed their language on Cushites.

In relation to this, Mekonnen (1991:58) states that the number of immigrants from the Arabian Peninsula who settled in the horn of Africa was relatively small, but their impact on the culture, language and political structure of the indigenous Cushitic societies which observed them was deep and lasting; the coexistence and unity of these issues leading to the creation of first Ge’ez and then Tigrinya has been noticed by linguists. Furthermore, Daniel Mehari (1991: 47-48) explains that Tigrinya is very closely related to Ge’ez in which the Alphabets of Tigrinya have been taken from Ge’ez and its vocabularies are more or less similar with that of Ge’ez. Daniel adds that there is also an assumption given that Ge’ez is the parental language of Tigrinya. In addition, he elaborates that there are some scholars who assume that both Ge’ez and Tigrinya are sister languages of the same

origin, that is the Proto-Ethio-Semitic language; however, according to Daniel Mehari (1991:51), it is not yet settled the question of whether Ge'ez is the parent language of Tigrinya or whether both languages were derived from some proto-Ethiopic language or languages.

Regarding Tigrinya literature, Mekonnen (1991:64-65) explains that it is believed that Tigrinya started to be used literally language recently; in particular, for the first time short poems, pamphlets on religion topics and literal works by monks were in evidence in present day Eritrea. In relation to this, Amanuel (1984: 79) also argues that the earliest evidence of written Tigrinya that we have at our disposal is a textbook believed to have been written in the 19<sup>th</sup> century in a certain region of Akale-Guzay. Amanuel adds that a considerable number of books were written in this period, however, according to Amanuel, the most interesting document in Tigrinya is no other than “The Code of Law of Loggo Sarda”. He states that this valuable text reveals some of the primitive aspects of the language. In general, all the above authors argue that the 19<sup>th</sup> century would be the right time to start the history of written Tigrinya.

Mekonnen (1991:65) explains that the period between the end of Italian rule of Eritrea (1930-1941) and the British occupation (1942-1952) would be considered as water shed for the apex in the use of Tigrinya literary.

As to Mekonnen (1991:66), during the period 1930-1941, Tigrinya was widely used mainly for propaganda purposes; the Italian officials in Asmara used to write pamphlets in Tigrinya and drop them from airplane behind the enemy lines during the wars. He also elaborates that the Tigrinya used was of the Akale-Guzay dialect, and it was mostly a translation from Italians. Nevertheless, other than for propaganda and similar subversive activities, Tigrinya was not used in other literary works or in schools; this is due to the fact that the colonial government was not willing to see any sort of cultural and social development in the country that it had colonized to civilize (Amanuel, 1984:82-83).

There are also some works which have been done on the structure of some specific dialects of Tigrinya and on the dialectal variations of the language so far.

Leslau (1946: 219) states that Tigrinya is spoken in a part of Eritrea, of North Ethiopia, and in Tigre province. He also elaborates that Tigrinya has numerous features in common with Ge'ez and Tigre, but that it is also strongly influenced by Amharic; still other features are characteristic for Tigrinya only and do not occur in any other North Ethiopic language.

Leslau (1946:221) discusses that there are several Tigrinya dialects such as the Akale-Guzay, Hamassien, Adwa and Temben dialects of Tigrinya. The study of the Tigrinya dialectology according to Leslau, however, is in its beginning, since the existing grammars do not localize the described speech.

Leslau's work on Tigrinya Dialectology mainly focuses on the Tigrinya variety spoken in Akale-Guzay and Hamassen which are two districts of the present day Eritrea and the Tigrinya dialect spoken in Adwa (a district in the northern part of the present regional administrative state of Tigray).

Leslau (1939:61-64) states that there are slight phonological, morphological, and lexical variations among the Tigrinya dialects of Akale-Guzay and Hamassen, located in what is now Eritrea, and the variety of Tigrinya spoken in Adwa, the northern tip of Tigray (Ethiopia). However, Leslau argued that all the Tigrinya dialect speakers of the above three districts together make up the northern Tigrinya dialect.

Germa (1991) categorizes the Tigrinya dialects spoken in the present Tigray into two categories-the "Northern Tigrinya (NT)", which is spoken in districts such as Shire, Axum and Adwa in one group and the "Southern Tigrinya (ST)", which Germa may probably mean the Tigrinya variety spoken in Mekelle and its surroundings or what other previous researchers call the "Enderta Dialect".

However, what is southern Tigrinya in Germa (1991) does not represent the Tigrinya variety spoken in the southern part of Tigray rather it wholly represents the Tigrinya dialect spoken in districts like Temben, Kilet-Awlaelo, and Mekelle as well as its surroundings (Enderta).

According to Gerday (1991: 153) these dialects of districts like Axum and Adwa, which are close to the border with Eritrea, are mainly influenced by Northern Tigrinya (the Tigrinya spoken in Eritrea).

For Gerday (1991) there are a number of points of comparison that he used to differentiate what he calls the “Northern and Southern Tigrinya” in his study. Overall, there are seventeen points of comparison made in Gerday (1991) for the northern and southern dialect groups of Tigrinya, which he also terms the Z-group and the L-group. As to Gerday this is because the relative clause marker, prepositions, and nominal prefixes begin with *l* in what he calls the “Southern Tigrinya” and with *z* in the “Northern Tigrinya”. However, the relative clause marker, prepositions, and nominal prefixes do not begin with *l* in the Tigrinya dialect spoken in the southern Tigray; instead they begin with *d*. It is in the Tigrinya dialect which is spoken in Temben, Kilde-Awlaelo, and Enderta that relative clause marker, prepositions, and nominal prefixes begin with *l*.

Gerday Berhane (1983) in his MA thesis deals with the description of the phonology of the “Enderta and Hulet-Awlalo” dialect of Tigrinya. Gerday attempted to describe the sound system of the dialect spoken in the above parts of Tigray. He particularly dealt with the description of the segmental phonemes and their realizations. In his description, Gerday identified that there are twenty nine (29) consonant and seven (7) vowel phonemes in the dialect spoken in “Enderta and Hulet-Awlalo”. He stated that this number of consonant phonemes is different from that of Leslau (1941) and Ullendorf (1955) who identified 31 and 32 consonant phonemes respectively in other dialects of Tigrinya. Furthermore, he tried to treat the consonant clusters, the syllable and the morpheme structure. And he realized that the syllabic structure of that dialect is both open and closed. Gerday stated that both Leslau (1941) and Ullendorf (1955) identified that the vowel phoneme [e] has greater distribution in their studies on the other dialects of Tigrinya. Gerday, however, stated that it is limited only to the initial and medial positions in the dialect he studied.

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Mohammed (1983), in his BA thesis on *The phonology of the Rayyan Dialect of Tigrinya* has also tried to identify and describe the contrastive and complementary segments of the Rayya and Azobo (what is called today Rayya-Azobo) dialect of Tigrinya. Here, Mohammed attempted to deal with the phonetic and phonological descriptions of consonant and vowel phonemes, and he attempted to analyze the syllabic structure of that dialect. The researcher identified that the Rayya-Azobo dialect has twenty one (21) consonant and five (5) vowel phonemes. As to Mohammed, the consonant phonemes [p] and [p'] are not considered in the dialect of Rayya-Azobo as indigenous phonemes since their occurrences are limited to loan words. He also stated that [ž], which occurs in other dialects of Tigrinya is non-existent in Rayya. He also explained that [k<sup>w</sup>], [g<sup>w</sup>] and [k'<sup>w</sup>]

which are considered as independent phonemes in other dialects are allophones of [k], [g] and [k'], respectively, in Rayyan dialect since their occurrence is predictable. In addition, Mohammed comprehends that the vowel phonemes [i] and [e] are absent in Rayyan dialect, and the syllabic structure of that dialect is both open and closed.

Daniel Teklemariam (1985) in his study on *The Regional Variation of Tigrinya between Hammasien and Enderta Awrajas* has also tried to deal with the concept of Tigrinya dialectal variations and how they are formed. Here, Daniel tried to discuss the linguistic areas where the dialects of Tigrinya vary from each other. He explained the linguistic differences which have been clearly noticed due to variations in phonology, lexicography and grammatical structure among the different dialect speakers of Tigrinya. He tried to discuss these issues using data from the dialect of Enderta of Tigray and Hamassien of Eritrea in comparison. In addition, Daniel Teklemariam (1991) attempted to go through the way how to make and standardize one dialect of Tigrinya. Here, Daniel tried to raise and discuss certain issues such as what the concept of making and standardizing language means and issues those have to be considered when making and developing standard Tigrinya.

Yikune-Amlak (2000) has dealt with the description of the Tigrinya variety spoken in Ofla (one of the eight woredas of the present Southern Zone (Rayya) of Tigray) in comparison with the Tigrinya variety spoken in the other parts of Tigray. Yikune-Amlak describes how the dialect of Tigrinya spoken in Ofla woreda varies phonologically, grammatically and lexically from the Tigrinya dialect spoken in other parts of the region. In his description, the researcher classified the data into two categories: the Tigrinya dialect spoken in Ofla on the one side, and the Tigrinya dialect spoken in other parts of Tigray on the other side. However, he did not treat the other dialects as which of them are spoken in which parts of Tigray. But the dialect spoken in Ofla might represent the dialect spoken in most of the Rayyan areas, even though there are some expressions which are exceptional to the variety spoken in Ofla.

In addition, Dagnaw (1999) in his BA Thesis tried to see and describe the variations between the Tigrinya dialect spoken in Adwa (central part of Tigray) and the dialect of

Tigrinya spoken in Rayya (Southern part of Tigray). He tried to deal with the descriptions of certain linguistic aspects where the above two dialects designate remarkable differences to each other. He mainly focused on the description of phonological, morphological and lexical variations between the two varieties, and finally, he came to the conclusion that there is a great linguistic variation between the variety spoken in Adwa and the one which is spoken in Rayya where the speakers of each dialect are observed facing difficulties to communicate with each other.

Furthermore, Tsehaye (2009), in his MA thesis has dealt with the comparisons of the Wajerat Tigrigna dialect, which is spoken by the Wajerat people vs. the standard Tigrigna. Tsehaye has mainly tried to go through the phonological and grammatical comparisons of the two varieties of Tigrinya. He also tried to discuss whether and in what ways Wajerat Tigrigna is nearer to Ge'ez than the Tigrigna dialect which currently serves as the standard one in the regional state of Tigray.

However, none of these works tried to address the impacts of the dialectal variations of Tigrinya on implementing the Tigrinya which is used as medium of instruction in any of the primary schools of the Tigray region. Therefore, this research is essentially different in its goals and contents from all the related works reviewed above.

## **2.2. The Influence of Amharic on Tigrinya**

Some researchers have reported that Amharic has linguistically influenced Tigrinya. Amanuel Sahle (1988:15-20) states that Amharic began to take the role of a king's language ever since Ge'ez lost its country privilege after the decline of Axum around the 10<sup>th</sup> century and due to the fact that lack of efficient communication in a feudal and somewhat weakly united country, Amharic could not have a positive influence over Tigrinya until the modern times. Furthermore, Mohammad Siraj (1983:1) in his study on *The phonology of Rayyan Dialect of Tigrinya* stated that the Rayya-Azebo dialect is influenced by Amharic. As to Mohammad, such influence on the Rayyan dialect characterizes it different from dialects of Tigrinya spoken in other parts of Tigray and Eritrea. Teklehaymanot Hailelassie (2000: 167) also explains that lexical interference from Amharic to Tigrinya challenges not only students but also teachers and authors due

to the fact that there is a close relationship between Amharic and Tigrinya. He elaborates this issue using examples such as *Zätänäñña wäsi?ä*, which means “I stood ninth”. In this expression, there is an interference of the Amharic word *Zätänäñña* which means “ninth” in Tigrinya. Furthermore, there are other Amharic words, such as *g<sup>w</sup>adäñña*, which means “friend” as in *g<sup>w</sup>adäññaḡa mäsi?a* “your friend has come.” Teklehaymanot (2000:169) discusses that teachers believe that there is a problem within the Tigrinya curriculum because it is not prepared based on Tigrinya linguistics rather it is translated from Amharic, and this is one of the major causes of the Amharic interference into Tigrinya in academic /at schools.

Daniel Teklu (2000:220) explains that slogans, notices and letters which are written from different offices, names of different companies, hotels and motels are directly written in the Amharic morph-syntactic form. In addition to this, Daniel stated that the names of some companies are written in Amharic. As to Daniel, lack of using (following) Tigrinya structure, mixing Amharic into Tigrinya in one’s own writing and lack of abilities in making Tigrinya letters correctly represent the correct oral speech sounds that they have to represent are the major problems that we can observe in written Tigrinya. Furthermore, some parts of societies, specially youngsters who live in urban areas do not have the interest to express their own ideas in both written and spoken Tigrinya rather they use written and spoken Amharic version to express their ideas (Daniel,2000: 221-222). Here, Daniel states that Tigriyans have got their own freedom, but Tigrinya is still under the influence of Amharic; Tigrinya speakers still do not skip from the influence of Amharic. According to Daniel, the structure they use in their spoken Tigrinya is the structure of Amharic, and it is habitual for most Tigrinya speakers to interfere Amharic words in their speech. But, according to Daniel, the interference of Amharic into Tigrinya is serious in some parts of the society, particularly the youngsters who live in urban areas. He explained that they are always observed completely switching their Tigrinya into Amharic mainly due to the fact that they think that Tigrinya is not appropriate to address love; in other words, they think that Amharic is a sweet (comfortable) language for them to express their love, and they understand that Amharic is the expression of modernity. Furthermore, Daniel discusses that Tigrinya dialect users reflect a sense of localism in

many occasions; this situation is commonly seen (observed) in professionals who work in public medias.

### **2.3. Language and Education**

Language enables human beings to live together in society, to develop and exchange ideas and to plan for the future; it is a critical means of gaining access to important knowledge and skills, and it is a tool for all aspects of human civilization and indispensable to every human activity (Ager, 1996:1). Fentahun (1999:9), “language–spoken, heard, written and read is part of everything.” Therefore, as language is part of everything, it also plays a significant role in the realm of education which is the key to all human civilization.

As to the best understanding of the researcher, language and education are not separable, especially in the overall activities of the instructional process. The role of language in the instructional process is very critical because it represents a people’s theory of reality; it explains, interprets, constructs and reproduces that reality (Smitherman, 1998:58). As Spolsky (1972:3) and Thomas (1990:1-2) noted, learning in school depends on an interaction to interaction of the pupil with his/her teachers, books and peers, and all these interactions are mediated by language. Most of his/her teaching takes place through language, and most of his/her learning depends on a pupil’s ability to understand what his/her teacher says and what is in his/her text books. That is, success in learning depends basically on the ability of the learners to understand the teaching-learning process and to express themselves in the language that is used for learning. Hence, for Thomas and Spolsky, students who lack sufficient language skills not only fail to express ideas in the language but they also fail in the other subject areas as well.

Generally, language is an essential means of interaction, explanation, sharing ideas and mutual understanding in the instructional process. Numerous studies have shown that there is a positive correlation between the medium of instruction and success at school. Thus the choice of medium of instruction in societies with plurality of languages is fundamental for the teaching – learning process. The question then, according to Annamalai (2003) “is which language will serve as the effective medium of instruction.”

Effectiveness, for Annamalai, is not about the quality of language to be used but is about the quality of education that is aimed at, whether it is interactive, creative and critical.

## **2.4. History of Ethiopian Language Policy in Education**

In the history of Ethiopia since the introduction of modern education around the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, language policy regarding education has been changed many times due to external influences and political interests of leaders of the time. Marew (2000:3-4), Altaye (2001:4-5), Ghermai (1998:58), Ayalew (2000:75), and McNab (1989:78) discuss that although there was apparently no educational policy governing the use of language, foreign languages ( particularly French) were used as medium of instruction in modern Ethiopian schools until the Italian occupation, and around six local languages including Tigrinya were used for teaching purpose during the Italian colonial period, but only the Amharic language continued to be a language of instruction in primary schools of formal education in Ethiopia until 1990. During the military regime, an attempt was made to introduce 15 national languages in a nationwide literacy campaign (McNab, 1989:85; Ayalew, 2000:75).

When the new government in 1991 replaced the Derg, the constitution of the new transitional government recognized the rights of nationalities to speak, to write, and to develop their own language. As a result, a new Education and Training Policy (ETP, 1994) has been established with provision for choice of nationality languages of instruction in primary education (Ghermai, 1998:64; Gfeller, 1999:3-4). So since the new curriculum became operational, over twenty nationality languages have been used as the languages of learning in primary schools in different regions of the country (MOE, 2002:27). Among these, one is Tigrinya, which is the subject of this study.

## **2.5. Dialectal Variations**

Larson (1974:5) defined dialect as it is the variety of language used by a group whose linguistic habit patterns both reflect and are determined by shared regional, social, or cultural perspectives. The user of a specific dialect employs the phonological (pronunciation), lexical (vocabulary), and syntactic patterns (word arrangement) and

variation of the given “community”. As to Larson, a dialect is a variety of a language used by some definable group. Everyone has a personal version of language, an idiolect, which is unique, and closely related groups of idiolects make up a dialect. Furthermore, Larson explained that “by custom, some dialects are spoken; others are written, and some are shared by the community at large, whereas others are confined to small communities, neighborhoods, or social groups and the need for varying dialects may arise from membership in groups tied to physical localities.” He also explains that:

Differences in dialects derive from events in the history of the communities using the language, not from supposed differences in intelligence or physiology. Although they vary in phonology, in vocabulary, and in surface grammatical patterns, the differences between neighboring dialects are not sufficiently wide to prevent full mutual comprehension among speakers of those dialects.

Furthermore, Wolfram, W., Adger, C. and Christian, D. (1999) explained that dialect differences are one of the most interesting features of language, but also one of the most controversial, particularly in schools; dialects are varieties of a language that contrast in pronunciation, grammatical patterns, and vocabulary and that are mainly associated with geographic area and social class. According to the authors, although the term dialect is used popularly to refer to vernacular (i.e., non-standard) language varieties, linguists use the term in a neutral sense to refer to any variety—vernacular or standard, and all dialects, whether considered standard or vernacular, the use of the term dialect reflects language attitudes rather than linguistic facts.

## **2.5.1. Types of dialectal Variations**

### **2.5.1.1. Social Dialect**

Rickford (2002:13), elaborated that social dialects are varieties distinguished according to the social groups who use them, for instance, upper middle class versus working class speakers (social class), men versus women (sex or gender), young people versus old (age), African Americans versus European Americans (ethnicity or race), people who are part of a particular network at school or in the neighborhood versus those who are not. Furthermore, Eckert (1989) states this idea as follows:

In theory, since individuals typically belong to several different groups simultaneously, their speech patterns might be taken to reflect the simultaneous intersection of their social categories and experiences, e.g. the speech of young upper middle class White female "jocks" from Chicago.

### **2.5.1.2. Regional/Geographical Dialect**

Regional dialect refers to varieties of a language which are spoken in different geographical areas. These variations can be caused due to different regional factors such as the influence of geographical barriers like a river or a mountain range, expanse of barren land, can serve to keep two populations apart, creating or maintaining differences in usage between dialects on either side. The Ohio River, for instance, helps to define the division between the dialect areas of the North and the South (Rickford, 2002:12). As to Rickford, there are also other factors beside geography which help to create and maintain regional dialects including political boundaries, settlement patterns, migration and immigration routes, territorial conquest, and language contact.

Furthermore, Trudgill (1983:61) states that, contrary to what many people seem to think, television has not had much influence in spreading dialect patterns or obliterating dialect differences, particularly in phonology and grammar, the domains of language which are less easily noticed or controlled than the lexicon is. Lepage and Tabourat-Keller (1985) point out that one reason for this is that television is a non-interactive medium; viewers don't talk back to it, and if they do, the television characters certainly do not respond to them in return. As to those authors, it is the responses of the people we speak to in our everyday lives-indicating varying degrees of comprehension, non-comprehension, approval and non-approval of the way we speak that cause us to modify our dialects, depending, of course, on our attitudes towards those people and whether we care about their opinions.

### **2.5.2. Dialect Continuum**

Researchers in sociolinguistics state that a language/ dialect continuum is said to exist when two or more different languages or dialects merge one into the other without a

definable boundary. According to Chambers and Trudgill (1980:6) geographical dialect continuum is explained as follows:

If we travel from village to in particular direction, we notice linguistic differences which distinguish one village from another. Sometimes these differences will be larger, sometimes smaller, but they will be cumulative. The further we get from our starting point, the larger the differences will become. The effect of this may therefore be, if the distance involved is large enough, that (if we arrange villages along our route in geographical order, while speakers from village A understand people from village B very well and those from village F quite well, they may understand village M speech only with considerable difficulty, and that of village Z not at all. Villages from M on the other hand, will probably understand village F speech quite well and villagers from A and Z only with difficulty. In other words, Dialects on the outer edges of the geographical area may not be mutually intelligible, but they will be linked by a chain of mutual intelligibility. At no point is there a complete break such that geographically adjacent dialects are not mutually intelligible, but the cumulative effect of the linguistic differences will be such that the greater the geographical separation, the greater the difficulty of comprehension will be.

