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Exploring Challenges Linguistic Minority Learners Experience in Multilingual Classrooms

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This is to certify that the thesis prepared by Abera Admassu, entitled: *Exploring Challenges Linguistic Minority Learners Experience in Multilingual Classrooms* and submitted to the department of Foreign Languages and Literature in fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of Doctor Philosophy in Applied Linguistics and Communication, complies with the regulations of the university and meets the accepted standards with respect to originality and quality.

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to investigate how primary schools in Arba Minch address children with diverse linguistic background, in this study referred as linguistic minority students. It is founded on the premises of sociology of education which is considered essential to address the education of linguistic minority learners. More specifically, this study analyzed, through the application of Bourdieu's notions of 'linguistic capital' and Cummins' 'interdependence hypothesis' theory. The study used a mixed method concurrent design, and data were collected using questionnaires, tests, interviews, observation checklists, fieldnotes and document examination. The study revealed that linguistic minority learners have encountered challenges owing to their limited L2 proficiency. The finding also showed that the children used non-linguistic signals, time gaining, codeswitching, appeal for help, use of all-purpose words, and this shows the children were not competent enough in Amharic oral expressions. Besides, it revealed that minority language students experienced difficulties and challenges in negotiating competence and identities, which influence their opportunities for learning. Moreover, teachers indicated negative perceptions towards the inclusion of linguistic minority children, and expressed that linguistic minority children needed to attain a minimum level of Amharic proficiency prior to entering the mainstream classrooms. Recommendations for future research and implications for practice and policy include establishing pre-school programs, providing appropriate training for general education teachers, developing parent engagement programs to facilitate parent-teacher communication and to establish a collaborative working relationship between home and school.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Mother tongue education has preoccupied applied linguistics and educational studies in the last fifty years. The principle that children should be educated in their first language received prominence through the 1953 UNESCO Declaration. The declaration states that on educational grounds, that pupils should begin their schooling through the medium of their mother tongue because beginning school life in a familiar language would facilitate smooth transition between home and school.

The document further highlights that teaching children in early grades in mother tongue provides a strong foundation of literacy and to promote intergenerational transmission of knowledge, skills, and values. One of the UNESCO education principles is to support mother tongue instruction as a means of improving educational quality by building upon the knowledge and experience of the students. This is reflected in improvments in reading, learning achievements, and better communication among peers and wider community. Besides, language is one of the most important components of ethnic identity, and in several communities, when a child is born; he or she is given a name. That name is derived from the language the child will learn to speak, read, and write. Hence, language is a tool of identity, self esteem, and culture (Gove & Cvelich, 2010).

The argument around the use of children's mother tongue in education has taken center stage following the 1953 Declaration, and UNESCO still maintains its positions on the significance of mother tongue education for primary school children while accepting challenges that could be faced in the pursuit of this ideal. Increasing evidence that mother tongue education has a positive impact on educational and learning outcome has influenced language in education policies in many parts of the world. In particular, the importance of language to promote development was realized when UNESCO recommended that a child's schooling is best begun in his or her mother tongue paving way to use African languages' as media of instruction.

In Africa, where children continue to learn in unfamiliar language, the question of language in education is of particular concern. This situation restricts access to the

curriculum especially where the majority of the children have not mastered the language well. Interest in the language issue by African countries include: the OAU Language Plan for Action of 1986, which lays emphasis on the use of African languages as media of instruction and as working languages, the Draft Charter for the Promotion of African Languages of 1996, the Harare Declaration of 1997, and the Asmara Declaration on African Languages and Literatue of 2000 (AU, 2006). The basic principles underlying these documents are the acceptance of multilingualism as a fact of life in Africa, and the need to empower the languages that the African people know best, as working languages, media of instruction and as languages of mass media. Scholars have argued that the exclusive use of unfamiliar language as medium of instruction in sub-sharan Africa is, at least in part, responsible for the illiteracy, low school enrolments, school repeat and drop-out rate, and social inequality on the continent (Bokamba, 1991).

While multilingualism is the most prominent feature of speech communities in Africa, the education of the African child is still locked into a monolingual policy of language substitution, a policy that imposes a language of instruction that the majority of the learners do not know and that wrongly assumes that all learners possess the same backgrounds and experiences. In Africa, certainly, there is no country where linguistic diversity of the society does not pose challenges to language in education policy and practice.

Obviously, the importance of language in education is unquestionable. Wolff (2006:50) describes that 'language is not everything in education, but without language everything is nothing in education.' Every part of learning is language dependent, from arousal of curiosity, to the teacher's explanation of a concept, to the formation of an understanding of that concept, to the verbalization or written expression of that understanding. Along the path from curiosity to demonstrating understanding, any learner needs to clarify his or her developing understanding and solicit confirmation of his or her thinking (Corson, 1993). Thus, all of these activities are conducted through the medium of language. When a learner is carrying out all of this cognitive work in an unfamiliar language, limitations in language can lead to limitations in learning.

Studies carried out in different parts of the world (Thomas & Collier, 1997; Seyoum, 2009; Benson, 2002) have repeatedly witnessed that children who begin their schooling in their first language stand a better chance of academic success than those who begin in an unfamiliar language. Learners who start schooling in a language they know well do not only learn better but also demonstrate their acquired knowledge effectively in assignments and examinations, and excel in other academic subjects because they understand what is taught.

On the other hand, various reasons have been cited for not implementing mother tongue education that support the employment of children's L1 in schools. Key challenges include lack of instructional materials for the different mother tongues, teachers not trained to teach in the mother tongue, negative attitudes towards mother tongue, and lack of appropriate terminologies in the mother tongue for educational purposes (Woldemariam, 2007; Baker, 2001; UNESCO, 1953; Bamgbose, 1991).

In Ethiopia, mother tongue education has been in effect since 1991. The educational changes brought by the Constitution and the language-in-education policy have resulted in the emergence of local languages as media of instruction. However, quite a few local languages are currently used as language of instruction, and this has brought new dynamics in which certain groups have the opportunity to learn school subjects in their mother tongue, while others to learn in unfamiliar languages. The shock which the young child undergoes in passing from the home to the school life is so great that everything possible should be done to soften it.

Studies conducted in Ethiopia have cited the above-mentioned challenges in the implementation of mother tongue education (Teshome, 2003; 2009; Woldemariam, 2007). Woldemariam (2007), for instance, notes that the scarcity of financial and human resources, multiplicity of languages and dialects, and inconsistent strategies to handle the circumstances. Assebe (1981) reveals that distorted attitudes towards mother tongue education and preference of one language over the other have been posing challenges. Woldemariam (2007) also underscores the disapproval attitude towards mother tongue education is not only advocated by parents and students, but also by educated segment of the community of North Omo.

Hence, this study aims at exploring the challenges multilingual classrooms pose to students. It specifically tries to examine language related challenges linguistic minority children experience in multilingual classrooms.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Various studies (Thomas & Collier, 1997; Benson, 2002; Williams, 1998) confirm that mother tongue education has an important role in education, particularly at primary level. In many countries, the policy of teaching children in early grades in mother tongue has been adopted to provide a solid foundation of literacy.

The global clamor for the use of mother tongue in the education of the primary school child has led Ethiopia to accord local languages recognition. The EPRDF-led Coalition that took power in 1991 configured Ethiopia as a fedral state, and introduced an Educational Policy that guarantees local languages as media of instruction for primary education. Consequently, various policy measures have been taken by regional governments to promote mother tongue education especially at primary school levels. In spite of the numerous benefits of mother tongue education, a range of obstacles have presented local languages from being used more widely as a medium of instruction.

Firstly, despite efforts exerted to recognize and provide mother tongue education, the children of many linguistic groups have not yet had the opportunity to learn in their mother tongue. Currently, out of the total 89 languages (the 2007 Population & Housing Census), about twenty five languages have been in use at the primary schools (Seidel & Moritz, 2009; Tekeste, 2010). As a result, a significant number of ethnic groups are still attending primary school in their L2. Section 3.5.1 of the Education and Training Policy (1994) stipulates:

> Cognizant of the pedagogical advantage of the child in learning in mother tongue and the rights of nationalities to promote the use of their languages, primary education will be given in nationality languages.

However, more than twenty five years since the introduction very little progress has been made towards the implementation of mother tongue education. Seidel & Moritz (2009) and Woldemariam (2007) pointed out that reasons such as multiplicity of languages, lack of teaching materials in the local languages, absence of grammar and scientific terms, and lack of commitment on the part of ethnic groups to develop their own languages and to successfully implement their local languages into the education sector make the implementation of mother tongue education difficult.