From the above explanation we can understand that a dialect continuum is a range of linguistic varieties (dialects) spoken along a vast geographical area, showing only slight differences between areas that are geographically close to each other, but the variation gradually increases as the distances become greater. As a result, dialects separated by great geographical distances may not be mutually comprehensible, and such dialects can be considered as stand-alone languages. However, they also can be seen as dialects of a single language, provided that they have a common standard language, through which communication may be possible.

### **2.5.3. Dialectal Variation and Dialect Interference at Different Linguistic Levels**

The most significant variations or differences within languages occur at the level of phonology (pronunciation), grammar (morphology and syntax) and lexicology (vocabulary) (Campbell 2004:6-7; Schendl 2001:25). For the authors, they are not just qualitative, in the sense that dialect **A** uses one feature and dialect **B** another, but they may also be quantitative, in the sense that dialect **A** uses one feature more often than dialect **B** does; this is particularly true of phonological and grammatical features which have social or stylistic significance, and variation may be regional, social or stylistic in its origins.

People make interference of their first dialect/language when they speak or write in their second dialect/language in a certain speech act or written context. Different authors defined the issue of dialect/language interference differently. According to Dulay (1982:98-99) the expression interference has been used to refer to two very distinct linguistic phenomena, one that is essentially psychological and another that is sociolinguistic. The psychological use of the term interference, as Dulay, refers to the influence of old habits when new ones are being learned, whereas the sociolinguistic use of the term interference refers to language interactions, such as linguistic borrowing and language switching, which occur when two language communities are in contact. In addition, Dulay elaborates that dialect/ language interference is the automatic transfer of linguistic items of one's own first dialect/language onto the surface structure of the target language at school, mainly due to habit of the surface structure of the first dialect/ language.

Furthermore, Ellis and Laporte (1997:51) define interference as errors in the learner's use of the foreign language that can be traced back to the mother tongue. As to Ellis and Laporte, dialect interference refers to interference as 'transfer', which they say is 'the influence that the learner's native dialect/language exerts over the acquisition of a target language.

Boey (1975:109), on the other hand states that dialect/language interference in language learning situation is students' habit of perceiving, performing, and tendency to speak the second dialect/language with the intonation or word order of his/her own dialect/language.

Skiba (1997:1-5) also discuss that linguistic interference is the transfer of elements of one language to another at various levels including phonological, grammatical, lexical, and orthographical.

Parera (1997:105) defines interference as those instances of deviation from the norm of either language which occur in the speech of bilinguals as a result of their familiarity with more than one language. Parera elaborated the notion as follows:

Interference is negative transfer that resulting error in language use. Interference occurs in bilingual situation at all levels of language such as phonology, morphology, lexical, syntactical, and grammar; it also occurs unconsciously. Language interference may occur in written and spoken language. Language interference may give effect on any aspect of language such as phonological, morphological, lexical, syntactical, and aspects. Language interference may also occur in the writing system of second language learner. For example in the writing of elementary school or junior high school students, who are not mastering the languages they learn yet.

Cassano (1977: 239-240) explains dialect/ language interference as:

When the language of a group of people (usually conquerors) is superimposed upon and ultimately displaces the language of the autochthonous people in any given area, some habits or features characteristic of the indigenous language are retained and transferred to the new language as spoken by the indigenous people; as time advances, however, these habits or features become characteristic of the language of all speakers and are attributable to the substratum interference of the indigenous language.

As to Saidalavi (2010:1), all over the world it is found that the mass language and the official language are unrelated. In relation to this issue, the author states that:

The 'standard dialect is the variety of language used in writing. It is the language of media, commerce and administration. The language used for education purpose is not the one individuals use in their daily life and at home. As a result

of this, they face problem at school. The problem for the non-standard dialect speakers mostly with oral and written language production is mainly due to the interference of the non-standard dialect with the standard one. In addition to this, they face difficulties in conceiving ideas through the standard dialect used in textbooks. Although the non-standard dialect interference is tended to decrease during their course of education, it continues to be an important source of error up to University level of education.

Weinreich (1953:14-47) divides type of language interference into three: (1) phonological interference, (2) Lexical interference, and (3) Grammatical interference. Handayani (2009:16), however, says that language interference occurs in all aspects of language such as phonology, morphology, syntaxes, lexis, and semantics.

### **2.5.3.1. Phonological Variation**

Speakers of a certain dialect can vary in the way they pronounce sounds from other dialect speakers of the same language. Such variation is called phonological variation. According to Rickford (2002:4):

Phonological variation refers to differences in pronunciation within and across dialects, for instance, the fact that people from New York and New England might pronounce "greasy" with an [s], while people from Virginia and points further south might pronounce it with a [z], or the fact that working class people across the United States are more likely than are upper middle class speakers to pronounce the initial [th] of they and similar words with a [d] sound.

Furthermore, Wells (1982:522) elaborates that phonological variants are fairly salient as markers of regional dialect as follows:

Phonological variants are fairly salient as markers of regional dialect; for instance, the stereotypical Bostonian pronunciation of "Park your car in Harvard yard" as "Pahk yo' car in\_Hahvahd yahd" includes not only the r-less ness of **Pahk, yo', Hahvahd** and **yahd** (the **r** in **car** is retained because the following word begins with a vowel)- a feature shared with many other American dialects, particularly in the South, but also the more distinctive use in these words of a long maximally low or open front vowel [a] where other dialects use a slightly frontier and less open vowel [ʌ].

One relevant aspect of phonological variation worth noting, according to Rickford (2002:3) is that it is often conditioned by the phonological environment that is, by where in an utterance (word-initially, word-finally, before r, and so on) the sound occurs.

Weinreich (1953:14-47) defines phonological interference as a linguistic transfer, which occurs when a bidialectal/bilingual speaker re-translates or re-produces his/her first dialect/language (D1/L1) by using the appropriate phonemes in his second dialect/language (D2/L2). Furthermore, Sikba (1997) defines phonological interference as items including foreign accent such as stress, rhyme, intonation and speech sounds from one language influencing the other. Moreover, the authors elaborated that phonological problems refer to the interferences or transferences of the rules guiding the production of speech sound of a dominant dialect/ language in a speech community to the sounds system of a subordinate or target language. This can be realized at the phonemic, stress and intonation levels. At the phonemic level, interference is predominant. This is because of the differences between the sound patterns of the non-standard dialect of the learners bidialectal and the sound patterns of the standard language.

### **2.5.3.2.. Grammatical Variation**

What we have been referring to as grammatical variation according to Rickford (2002:4-5), really involves two sub-types: the variation in morphology (the internal structure of words) and the difference in syntax (how words are patterned at phrasal, clausal and sentential levels) between/among the different dialect speakers of the same language. The author states that the variation in morphology is all about the difference in structure or forms of words, including the morphemes or minimal units of meaning which comprise words, for instance the morphemes /un-/ "not" and /happy/ in *unhappy*, or the morphemes /cat/ and /-s/ which is "plural" marker as in *cats* among dialect speakers of the same language. Rickford, (2006:5), discusses the concept of syntactic variation among the different dialect speakers of a particular language as follows:

Syntactic variation refers to the linguistic difference in structure of larger units like phrases and sentences, including rules of combining and relating words in sentences among the different dialect speakers of the same language; for

instance, “the rule that in English yes/no questions, auxiliaries must occur at the beginning of sentences, before the subject noun phrase (for example, Can John go? Vs. the statement John can go)

Atwood (1953) states that one can find examples of regional variations of both the morphological and syntactic variations work together; for instance, the morphological form of the past tense of **catch**, **climb** and draw were sometimes **cached**, **clum** and **drawed** respectively in parts of the East but only caught, climbed and drew respectively in the Western US”. One can see that ‘tense’, a syntactic category, interacts with affixation or derivation of the lexical items.

Furthermore, Labov (1973) argues that grammatical variation is much more common to be used as a marker of social dialects and formal/informal styles than it is of regional dialects, with non-standard or vernacular variants sometimes being strongly stigmatized for their associations with limited education or use by the lower working class, but simultaneously being strongly admired and adopted for their connotations of informality, masculinity or non-pretentiousness.

Grammatical interference refers to when speakers of one dialect/language make the interferences of linguistic items of that dialect/ language into another dialect or language at morphological and syntactic levels. Weinreich (1953:14-47) states that morphological interference is a linguistic/language interference which occurs when a bidialectal/bilingual speaker identifies morphemes and class of morphemes in language chain in syntax and uses it in the speech act. According to Sikba (1997) syntactic interference can be defined as one dialect/language influencing the other one in terms of word order, use of pronouns, determinants, tense, mood and the like. They elaborated those syntactic problems as factors of interference involving the comparisons of the structure of two languages with the aim of identifying area of difficulties.

In general, Sikba discuss the issue of grammatical interference as follows:

At the grammatical level, there could be interference. Mother tongue obviously affects the learner's understanding of grammatical rules of target language because the two are of different models. Grammatical interference depends on the level of competence of the bilingual involved.

For instance, the level of competence of primary school pupils may be different from that of secondary school pupils.

### 2.5.3.3. Lexical Variation

Carver (1987:268-273) states the concept of lexical variations among peoples who speak different dialects of one language as follows:

Difference in vocabulary is one aspect of dialect diversity which people notice readily and comment on quite frequently. They are certainly common enough as markers of the differences between geographical areas or regions, for instance, the fact that "a carbonated soft drink" might be called **pop** in the inland North and the West of the United States, **soda** in the Northeast, **tonic** in Eastern New England, and **cold drink**, **drink** or **dope** in various parts of the South. Furthermore, the fact that persons who were "tired" or exhausted" might describe themselves as being **all in** if they were from the North or West, but **wore out** or **give out** if they were from the South, and accordingly, lexical differences play a significant role in regional dialectology (the study of regional dialects).

According to Smitherman (1994:49), lexical differences are not as salient in distinguishing the speech of different social or socioeconomic classes, and they have accordingly played a much smaller role in social dialectology (the study of social dialects), which has concentrated instead on phonological and grammatical differences. Nevertheless they are certainly an aspect of ethnic differences, for instance, knowledge of the term **ashy** to describe the "whitish or grayish appearance of skin due to exposure to wind and cold" is widespread among African Americans but less so among European Americans (Labov, W., Weinreich, U. and Marvin, H, 1968).

Weinreich (1953:14-47) also defines lexical interference as a linguistic transfer which occurs when bidialectal/bilingual speaker uses two or more parts or structures of different dialects/ languages in a single word or lexicon. In addition, the author explained that interference at a lexical level provides for the borrowing of words from one language and converting them to sound more natural in the other language.

In addition, Handayani (2009) discusses how lexical interference can take place due to language/dialect contacts as follows:

When two or more dialects/languages come into contact, it brings great effect for those languages which are not realized by the speech community. Language contact may cause changes in the part of language as in lexicology. In addition language contact also causes a speech community to be bilingual. And when there is language contact, there will be a tendency to transfer one language item such as lexicology into another language or language interference. People have great tendency to transfer their language into another language because there is a big influence from their first dialect/language and the society as a whole.

#### **2.5.3.4. Orthographic/Spelling Interference**

Orthographic interference on the other hand includes the spelling of one language altering another (Sikba, 1997). In a study testing the effects of pronunciation on spelling, Kligman (1972:1247) reported that:

Because spelling is based on oral stimuli, it is quite possible that there is a greater potential for dialect interference in spelling than in reading. Dialect pronunciation may interfere with the spelling of unfamiliar words for Black English speakers in the same way that standard pronunciation may interfere with the spellings of unfamiliar, irregularly spelled words for Standard English speakers.

From the above quotation, one can realize that dialect speakers make orthographic/spelling interference due to the influence of their oral speech habits. They are unconsciously forced to apply what they speak (pronounce) in what they write.

#### **2.5.4. The Issue of Dialectal Variations in Education**

Yiakoumetti (2006:2) discusses that the issue of dialect and education and, in particular, the issue of which code to use as the medium of instruction has generated much heated debate in bidialectal societies. As to the author, this debate is reflected in the literature on language policy in education which is divided between supports for: (1) the use of the standard variety as the medium of instruction; (2) the use of a non-standard dialect as the medium of instruction; and (3) bidialectal education, which involves the use of both.

Children from different backgrounds come to school speaking a wide variety of dialects (Christian, 1987:1). In this regard, Christian raised questions as follows:

Should our schools try to teach all students to use a standard dialect? If so, how? If not, how should different dialects be handled in the school setting? What

impact does speaking a non-school dialect have on students' academic success and on their interactions with others in and out of school?" These complex and controversial questions have been debated through the years, but they have become increasingly prominent in the last two decades. The close relationship between minority and dialect groups makes civil rights an issue along with educational policy.

Furthermore, Christian (1987:1-2) has put the explanation of the above notion as follows:

One central issue in this controversy concerns the requirement of a standard dialect in schools. Some people consider this requirement to be discriminatory, since it places an extra burden on certain students and may deny them the same educational opportunity that others receive. Others argue that it is a responsibility of the education system to teach a standard dialect to broaden students' base of opportunity. For instance, students who do not develop facility with standard language may find that their employment or educational potential is restricted. The student's chances for success in school and in later life, then, may be related to mastery of standard language forms.

According to Yiakoumetti (2006: 3), a bidialectal situation is one in which the standard and a non-standard variety of the same language are used alongside each other. The two variations differ linguistically but are at the same time sufficiently related so as to overlap somewhat in pronunciation, grammar and lexicon.

Yiakoumetti (2006:3-4) explains that the standard vs. non-standard debate in bidialectal contexts has been linked to educational underachievement, with the coexistence of standard and non-standard dialect grammar given rise to problems in educational systems that are predicated on the use of the standard language. This is why the issue of which language code to use as the medium of instruction in bidialectal societies has generated much heated debate.

Custred (1990) and Paulou (1990) both cited in (Yiakoumetti 2006: 6) argue from the point of view of national unity that the standard variety should be the one used as medium of instruction. One of the reasons provided for creole or minority dialects not being used officially in formal education is that they are stigmatized and not seen as ordered, systematic languages, but rather as degenerate varieties of the particular standards to which they are lexically related (Valdman, 1989). On the other hand, Lind and Johnston (1990) Gfeller and Robinson (1989) advocate that the local regional dialect

should function as the medium of instruction for formal schooling since this is the code most intimate to the speakers.

Furthermore, Edwards (1983) notes the following regarding the above issue as follows:

Children who speak a dialect other than the standard one face additional difficulties when compared with their standard dialect speaking counterparts. While even standard speakers have instances of confusion (e.g., between formal and informal uses of language), non-standard dialect speakers have many more instances of these difference to remember and are therefore presented with many more opportunities for error.

Valdes (1995:) points out that one of the problems associated with learning a second dialect (the standard) is the fact that the learners are not always aware of the exact differences between the first dialect (non-standard) and the second dialect (the standard one).

Corson (1993) makes a distinction between the receptive (reading and listening) and the productive skills (speaking and writing) use of the standard variety by dialectal users. Corson elaborates this notion in the first case; non-standard users are faced with few practical problems because children nowadays have contact exposure to the standard variety through daily contacts with the mass media. In other words, children have the opportunity to both read and listen to the standard frequencies. Consequently, no threat to the interests of non-standard speakers results from the regular demand in schools that they engage in reading and listening (receptive exposure) to the standard, provided that the mother tongue is maintained to a high level of proficiency at the same time, and reading and listening may thus be mainly unaffected, oral and written production can nevertheless be problematic.

From the above explanation, one can understand that non-standard dialect speaking students might not face such great difficulties in reading and listening in the dialect due to the fact that they might have an exposure to the standard dialect through different medias such as TV and radio broadcastings. However, they can face a very significant problem to use the standard dialect in both the oral and written forms since the

interference of their own dialect (the non- standard one) might be quite habitual to take place.

Giesbers, Herman, Sjaak, Kroon and Rudi, Liebrand (1988) state that when non-standard dialect speakers had to use the standard dialect for communication, especially in highly specialized tasks such as letter writing or group discussion, they did not perform as what their standard dialect speaking peers perform. Yiakoumetti (2006:8) argues the issue as follows:

Researchers explained that non-standard dialect speakers did not seem to be educationally disadvantageous because they found them to be highly inconsistent with different patterns when other language skills were tested, with non-standard dialect speakers doing well in some measures and standard dialect speakers doing well in some majors and standard dialect speakers doing well in others.

To Yiakoumetti, this meant that the possible disadvantages of non-standard speaking were produced by very subtle factors such as teachers' attitudes toward school, differences in communicative habits, and of course, the degree of divergence between the non-standard and the standard dialects all playing their roles.

Having the above notion in mind, (Baker, 1993 and Wolfram, W., Adger, C. and Christian, D. (1999) stated that a system which suppresses the home language and forcibly promotes the standard dialect is likely to be part of the explanation of the underachievement of the non-standard dialect speaking students. In Europe, a relevant study done in Scandinavia (Bull, 1990) found that reading proficiency in the standard variety increased when children are helped to read in their non-standard dialect in conjunction with the standard variety.

According to Charalambopoulos, (1990); Iordanidou, (1991); Christodoulou, (1997); Pavlou and Christodoulou, (2001); Papapavlou, (2004); Pavlou and Papapavlou, (2004) all cited in Yiakoumetti (2006:7), the linguistic situation in Cyprus has recently attracted a great deal of attention from academics, linguists and educationists on the Island; and it has been suggested that the phenomenon of bidialectism affects learners' performance in the standard dialect, leading to non-standard dialectal interference in their writing of the standard dialect at a school.

### **2.5.5. The Impacts of Dialectal Variation in Education**

Dialect differences can affect the quality of education received by some students both academically and socially due to the fact that a child's dialect may interfere with the acquisition of information, and with various educational skills, such as reading (Labov, 1995).

Christian (1987:2) explained that in a court case in Ann Arbor, Michigan in 1979, a group of black parents sued the local school system on behalf of their children, claiming that students were being denied equal educational opportunity because of their language background specifically, they maintained that the schools were failing to teach their children to read because they did not take into account the language differences represented by their children's vernacular dialect.

In connection to this issue, Williams (1976) states the social consequences of belonging to a different dialect group as follows:

The social consequences of belonging to a different dialect group may be more subtle, but are just as important. The attitudes of teachers, school personnel, and other students can have a tremendous impact on the education process. Often, people who hear a vernacular dialect make erroneous assumptions about the speaker's intelligence, motivation, and even morality. Studies have shown that there can be a self-fulfilling prophecy in teachers' beliefs about their students' abilities.

Furthermore, Christian (1987:4) elaborates that if an educator underestimates a student's ability because of dialect differences, the student will do less well in school, perhaps as a direct result of the negative expectations. As to Christian, in some cases, students are "tracked" with the so-called slower groups, or even placed in special classes for the mentally handicapped because of their vernacular speech patterns, and in the process, the negative opinions may do damage to the student's self-concept.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **3. Research Methodology**

This chapter deals with the presentation of methods employed in the data collection, data analysis and interpretation of the paper. Questionnaire, interview, written tests and observation are tools employed in the data collection. This is to cross check the data collected via multiple methods of data collection. This only can be assured using multi method approach of data collection; as Teshome (1998:46) argues, multiple methods should be used in every investigation as a rule because each method reveals different aspects of empirical reality. The author explains that triangulating such methods as interviews, observations, questionnaires, and document analysis constructs, checks and balances to a particular study.

In addition to this, Brewer and Hunter (1989) and Patton (1987) discuss that there are strengths and weaknesses to any single data collection instrument; therefore, using multiple methods of data gathering instruments will help to cross-check the validity of data in any research. Teshome (1998:46) also argues that using more than one data collection approach permits the study to combine the strengths and correct some of the deficiencies of any source of data. Furthermore, Wellington (1996:17) states that a mixture of data collection methods can often be adapted even in a single small-scale study. Wellington added that both qualitative and quantitative methods can exist side-by-side in data analysis of an enquiry. Therefore, by taking the necessity of all the information suggested by the above authors into account, the researcher in this study was persuaded to use qualitative and quantitative data analysis approach for the data collected through the aforementioned methods of data collection. In this study, therefore, questionnaire, interview, observation and writing test were employed as main data gathering instruments. How these tools were employed will be briefly discussed in section 3.2 below.

### **3.1. Subjects of the study and Sampling Technique**

The targeted populations of this study were the students of the Alamatan primary schools and their Tigrinya teachers. These children were identified as the subjects of the study due to the fact that everyone from Alamata is always observed speaking either Amharic or a dialect of Tigrinya, which is highly influenced by Amharic and greatly deviates from the ST which is being used as medium of instruction in primary education of the present Tigray region.

The total number of primary schools in Alamata Woreda is 61. From this number of primary schools, eight of them are found within the Alamata town and its surroundings; the remaining 53 primary schools are found in the rural areas (Rayya-Alamata) of the woreda

The researcher randomly selected three (Mibraaq, Bruh-Tesfa and Edget-Fana primary schools) from among the eight primary schools found in the Alamata town. However, the researcher was forced to select three primary schools from the rural areas (Rayya Alamata) (Selen-Weha, Wajja and Tumuga) purposefully (using purposive sampling method) by taking time constraints, access of transportation, meal and accommodation services and other similar reasons into account.

The researcher has also randomly selected only one grade level i.e. grade seven from each of the sample primary schools of the woreda for this study. There are 20 grade seven sections and a total of 900 students in all the six sample primary schools. Of the 20 grade seven sections, eight (8) sections have been selected randomly as the sample of this study. In the same fashion, the researcher has randomly selected 168 students, 21 from each of the 8 sample sections to fill questionnaire. Of this 168 sample students, 88 (55%) are male while 80 (45%) are female. In addition, 96 (55 male and 41 female) students have been selected randomly from the total of 168 sample grade seven students for writing test. Furthermore, all the Tigrinya teachers (8 in number) of the sample sections have been taken for interview. Of the eight (8) Tigrinya teachers, 5 (62.5%) are male

while 3 (37.5%) are female (see subjects of the study in appendix-I). The primary data, therefore, were collected from the above sample subjects of the study.

### **3.2. Tools of data collection**

First, the researcher has tried to go through the analysis of some previous works and the grade seven Tigrinya textbook. The raw data then, was collected from the sample subjects of the Alamatan primary schools through questionnaire, interview, writing test, and personal classroom observations. The collection of the raw data was facilitated and gathered by the researcher himself during schooling time. In other words the researcher spent his time in the study area for the purpose of data collection. First, the method of document analysis was employed for secondary data of previous works done on what and how the Rayyan dialect varies from the Tigrinya variety used as medium of instruction. Then having this variation, questionnaire, interview, personal classroom observations, and writing test methods were employed.

#### **3.2.1. Questionnaires**

To collect the necessary data, questionnaire was employed as one means of data collection tool. A questionnaire, having both close and open ended questions was prepared and distributed to 168 (88 male and 80 female) sample grade seven students of the sample Alamatan primary schools. The questionnaire includes questions that require information about the students background, information about how the dialectal variations between the ST and the RD is high, and information about the impacts that such dialectal variations have on the Tigrinya language learning of the subject students in general and on their overall lessons in the other subjects in general. In addition to this, the questionnaire consists of items that require respondents' reflection about their attitudes towards the ST, the RD, Amharic and English, and their preference of language they want to use as a medium of instruction in their primary education. This method was used mainly in order to get primary information from the subject students about their difficulties in communication, their attitudes towards their dialect (RD), the Standard Tigrinya (ST) Amharic and English.

Since the subject students were grade seven students, the questionnaire was first prepared in English and then it was translated into Tigrinya by the researcher himself and then evaluated by colleagues who are Tigrinya teachers.

### **3.2.2. Interview**

The other type of instrument used to collect the raw data was an interview. The researcher conducted an interview to Tigrinya teachers. The interview used guided questions in order to make the interviewees stick to the required information. According to Borg and Gall (1989) and Kvale (1996), in an interview situation, an interview guide helps to indicate the outlines of the topics to be covered. In addition, Chernet (1999:39) argues that interview guidelines also help the interviewer to concentrate or focus on what to say at the opening and closing of the interviews. So for this purpose, the researcher constructed and used interview guidelines in this study. As a result of the necessity to frame interview questions in language that ensures effective communication between the interviewees and the interviewer (researcher), all the interviews were made using Tigrinya language in which both the interviewees and the researcher can communicate sufficiently. Thus the interview guidelines were first prepared in English and then translated into Tigrinya; after the interview guidelines were translated into Tigrinya, they were evaluated by colleagues who have Tigrinya background, and certain modifications were made according to their suggestions. All the interviews were recorded using a tape recorder. However, according to Wellington (1996:34), the use of mechanical aids such as audio recorders, may be seen as obtrusive in some situations. Respondents may not wish their views to be recorded on tape. In order to take care of this problem, therefore, the researcher briefly informed the interviewees about his background and the general purpose of the interview and secured their permission. This means that the respondents were clearly informed about the general objective of the research so that participating in the research would not threaten their social welfare.

The contents of the questionnaire which was administered to the sample grade seven students of Alamatan primary schools and the contents of the interview which was conducted to the Tigrinya teachers of the above sample grade level were not entirely

different types; some of the items were intentionally made similar in order to cross-check the feedback from both of the two groups of respondents.

### **3.2.3. Observation**

According to Trochim, B. (1999), observation refers to a type of study in which individuals are observed and certain outcomes are measured. According to the author, observation allows the researcher to study people in their “natural setting” without their behavior being influenced by the presence of a researcher, and observational data usually consists of detailed information about a particular group or situation. This kind of data can “fill out” and provide a deeper and richer understanding about a larger number of people. Trochim states that some methods only allow for the study of one individual at a time; observation, however, enables the researcher to study groups of people together, that is, it allows for the study of interaction between the members of a group, and some times, observation is the only way of finding out about a certain study at school.

The researcher in this study, therefore, conducted a critical classroom observation using observational check list in order to see if there have been interference of RD or Amharic or both into the language of instruction (ST) during the actual classroom teaching learning process. The main emphasis of the researcher, here, was to critically observe the interferences of linguistic aspects such as, phonology, grammar (morphology and syntax) and lexicon of both RD and Amharic into the MOI made by the sample students , and also to notice if confusion and/or communication gap between the sample grade seven students of Alamatan primary schools and their Tigrinya teachers takes place as a result of the RD and/or Amharic interference problems into the ST in the actual classroom oral interaction. Here, the researcher tried his best to write down any linguistic interference of the RD and Amharic which the subject students made into the language of instruction (ST) in the actual classroom teaching-learning process during Tigrinya sessions as much as possible.

### **3.2.4. Writing Test**

The other method of data collection instrument used in this study was a writing test. The main purpose why the researcher preferred to employ this method, was in order to see if the sample grade seven students of Alamatan primary schools will show any interference of linguistic items from the phonology, grammar (morphology and syntax) and lexicology of their own local dialect (RD) and/or Amharic into the ST in their written language and then to see if such interferences bring about any variations in meaning. The researcher, therefore, has randomly selected 96 (32 male and 24 female) grade seven students from the total 168 sample students for the writing test. These students were required to write a paragraph of their own, using at least 100 words of the ST.

### **3.3. Methods of Data Analysis**

The researcher has employed both the quantitative and qualitative methods. The quantitative method has been used in order to analyze numerical data. The qualitative method, on the other hand, is employed so as to describe non-numerical data particularly linguistic data in such aspects as phonology (pronunciation), grammar (morphology and syntax) and vocabulary (lexicon) in the written form. Descriptive analysis and interpretation is also used. And in the output, results and discussions are organized and presented in narratives, tables, and figures. Finally, the researcher has interpreted and described the data based on the results of the analysis. For convenience, the researcher has tried to integrate and treat together all the data obtained through the different data gathering instruments in the analysis and discussion parts.

In general, the research is based on qualitative data and on basic descriptive statistics of the sample.

## **CHAPTER FUOR**

### **4. Data Analysis and Discussions**

This section undertakes the descriptions and discussions of the result of the research. Document analysis, questionnaire, interview, writing test and personal classroom observations have been used as the main means of data collection instruments. A total of 168 copies of the questionnaire were distributed for 88 male and 80 female sample grade seven students of the Alamatan primary schools. Out of these questionnaires, 160 (95.24%) were returned to the researcher. Moreover, an interview with 8 (5 male and 3 female) grade seven Tigrinya teachers has been conducted. The writing test was administered for 96 (55 male and 41 female) grade seven students of the sample primary schools. These students were required to write a paragraph of their own, using at least 100 words. In addition to these methods of data collection, a critical classroom observation has also been conducted using observational check list. The data obtained by all the above instruments have then been described, analyzed and discussed in an integrated way in order to avoid redundancy. Tables, numerical and narrative expressions are used for the description and analysis.

In this chapter, general questions about the respondents' awareness of the variations between the RD and ST and the consequent problems will be dealt first. Following this, data about the linguistic interferences of the RD into the ST at phonological, grammatical and lexical levels, their descriptions, explanations as well as their pedagogical implications will be addressed section by section. Then attitude of students towards the use of the ST, RD, Amharic and English as MOI, teachers' reaction about the lexical interference (LI), students' attitudes towards the language of instruction and their consequences on the MOI as well as on the students' overall education will be presented. And finally, measures taken by teachers, schools and other concerned bodies to solve or to reduce the problems will be addressed in brief.

#### 4.1. Respondents' awareness of variations in Tigrinya and the consequent problems

The data obtained through the questionnaire and interview from the students and teachers respectively have been tallied, and the result is organized as follows. To begin with, the sample students were asked whether there is a variation between the Tigrinya spoken in Rayya and the Tigrinya they learn in the classroom. Their responses for this question are summarized in the table below.

Response	Respondents	
	In Number	In Percent (%)
Yes	160	100
No	0	0
Total	160	100

**Table 1: Students' Response on variation between the RD and the ST**

As we can see from the data in the table above, 160 (100%) of the respondents replied that there is a variation between the Rayyan Tigrinya and the Tigrinya which they learn at school.

The data obtained by interview from the sample of Tigrinya teachers of the primary schools of Alamata also strongly supported the data, which was obtained by questionnaire from the sample students. 8 (100%) of the interviewed grade seven Tigrinya teachers reported that the variation between the Tigrinya they teach in the actual classroom and the Tigrinya dialect spoken in Rayya is very high.

The researcher has also observed that there is a great variation between the ST and RD both in the actual classroom teaching learning process and in the peoples' day-to-day communication outside the school community.

In addition, the students were asked if the variation between the Tigrinya spoken in Rayya and the Tigrinya they learn at school affects their understanding of the Tigrinya and other subjects that they learn. Their response for this question is summarized in the table below.

Response	Respondents	
	In Number	In Percent (%)
Yes	148	92.5
No	12	7.5
Total	160	100

**Table 2: Students' Response on effects of variation between RD and ST**

The data in the above table shows us that 148 (92.5%) students replied that the dialectal variation between the ST and RD affects them not to understand the language itself and the overall classroom lessons and inhibit them from having good academic performance at school in general. 12 (7.5%) students, however, reacted that the variation between the ST and the RD does not affect them so much.

The data obtained by interview from the Tigrinya teachers regarding the above question show that the variation between the Rayyan dialect of Tigrinya and the Tigrinya being used as medium of instruction at school affects the majority of the students of the primary schools of Alamata. 8 (100%) of the interviewed teachers reacted that most of their students are not free from the interference of both the Rayyan dialect and Amharic mostly in what they speak and write in the actual classroom lessons. Furthermore, the interviewees elaborated that most of their students faced great difficulty during their written and oral examinations as a result of the variation between the ST and the RD. They added that most of the students in Alamatan primary schools score lower grades in the national exam given in grade eight compared to students of other primary schools of the region.

Again regarding this issue, the researcher conducted a critical classroom observation to ensure that the data obtained by the questionnaire and interview are valid. From the critical observation, it was clearly observed that there has been communication gap between teachers and students as well as between students and the textbook due to the fact that most of the students were not out of the influence of the Rayyan dialect and the interference of Amharic at certain linguistic levels (phonology, grammar and lexicon).

The students were also asked if they have been taught Tigrinya as a subject by teacher who speaks the RD. The response is summarized as indicated in the table below:

Response	Respondents	
	In Number	In Percent (%)
Yes	137	85.625
No	23	14.375
Total	160	100

**Table 3: Students’ response about teachers’ knowledge of the RD**

As the table above reveals, 137 (85.625%) students replied that they have been taught Tigrinya by a teacher who speaks the RD. The rest 23 (14.375%) respondents, however, reflected that they have never been taught Tigrinya by a teacher who speaks the RD.

In his critical classroom observation, the researcher observed that there have been some Tigrinya teachers who can speak the RD of Tigrinya in some of the sample primary schools. The sample students were also asked if the teacher who speaks the RD uses it to teach the Tigrinya which is being used as the LOI. The response for this question is again summarized in the table below.

Response	Respondents	
	In Number	In Percent (%)
Yes	120	75
No	40	25
Total	160	100

**Table 4: Students’ Response about teachers’ use of the RD during teaching**

Here again, 120 (75%) respondents reported that most of the Tigrinya teachers who speak the RD use that dialect rather than the Tigrinya which serves as MOI to teach Tigrinya language in the actual classroom teaching learning process. On the other hand, 40 (25%) of the respondents replied that Tigrinya teachers who can speak the RD do not use it in teaching the ST (MOI).

The researcher observed that some Tigrinya teachers speak the RD in teaching Tigrinya as a subject. Asked why they use the local dialect rather than the Tigrinya which is being used as the MOI in primary education of the Tigray region in teaching, the Tigrinya teachers who speak the RD replied that they use the RD while teaching Tigrinya in the actual lessons in order to make their students clear with certain concepts. From this, one can easily understand that there might be a communication gap between teachers who cannot speak the RD of Tigrinya and the students of the primary schools of Alamata which affects the quality of education.

The sample students were again asked which of their language skill/s is/are mostly affected due to the variation between the Tigrinya spoken in Rayya and the Tigrinya which is being used as MOI. The responses for this question are also summarized as indicated in the table below.

Affected skills	Respondents	
	In Number	In percentage (%)
Listening	15	9.375
Reading	18	11.25
Speaking	72	45
Writing	55	34.375
Total	160	100

**Table 5: Students’ response on the skill/s mostly affected by the variation**

As the above table shows, 72 (45%) and 55 (34.375%) students reported that the variation between their first dialect (the Rayyan Dialect) and their second dialect (the dialect which is being used as MOI) highly affects their speaking and writing skills respectively. 15 (9.375%) and 18 (11.25%) respondents stated that the variation between the ST and RD affects their listening and reading skills respectively.

The data obtained through the critical classroom observation of the researcher and through the writing test show that the students are encountered with great problems while they write and speak using the ST (MOI) in schools. The researcher clearly observed that there was an interference of the RD which is highly influenced by Amharic and the

interference of Amharic itself at certain linguistic levels while the students were asking and answering oral questions during the actual Tigrinya classrooms sessions.

Generally, from all the above data gathered through questionnaire, interviews, writing test, and personal classroom observations, we can wind up that there have been great dialectal variations between the ST and the variety of Tigrinya spoken in Rayya, particularly in Alamata and its surroundings where the influence of Amharic on that dialect is high. The variations are mainly noticed at the phonological, grammatical (morphology and syntax) and lexical levels of linguistics.

Previous studies indicate that the reasons for the linguistic variations in Tigrinya are regional factors. According to the report of the earlier works, the dialectal variations of Tigrinya have taken place due to such factors. Abba Yacob (1940) cited in (Asfaw, 1991:276; Daniel Teklemariam, 1991:70; Amanuel,1988:16-17; Asmerom,1991: 725-726) states that the dialectal differences of the Tigrinya language are the result of regional/geographical variations, though there are no natural factors such as Great Mountains, Rivers and the like which can cause such variations. And none of the above authors argued that there could be other factors which might have caused the disparities among the different dialects of Tigrinya. However, it has to be noticed that there could have been also other historical and social factors which have contributed an essential effect on the variations of the dialects. According to Haller (2006: 30), in this regard argues that although geography has immediately noticeable effects on the evolution of local dialects and is one of the greatest factors in their original differentiation from a standard variety of a particular language, other social factors have also an important role. In connection to this, Haller (2006:32) argues that much of the previous studies have highlighted geographical influences on the formation of dialects, but their effect alone is not sufficient to explain their formation; another important factor is settlement history which works in conjunction with geography to affect the differentiation of local dialects. In addition, Haller states that different social factors have historically had a significant effect on the formation of dialects. Therefore, it should be considered that other historical and social factors could have had their own effects on the formation of the different dialectal variations of Tigrinya.

The dialects of Tigrinya as reported by the above authors, therefore, are classified into three regional/geographical localities (see pp. 2-3 of this paper for detail). Among these three regional dialects of Tigrinya, one is the variety spoken in Wajerat, Rayya-Azebo, Zaemel (Korem and Ofla), Wegera and Woldya, which shows a great deviation from the other two geographical dialects of Tigrinya.

The current researcher is not sure whether Tigrinya variety was spoken in Woldya and Wegera, and he is not able to find additional reference in this regard yet. But in fact, what is currently spoken in these two localities is Amharic. Although the dialects of Tigrinya spoken in Wajerat, Rayya-Azebo and Zaemel are categorized under one regional variation, there is again a difference among these local varieties of Tigrinya. The dialect spoken in Wajerat shows significant difference may be due to the reason that it is nearer to Geez (Tsehaye, 2009). The dialect spoken in Rayya-Azebo, on the other hand, is influenced by Amharic, Afan Oromo and Afar (Mohammed, 1983:1). And the variety spoken in Korem and Ofla (Zaemel) is influenced by Amharic, Afan Oromo and Agow (Kassahun, 1998:1).

The other local dialect which is not specifically mentioned in the above studies, but shares large number of linguistic features, especially with the varieties spoken in Rayya-Azebo and Zaemel, is the Tigrinya variety spoken in Alamata Woreda. However, this variety is highly influenced by Amharic due to the fact that it is spoken in the most southern pointed end of the present Tigray.

Moges (1993) in his BA thesis on *lissanä-bizuhinnät ?inna yäk'k'ank'k'w'a ?at't'äk'k'ak'k'äm bä ?alamat't'a wäräda* points out that Tigrinya, Amharic, Afan Oromo, Afar and Agew are spoken as mother tongues in this woreda. As to Moges, Tigrinya and Amharic have large number of speakers, whereas the other three languages are spoken by small number of speakers and the speakers of these languages are mainly elders. According to the data obtained from the office of public and government relationship of the Rayya-Alamata woreda by the present researcher, there are six kebeles where their inhabitants are wholly Amharic MT speakers. And since the Alamata woreda is located in the border area between Tigray and Amhara, there is a large language

contact among the people of Rayya-Alamata of Tigray and Rayya-Kobo of Amhara. Therefore, it could be the influences of all the above languages that have caused the Tigrinya variety spoken in Rayya in general, and Alamata in particular to show a great variation from the Tigrinya variety, which has been used as the language of instruction in primary education of the Tigray region.

In this study, two groups of students have been identified; students who speak Tigrinya variety which is highly influenced by Amharic on the one hand, and students who speak entirely Amharic as MT on the other hand. Both these groups of students come to school with their own dialect/language. However, these students are supposed to use only ST in the schools in which they face difficulty to express their thoughts through the written and spoken forms in the ST which is the MOI. Most of the teachers were observed persuading the students to keep away themselves from making interferences of their home dialect/language whenever they speak and write using ST in the actual classroom sessions. On the other hand, some Tigrinya teachers were observed using only the RD, and some others using Amharic during the Tigrinya classroom sessions. According to some literature, the language of non-standard variety speakers has to be respected. Most of the time, negative attitudes about speech have started with the belief that vernacular dialects are linguistically inferior to standard versions of a particular language. In fact, the language systems of various groups of speakers may differ, but in reality, no one system is inherently better than any other.

As it has been already reviewed in chapter two of this study, regarding the pedagogical benefits of mother tongue as a MOI, Annamalai (2003) discusses that the basic pedagogical fact is that the learner must know the medium, and the medium known to the child is the language of his/her early childhood experience- the language in which the child gained his/her experience of the world around his/her before coming to school. This means that the language in which the child operates for relating himself /herself with the social, natural and physical environment he/she lives in, must be the medium of instruction; otherwise, he/she will have, according to Annamalai, the double disadvantage of dealing with two unknowns simultaneously, the content he/she is learning and the

medium through which he/she is learning it. He/she will end up in rote learning by which he/she can be creative neither with the language nor with the content.

Therefore, the home dialect/language of the students of the Alamatan primary schools should be accepted. They do not have to be denied using their own variety of language. What they speak or what they write using their vernacular has to be esteemed; however, they have also to be pursued and to be encouraged to appreciate the nature of the linguistic variations, and to acquire the standard variety in order to have a wider regional perspective as well as a good command and access of the MOI (ST).

It was noticed that all the variations have negative impact on implementing the ST as MOI in general and on the primary education of the students of Alamatan primary schools in particular. This is due to the fact that confusions as well as communication gaps were observed taking place among the subject students and Tigrinya teachers during Tigrinya classroom interactions. These variations lead the students to make linguistic interferences into the ST in the classroom teaching learning process particularly when they have attempted to speak or to write in the ST. As a result of this, it has been noticed that there are barriers of communication among the students and the Tigrinya teachers, specifically those who do not know the RD. Especially the speaking and writing skills of the students are the most affected ones; most of the students have been observed facing problems to reflect their thoughts through spoken and written forms of the standard variety of Tigrinya. They make interferences of the RD as well as Amharic into the ST whenever they speak or write using the ST in their academia. Such interferences, therefore, sometimes, bring about confusion, and sometimes they bring about communication gap as they bring about meaning differences. So, from this, we can realize that the policy of mother tongue instruction (MTI) has not been well implemented, particularly in the Alamatan primary schools.

In the following sections, data about the phonological, grammatical and lexical interferences of the RD and Amharic, descriptions and analysis of these data as well as explanations about how such linguistic interferences bring about confusions and communication gaps in classroom interactions will be addressed in brief.

## 4.2. Linguistic Interference of the RD on the Medium of Instruction

The researcher employed written test to see how far the respondents' claims are true. The sample students were demanded to write a paragraph of 100 words. According to the data obtained from this written paragraph, a large extent of linguistic interference of the RD as well as Amharic into the ST was realized. The researcher first identified the interference of the RD at each of the linguistic levels. Then he calculated the interferences of the RD at certain linguistic levels (phonology, grammar and lexicology), and tried to put the summary of the result as we can see it in the following table.