Secondly, when the education policy was put in to place in 1991, minority groups faced obstacles during instruction. The settlement pattern of people in Ethiopia is that minority communities live side by side with the dominant ethnic groups. When the policy was put into effect, no arrangement was done for children in these communities. To overcome the problem, MoE issued a circular to the regions to offer instruction to the communities in Amharic (Ayalew, 1999). However, this move by the government was not welcomed by some regions, and parents pulled their children out of school. As Amharic became the medium of education, those whose home language was Amharic had the advantage of learning in their own language, whereas, those whose home languages other than Amharic were disadvantaged.

Misconception about mother tongue education and preference to some language over the mother tongue is a major problem. In this regard, two different views have emerged since the language in education policy has been in effect. One is the mandatory use of instructional language in some parts of the country. Due to this situation some parents were forced to send their children to schools that catered for ethnic language instruction even when the children do not speak the language. As Daniel & Abebayehu (2006) note, the sole criterion for placing children was whether the children's surnames coincide with the ethnic group in the areas. As a result, mother tongue instruction is pushed away for ethnic language instruction.

On the other hand, the promotion of mother tongue education is challenged by social attitudes. The community in some regions are not aware of the cognitive and linguistic benefits that mother tongue education offers, and would not subscribe to their children being taught in their mother tongue. Woldemariam (2007) clearly states parents and teachers in North Omo are unenthusiastic about mother tongue education.

The community consider it a waste of time to send their children to school to learn their own language, which they already know. They view indigenous languages, like Gamotstso, may restrict their progress. In so doing, the society disapproves of mother tongue education in favour of Amharic due to lack of awareness about mother tongue education.

Language and achievement are closely linked and the use of unfamiliar language as a medium of instruction contributes a great deal to students' poor performance and academic failure. In Ethiopian context, studies have been carried out to show the level of difficulty that language has been causing children in their achievement and understanding. The EGRA (Early Grade Reading Assessment) study (2010) carried out in eight regions shows that the children of several majority language groups who have not yet had the opportunity to learn in their mother tongue are unable to read and write. Besides, Heugh, Benson, Gebre Yohannes, and Bogale (2012) conducted a research on the effects of a multiplicity of models on academic achievement, including performance in English. The researchers made comparisons among students using mother tongue as four (early-exit model), six (late-exit model), and eight (very late-exit model) years of primary schooling. Their findings that Ethiopian students who were taught in their L1 for the first eight years had significantly higher mean achievement scores in mathematics, biology, chemistry, and physics and out performed their peers who were engaged in late-exit model and early-exit model supported by the continuation of mother tongue instruction for four years. As such, these researchers believe extended use of mother tongue ensures greater learning and that children engaged in it exhibited the highest level of academic achievement.

Similarly, a study on media of instruction in Ethiopia (Mekonnen, 2005) attests the superiority of learners with substantial mother tongue schooling. Mekonnen made comparisons among students using mother tongue as four, six, and eight years of primary schooling, and affirmed that academic performance was different. Children who had mother tongue as medium of instruction up to the end of primary school performed better in both L1 and L2 than their counterparts in late-exit and early-exit models.

In sum, in multilingual classrooms we find children, who speak two or more different home languages, but only one language is used and others are forced to learn in the language of the majority group. On the other hand, we have students who speak more than one language, and are proficient in more than one language. Hence, the choice of one language on the basis of majority language has little harm.

Although these are the major challenges with regard to language in education choice, my study will focus on the first challenge. The education of students from linguistic minority backgrounds comes with its own communication burdens, especially for those whose competence is low. It is often observed that linguistic minority students shy away from active participation or involvement in the classroom interaction because of their lack of linguistic competence. They are not able to self-express; they withhold their ideas; they withdraw from the process. They sometimes do so because of the absence of support and motivation from the teachers and their L1 classmates to use L2 with some confidence. Rather, they are discouraged by frightening comments and derogatory remarks.

There are some research (Woldemariam, 2007; Moges, 2010; Getachew & Derib, 2006; McNab,1989) conducted in relation to language in education policy and practice; Cohen (2000) studied perceptions of identity expressed through attitudes towards the use of language education. This study, however, addresses the problems of a multilingual classroom. It attempts to understand difficulties linguistic minority children experience in the mainstream classroom, and directs towards better teaching and learning strategies by examining the linguistic problems associated in the classroom issues of multilingual classroom.