Linguistic level (LL)	Linguistic Interference (LI)	Average Linguistic Interference Per Fifty Words (ALIPFW)
Phonology	30-42	36
Grammar	18-22	20
Lexicon	23-29	26

**Table 6: The RD interference at different linguistic levels**

A photocopied sample paragraph of one student which shows the interferences of RD into the ST at phonological, grammatical and lexical levels is attached for evidence, here, below.

IV. ዓይ ፅሁፍ ፈተና

ደስ ዝበለኹም ርእሲ፣ ወሰድኩም በዛዕባኡ ካብ 100 ቃላት በዘይገእስ ሓሳብኩም ፅሁፍ፡፡

ገገገገ<sup>1</sup> ፋጥፋጥ<sup>2</sup> ደገገገ<sup>3</sup>  
 ሓይ ፋጥፋጥ<sup>4</sup> ገገገገ<sup>5</sup> ገገገገ<sup>6</sup> ገገገገ<sup>7</sup> ገገገገ<sup>8</sup> ገገገገ<sup>9</sup> ገገገገ<sup>10</sup> ገገገገ<sup>11</sup>  
 ገገገገ<sup>12</sup> ገገገገ<sup>13</sup> ገገገገ<sup>14</sup> ገገገገ<sup>15</sup> ገገገገ<sup>16</sup> ገገገገ<sup>17</sup> ገገገገ<sup>18</sup> ገገገገ<sup>19</sup> ገገገገ<sup>20</sup> ገገገገ<sup>21</sup>  
 ገገገገ<sup>22</sup> ገገገገ<sup>23</sup> ገገገገ<sup>24</sup> ገገገገ<sup>25</sup> ገገገገ<sup>26</sup> ገገገገ<sup>27</sup> ገገገገ<sup>28</sup> ገገገገ<sup>29</sup> ገገገገ<sup>30</sup>  
 ገገገገ<sup>31</sup> ገገገገ<sup>32</sup> ገገገገ<sup>33</sup> ገገገገ<sup>34</sup> ገገገገ<sup>35</sup> ገገገገ<sup>36</sup> ገገገገ<sup>37</sup> ገገገገ<sup>38</sup>  
 ገገገገ<sup>39</sup> ገገገገ<sup>40</sup> ገገገገ<sup>41</sup> ገገገገ<sup>42</sup> ገገገገ<sup>43</sup> ገገገገ<sup>44</sup> ገገገገ<sup>45</sup> ገገገገ<sup>46</sup>  
 ገገገገ<sup>47</sup> ገገገገ<sup>48</sup> ገገገገ<sup>49</sup> ገገገገ<sup>50</sup> ገገገገ<sup>51</sup> ገገገገ<sup>52</sup> ገገገገ<sup>53</sup> ገገገገ<sup>54</sup>  
 ገገገገ<sup>55</sup> ገገገገ<sup>56</sup> ገገገገ<sup>57</sup> ገገገገ<sup>58</sup> ገገገገ<sup>59</sup> ገገገገ<sup>60</sup> ገገገገ<sup>61</sup> ገገገገ<sup>62</sup>  
 ገገገገ<sup>63</sup> ገገገገ<sup>64</sup> ገገገገ<sup>65</sup> ገገገገ<sup>66</sup> ገገገገ<sup>67</sup> ገገገገ<sup>68</sup> ገገገገ<sup>69</sup> ገገገገ<sup>70</sup>  
 ገገገገ<sup>71</sup> ገገገገ<sup>72</sup> ገገገገ<sup>73</sup> ገገገገ<sup>74</sup> ገገገገ<sup>75</sup> ገገገገ<sup>76</sup>

Figure 2: Extract from paragraph writing in Tigrinya

From the figure above one can clearly notice that there are phonological, grammatical and lexical interference of RD and Amharic into the ST. Phonologically, the student-writer has changed the phoneme *z* of the ST into the phoneme *d* in the RD as clearly indicated by the numbers 3, 6, 8, 11, 13, 16, 17, 22, 24, 26, 28, 29, 35, 39, 42, 43, 44, 46, 50, 53, and 74 in the paragraph. Furthermore, there is a phonological change due to metathesis of *ʔy* to *yʔ* as indicated by the numbers 18, 30, 66 and 76 in the paragraph. Moreover, the phonemes in the words *ʔagälabit’u*, *ʔänbibu*, *tälaʕilu*, *ʔäntämhir*, *kallo*, *ʔäntägäbir* and *tämharroy* of the ST are written in the paragraph as *ʔagälawut’u* (51), *ʔanbibu* (57), *tälaʕilu* (71), *tämharloy* (59), *tägäbbiroy* (65) and *tämhari* (2, 4, 34, 41) respectively in the RD.

We can also see changes from the phoneme *n* of the ST into the *d* phoneme of the RD as we can see it in numbers 48, 19 and 32. Regarding lexical change, terms such as *zälläwo*, *mäjjämärītta*, *mämhēr*, *gäzʔu*, *tädaliyu*, *nīfuʕ*, *ʔiwwīn*, *sīraḥti*, *dīmma*, *k'älbu*, *ʔakibu* and *goräbet* of the ST are replaced by *dinähäwo* (23,61), *mäjjämärya* (borrowed form Amharic) (31, 37, 55), *ʔastämhari* (45,52), *ʕadu* (9, 56,67), *täzägaj̄yū* (58), *gobäz* (1, 5, 33, 40, 75), *lällä* (10, 20, 27, 49, 54, 60), *siraḥt* (12), *χ'alw* (62), *säwsīwu* (63) and *goräwät* (21) respectively in the RD. Grammatically, the “n---n” which is conjunction “and” in the ST is changed into “y---y” (conjunction “and”) in the RD as we can see it in numbers 14, 15, 25, 37, 38 and 47 in the paragraph. In addition, the expression *bet tīmhirti* in the ST is changed into *tīmhirti bet* of the RD as indicated in numbers 7, 36 and 72 in the sample paragraph.

In fact, such interferences of linguistic aspects in the orthographic (written version) of the students are resulted from their oral language. The students have been observed applying the sounds of their oral speech on what they wrote. For example, they have been always observed pronouncing the alveolar, fricative and voiced [z] sound of the ST as the alveolar, stop and voiced [d] of the RD when both sounds occur at word initial. This predictable in all Tigrinya word classes with the exception of nouns in which the change from the alveolar, fricative and voiced [z] into the alveolar, stop and voiced [d] does not work. So as we can observe from the sample paragraph, the change of sounds in the oral language of the students has also resulted in the written version of the students. The phonological, grammatical and lexical interferences of the Rayyan Tigrinya into the language of instruction (ST) by the students incur meaning differences which affects proper communication. In what follows, this will be illustrated and discussed in brief.

### **4.2.1. Phonological Interference of Rayyan Dialect into the Medium of Instruction**

Tigrinya has several regional dialects which manifest some variations from the standard form, which is the medium of instruction in primary schools. It is true that words differ in their pronunciation from place to place. People pronounce a single word differently. This difference in pronunciation may lead to misunderstanding of meaning. In other words, a word which has one meaning pronounced differently by people in different areas may result in a communication gap. Sometimes, it may block communication completely as it may confuse the other Tigrinya speakers.

Some studies have been carried out to reveal these realities. Daniel Teklemariam (1991:270) in his study on “How can we Develop and Standardize Dialects of Tigrinya into one Standardized Stage”, explained that there is a great variation in phonology (pronunciation) among the different dialect speakers of Tigrinya using adequate examples. Yikune-Amlak (2000:272-274) in his study on ‘The Role of Creating Standard Dialect in the Case of Ofla Woreda’, also discussed that people from Ofla (Korem) of Rayya have been observed facing a significant phonological interference while speaking in the mass media and in different public meetings. So from the above two works, we can understand that those people face phonological (pronunciation) interference.

The main emphasis of this study, therefore, is to show the interferences of certain phonemes of the Rayyan Dialect that can confuse others as a result of variations in pronunciation by taking some examples from the data that are collected from a sample of grade seven students of some Alamatan primary schools. For convenience, first, description of how certain words are pronounced in both the standard Tigrinya and the Tigrinya dialect spoken in Rayya with their glosses in English will be given in 4.2.1.1, followed by a discussion on how the interference of such variation in pronunciation brings confusion and communication gap in certain speech and written context in actual classroom teaching learning process in 4.2.1.

### 4.2.1. 1. Phonological Changes

**Table 7: Sound Change from Fricative to Stops**

ST	RD	Gloss	Sounds Changed
a. <i>ziχuri</i>	<i>diχuri</i>	one becomes anger	[z] ⇒ [d]
b. <i>ziharāmo</i>	<i>diharāmo</i>	for bidden to have	[z] ⇒ [d]
c. <i>ziχonä nāgär</i>	<i>diχonä nāgär</i>	anything	[z] ⇒ [d]
d. <i>zihb</i>	<i>dihb</i>	someone who gives	[z] ⇒ [d]
e. <i>ziχädä</i>	<i>diχädä</i>	one who went	[z] ⇒ [d]
f. <i>zämhäru</i>	<i>dämhäru</i>	those who taught	[z] ⇒ [d]
g. <i>zibillaƒ</i>	<i>dibillaƒ</i>	to be eaten	[z] ⇒ [d]

As we can see in the above data, there is a variation in pronunciation between the ST and the RD due to the fact that there is a disparity in pronouncing the phonemes *z* and *d*. Except in nouns, it is predictable that the alveolar, fricative and voiced [z] sound in the ST will be changed into the alveolar, stop and voiced [d] in the RD at word initial as it is clearly seen in the above data. For example, the words *ziχuri* “one becomes anger”, *ziharāmo* “for bidden to have” and *ziχonä nāgär* “anything” in the ST are pronounced as *diχuri*, *diharāmo*, *diχonä nāgär* in the RD respectively.

**Table 8: Sound Change from Nasal to oral**

ST	RD	Gloss	Sound Changed
a. <i>nabäy</i>	<i>dabäy</i>	where	[n] ⇒ [d]
b. <i>nabzi</i>	<i>dabzi</i>	to here	[n] ⇒ [d]
c. <i>niƒʔu</i>	<i>diʔu</i>	for him	[n] ⇒ [d]
d. <i>niƒay</i>	<i>diʔannä</i>	to me	[n] ⇒ [d]
e. <i>niƒʔom</i>	<i>diʔom</i>	for them (M)	[n] ⇒ [d]
f. <i>nilimƒat</i>	<i>dilimʔat</i>	for development	[n] ⇒ [d]
g. <i>niyyä</i>	<i>diyyä</i>	there	[n] ⇒ [d]

As we can clearly see from the above data, the sound change in the Rayyan dialect is predictable. For example, in this dialect, it is also predictable that the nasal sound [n] becomes to be an oral [d] in all parts of speech except noun. In the ST, the initial sound in all the words given in the above data is the alveolar, nasal and voiced consonant [n]. As it is clearly noticed, this nasal sound has been changed into the alveolar, stop and voiced oral sound [d] as we can see it at the initial position of all the words given under the Rayyan dialect. For instance, the initial [n] of the ST *nabäy* "to where", *nabzi* "to here" and *nifʔu* "for him" is changed into [d] as in the RD *dabäy*, *dabzi*, and *diʔu* respectively. This change from the nasal [n] to the oral [d] by the Rayyan variety speakers has frequently been observed during the field work in their oral use, and it is also reflected in a parallel spelling change in the written version of the standard variety.

**Table 9: Sound Change from Stop to Approximant (Fricative, Trill, and Glide)**

ST	RD	Gloss	Sound Changed
a. ʔadgi	ʔargi	donkey	[d] ⇒ [r]
b. kämäy	hamäy	how	[k] ⇒ [h]
c. ʔina	yäna	we are	[ʔ] ⇒ [y]

Sometimes, it is also common to observe the students of the Alamatan primary schools pronouncing the dental, stop, and voiced [d] sound as alveolar, liquid, lateral, and voiced [r] sound in certain circumstances. The word *kämäy* 'how' in the ST is pronounced as *hamäy* in the RD. The initial sound [k] which is stop, voiceless and velar consonant in the ST is replaced by [h] which is a fricative, voiceless and glottal consonant in the RD. The interviewed teachers stated that they are sometimes confused when their students make interferences of such sounds in the actual classroom sessions. In addition to this, sometimes a change from non-glide stop sound of the ST into a glide sound of the RD occurs. For example, let us see the replacement of the [ʔ] which is glottal, stop and

voiceless sound by [y] which is velar, glide and voiced sound in the words *?ina* “we are” and *yäna* in the ST and RD respectively.

**Table 10: Change due to Metathesis**

ST	RD	Gloss	Sound Changed
a. ?iyyu	yä?u	is	[?y] ⇒ [y?]
b. χisad	sixad	neck	[χs] ⇒ [sχ]
c. hawäyä	hayäwä	he became well	[wy] ⇒ [yw]
d. ʕax'mi	χ'aʕmi	capacity	[ʕχ'] ⇒ [χ'ʕ]

We can again see some phonological changes due to metathesis between the ST and RD. For example, we can see this feature between the glottal, stop and voiceless [?] of the ST and the palatal, glide and voiced [y] in the words in the RD. For instance, *?iyyu* “is” of the ST is changed into *yä?u* in the RD; the [χ], which is velar, ejective and voiceless consonant in the ST is changed into [s], which is an alveolar, fricative and voiceless in the RD as we can see them in the words *χisad* “neck” of the ST and *sixad* of the RD. There is also a shift in position between the pharyngeal, fricative and voiced [ʕ] of the ST and the velar, ejective and voiced [χ'] of the RD as in the examples *ʕax'mi* “capacity” of the ST and *χ'aʕmi* of RD.

The students have been noticed pronouncing the ST word *sixad* as *χisad* “neck”; which is also reflected in the written version of the standard variety of Tigrinya.

Regarding this, some of the interviewed Tigrinya teachers who are not familiar with the RD reflected that they are confused by the pronunciation of such words. For instance, they affirmed that they were not clear whether the students meant “neck” or another word

by their pronunciation of the word *sīχad* because *sīχad* is non-existent in the standard version of the language.

**Table 11: Deletion of phonemes**

ST	RD	Gloss	Sounds Deleted
a. ʔantta	ʔatta	you (SGM)	[n]
b. niʔʔu	diʔu	for him	[ʔ]
c. kiχäwin	kiχon	to be or to happen	[w]/ [äw] ⇒[o]
d. mäś'iʔu	mäs'ʔu	he came, they come	[i]

As we can see from the data, deletion of certain consonant sounds from the words of the ST is observed in the pronunciations of the target students of this research. For example, there is a deletion of the dental, nasal and voiced sound [n] when they pronounce the word *ʔanta* “you (SGM)” as *ʔata* and the word *niʔʔu* “for him” as *diʔu*.

In these examples, there is a deletion of the pharyngeal, fricative and voiced [ʔ]. The deletion of the [i], which is high, front and unrounded vowel in the pronunciation of the RD speakers, is predictable when it occurs at word medial position. And this deletion of the vowel [i] in the Tigrinya variety spoken in Rayya, particularly in Alamata and its surroundings brings about meaning change. This will be illustrated under the grammatical interference in the next section.

**Table 12: Change from alveolar to palatal (palatalization)**

ST	RD	Gloss	Sound Changed
a. säyru	šäbru	he broke	[s] ⇒ [š]
b. ħasyu	ħašyu	he smashed	[s] ⇒ [š]
c. ħaswu	ħašwu	he lied	[s] ⇒ [š]
d. mäsyu	mäšyu	became evening	[s] ⇒ [š]

The above data also reveal that there have been phonological changes taking place between the two varieties of Tigrinya. The alveolar, fricative and voiceless [s] in the ST is replaced by the palatal, ejective and voiceless [š] in the pronunciation of the RD speakers. For example, the words *säyru*, "he broke", *hasiyu* "he smashed", *hasiwu* "he lied" and *mäsyu* "becoming evening" in the ST are pronounced as *šäbru*, *häšyu*, *häšwu* and *mäšyu*, respectively in the RD.

It has been also observed that the grade seven students of the Alamatan primary schools make the interference of the palatal, fricative and voiceless consonant [š] into the place of the alveolar, fricative and voiceless [s] in their classroom interactions and that this is also reflected in parallel spelling changes in the written text.

**Table 13: Vowel change**

ST	RD	Gloss	change of sounds
a. t'el	t'äli	goat	[e] ⇒ [ä] and addition of [i]
b. kämäy	hamäy	how	[ä] ⇒ [a]
c. ?ina	yäna	we are	[i] ⇒ [ä]
d. däyyu	däyä?u	is that	[i] ⇒ [ä]
e. ?iyyu	yä?u	is	[i] ⇒ [ä]

In the above data, there are both consonant and vowel changes. Let us focus now only on the description of the vowel change since the consonant changes have been treated so far. As it has been clearly illustrated in the above data, there are a number of vowel changes taking place between the two varieties of Tigrinya. For instance, the word for goat is pronounced as *t'el* in the ST, but it is pronounced as *täli* in the Rayyan Variety. Here, we can see the vowel change, i.e. [e] in the ST is changed to [ä] in the RD with the addition of the high, front and unrounded [i] vowel sound at the final position of the word. In addition, the high, front and unrounded vowel sound [i] in the word *?ina* of the ST is changed into the middle, central and unrounded [ä] as in the word *yäna* "we are" in the RD. The mid, central and unrounded vowel sound [ä] in the ST is replaced by the low,

central and round vowel sound [a] in RD as in *kämäy* “how” and *hamäy* in ST and RD respectively.

However, the vowel changes between the ST and RD are not predictable. There is no such consistency which we might expect to take place regularly. In spite of this, however, there are many instances where disparities among the ST and RD have taken place due to the differences in the pronunciation of vowels.

Regarding the above issue, some of the interviewed teachers reacted that they are sometimes confused by such vowel changes in the pronunciation of their students in actual classroom teaching learning process.

**Table: 14 other sound changes**

	<b>ST</b>	<b>RD</b>	<b>Gloss</b>	<b>Sound changed</b>
a.	<i>häzi</i>	<i>χäzi</i>	now	[h̥] ⇒ [χ]
b.	<i>näyru</i>	<i>näbru</i>	was(he)	[y] ⇒ [b]
c.	<i>gäyru</i>	<i>gäbru</i>	he did	[y] ⇒ [b]
d.	<i>säyru</i>	<i>šäbru</i>	he broke	[y] ⇒ [b]
e.	<i>däyyu</i>	<i>däyäʔu</i>	is that	[i] ⇒ [ä] and [ʔ] (Addition)

As we can see from the above data, there are certain changes of sounds from the ST to the RD such as oral sounds into nasal, glide to non glide, pharyngeal to velar, voiced to voiceless, and addition of certain sounds. The researcher witnessed that the sample grade seven students pronounce the pharyngeal, fricative, voiceless [h̥] sound in the ST as velar, fricative and voiceless sound [χ] as in *häzi* “now” of the ST and *χäzi* of the RD. We can also face a change of sounds from glide to non-glide between ST and RD. For instance, the palatal, glide and voiced sound [y] in the word *näyru* “he was” of the ST is changed into the bilabial, stop and voiced [b] sound in the word *näbru* of the RD.

In addition to the above changes, the feature of addition of both vowel and consonant sounds are also observed in the pronunciations of the sample grade seven students who speak the RD. For instance, they have been observed changing the high, front and unrounded vowel sound [i] of ST into the mid, central and unrounded vowel sound [ä] and adding the [ä] and [ʔ] sounds into the word. Thus *däyu* “is that” of the ST is pronounced as *däyäuʔu* in the RD.

### **i) Sound changes due to Amharic influence**

Amanuel (1988: 15-20), Mohammad (1983:1), Teklehaymanot (2000:167-169) and Daniel Teklu (2000:220-221) discuss that Amharic has a significant influence on Tigrinya. Meaza (1983:2) also pointed out that there is a close contact and problem of interference between Amharic and Tigrinya as follows:

The two languages (Amharic and Tigrinya) are in close contact in every aspect, geographically and linguistically. One knowing the close contact and similarity might not believe that there is a problem of interference between these languages. But whether the reasons are the slight difference, the similarity or any other, there is a problem of interference.

The field work of this research has shown that in the sample schools of the Alamata Town, particularly in “Bruh-Tesfa” and “Edget-Fana” primary schools, phonological interferences of Amharic into ST have been witnessed. During classroom observations some individuals have been noticed using Amharic phonemes in addition to the RD in the place of certain Tigrinya words during Tigrinya sessions. The interference of such Amharic phonemes sometimes brings about a total change in meaning, and sometimes they involve Amharic words which do not have any meaning in the ST. The researcher then has tried to show some examples how such sound interferences bring about change in meaning or how they create words which do not have any sense in the ST in the table below.

Basic words	Pronunciation In ST	Meaning in ST	Some students' Pronunciation in RD	Meaning in ST	Sound Changed	
a	ʕibyət	ʕibyət	development	ʔibyət	being unwilling	ʕ⇒ʔ
b	ʕibud	ʕibud	crazy	ʔibud	-----	
c	ʕallamay	ʕallamay	one who hits a target	ʔallamay	one who waves	
d	ʕilama	ʕilama	purpose	ʔilama	-----	
e	ʕaddäy	ʕaddäy	my country	ʔaddäy	my mother	
f	S'aʕri	s'aʕri	effort	s'aʔri	-----	
g	Siʕat	siʕat	clock	siʔat	-----	
h	saʕirri	saʕirri	grass	saʔirri	-----	
i	maʕrä	maʕrä	equal	maʔrä	some to be picked up	
j	ħarisu	ħarisu	he ploughed	Harisu	he slept	
k	ħirum	ħirum	for bidden to have (own) something	hirum	one who is hit (passive verb)	
l	ħibuʔ	ħibuʔ	something hidden	hibuʔ	-----	

**Table 15: Sound changes due to Amharic influence**

As we can see in the above data, there is a total meaning change as well as meaning loss due to sound variations between the pharyngeal [ʕ] and the glottal [ʔ] in the first case and between the pharyngeal [ħ] and the glottal [h] in the second case in each of the words between the two varieties of Tigrinya. For example, we can see a variation between the phonemic /ʕ/ which in ST is pharyngeal, fricative and voiced [ʕ] while it is glottal, stop and voiceless [ʔ] in the RD. In the researcher's classroom observation, some students were observed pronouncing the above pharyngeals as they are, while some others pronouncing them as the above glottal ones.

These pharyngeal consonants are not found in Amharic, and are difficult for Amharic speakers to pronounce them as do Tigrinya MT speakers. They, for instance, pronounce the pharyngeal [ʕ] instead as the glottal [ʔ]. In this case, there is again meaning change that results from the variation.

The same is true with the pharyngeal, fricative voiceless [ħ]. The [ħ] does not exist in Amharic, and it is again common to observe Amharic speakers pronouncing it as the glottal [h]. This also results in a meaning change as one can witness it in the words of the above data.

According to the data, some student subjects of this study who claimed MT speakers of the Rayyan variety of Tigrinya showed the same phonological changes that Amharic MT speakers did in their pronunciation of Tigrinya words that have these pharyngeal consonants as shown in the table above.

The replacement of the pharyngeal [ʕ] by the glottal [ʔ] in the pronunciation of some RD speakers as one can clearly see in the above data brings a total lexical (meaning) change. For example, the pharyngeal [ʕ] in ST words *maʕrā* “equal”, *ʕalāma* “purpose” and *ʕibiyät* “development” is changed into the glottal [ʔ] as in *maʔrā* “picking up”, *ʔalāma* “waving” and *ʔibiyät* “being unwilling” by some RD speaking students.

The replacement of the pharyngeal [ħ] by the glottal [h] also causes total lexical change, which brings communication gap between the teachers and these individual students during classroom sessions. For example, the pronunciation of [ħ] as in the word [sɪrah] in the ST has the meaning of ‘work’, whereas the pronunciation of [h] in the word [sɪrah] in RD does not have any meaning in the ST. And in the ST, the pronunciation of [ħ] in the word *ħabo* “motive”, is replaced by [h] in the pronunciation of some students to become *habo* “give him” in the ST. The [ħ] in the word *zħarāmo* has the meaning of “that is forbidden for someone to have or to own something” in the ST, but the meaning is

changed in the RD speakers due to the fact that they pronounce the [ħ] sound as [h] as in the word *diharämo* which in ST means “one (3SGM) who hit him”. Moreover, *harisu* in ST means “he ploughed”, but it is pronounced as *harisu* by these individual students, and gives the meaning of “he slept” in ST.

#### **4.2.1.2. Discussion on Phonological Interferences**

In general, from the descriptions of the phonological variations between the ST and RD that have been illustrated so far, it can be realized that there are a number of phonemic processes that have been innovated in the pronunciation of the Rayyan variety of Tigrinya. Of course, the researcher has not discovered any clear evidence which explains the reason for the innovation of such sounds yet. Some previous works have reported that the variation between is an influence from Amharic and to some extent from Afan Oromo, Afar and Agow. It is true that there is a high degree of influence from Amharic on the Rayyan variety of Tigrinya. The current researcher, in this regard, has also discovered that there are a number of Tigrinya phonemes replaced by Amharic phonemes and frequently used by some of the RD speaking students in their written test and oral classroom interaction during Tigrinya sessions. The root cause for the innovation of the other phonemes of the Rayyan variety of Tigrinya, however, is not identified. The innovations, therefore, might be either due to influences from Afan Oromo, Afar and Agow, or there might be any other historical reason which might have possibly caused such disparity between the two varieties (ST and RD) of Tigrinya. In fact, further study will be required to investigate the possible causes for the innovations of such phonemes.

Whatever the possible causes might be, there are changes of sounds between the RD and the mainstream Tigrinya variety. In this study, it has been noticed that the deviations in pronunciation of phonemes between the RD and the ST bring about an impact in implementing the ST as a medium of instruction in the primary education of the Alamata woreda. The students have been observed making interferences of the phonemes of their own dialect into the language of instruction (ST) both in oral and the written form.

The researcher clearly observed that sometimes the interferences of the pronunciation of the Rayyan dialect into the ST, which is the language of instruction, confuses some Tigrinya teachers who cannot speak the RD. For example, as we can see from the data described so far, the replacements of the fricative [z] by the stop [d], the nasal sound [n] by the oral sound [d], the stop sounds ([d], [k] and [ʔ]) by the approximants ([r], [h] and [y] respectively), in certain situations bring about confusion for the Tigrinya teachers who speak only the standard variety of Tigrinya in the actual classroom teaching-learning process. For instance, the students pronounce the expressions as *dämhörä* “one who taught”, *dabäy* “to where” instead of the teachers’ expected pronunciation, *zämhörä* and *nabäy* respectively. It has been noticed that these teachers were not able to understand the students’ words, like *dibillaŋ* “to be eaten”, *däyyä* “there”, *ʔargi* “donkey”, *hayäwä* “he became well”, *ʔatta* “you (SGM)”, *haswü* “he lied”, *t’äli* “goat”, *šäbru* “he broke” and the like respectively as representing the meanings intended by the students due to differences in the pronunciations of the phonemes for which the equivalent terms the teachers know in the standard variety of Tigrinya, are *zibillaŋ*, *näyyä*, *ʔadgi*, *hawäyä*, *ʔanäitta*, *hasiwu*, *t’el* and *säyru* respectively.

Furthermore, from the data given in table 15, everyone can easily comprehend that communication gap between teachers and some students of the primary schools of Alamata in the actual classroom teaching learning process would take place as due to the replacement some Tigrinya pharyngeal sounds by some Amharic glottal sounds. In this regard, the researcher has observed some Tigrinya teachers allowing students to ask and answer questions in Amharic during Tigrinya period because those teachers were not able to understand some expressions of the students. From the classroom observation, the researcher has realized that most of the students are able to explain their idea clearly in Amharic than in ST, and it was easier for some Tigrinya teachers to understand the students’ expressions in Amharic more clearly than in the RD. And this shows us how the

communication gap among Tigrinya teachers who are not familiar with the RD and the students whose variety is the RD is high.

So such a large number of phonological interference of the RD into the ST by the grade seven students of the Alamatan primary schools, as it has been indicated in the data so far have negative pedagogical implication in implementing the ST as the language of instruction in the classroom in particular and in achieving the educational objectives of the woreda in general. This is due to the pedagogical fact that it can be hardly possible to educate /instruct children without adequate command of instructional language. In order to be successful in the actual classroom teaching learning process, the language of instruction should be very familiar for both the students and the teachers. If both the teachers and the students are not adequately competent with the language of schooling, it is true that they face difficulties in the classroom instructions and to attain their educational objectives. Therefore, both students and teachers must be provided with medium of instruction they know very well in order to create healthy and effective classroom instruction and then to achieve the required educational objectives.

#### **4.2.2. Grammatical Interference of Rayyan Dialect into the ST**

Grammatical interference can be treated both at morphological and syntactic levels. This part of the paper deals with the analysis of how morphological and syntactic interferences of the RD affects the ST by bringing about meaning change in the actual classroom teaching learning process through some examples from the data.

##### **4.2.2.1. Morphological Interference of Rayyan Dialect**

According to Haspelmath (2002:1), the term morphology refers to the study of the internal structure of words. Morphological interference as stated by Weinreich (1953:14-47) refers to a linguistic /language interference, which occurs when a bidialectal/bilingual speaker identifies morphemes and class of morphemes in language chain in syntax and uses it in the speech act.

From the analysis of morphological variations of Tigrinya stated in (Asfaw (1991), Daniel Teklemariam (1991), Asmerom (1991), Yikune-Amlak (2000), Dagneu (1999) and Tsehaye (2009)) one can understand that there are certain morphemes that can bring about significant differences among the different dialect speakers of Tigrinya. The current study in this part tries to reveal some morphological variations, (particularly affixes of person and negation morphemes) between the ST and the RD and how they bring about confusions and communication gaps among the teachers and the students of the Alamatan primary schools. In this regard, the researcher has clearly noticed during his field work in the sample primary schools of Alamata woreda that morphological interferences of the RD into the medium of instruction take place and sometimes create confusion as well as bring about meaning change practically in the Tigrinya language sessions.

In what follows, the researcher tries to describe and discuss how such morphological interferences create confusion and meaning change in Tigrinya classroom interactions by taking and elaborating some of the examples from the data collected during the field work. For convenience, first the morphological data about the affixes of person in each of the two dialects with their meanings in English will be given. A brief summary on how such variation confuses and brings about meaning change will be dealt with. Next to this section, the data on negation morphemes will be described first, and then discussion on how such morphemes bring about variation between the two dialects of Tigrinya will be briefly discussed.

#### **a) Affixes of Person**

It is common to observe that affixes of person mostly result in variation in meaning between the ST and RD. To begin with, let us see how the affixes of person in the Tigrinya root word /*bāliŋ-*/, ‘eat’ in the ST, brings about variation in meaning between the ST and the RD in the following data.

**Table 16: Affixes of Person and meaning differences between RD and ST**

Word	Meaning in ST	Meaning in RD
a. bälif-u	he ate	-----
b. bälif-u	they(M) eat	he ate
c. bälif-om	they (M) ate	-----
d. bälif-om	he eats them (M)	they (M) ate
e. bälif-a	she ate	-----
f. bälif-a	he eats her, they(F) eat	she ate
g. bälif-än	they (F) ate	-----
h. bälif-än	he eats them (F)	they (F) ate
i. bälif-xa	you (SGM) ate	-----
j. bälfi-xa	-----	you (SGM) ate
k. bälif-xi	you (SGF) ate	-----
l. bälfi-xi	-----	you (SGF) ate
m. bälif-xum	you (PLM) ate	-----
n. bälfi-xum	they(M) eat you(PLM)	you (PLM) ate
o. bälif-xin	you (2PLF) ate	-----
p. bälfi-xn	-----	you (PLF) ate
q. bälif-ä	I ate	-----
r. bälif-ä	he eats	I ate
s. bälif-na	we ate	-----
t. bälfi-na	-----	we ate

From the above data we can realize that the following three points can be drawn from the morphological variations between the two varieties of Tigrinya.

- 1) The verbal stem appears only as /bälif/ in the RD, whereas in the ST, it can appear both as /bälif/ and / bälfi/.

For example:

- |    |                              |                              |
|----|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| a. | RD /bälif-u/ “he ate”        | ST /bälif-u/ “he ate”        |
| b. | RD /bälif-om/ “they (M) ate” | ST /bälif-om/ “they (M) ate” |

- c. RD /bälŋ-än/ “they (F) ate”                      ST /bälŋ-u/ “they (M) eat”
- d. RD /bälŋ-a/ “she ate”                              ST /bälŋ-om/ “he eats them (M)”

2) The suffix for a specific person attached to the /bäliŋ/ stem in ST will have the same meaning in the RD when the same suffix appears in the /bälŋ/ stem.

For example:

- a. ST /bäliŋ-u/ = RD /bälŋ-u/ “he ate”
- b. ST /bäliŋ-om/ = RD /bälŋ-om/ “they ate”
- c. ST /bäliŋ-a/ = RD /bälŋ-a/ “she ate”
- d. ST /bäliŋ-ä/ = RD /bälŋ-ä/ “I ate”
- e. ST /bäliŋ-än/ = RD /bälŋ-än/ “they (F) ate”
- f. ST /bäliŋ-χa/ = RD /bälŋ-χa/ “you (SGM) ate”

3) The suffix that appears attached to the /bälŋ/ stem in ST will always take a different meaning from that happens in the RD.

For example:

- a. In ST /bälŋ-u/, /-u/ represents “3PLM” while in RD it represents “3SGM”.
- b. The suffix /-a/ as in /bälŋ-a/ represents “3SGFO” in ST where as in RD, it signifies “3PLF”.
- c. The suffix /-om/ in /bälŋ-om/ represents “3PLMO” in ST, but in RD, it represents “3PLM”.

Therefore, since a suffix attached to the /bälŋ/ stem in the ST and the RD show different meanings, there results a lot of confusion and communication problem between speakers who directly communicate using the two dialects with each other.

## b) Negation Morphemes

### i) Presentation on variation due to negation markers

According to Gebremedhin and Hailemichael (1991a: 283-306), there are a number of grammatical and lexical variations in Tigrinya. In addition to the dialectal variations in the possessive markers, forms with ‘to’ and relative forms the authors have stated that there are morphological variations regarding negative markers in Tigrinya. They indicated that there are two forms of the negative, i.e. the ‘ʔay---n’ and the ‘yä---y’.

Tsehaye (2009:20) states that there is one more negative marker ‘ʔay---y’, which belongs to the Wajerat dialect. The two forms of negative markers stated by Gebremedhin and Hailemichael (1991), however, have not clearly differentiated which form belongs to which dialect. But the current researcher is able to identify that the first negative marker (ʔay---n) belongs to the standard Tigrinya, which is used as medium of instruction and the second form (yä---y) belongs to the dialect of Tigrinya spoken in Rayya from the data that are gathered from the grade seven students and from the grade seven textbooks as shown below.

**Table 17: Negative Markers in RD and ST**

Negative Markers in RD	Negative Markers in ST	Gloss
a. yä---y	ʔay---n	not
b. yä-χäd-χu-y	ʔay---käd-ku-n	I did not go
c. yä-χäd-χi-y	ʔay---käd-ki-n	you (SGF) did not go
d. yä-χäd-χa-y	ʔay---käd-ka-n	you (SGM) did not go
e. yä-χäd-χini-y	ʔay---käd-kin-i-n	you (PLF) did not go
f. yä-χäd-χumi-y	ʔay---käd-kumi-n	you (PLM) did not go
g. yä-χäd-a-y	ʔay---käd-a-n	they (F) did not go

We can see in the above data that the negative marker morphemes in both dialects occur both at word initial and at word final positions. For instance, in the word ‘yä-χäd-χu-y’ in

the RD, the discontinuous morpheme /yä-/ and /-y/ is a negative marker. The morpheme /χäd-/ is the root word, which means ‘go’ and the morpheme /-χu-/ marks the first person, singular ‘I’. In the same way, the discontinuous morpheme /ʔay-/ and /-n/ in the word /ʔay-käd- ku-n/ marks the negative marker ‘not’. The morpheme /käd-/ is the root word which means ‘go’ and the morpheme /-ku-/ marks the first person singular ‘I’. Putting the phonological differences in the verbal root and the pronominal suffix out of consideration for the time being, let us focus on the form of the negation marker alone. The initial part of the negative marker in the RD /yä-/ is completely different from the initial part of the negative marker morpheme /ʔay-/ in the ST. Similarly the final part of the negative marker morpheme in RD is /-y/ which is different from the final part of the negative marker morpheme /-n/ in ST.

So, from the data collected through the written test and critical classroom observation, the researcher observed and found that the above variations in the negative markers coupled with the phonological differences within the word are again causes of confusion and communication barrier between the Tigrinya teachers and the grade seven students who speak the RD in the actual classroom interaction.

## **ii) Discussion on the variations and consequences of negative markers**

As we have seen in the above description regarding the negation morphemes, there was again a great disparity between the two varieties of Tigrinya. However, the researcher is not able to find out the possible sources for the variation of these negative markers. The difference shown in the RD is innovated in that variety. There might be a historical reason which has caused such innovation of negative markers in the variety of Tigrinya spoken in Rayya in general and in Alamata and its surroundings in particular. To discover the possible sources of this innovation, other studies have to be conducted in the future. But for the time being, let us see the impact of such variations in negation morphemes between the ST and the RD on the implementation of the ST as the language of instruction in Alamatan primary schools, which is the main focus of this study.

The researcher has found the grade seven students of the sample Alamatan primary schools making the interference of negation morpheme of the RD into the ST. The data gathered through the writing test and the critical observation of the researcher has revealed that the students have made such interference when they write and speak using the ST. For example, some students have been noticed saying *yäχädχuy* instead of ST word *?aykädkun* “I did not go”, in their classroom interaction. As they are plainly seen, there are both phonological and morphological differences between the varieties. The discontinuous initial morpheme */?ay-/* of the ST in the given example is replaced by the discontinuous initial negation marker */yä-/* of the RD in the pronunciation of the students. Furthermore, the velar, stop and voiceless sound [k] of the ST is substituted by the velar, fricative and voiceless [χ] in the RD. And the final discontinuous negation marker morpheme */-n/* of the standard variety is changed into the final discontinuous negation marker morpheme */-y/* in the Rayyan variety of Tigrinya.

The interviewed Tigrinya teachers who are not familiar with the RD attested that they are not clear with the words that most of the time they are confused by such expressions from their students. Such confusion in an actual classroom teaching learning process, in Alamatan primary schools, therefore, slows down the effectiveness and clarity of the general classroom instruction. It also creates difficulty in implementing and promoting the standard variety of Tigrinya as the language of schooling in these primary schools.

#### 4.2. 2.2. Morpho-Syntactic Interference

The morpho-syntactic interference of the RD into the medium of instruction mainly happens due to the influence of Amharic structure on the Rayyan dialect. For elaboration and clarification, let us compare some examples from ST, RD and Amharic as follows.

	<b>ST</b>	<b>RD</b>	<b>Amharic</b>
Example:1	?iti mämïhr	mämïhr-u	mämïhr-u
	the teacher	teacher-DET.3SGM	teacher-DET.3SGM
	“the teacher”	“the teacher”	“the teacher”

From the examples, one can realize that the RD and Amharic have the same bound morpheme i.e. /-u/, which determines the third person, singular and masculine, and their morph-syntactic pattern is also the same. Contrary to this, however, the ST has the free morpheme /ʔiti/, instead to mark the same person. For more clarification, consider the phrase in a clausal context.

**Example: 2 In Standard Tigrinya**

ʔiti	mämäihr	nab	bet	tĩmhĩrti	käydu
DET.3SGM	mämäihr	to	house	lesson	go.PAS.3SGM

“the teacher went to schools”

**Example: 3 In Rayyan Dialect of Tigrinya**

mämäihr -u	dab	tĩmhĩrti	bet	χäydu
mämäihr -DET.3SGm	to	lesson	house	go.PAS.3SGM

“the teacher went to school”

**Example 4 In Amharic**

mämäihr -u	wädä	tĩmhirt	bet	hedä
mämäihr -DET.3SGM	to	lesson	house	go.PAS.3SGM

“the teacher went to school”

From the above description, we can understand that both the RD and Amharic follow the same morph-syntactic structure i.e. they have the same bound morpheme [-u] occurring in the same position as a suffix. The structure of the word both in the RD and Amharic is: “Noun (subject)” + “Determiner (Definite)”, whereas in ST the structure is phrasal and the order of morphemes is “Determiner” (which is the free morpheme /ʔiti/, + “Noun (subject)”. So, it can be recognized that the grammatical interference of RD into the ST takes place due to the influences of Amharic. In other words, this is tantamount to saying that this is Amharic interference in Standard Tigrinya.

### 4.2.3. Lexical Interference of RD into ST

This section deals with the analysis of lexical interference of RD into the ST. The analysis and discussion will focus on the data that are collected from the sample grade seven students of the Alamatan primary schools. First words of RD obtained from the data and their corresponding meanings in the ST with a gloss in English will be presented, and second, discussion on the data will be made in brief.

Lexical interferences are common to take place in the Tigrinya classroom sessions particularly in Alamatan primary schools. The data in the first column in the list below are taken as sample from the data collected through the written test, interview, questionnaire and the researcher's critical classroom observation from both the students and Tigrinya teachers of the Alamatan primary schools. And the data in the second column are equivalents sought from the ST to show the variation and how communication gap would result due to the lexical interferences from the RD.

**Table 18: Lexical Items**

	<b>RD</b>	<b>ST</b>	<b>Gloss</b>	<b>RD</b>	<b>ST</b>	<b>Gloss</b>
a.	ḥīrya	maḥrā	equal	x <sup>w</sup> ārya	buxarya	fox
b.	ḥixli	siḡām	barley	ḥandāñña	k'āddāmay	first
c.	sinday	sīrnay	wheat	s'īwwa	zārāba	speechs
d.	sarba	danga	leg	gurra	s'āgam	left-hand
e.	mizga	yāman	right hand	ḥat'ḥa	bīṭāy	calf
f.	kārān	gobo	mountain	ḥayyāḥā	ḥabboy	father
g.	ḥom	ḡārāb	tree	lālā	ḡimma	also
h.	ḥīrras	ḡik'k'as	asleep	ḥuš	sux'	be quite
i.	Ḥ'ällä	ḥīrray	okay	nāga	s'ībaḥ	tomorrow
j.	bormašilla	mišālabahri	maize	ḡālāba	ḥasār	hay
k.	t'īrah	t'īray	only	t'īray	ḥixli	crop
l.	ḡārāway	ḡorābet	neighbor	mammo	lama	razor

	RD	ST	Gloss	RD	ST	Gloss
m.	hīwšal	hīwwas	mixed	kāray	bīzuḥ	many
n.	šäkkittu	fäs's'immu	completely	käfti	?aḥa	cattle
o.	bīχ'addāmay	bī?amhoy	previous day	χoläta	ʕaso	malaria
p.	t'īyyak'e	ḥitto	question	lämissale	nī?abinnät	for example
q.	mäbt	mäsäl	right	hullätäñña	kal?ay	second
r.	?iwk'ät	filt'ät	knowledge			

### a) Discussion on Lexical Interference

As the above data exemplify, objects have different lexical representations in the two dialects of Tigrinya (the RD and ST). For example, the word for 'equal' in RD is *ḥīrya*, but its equivalent in the ST is *maʕrä*, and the word for 'barley' in RD is *?ixli*, and its equivalent in the ST is *siḡäm* etc.

Some of the words of the RD in the above data have another meaning in the ST, which is different from the meaning that the words have in the RD, and some of the words in the RD are with no meanings in the ST. For example, the word *t'iray* in RD means "crop", but in ST, it means "only". The word *?ixli* is "barley" in RD, but it is "any crop" in ST. The term *ʕaddi* in RD mostly refers to "house" and sometimes to "country", but in the ST, it has only the meaning of "country". The rest of the words of the RD listed in the above data, however, are non-existent in the ST.

There are certain words which have similarity with some Amharic words. For instance, the words *šinday*, *t'iray*, *käfti* and *bīχ'addāmay* of the RD have similarity with the Amharic words *šinniddīye* "wheat" *t'irre* "any crop", *käbt* "cattle" and *bäk'äddäm* "previous time" respectively. In addition, there are some Amharic borrowed words in the RD; for example, the words *?andäñña* "first" *gäläba* "hay", *?iwk'ät* "knowledge", *mäbt*

“right”, *t’iyyak’e* “question” and the like are borrowed from Amharic. This shows Amharic influence as one source of the variation between the two varieties of Tigrinya. But, the researcher has not discovered the sources of many other words yet.

The grade seven students of the sample primary schools of Alamata have been noticed when they use some of the words given in the above data in their oral classroom interaction and some of them in their written test. So from such lexical interferences of the RD into the ST by students, one can notice that there has been communication gap between/among the students who speak the RD and the Tigrinya teachers who only know the ST in the actual classroom interactions, mainly due to meaning variation between the two varieties of Tigrinya.

Many of the students have been noticed using Amharic words both in the oral and written forms during Tigrinya sessions. For, instance, the students were observed using Amharic words such as *t’iyyak’e* “question” *lämissale* “for example”, *ʔiwk’ät* “knowledge” and the like instead of the corresponding Tigrinya words, *ħitto*, *niʔabinnät*, *filt’t’ät* and the like respectively in their oral classroom interactions during Tigrinya sessions.

Furthermore, it was also noticed that most of the students use Amharic words like *mäbt* “right”, *hullättäñña* “second” etc, instead of the equivalent Tigrinya words *mäsäl*, *xalʔay* in the paragraph they wrote.

The reason why these students make interferences of Amharic with Tigrinya could be due to the fact that the variety of Tigrinya spoken in Rayya in general and in Alamata in particular is highly influenced by Amharic. Since Amharic is spoken by more than 33 % of the total population of Alamata woreda (Public Office of the Rayya-Alamata Woreda) and since Amharic is widely spoken by the people of the woreda in different socio-economic activities of the society (Moges, 1993), the Tigrinya variety spoken in this woreda is distorted by the influence of Amharic.

As a result of this, most of the people are observed by the researcher using Amharic in their daily communication. Since the students are also part of the whole society, they

have been observed using Amharic to communicate with the people of the community in general and with their peers instead of Tigrinya.

The Rayyan, specifically Alematan dialect of Tigrinya shows a significant variation from the mainstream Tigrinya variety. In education, most of the students of Alamatan primary schools, therefore, consider Amharic as their first language and Tigrinya as their second language (interviewees from Bruh-Tesfa and Mibraaq primary schools). Due to this fact, these students are noticed making linguistic interferences of Amharic into Tigrinya at all levels of linguistics when they speak and write during Tigrinya classroom sessions.

It was also observed that most of the Tigrinya teachers were denying the students' use of Amharic to reflect what they understand and not understand in the classroom interactions. But from the pedagogical and applied linguistics point of view, the use of mother tongue or home language by students in schools has to be accepted and appreciated by teachers. It is important to keep in mind especially in the area of schooling that linguistic features associated with vernacular dialect/language is not the result of poor or incomplete language learning and its use does not impede cognitive development. Correctness in language is a matter of social acceptability. So, in schools, students should be encouraged to build competence in speaking and writing in the standard variety, but their vernacular language must be respected as evidence of social identity and linguistic expertise.

### **4.3. Total Use of Amharic during Tigrinya Sessions**

Cohen (2006) discusses the use of several Ethiopian languages in primary education as follows:

The use of several Ethiopian languages in primary education is a reflection of reforms in the geopolitical structures of the state after 1991 that divided Ethiopia into regional states based upon the broadest formations of identity, such as “Amhara” and “Oromo”. The borders of the regions were based upon the use of languages and the previous body of linguistic literature that attempted a categorization of Ethiopian people according to language and geographical area. The rights of nationalities within the state to use language for official purposes are enshrined in article 39 of the 1994 constitution of Ethiopian Government. The use of regional language is a strong feature of federalism and an aspect of the

representation of Ethiopia's ethno- linguistic groups of people. But the division of the country into regions defined by language is problematic because of the lack of actual linguistic boundaries and the high degree of contact and mixing between the various peoples that inhabit the state.

The current researcher has found that the above case exists in the border area between Tigray and Amhara regions particularly, between the Rayya Alamata of Tigray and the Rayya Kobo of Amhara. The researcher, in his field work observed that the societies who live in Wajja, Selen-Weha and Tumuga kebeles in the Rayya-Alamata of Tigray, are speakers of only Amharic. The sample grade seven students of Wajja and Selen Weha primary schools were observed being unable to express their ideas using Tigrinya during Tigrinya classroom sessions. This problem has also been noticed by some researchers earlier. Regarding language problems in Alamata woreda, Moges Ali (1993:39) in his BA Thesis, discusses that there are many problems that the peoples of Alamata woreda face in their daily activities due to communication gaps. He states the problem as follows:

There are many problems that the peoples of Alamata woreda who speak different languages and live in one area face in their day to day life. Among these problems, the regional official language in Tigray is Tigrinya, and then the people of Alamata who speak only Amharic are expected to speak in Tigrinya when they go to different government offices. But they cannot speak Tigrinya, and as a result of this, they do not get as good service as what they want to get. The other problem is that students whose mother tongue is Amharic are let learn in Tigrinya which they can't express their ideas, feelings, social and cultural norms in primary (1-8) educations. There are a number of kebeles which are located in the border between Tigray and Amhara regions. The people of these Kebeles are not able to speak Tigrinya. But they send their children to school to learn in a language which they cannot express their thoughts in the way that they can express their ideas in Amharic. Even children whose mother tongue is Tigrinya are facing many difficulties due to the fact that there is a great difference between the Tigrinya spoken in Alamata and the standard Tigrinya. They are not allowed to use their dialect in schools. If they use it, they are considered as they do wrong (Translated by the current researcher).

From the quotation above, one can easily understand that there is lack of communication among ST speakers and the residents of Alamata who speak the RD as well as those who live in an entirely Amharic speaking kebeles.

According to the data obtained from the public and government relationship officials of the Raya-Alamata woreda, there are six (6) kebeles among the total of sixteen (16) where residents are entirely Amharic speakers. The statistical data from the woreda education office also indicates that the number of primary schools and primary school students in these sole Amharic MT kebeles is 19 and 8706 (4917 male and 3789 female) respectively. From this we can understand that there are 8706 primary school students most or all of whom have Amharic mother tongue, but the medium of instruction in which they learn is Tigrinya.

Classroom observation in “Selen-Weha” and Wajja (two of the 19 primary schools of the Amharic speaking community), showed that the students were not able to use Tigrinya at all during the actual Tigrinya classroom lessons. Of course, the researcher observed that these students have had some listening competence in Tigrinya, but they are not able to speak Tigrinya during Tigrinya sessions. The researcher observed that the Tigrinya teachers in these classrooms were teaching using Tigrinya for the sake of addressing in the regional policy, but used Amharic to further teacher-students interactions in the actual classroom teaching learning process. It was only one exceptional student, who came from Adwa (central Tigray), who was observed using Tigrinya during classroom interaction.

To support this data obtained through observation, the researcher has administered the written test for the sample subject students in both primary schools. However, only 6 students wrote their own paragraphs which were literally Amharic than Tigrinya, while the rest (18 students) returned the question paper without any attempt. A photocopied sample paragraph of one student written in Amharic is attached, here, below.



I could not be considered as Tigrinya teacher here. I always translate the Tigrinya vocabularies, proverbs and even contents conveyed by certain passages and proverbs found in grade seven Tigrinya text book into Amharic. My role in the actual classroom teaching-learning process, therefore, is not teaching Tigrinya; rather my role is translating Tigrinya into Amharic. Here, I always face a great difficulty to find and use equivalent terms and expressions of Amharic. So it is possible to say teaching Tigrinya here in Wajja where the students' mother tongue is Amharic, is simply waste of time and resources.

But as far as the researcher's understanding of how to treat learners whose mother tongue is not the language of instruction is concerned, language teachers should not complain on students' difficulty when they use the target language. Any teacher has to be aware of that it could be common for students to use ones' own mother tongue to reflect what they understand about a certain issue and to ask about an issue which they might not be familiar with, using their home language. Furthermore, teachers have to try their best to make their students clear with any linguistic elements of the target language by translating from the language of instruction into the language of the children.

In relation to this reflection, what the researcher raised was a question about how other teachers in other subjects which are taught in Tigrinya carry out their instruction. The interviewee replied for this question by stating that almost all other subject teachers with the exception of English teach in Amharic. He added that only Tigrinya teachers attempt to teach in Tigrinya. Furthermore, the researcher asked the interviewee to reflect on how non-instructional communication between the teachers and their students takes place. The informant then explained the issue as follows.

Most of our students do not have such great difficulty in listening Tigrinya. But they are not able to express their idea, opinions and the like using Tigrinya both in a spoken and written version. Instead of Tigrinya, they use Amharic to ask and answer questions and to reflect their general understanding of a certain issue. So as a result of this, we are forced to use Amharic more than Tigrinya in order to communicate with our students during Tigrinya classroom sessions. Generally, Tigrinya is not properly implemented as first language instruction in our school where the total school population speaks Amharic as a first language.

Regarding the way how the students, are assessed Tigrinya lessons, both of the interviewee teachers explained that students are given specific areas mostly words

(vocabularies) with their synonymous and opposite meanings to study and to memorize for their examinations. Then objective type questions (multiple choices, true- false and matching types of questions) are given in the examinations. Speaking and writing skills of the students are not assessed as the students find it difficult to express their ideas through written and spoken Tigrinya.

The interviewees also said that there is a special criterion of assessment that applies through the 19 primary schools of the entirely Amharic speakers of the Raya Alamata woreda. In spite of the fact that most of the students do not have the required competence of Tigrinya and knowledge of subject matter which are prepared in Tigrinya textbooks, students earn satisfactory marks due to the working criterion of measurement and evaluation.

However, as the researcher understands of the pedagogical point view, students should be taught all language skills in an integrated way. Language teachers have to teach their students all the language skills of the new language, and they have to motivate their students in order to make them master these language skills. Learners must be assisted to develop a positive attitude towards learning the new language and they have to be made aware of the fact that they can be successful in their academic at school if they have a good command of language of instruction. Moreover, teachers have to tell their learners that being bidialectal or bilingual is really important for them in order to be able to communicate with people from outside of their speech community. Therefore, any language teacher has to teach and assess his/her students all the language skills.

#### **4.4. Language Attitudes to the Medium of Instruction**

Language use is fundamentally such a personal affair that real change is only possible with the consent of language users (Fasold, 1984: 225). The effectiveness of language used for instruction highly depends on people's attitude towards the language used rather than the demographic fact of language distribution (Tsehaye, 1977:3). This is to say that a language of instruction which has good acceptance by the society speeds up the implementation of the educational programs and thus helps to achieve the intended educational objectives easily. Therefore, an assessment of the attitude of students towards

the language of instruction is an essential component to be considered before any decision is made in any educational language policy making.

According to Fasold (1984:147-149), if attitudinal assessment is not conducted to make decision on the language of instruction, failure of the decision may reveal itself at a later stage, by the rejection from individuals, or from people or in the poor achievement of students who learned under the pressure from political forces. Generally, the most important factor, according to Nyawaranda (2000:26), which determines how quickly a child learns, is not the language he/she uses, but his/her attitude towards the language used.

#### **4.4.1. The Attitudes of students of Alamatan primary schools towards the languages**

The main objective of using MT as medium of instruction is to make the teaching-learning process more effective; pupils' attitudes towards the language of instruction plays a facilitating role for the success of educational attainment. Perhaps one of the most crucial things to be considered when making decision about which language to use in schools is the pupils' attitudes (Philips, 1989:65). Unless students have positive attitude towards the medium of instruction, the interests and activities of students may hinder the success in learning achievement (Mnkandla, 2000:80). Therefore, the teaching-learning process can take place effectively and the learners can successfully attain objectives when they have positive attitude towards the language of instruction, and teaching- learning activities can be more effective and learners understand when they have positive attitudes towards the medium of instruction.

This study, therefore, tried to assess the attitude of the students of the Alamatan primary schools towards the four varieties RD, ST, Amharic and English to which they are exposed in life and schooling. The students were first asked to indicate which of the above languages they prefer to use as medium of instruction for primary education. Their responses are summarized in the table below followed by discussions.

Language preferred	Respondents	
	In Number	In Percent (%)
ST	10	6.25
RD	64	40.00
Amharic	78	48.75
Other (English)	8	5.00
Total	160	100

**Table 19: Students' preference of medium of instruction in primary school**

The above data show that only 10 (6.25%) of the total 160 students preferred the ST while 64(40%) preferred the RD to be the medium of instruction. 78(48.75%) of the students reported that they preferred Amharic as medium of instruction while only 8(5%) replied that they preferred English to be the medium of instruction. From this data, therefore, one can easily understand that Amharic and RD are preferred more than the ST and English to be the medium of instruction in primary education.

Furthermore, the students were asked to reason out why they preferred a certain language as their medium of instruction in primary school. Then 10 (6.25%) of the students reflected that they preferred the ST because it is their dialect; 64(40%) of the students accounted for their preference of the RD to be the medium of instruction in that it is through that dialect they can express their ideas, social and cultural thoughts than the Tigrinya being used as language of instruction at present. 60 of the 78 students who preferred Amharic, reacted that they preferred Amharic because it is their mother tongue, and the remaining 18 students of the total 78 students preferred Amharic because it is through Amharic that they can easily understand their lessons. The remaining 8(5%) of the sample students preferred English to be the medium of instruction because they can be fluent in English if they learn the other subjects in English.

In general, the data show that the majority of the students preferred Amharic and the RD to be their medium of instruction respectively. From this figure, one can comprehend that it is through Amharic and the RD that most of the students of the Alamatan primary schools want to learn their primary education. This shows us that they could be able to

write or speak their thoughts in Amharic and in the RD better than in the ST and in English.

Students' attitudes towards the medium of instruction are very crucial factors for the successful achievements of instructional objectives in schools. If students do not have a positive attitude towards the language of instruction, it is true that the failure of instructional objectives in schools will take place. It is this fact that anyone can realize about the attitudes of the students of the Alamatan primary schools towards the medium of instruction (ST).

The above data reported that 150 (93.75%) of the subjects have a negative attitude towards the language of instruction. And this might imply that the medium of instruction (ST) is not well implemented in the primary schools of the Alamata woreda. In other words, this might mean that the instructional objectives of the primary education in that particular woreda are not achieved. Therefore, teachers, school principals, parents and other concerned bodies need to discuss this issue and work together to make the students develop a positive attitude towards the language of instruction in order to attain the instructional objectives. They have to deal to provide the students with language of instruction in which they know and learn better.

The students were also given some statements of attitude and were required to show whether they 'strongly agree', 'agree', 'partially agree' 'disagree' or 'strongly disagree' to the statement. Their responses for each of the statements are summarized in the table below.

**Statement 1: "I am happy that I learn in ST."**

Response	Respondents	
	Number	Percent (%)
Strongly agree	10	6.25
Agree	15	9.375
Partially agree	23	14.375
Disagree	27	16.875
Strongly Disagree	85	53.125
Total	160	100

**Table 20: Respondents' attitude towards learning in ST**

As we can see from the above table, the majority of the respondents, i.e. 85 (53.125%) reported that they strongly disagree with the given statement, implying that they are unpleasant in the choice of the medium of education in their primary schools. 27 (16.875%) also reflected that they disagree with the given statement, and 23 (14.375%) reacted that they partially agree; whereas, 10 (6.25%) and 15(9.375%) of the total sample respondents stated that they strongly agree and agree with the given statement respectively.

In other words, we can figure out from the above data that only 30% of the students have a positive attitude towards learning in the ST. However, 70% of the students of the Alamatan primary schools have a negative attitude towards the use of the ST as language of instruction in their primary education.

**Statement 2: “I will be happy if I learn in RD than in ST.”**

Response	Respondents	
	Number	Percent (%)
Strongly agree	51	31.875
Agree	38	23.75
Partially agree	32	23.75
Disagree	14	8.75
Strongly Disagree	25	15.625
Total	160	100

**Table 21: Respondents’ attitude towards the RD as medium of instruction**

The data in the table above show that 51 (31.875%), 38 (23.75%), and 32 (20%) of the sample subjects put their state of agreement by saying strongly agree, agree and partially agree with the given statement respectively. However, 25 (15.625%) of the respondents replied that they strongly disagree with the given statement, and the rest 14 (8.75%) of the respondents reacted that they disagree with the statement. This also reveals that only 39 (24.375%) students have disagreed with the use of the RD as their language of instruction in their primary education. On the other hand, most of the students, i.e. 121(75.625%) reported that they have agreed with the choice of the RD as medium of instruction in their primary education. From this one can realize that most of the students

of the Alamatan primary schools have a positive attitude towards the use of the RD as the language of schooling than the ST.

When we compare the data given in table 20 with that of table 21, the majority of the students in table 20 stated that they have a negative attitude towards the choice of the ST as the language of instruction in their primary schools. The data in table 21 show that 75.625% of the respondents are pleasant with the preference of the RD as the medium of instruction in their primary education. Therefore, from the data given in both tables, we can comprehend that many of the students would like to prefer the RD to the ST to be their language of instruction in schools. The possible reason why most of the students prefer the RD to the ST as the language of education and its pedagogical implication will be briefly addressed at the end of this section.

**Statement 3: “I will be happy if I learn in Amharic than in ST.”**

Reflection	Respondents	
	In Number	In Percent (%)
Strongly agree	65	40.625
Agree	43	26.875
Partially agree	33	20.625
Disagree	14	8.75
Strongly Disagree	5	3.125
Total	160	100

**Table 22: Respondents’ attitude towards Amharic as the medium of instruction**

The data in the above table show that 65 (40.625%), 43 (26.875%) and 33 (20.625%) of the total respondents reflected that they strongly agree, agree and partially agree with the given statement. However, the rest 14 (8.75%) and 5(3.125%) of the total sample subjects stated that they disagree and strongly disagree with the given statement. This means only 11.875% students have a negative attitude towards the use of Amharic as the medium of instruction in their schools. However, more than 88% of the subjects have a positive attitude towards Amharic as the language of instruction in their schools.

**Statement 4: “I will be happy if I learn in English than in ST.”**

Reflection	Respondents	
	In Number	In Percent (%)
Strongly agree	18	11.25
Agree	25	15.625
Partially agree	30	18.75
Disagree	44	27.5
Strongly Disagree	43	26.875
Total	160	100

**Table 23: Respondents’ attitude towards English as the medium of instruction**

The data in the above table prove that the majority of the respondents, i.e. 44 (27.5%), and 43(26.875%) affirmed that they disagree and strongly disagree with the given statement respectively. However, 30 (18.75%) of the respondents reflected their state of agreement by putting partially agree; 18 (11.25%) and 25 (15.625) of the respondents reacted that they strongly agree and agree with the given statement respectively. In other words, we can realize that more than half (54.375%) of the subject students attested that they have a negative outlook towards the use of English as the medium of instruction in their primary education. This implies that most of the respondents would prefer the ST to English as their language of instruction.

To sum up, the data given in tables 20, 21 and 22 reveal that most of the students have a negative attitude towards the Tigrinya variety that has been used as language of instruction in their primary education. As table 21 shows, more than half of the subject students stated that they want to learn in the Tigrinya variety spoken in Rayya than in the ST. And the data in table 22 demonstrate that more than 88% of the respondents are interested in using Amharic as the language of schooling. From this, we can comprehend that the use of the ST as MOI in the primary schools of Alamata woreda is not implemented in consistence to the will of the stakeholders.

Therefore, it is very easy to realize that if learners do not have a positive attitude towards the language of instruction, the instruction in the actual classroom teaching-learning

processes will not be effective. If the classroom instruction is not effective, it is true that the educational objectives cannot be successfully achieved. So in order to pursue effective education and motivate the students to build a positive attitude towards the use of ST as the language of primary education in Rayya, specifically in Alamata and its surroundings, teachers, school teams, parents, education officials at woreda, zonal and regional levels, NGOs and other concerned bodies have to discuss on this issue and try their best to reduce the students' problems of attitudes and to promote the successful implantation of the policy of the ST as language of instruction

#### **4.4.2. Teachers' Reflection on Students' Attitude towards ST, RD, Amharic and English**

Teachers were asked to reflect on what attitudes their students have towards ST, RD Amharic and English. Then the reflection of each interviewee is summarized as follows.

The interviewed Tigrinya teacher in Bruh-Tesfa primary school replied that her students have a positive attitude towards Amharic than towards ST, RD and English. According to the interviewee, the students have the understanding that Amharic is preferable and that it is the superior language. Of course, they also have a positive attitude towards the RD, but most of the time they are observed speaking Amharic in the classroom and in the school compound in general. But they have a negative attitude towards the ST.

In addition to the above interviewees, the grade seven Tigrinya teacher in Mibraq primary school reflected that it is not questionable that the students have a positive attitude towards Amharic, and that they are interested to learn in Amharic than in Tigrinya in school. He also asserted that this might be due to the reason that first Amharic is widely spoken in their community, and secondly that students got a new language of instruction (ST), which greatly varies even from the Tigrinya dialect they speak.

In relation to this, the interviewed grade seven Tigrinya teacher in Wajja primary school forwarded his reflection about the attitude of the grade seven students of Wajja primary school in the same way. He explained that there is no any hesitation that the students in the primary schools of Alamata have a positive attitude towards Amharic. Furthermore, the interviewee elaborated that the students are always observed using Amharic to ask

and answer questions in classroom interactions; they are not eager to try to acquire and use the Standard variety of Tigrinya which is used as medium of instruction.

The interviewed grade seven Tigrinya teachers in Selen-Weha primary school also explained that he tries to push his students to do their best to be able to use the Standard variety of Tigrinya to express their views, ideas and feelings with their peers and teachers both in school and outside. However, the language they mostly use to communicate with their parents at home and with the society in the whole community is Amharic. From this it is possible to conclude that the students have a positive attitude towards Amharic.

The grade seven Tigrinya teachers of the Edget-Fana and Tumuga primary schools stated that their students had a positive attitude only towards Amharic in the previous years, and that they are on the way to develop a positive attitude towards Tigrinya at present. They also explained that their students are using Tigrinya, especially the RD in the actual classroom interaction to some extent. However, they attested that there are still a number of students who are under the influence of Amharic. Due to the fact that they are able to express their ideas well in Amharic, they prefer to speak, to write, and to use it in the actual classroom teaching learning process.

So from all the interviewees who reflected on the attitudes of the students of the Alamatan primary schools towards the ST, RD, Amharic and English as the language of instruction in their schools, we can realize that most of the students have a positive attitude towards learning in Amharic than in the other languages. In other words, the data reveal that the students would like to use Amharic as the language of instruction in their primary education. And this shows us that this data ensured the finding investigated from the students' questionnaire in section 4.4.1.

There might be different reasons why the students have developed a positive attitude towards using Amharic than the ST as the language of instruction in their primary education. First, according to the interview, most of the students of Alamatan primary schools have the belief that Amharic is the most superior and hence preferred language. And as result of this they have built a positive attitude towards Amharic, and they want it to be their language of instruction in their schools. Second, according to the office of the

public and government relationship of Rayya-Alamata there are a number of people who speak entirely in Amharic as the MT, and according to the education bureau of Rayya-Alamata woreda there are more than 8706 primary school students whose mother tongue is Amharic, but they are persuaded to learn their primary education in the ST. This might also reveal that these students could have a positive attitude towards Amharic due to the fact that most likely children prefer to learn their primary education in the language they know very well. The third possible reason could be due to the fact that there is a large linguistic influence of Amharic on Tigrinya as a result of high language contact between Tigrinya and Amharic. Since the woreda is located at the southern tip of the regional state of the present Tigray (see the map pp.5), most of its people share similar religious, social, economic, cultural and linguistic aspects with Amhara people of northern Wollo (Moges, 1993). Due to this fact, most of these people use Amharic as the medium of communication in market transactions, in mosques and churches as well as in other social and cultural aspects of the societies. And as a result of this, the variety of Tigrinya spoken in Alamata, as we have repeatedly seen it in many of the data in the previous sections, is highly influenced by Amharic.

So all the above factors could be the possible reasons which might have forced the students to portray a positive attitude towards the use of Amharic as medium of primary education in their schools

As we have frequently seen in many sections of this paper, such problems have a negative effect on the implementation of the ST as language of instruction in particular and on the students' academic achievement as well as on the success and attainment of the educational objectives of the Alamata woreda in general.

#### **4.5. Teachers' Reaction about Rayyan Dialect and Amharic Interference into the Language of Instruction**

This section deals with the analysis of the grade seven Tigrinya teachers' reactions on what problems they face due to the interference of Rayyan dialect (RD) and Amharic into the ST. It also attempts to scrutinize the measures that have been taken so far to solve or minimize the problems in the future.

#### **4.5.1. Teachers' Reflection on what Problems they encountered with RD and Amharic Interference in the Language of Instruction**

The researcher first asked the interviewed grade seven Tigrinya teachers to reflect on what problems they faced in the actual classroom teaching – learning process due to interference with RD and Amharic in ST. The teachers from the Bruh-Tesfa, Mbraq and Edget-Fana reported that they face communication barriers. These Tigrinya teachers and the teacher of Tumuga primary school (one of the three primary schools of the Rural (Rayya-Alamata) area) explained that sometimes communication gap takes place because of phonological, grammatical and lexical interferences of both the Rayyan dialect and Amharic into the ST during Tigrinya sessions. They stated that most of the students carry out interference of phonology, grammar and lexical items which sometimes involve differences in meanings which distort the idea that the students intended to mean in the ST. Sometimes the interference creates words which do not have any meaning or words that can confuse the teachers during both oral interactions and written assessments during classroom sessions. The interviewed teachers also elaborated that most of the students are highly influenced by the interference of Amharic both in what they speak and write during Tigrinya lessons.

The grade seven Tigrinya teachers of the rural primary schools of Selen Weha and Wajja, on the other hand replied that they severely face a great difficulty to teach Tigrinya since they teach Tigrinya as a first language for students whose mother tongue is Amharic and who come from the community where only Amharic is spoken. These teachers also reported that the students they teach have some listening competence in Tigrinya, but they are rather poor in speaking and writing in Tigrinya; they are not able to express their ideas through the spoken and the written form of Tigrinya. They accounted for the great challenge they encounter in the actual classroom teaching learning process as resulting from their students' entirely Amharic mother tongue background. The Tigrinya teacher of Wajja primary school also said that:

Most of the students I teach Tigrinya in the classroom do not speak or write in Tigrinya; I teach and ask questions in Tigrinya, but my students try to ask and answer questions in Amharic if they understand me. But mostly, I have to

translate the Tigrinya terms into Amharic in order to make my students understand the content as well as the language they fail to comprehend what I say. Here, I also face severe difficulty to find equivalent Amharic terms.

From the above reactions, we can realize that teachers who teach in the Alamatan primary schools, particularly in primary schools such as Selen-Weha and Wajja where the students are wholly Amharic mother tongue speakers have faced difficulties to implement the ST as language of schooling. Tigrinya teachers reported that even they have faced problem of finding equivalent Amharic terms to make their students clear with what they teach in the actual classroom teaching- learning process. In addition to this, those who teach in the primary schools where the RD is spoken, have also faced the same difficulty due to the fact that there is a large gap between the language of instruction (ST) and the Tigrinya variety spoken in the woreda; this is mainly due to the fact that the students make interference of the RD which reveals a large innovation of its own linguistic elements on the one hand, and subject to the high influence of Amharic on the other hand.

#### **4.5.2. Measures Taken to Solve the Problems Due to Language Interference into the Standard Tigrinya Classrooms**

In the previous section, we saw the interviewees' reflection on what problems they encountered due to the RD and Amharic interferences into the language of instruction, ST. In this section, the study tries to show the responses of the interviewee teachers regarding measures that have been taken by Tigrinya teachers and other concerned bodies to resolve these problems.

##### **4.5.2.1. Teachers' Attempts to Solve the Problems**

The interviewed Tigrinya teachers confirmed that measures have been attempted by individual teachers, departments and schools to some extent. Most of the interviewed Tigrinya teachers stated that they have tried their best to minimize the difficulties that they and their students faced due to the interferences of the RD and Amharic in Standard Tigrinya by giving advices to their students that they have to try to be able to speak and write using the ST. In addition, they described that they used to try to identify the major

variations contributing for the interference between the ST and the RD in advance, and then that they used to provide the students with equivalent phonemes, morphemes and lexemes whenever the students are forced to make interference during classroom teaching learning process. Furthermore, most of the interviewed Tigrinya teachers indicated that they prepare notes, (at department level) about the variations in pronunciation, morphology, lexicography and syntax to make their students conscious of such variations and tried to help them to practice and use the forms of ST both in the classroom interaction at school and outside the school.

They also elaborated that they discuss on what and how they assess their students at schools level, and then have decided to design exam questions in the way that most of the students can answer and earn good results.

Generally, giving advice and identifying the areas where the variations could possibly take place in advance are the measures taken by individual teachers in order to solve the problems of linguistic interferences of both the RD and Amharic into the ST in classroom instructions. Preparing and giving notes about the major linguistic variations between the RD and the ST in order to make the students understand such disparities and making the students practice the linguistic features of the ST both in written and spoken forms so as to master this variety of Tigrinya is the measure taken at department levels. Moreover, deciding what and how to evaluate students in order to make them score good results is the only measure taken at school level.

So from the discussion, one can comprehend that a good attempt has been taken by Tigrinya teachers both individually and at department levels in order to alleviate the consequent problems resulting due to the interferences of the RD and Amharic into the language of instruction. The measure taken by schools, however, is not sufficient. School principals could have taken more series measures. They should have dealt with all the school communities, with parents and with other concerned bodies such as with local and kebele administrators about the issue. Furthermore, the school communities should have to deal with the educational officials of the Rayya- Alamata Woreda and report how really serious the problems the schools have faced to implement the MT policy of primary education is, due to linguistic variations between RD and ST and due to the

influence of Amharic on Tigrinya. However, it has been reported that the school communities failed to do so.

#### **4.5.2.2. Teachers' Recommendation on the problems of the Language Interference**

The interviewees were also asked to suggest measures to be taken in order to solve or minimize the problems due to the RD and Amharic interference into the ST that they and their students faced in the actual classroom teaching learning processes. The Tigrinya teachers of Alamata town from Mibraaq, Bruh-Tesfa, Edget-Fana schools and the Tigrinya teacher of rural Tumuga primary school offered almost the same suggestions on the measures to be taken by teachers, the communities, and other concerned bodies. They recommended that teachers who offer subjects other than Tigrinya as a subject have to teach using Tigrinya in which the curriculum is designed. They objected that most teachers offer their subjects using Amharic, resulting in lesser attention to Tigrinya. This is one of the reasons that made the students passive during Tigrinya classes, and develop negative attitude towards Tigrinya as the MOI. Moreover, they suggested that the societies should develop a positive attitude towards Tigrinya since they live in the region where the official language and the MOI is Tigrinya.

The interviewed sample grade seven Tigrinya teachers of Selen-Weha and Wajja, on the other hand, recommended that it is only the concerned bodies that can solve this great issue. They suggested that the Regional Education Bureau, curriculum designers, policy makers and other concerned bodies have to seriously see this special and consequent educational failure. They should conduct different researches, workshops, and discussions with the community and other concerned governmental and non-governmental bodies and agree to promote the ST all over the region.

From the teachers' reflections, we can again realize that even teachers who offer subjects other than Tigrinya as a subject have a negative attitude towards using ST as medium of instruction. And this is one of the causes of the problems to implement the ST as MOI in Alamata woreda. Since some teachers offer their subjects using Amharic, students might have developed a negative attitude towards using Tigrigna, which is their language of

instruction. Fentahun (1999), regarding this issue, discusses that since teachers are the most influential factors in any education system, the success or failure of any innovation in the educational program ultimately depends on the attitude, values, skills and ability of the classroom teachers.

In connection to this, Beeby (1986:37) explains that teachers are the front line troops of change in education; progress in education depends on their own motivation, attitude and freedom to innovation. Moreover, Richard (1971:3) states that time and money invested in syllabus and curriculum may be wasted if teachers are not convinced of the need for change nor prepared for the different expectation made of them by a new curriculum policy. From what has been stated by the above authors, we can generalize that the attitudes values, skills, and ability of teachers to implement MT as MOI are among the essential factors that determine the MT policy in Education. Teachers have much access to the students. So the attitudes of the teachers towards the students and the language of instruction have great effects on the students' attitudes towards the MOI. According to (1990:83), students may either like or hate the language of instruction depending on the teachers' inclination and agitation to that language.

Generally, successful implementation of any instructional language can depend on the will and preparation of teachers. Teachers' attitudes towards any medium of instruction and their abilities to implement it will affect the quality of education positively or negatively. Therefore, teachers' willingness and preparation to accept and implement an instructional language in the actual classroom should be ensured in advance before the medium of instruction is taken in to effect.

The attitude of parents in particular and the whole community in general will also play a vital role to put any language of instruction into service. According to Fentahun (1999:27), the attitudes of parents and community members as well as the learners' study are twin foundations for any educational program to achieve its objectives. From this we can comprehend that a clear understanding of the attitudes of both parents and the community as a whole towards the language of instruction is an essential factor in any education language policy making. As to Fentahun, the children's likes or dislikes are most likely determined by their parents. In relation to this, Taylor (1973:41) and Solomon

(1995:28) discusses that the attitudes of the learners towards the language used for instruction most likely depend on their parents attitudes towards the language in question.

So from this one can realize that if the attitude of parents towards the MOI is positive, then the attitude of their children towards that language at schools is most likely to be positive. However, if the parents have a negative attitude towards that language, it is more likely that their children will also develop a negative attitude towards the language of instruction in particular and the whole educational system in general. Therefore, the attitude of parents and the community in general also plays a very crucial role to the success or failure of the implementation of any MOI in general and to the achievement of educational objectives in particular.

So as to the understanding of the current researcher in order to implement the ST as MOI and attain educational objectives in Alamatan primary schools, the school principals and education officials of Alamata woreda as well as other concerned governmental and non-governmental bodies should first deal with the issue of instructional language use in the primary education of the woreda and on the attitudes of the teachers and the whole community towards the LOI. Then accordingly, they need to design different trainings and workshops which can help them to aware and convince both the school teachers and the whole society in general to develop a positive attitude towards the MOI and ensure that all these school parties are interested and ready to implement the ST as MOI.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **5. Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations**

#### **5.1. Summary**

In this study the respondents' awareness of the dialectal variations in Tigrinya and the consequent problems have been assessed. The respondents' reactions on the variations between the RD and the ST, the effects of such variations, teachers' knowledge of the RD and the way how they use it during classroom teaching and the skills mostly affected by the linguistic differences between the two varieties have been discussed. Also the linguistic disparities between the RD and the variety used as language of instruction (LOI) in the primary education of the regional state of Tigray are addressed. The dialectal variations between the two varieties of Tigrinya at phonological, grammatical and lexical levels are briefly described, analyzed, and discussed using empirical data.

Phonological variations due to sound changes from fricative to stop, nasal to oral, stop to approximate as well as changes due to metathesis, deletion of phonemes, vowel and other changes as well as sound changes due to the influence of Amharic have been illustrated and explained. Grammatical variations due to morphological and syntactic disparities between the two varieties of Tigrinya are clearly addressed. The students' use of morphemes of the RD which bring about variations in tense, person, gender, number and the like from the ST (LOI) have also been described and discussed. Descriptions and discussions on the use of negation markers and morph-syntactic of the RD by the students which also designate disparities between the Tigrinya variety spoken in Rayya, particularly in Alamata and the ST have been shown in short. In addition, variations resulting from lexical differences between the two varieties in the actual classroom sessions are illustrated and explained using adequate data.

Moreover, how the students make interferences of the RD into the LOI at all the aforementioned linguistic levels and how such interferences affect the classroom interactions and the students' academic have been discussed. In addition, explanations on the total use of Amharic by students whose MT is entirely Amharic in Tigrinya classroom sessions have been dealt with.

Furthermore, discussions and explanations on how the interferences of both the RD and Amharic into the ST (MOI) at all the stated linguistic levels by the subject students were made. The study has shown how these affect the implementation of the ST as MOI, the academic success of the students and the overall achievement of the instructional objectives in the Alamatan primary schools in each of the linguistic levels. Besides the attitudes of the subject students towards the use of ST, RD, Amharic and English as LOI in their schools have also been assessed. The responses of the students to attitude questions refereeing to each of the aforementioned languages are summarized in tables and then discussed briefly. Furthermore, discussions on teachers' reflections about students' attitudes towards the above mentioned languages and their reflections on the pedagogical implications of the attitudes have been examined.

Finally, brief presentations and discussions on the teachers' reactions about the RD and Amharic interferences in the LOI have been dealt with. And their reflections on the problems they have encountered with such interferences in their classroom instructions, the measures they have taken to solve the problems at the levels of individual teachers, departments and school principals were scrutinized. The investigation was concluded by addressing teachers' recommendations on the problems of language interferences.

## **5. 2. Conclusions**

Based on the investigations obtained above, the following findings have been arrived at in this study.

Language is a critical means of access to all knowledge and skills, and it is a tool for all aspects of human civilization. Language and education are not separable. The role of a good command of instructional language in an instructional process is, therefore, very crucial due to the fact that it represents learners' theory of reality; it explains, interprets, constructs and reflects the linguistic and social identity of children in an early school setting. It also helps the learners to develop and reflect their self esteem, intellectual, social and psychological being. The finding in this study, however, pointed out that most of the students are deprived of use of the appropriate linguistic tool for this. Many are not provided with the opportunity to reflect their real life and aspirations in the classroom interactions. This was not made possible due to the reason that there is a mismatch

between the home language of the students in which they can express themselves and the language as well as the content they find in the actual classroom.

It has been also confirmed that the dialectal variations between the RD and the ST as well as the close contact between Tigrinya and Amharic have resulted in a negative impact in the academic performances of the students. The data regarding this issue have disclosed that the students whose MT is Amharic but learn in the ST are usually noticed facing a severe problem of speaking, writing and generally communicating in the medium of instruction. As a result of this, they are not able to compete with the students who speak the Non-Rayyan Dialect (NRD). Even the students who speak the RD are highly influenced by the interferences of their dialect and Amharic at different linguistic levels when they speak and write in the ST.

Data in this study also revealed that most of the students of the Alamata Woreda in general and those whose MT is Amharic in particular score lower grades (marks) in regional examinations given at grade eight compared to students whose language variety is Non-Rayyan Dialect.

The study has found out that the students of Alamatan primary schools have negative attitudes towards the variety of Tigrinya used as the MOI. It also realized that there was lack of effective classroom interaction and communication among students and teachers through the MOI, which are the most important factors which determine the scale of academic success in schools. This study has revealed the high scale of communication gap in classroom interactions which resulted due to the linguistic interferences of the RD and Amharic into the language of instruction (ST).

Investigation has also ensured that Tigrinya teachers both individually and in groups at department level were able to attempt to solve and minimize the problems that they and their students have been encountered due to the RD and Amharic interference in the ST. However, it was also discovered that the attempts made to solve the problem by school principals are not sufficient.

The children of Alamatan primary schools are seen facing problems in using the language of education in classroom interactions. The fact that they get new language of instruction

which is different from the language they use with their parents at home has been reported as one of the major causal factors of their language problems and their lack of success at school.

The current Ethiopian education policy states that the preparation of textbooks (school-curriculum) based on local situations helps the learners to bring their environmental, economic, social and cultural norms into their classroom lessons and then relate what they learn in the classroom with their real life activities, and therefore, learning will become meaning full for them. However, from the finding of this study, it can be concluded that the curriculum is not designed in line with the interest and language abilities of the students of Alamatan primary schools in general and the Amharic MT speakers in particular. As a result of this they face language/dialect in school which differs from the dialect/language they speak with their family, peers, and the whole community in general outside the school.

### **5.3. Recommendations**

In this study, it has been found that there are some linguistic innovations which can be clearly noticed in the RD. However, the possible reasons which have caused this dialect to innovate its linguistic aspects have not been discovered, yet. So, further study has to be conducted to investigate the possible historical causes.

Education officials at the regional, zonal and woreda levels and other concerned bodies should design different workshops and trainings for teachers as well as parental communities to discuss and make them aware of how the problems of linguistic differences between the RD and the ST as well as the influence of Amharic on Tigrinya are serious to implement the ST as language of instruction and to achieve successful educational objectives in Alamata Woreda.

Data in this study revealed that only Tigrinya teachers have been trying their best to solve the classroom language variation problems both individually and at the level of departments. Closing the gap between the home dialect (RD) and the school language (ST) reflected by these children, however, should not be the responsibility of the language teacher alone. That responsibility lies with every teacher and the whole school

community. The researcher, therefore, strongly recommends that every teacher has to do his/her best to solve or to minimize the problems.

Some language teachers have been observed denying the home language of the students. However, these students should not be underestimated whenever they use their own MT because it is that variety which signifies the socio-economic, cultural norms as well as the linguistic background of the children's social group; both the teachers and the students should understand and appreciate the nature of language variation and language change. So the students have to be appreciated when they make unconscious interference of their own home dialect into the ST in schools. They have to be persuaded that being able to know as many dialects or languages as they can know will benefit them to construct good social, political and economic affairs with people out of their social group.

Education officials and other concerned bodies should deal on the issue of classroom language problems in Alamatan primary schools, and they have to design a new school-curriculum based on the interest, language ability and local situations of the students because learning will become meaningful if these learners are provided with the opportunity to bring their environmental, economic, social and cultural norms into their classroom lessons and then relate what they learn in the classroom with their real life activities.

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## Appendix-I. Population Size and Informants' Background

### A. Population Size (Total and Sample)

No	List of Population	Urban	Rural	Total
1	Total Number of Alamatan Primary Schools	8	53	61
2	Number of Sample Primary Schools	3	3	6
3	Total Number of Grade 7 Sections in the Sample Primary Schools	11	9	20
4	Number of Grade 7 Sample Sections	5	3	8
5	Total Number of Grade 7 Students in the Sample Primary Schools	495	405	900
6	Number of Grade 7 Sample Students	105	63	168
7	Total Number of G 7 Tigrinya Teachers in the sample Primary Schools	5	3	8
8	Number of Sample Grade 7 Tigrinya Teachers	5	3	8

### B. Background of Interviewees

Name of school	Number of Interviewees	Sex		Qualification
		Male	Female	
Bruh-Tesfa	2	1	1	<b>Diploma</b>
Edget-Fana	2	1	1	
Mibraq	1	1	---	
Selen-Weha	1	1	---	
Tumuga	1	---	1	
Wajja	1	1	---	

## APPENDEX-II Observational Check Lists

Addis Ababa University

School of Graduate Studies

Department of Linguistics

Observational Check List prepared to observe the Interference of Rayyan Dialect and Amharic into ST in Tigrinya Language Classroom.

### 1. Interference of Rayyan Dialect into ST

No	Question/ Linguistic material	Response			Remark
		Yes	No	Example	
1.1	Is there phonological interference of Rayyan dialect?				
	1.1.1.Vowel Interference				
	1.1.2.Consonant Interference				
1.2	Is there morph-phonological interference of Rayyan dialect?				
1.3	Is there morphological Interference of Rayyan dialect?				
	1.3.1.Free morpheme				
	1.3.2.Bound morpheme				
	1.3.3.Inflectional more				
	1.3.4.Derivational morpheme				
1.4	Is there lexical interference of Rayyan Dialect?				
1.5	Is there morph syntactic interference of Rayyan Dialect				

## Is there Interference Amharic into ST?

No	Question/ Linguistic material	Response			Remark
		Yes	No	Example	
1	Is there Interference of Amharic?				
	1.1.Amharic phonology				
	1.2.Amharic morphology				
	1.3.Amharic lexicon				
	1.4.Amharic syntax				

**APPENDEX-III. Questionnaire**

**Addis Ababa University**

**School of Graduate Studies**

**Department of Linguistics**

**Questionnaire to be filled by Grade Seven Students of Alamatan Primary Schools**

**Dear Students;**

**This Questionnaire is prepared only for academic purpose. The purpose of this questionnaire is to collect relevant information, ideas, and opinions about the impacts of Rayyan dialectal variations on the Medium of Instruction. Hence, your honest and genuine response for each of the following questions will have a great value for the findings and success of the study, in general. You are then kindly requested to give your genuine responses for each of the following questions.**

**I. Personal Information**

1. Name of your school: \_\_\_\_\_
2. Your grade level: \_\_\_\_\_
3. Your sex: Male  Female
4. Your dialect: Rayyan  other  Please specify it \_\_\_\_\_

**II. Please, read each of the following questions carefully, and indicate “√” mark in side of the boxes based on your own level of agreement, and write your opinion for the open – ended questions on the provided blank spaces.**

1. Is there any variation between the Tigrinya you speak at home and the Tigrinya which you learn in the class? Yes  No
2. If your answer for question number one is yes, does it affect your understanding of the Tigrinya language you learn in the classroom?

Yes  No

3. Which of your language skills is mostly affected by the dialectal variations of Rayyan Tigrinya and the Tigrinya which you learn in the classroom (ST)?

Reading  Speaking  Vocabulary  writing   
Listening  Other  Please specify it \_\_\_\_\_

4. Please write down some variations between the Tigrinya spoken in Rayyan (Rayyan Dialect) and the Tigrinya which you learn in the actual classroom teaching learning process (ST).

4.1. Please list some examples of sound variation between RD and ST in the blank space below: \_\_\_\_\_

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4.2. Please list some examples of morphological variation between RD and ST in the blank space below:

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4.3. Please list some examples of lexical variation between RD and ST in the blank space below:

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4.4. Please list some examples of syntactic variation between RD and ST in the blank space below:

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4.5. Please list some examples if there are other variations between RD and ST in the blank space below:

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5. Have you ever been taught by Tigrinya teacher who speaks the Rayyan dialect?

Yes  No

6. If your answer for question number two is yes, does he/ she use the Rayyan dialect while teaching Tigrinya? Yes  No

7. Do you use Amharic to ask and/or answer questions during Tigrinya classroom?

Yes  No

8. If your answer for question number ten is yes, how often do you use it?

Always  Sometimes  Rarely  Never

9. If you use Amharic during Tigrinya classroom lessons, what is/are your reasons?

Because Amharic is my mother tongue

Because it is through Amharic that I can speak/write and understand the lesson

Because I like Amharic

Other  Please specify it \_\_\_\_\_

10. If you are given the chance which language do you prefer to be the medium of instruction in your primary education?

The Tigrinya being used currently (ST)

The Rayyan dialect

Amharic

English

Other  please specify it \_\_\_\_\_

11. Please state your reason for your answer in question number eight:

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**III. Please read each of the statements given in the table below and put a tick (✓) mark under your choice of agreement from the stated choices of agreement in the table.**

**NB. SA = Strongly Agree D = Disagree**

**A = Agree**

**SD = Strongly Disagree**

**PA = Partially Agree**

No	Statement	Response				
		SA	A	PA	D	SD
1	I am happy that I learn in the ST.					
2	I will be happy if I learn in the RD than in the ST.					
3	I will be happy if I learn in Amharic than in the ST.					
4	I will be happy if I learn in English than in the ST.					



## **APPENDEX-IV. Interview Guidelines**

**Addis Ababa University**

**School of Graduate Studies**

**Department of Linguistics**

### **Interview Guidelines for Grade Seven Tigrinya Teachers of Alamatan Primary Schools**

#### **I. Personal Information**

1. Would you tell me your name, please?
2. How old are you?
3. For how long have you taught Tigrinya?
4. For how long have you taught Tigrinya in Alamata?
5. Do you think that there is dialectal variation between Tigrinya spoken in Rayya particularly in Alamata and its surroundings and the Tigrinya that you teach in the classroom? If so how do you rate the degree of the dialectal variations of the Rayyan Tigrinya (dialect) and the Tigrinya that you teach in the classroom?
6. Do your students use or mix the Rayyan Dialect (RD) and or Amharic in their speech and or in their writing into the Standard Tigrinya (ST) in Tigrinya classroom lessons? If so how do you understand everything, what your students write, speak, and read for you if they use or make interference of their dialect? And what remedies do you take to correct such problems?
7. How do you assess your students if they use/ mix their dialect and or Amharic into what they speak and write in Tigrinya exams?
8. What do you think of the attitudes of your students towards learning in ST, RD, Amharic and English?
9. Have you ever faced any problems while teaching Tigrinya as a result of the dialectal variations between the Rayyan Tigrinya (RD) and the Tigrinya which you use as a medium of instruction, or you teach in the classroom? If so, what problems have you ever faced?
10. What measures have you ever taken to solve or to minimize such problems? And what measures do you think have to be taken by other concerned bodies to solve the problem?

APPENDEX-V. Questionnaires in Tigrinya

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ክፍሊ ትምህርቲ ስነ -ልቦና

ብተምሃሮ ሸብዓይ ክፍሊ ቀደማይ ብርኪ ቤት ትምህርት ታት ኣላ ማጣ ዝምላእ ፅሕፋዊ መሕተት

ዝኸበር ኩም ተምሃሮ ፤

ናይዚ ፅሕፋዊ መሕተት ምድላውዋና ዓለምኡ ብዛዕባ ፅልዋ ኣፈላላይ ከባብያዊ ኣዘራርባ (ላህጃ) ራያን መስላፍ ቋንቋ ትግርኛ ዝተዳለወሉ ላህጃን ኣብ ምምሃር ምስ ትምህር ክፍለ ግዜ ቋንቋ ትግርኛ ተዛመድቲ ሓበሬታታት፣ ሓሳባትን ሪኪቶታትን ንምትእኽኻብ እዩ፡፡ ስለዚ ናትኩም ሓበሬታታት፣ ሓሳባትን ሪኪቶታትን ነዚ ፅንዓት እዚ ዓብዩ ዋጋ ስለዘለዎ ትኹረት ሂብኩም ክትምልስዎ ብትሕትና ኣተሓሳስብ፡፡

I.ውልቀ - ሓበሬታ

- 1. ስም ቤት ትምህርት ኻ/ኪ-----
- 2. ደረጃ ትምህርት ኻ/ኪ-----
- 3. ያታኻ/ኪ ተባዕታይ  ኣነ ስታይ
- 4. ናትኻ/ኪ ከባብያዊ ቋንቋ ወይ ላህጃ እንታይ እዩ?  
 ሀ. ናይ ራያ  ለ. ኣምሓርኛ  ሐ. ካሊእ   
 ካሊእ እንተመሪፅ ኻ/ኪ ፅሓፍ/ፊ-----

II. ነዞም ዝስዕቡ ሕቶታት ብምንባብ ሓሲር መልሲ ንዘድሊዮም <✓> ኣብቲ ዝመረሰካዮ/ክዮ ሰደቓ ምልክት ብምግባር ከምኡ እውን መብርሂ ንዘድልዮም ድማን ሱር ዝኮነ ሓሳብ ካ/ኪ ሰሓፍ/ፊ.፡፡

1. ከባብያዊ ቋንቋ (ላህጃ) ራያ ዝዘረብ መምህር ኣምሂር ካ/ኪ ይፈልጥዮ?  
 ሀ. እወ  ለ. ኣይፈልጥን

2. ንሕቶ ቁፅሪ ሓደ መልስ ኻ/ኪ እወ እንተኾይኑ ናይ ከባብያዊ ቋንቋ (ላህጃ) ራያ ተጠቂሙ ይምህረኩም?  
 ሀ. እወ  ለ. ኣይፈልጥን

3. አብ ሞንጎ ከባቢያ ዊ ቋንቋ (ላህጃ) ራያን አብ ክፍሊ ትመሃርዎ ትግርኛን ሰፊሕ አፈላላይ አለዎ ዶ?

ሀ. እወ  ለ. የብሉን

4. ንሕቶ ቁፅሪ ሰለስተ መልስ ካ/ኪ እወ እንተኾይኑ አብ ኸይዲ ምርዳእ እቲ አብ ክፍሊ ትመሃር/ርዮ ቋንቋ ትግርኛ ፅልዋ የሕድረል ካ/ኪ ዶ?

ሀ. እወ  ለ. አይሕድረለይን

5. ብምክንያት አፈላላይ ከባቢያ ዊ ቋንቋ (ላህጃ) ራያን አብ ክፍሊ ትመሃርዎ ትግርኛን ንአየንኡ ክእለት ቋንቋ ካ/ኪ ፅልዋ የሕድረል ካ/ኪ?

ሀ. ምንባብ  ለ. ምዘራብ  ሐ. ምፅሓፍ  መ. ምድማፅ

ረ. ካሊእ  ካሊእ እንተመሪፅ ካ/ኪ ፅሓፍ/ፊ -----

6. ካብዞ ምዘስዕቡ መማረፅ ታት ነቲ ዕንቅፋት መበገሲ ዝኾኑ አየንኦም እዮም?

ሀ. አፈላላይ ድምጺ ወይ አዘራርባ  ለ. አፈላላይ ጥብቆ ታት

ሐ. አፈላላይ ቃላት  መ. አፈላላይ አቀማምጣ ቃላት አብ ምሉእ ሓሳባት

ረ. ካሊእ  መልስ ካ ካሊእ እንተኾይኑ ፅሓፍ/ፊ -----

6.1. እስቲ አብ ቁፅሪ ሽዱሽተን ዝቐረቡ መማረጺ ታት አብ ሕድሕድምን ዘለው አፈላላይ ት

አብነ ታት ሃቡሎም: :

ሀ. ንዓ ካ/ኪ ዘሸግሩ ካ/ኪ ናይ ድምጺ (አዘራርባ) አፈላላይ ፅሓፍ/ፊ: :

አብነ ት: -----  
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ለ. ንዓ ካ/ኪ ዘሸግሩ ካ/ኪ ናይ ጥብቆ ታት አፈላላይ ፅሓፍ/ፊ: :

አብነ ት: -----  
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ሐ. ን ዓካ/ኪዘ ሸግሩካ/ኪናይ ቃላት አፈላላይ ፀሐፍ/ፊ: :

አብነት: -----  
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መ. ን ዓካ/ኪዘ ሸግሩካ/ኪናይ ቃላት አቀማመጣ ቅደም ስዓብ አብ መሉእ ሓሳባት ዝረአዩ አፈላላይ ፀሐፍ/ፊ: :

አብነት: -----  
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ረ. ካሊእ መልሲ እንተሃልዩካ/ኪ ፀሐፍ/ፊ-----

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7. መምህራ ቋንቋናይ ምምራፅ ዕዳል እንተተዋሂቡኩም በየናይ ቋንቋን ምምሃር ትመርፁ?

ሀ. በቲ ሐዚ እትመሃርዎ ዘለኩም ትግሪኛ

ለ. ብናይ ራያ ከባቢያዊ ቋንቋ (ላህጃ)

ሐ. ብቋንቋ አምሓርኛ

መ. ካሊእ  ፀሐፍ/ፊ-----

8. አብ ቁፅሪ 7 ን ዝመረፅ ካዮ/ክዮ መልሲ ምኽንያት ፀሐፍ/ፊ-----

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9. አብናይ ትግርኛ ክፍለ ግዘ ሕቶታት ን ምሕታት ወይ ን ምምላስ አምሓርኛ ትጥቀምዶ?

ሀ. እወ  ለ. አይጥቀምን

10. ን ሕቶ ቁፅሪ 9 መልስካ/ኪ እወ አንተ ኾይኑ ክንደይ ግዘ ትጥቀም/ሚ?

ሀ. ኩሉ ግዘ  ለ. ሓልሓሊፉ  ሐ. ን ዝተወሰነ ግዘ

መ. ፈጊ መ አ ይ ጥ ቀ ምን

11. እንድሕር አብናይ ትግርኛ ትምህርቲ ክፍለ-ግዘ ሕቶታትን ምሕታት ይኹን ንምምላስ አምሓርኛ ትጥቀም/ሚአምሓርኛ እትጥቀመሉ/ምሉ ምኽንያት/ታት እንታይ እዩ/እዮም?

ሀ. ብቋንቋ አምሓርኛ አፈይ ስለ ዝኸፈትኹ

ለ. ብአምሓርኛ ክፅሕፍ፣ ክዛረብ፣ ክንብን ክሰምዕን ስለ ዝቐለኒ

ሐ. አምሓርኛ ስለ ዝፈቱ

መ. ካለእ ምኽንያት እንተ ሃልዩ ካ/ኪ ፀሓፍ/ፊ-----

**III. ነዞም ዝሰዕቡ ሓሳባት ኣብ እትሰማመዱ መልሲ ናይ <✓> ምልክት ብምቕማጥ መልስ/ሲ፡፡**

- ብ/እ = ብጣዕ ሚእስ ማዕ ማዕ      አይ = አይስ ማዕ ማዕን
- እ = እስ ማዕ ማዕ                      ፈ/አይ = ፈጊ መ አ ይ ስ ማዕ ማዕን
- ብዝ/እ = ብዝትወሰነ እስ ማዕ ማዕ

ተ.ቐ	ዝተወሃበ ሓሳብ	መልሲታት				
		ብ/እ	እ	ብዝ/እ	አይ	ፈ/አይ
1	በቲ ሓዚ እንመሃሮ ዘለና ትግርኛ ብምምሃረይ ሕጉስ እዩ፡፡					
2	ብናይ ከባቢ ቋንቋ (ላህጃ) ራያ እንተዝምሃር ደስ ምበለኒ፡፡					
3	አብ ክንዲ ትግርኛ ምምሃር ብአምሓርኛ እንተዝማሃር ደስ ምበለኒ፡፡					
4	አብ ክንዲ ትግርኛ ብቋንቋ እንግሊዘኛ እንተዝመሃር ደስ ምበለኒ፡፡					



# APPENDEX-VI. Interview Guidelines in Tigrinya

## ዩ ኒ ቨ ረ ሲ ቲ ኣ ዲ ስ ኣ በ ባ

### ቤት ትምህርቲ ድሕረ-ምረቻ

### ክፍሊ ትምህርቲ ስነ-ልቦና

ን ቀዳማይ ብርኪ ኣብያተ ትምህርቲ ኣላ ማጣን ናይ ትግርኛ መምህራን ዝተዳለወ ቀለ-መሕተት

1. ኣነ ስመይ -----እበሃል ሸሞም/ሸመን ዶ ክነ ግሩኒ /ግራኒ ?
2. ትግርኛ ንክንደይ ዓመታት ዘኣክል ኣምሂሮም/ረን ?
3. ኣብ ኣላ ማጣኸን ንክንደይ ዓመት ዘኣክል ኣምሂሮም/ረን ?
4. ኣብ ሞንጎ ከባቢያዊ ቋንቋ (ላህጃ) ራያን ከባቢኡን ከምኡ እውን ኣብ ክፍሊ እተምህሮ ቋንቋ ትግርኛን ኣፈላላያት ኣለውዎም ዶ? ኣብ ሞንጎ እም ኣፈላላያት እንተሃልዮም ኣፈላላዮም ብኸመይ ይስረዑ?
5. ተምሃሮኹም ንከባቢያዊ ቋንቋ (ላህጃ) ራያን ኣብ ክፍሊ ንዝመሃርዎ ትግርኛን ከምኡ እውን ንኣምሓርኛን ዘለዎም ኣመለኻኸታ ብኸመይ ትገልጹ/ፅዮ?
6. ናይ ራያ ከባቢያዊ ቋንቋ (ላህጃ) ይርደኡካ/ኪ ዶ? እንተዘይተረዱኡካ/ኪ ተምሃሮኻ/ኺ ኣብ ክፍሊ ናይ ከባቢ ራያ ትግርኛ ዝጥቀሙ እንተኾይኖም ብኸመይ ትርደኡም/እዮም? ብኸመይኸ ተተኣናገ ዶም/ግድዮም?
7. እቶም ተምሃሮ ናይ ከባቢ ራያ ትግርኛ ኣብ እትህብዎም ምዘናታት/ፈተናታት እነሓወዱ ዝጥቀሙ እንተኾይኖም ብኸመይ ትዕቅንዎም?
8. እቶም ተምሃሮ ናይ ከባቢኦም ትግርኛ ናብ እቲ መፅሓፍ ዝተፀሓፈሉ ትግርኛ እነሓወዱ ዝጥቀሙ እንተኾይኖም እቶም ዝሓወጡዎም ዓይነታት (ደረጃታት) ስነ-ልቦና እንታይን እንታይን እዮም?
9. ብምክንያት ኣፈላላይ ኣብ ሞንጎ ከባቢያዊ ቋንቋ (ላህጃ) ራያን ኣብ ክፍሊ እተምህሮ/ርዮ ትግርኛን ኣብ ከይዲ ምምሃር-ምስ ትምሃር ፀገም ኣጋጠመካ/ኪ ዶ ፈልጥ? እንተጋጠመካ/ኪ እቶም ፀገማት እንታይን እንታይን እዮም?
10. ነቶም ፀገማት ንምቕራፍኸ እንታይ ዓይነት መፍተሒተጠቂ ምኻ/ኺ ትፈልጥ/ጠ?