My research is primarily about children having insufficient comprehension and command of the languages used as languages of literacy in multilingual classrooms. The students as members of a classroom community are required to communicate in L2. They communicate with one another, with their teachers, and with their classmates whose mother tongue is used as a medium of instruction. However, the commuication occurs with its own trajectories and challenges. It is this trajectory, challenge, and unique manifestation that my study tries to examine.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The overall aim of this study is to investigate the nature of challenges and barriers experienced by learners with limited Amharic proficiency and for whom the language of learning and teaching is not their mother tongue. More specifically, the study:

- explores problems facing first grade linguistic minority students amongst mainstream classrooms
- investigates communicative strategies which linguistic minority students apply in classroom interactions with their teachers and other students
- finds out how linguistically diverse classrooms make students negotiate their identities
- explores teachers' instructional practices in multilingual classrooms with regard to their perceptions and their management of language diversity among learners

1.4 Research Questions

This research aims to investigate the challenges experienced by learners, i.e., the dynamics of communication, interaction, participation in linguistically diverse classroom.

The research questions are:

1. What difficulties do linguistic minority students encounter in their daily school lives in mainstream classrooms?
2. What communication strategies are employed by the students to cope with the challenges?
3. How do opportunities to negotiate their identities influence students' language development and home language use?
4. How are the perceptions of teachers articulated and implemented in their handling of linguistic diversity in language development amongst linguistically diverse students in mainstream classrooms?

1.5 Significance of the Study

Linguistic minority students' transition to mainstream classes is an important educational issue because the number of linguistically diverse learners has grown significantly across urban and semi-urban areas. Therefore, it is very important to

ensure that linguistic minority students acquire sophisticated academic language skills in order to access all levels of education.

Currently schools are facing challenges because of rapidly increasing number of linguistically diverse learners in their classrooms. Hence, the results of this study are believed to be applicable to multilingual classrooms within an inclusive framework. Thus, it is believed that the direct beneficiaries of the results of this study are students, educators, researchers, , and policy makers.

Most of all, this study may benefit mainstreamed linguistic minority students in that their needs might be better met in the future by reflecting their various challenges and investigating efficient strategies to overcome them.

Secondly, the findings of this study will be useful for school practitioners, i.e. both teachers and administrators who teach and work in multilingual schools. Schools are at the forefront of the debates and challenges emanating from language-in-education policies and practices. Typically, this study will be significant to the teachers who are faced daily with the challenge of managing linguistic diversity in their classrooms in that it will consider and document the different strategies used in classrooms where speakers from various language communities are represented.

Beyond school settings, the study has significance for urban policy developers. As linguistic minority learners constitute one of the target groups of urban policy, insights on linguistically diverse learners are helpful.

The study also has implications for pre-service and in-service education programs for teacher. For these teachers, multilingual classroom means that they will work with children whose linguistic contexts are not congruent with their own. A reflection of teachers' perceptions and strategies in their management of linguistic diversity in multilingual classrooms, can inform the training of teachers for such teaching environments. Further, illuminating teachers' perceptions and strategies may inform education policy as well as curriculum decisions for teacher education. Besides, as parents are active participants in their children education, they also benefit from the findings of this study.

1.6 Scope and Delimitation of the Study

The focus of this study was linguistically diverse primary schools in Arba Minch. The study focused on second language students who were speaking two or more different home languages, and were being mainstreamed into regular classes.

The study was limited to a group of students in grade one and who do not understand their school's medium of instruction. It was limited to the analysis of interactions with in classroom, in the playgrounds, and where extra curricular activities took place. It did not include the situation out of school or in the learner's vicinity.

This study was delimited to exploring teaching and learning trajectories linguistic minority learners experienced during instruction, discussion, presentation, and interactions in and out of classrooms. Besides, Southern Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples (SNNP) consists a number of schools, and attempting to study all the schools was difficult. Hence, because of its linguistic heterogenity, the study was delimited to primary schools in Arba Minch.

1.7 Limitation of the Study

A major limitation of this study has to do with the research methodology. The results of this study were basically depending on the assumption that grade one students could be cooperative and expressive to reveal their school experiences. However, if the students were not open enough and incapable in describing their school experiences, the validity of the study of this study would be questionable unless those problems were not addressed properly. In fact, utmost care was made to minimize problems of access and misunderstanding. Particularly, the study attempted to address the problems by creating relaxed atmosphere and by using triangulated inquiries as much as possible for participant children in interviews during data collection. Besides, the study does not attempt to realize its findings due to the limited number schools participating and the number of students interviewed (27 in total). These schools, however, represent models of schools found in similar context. Thus, it may be possible on this basis to combine the outcomes of this study with other studies with other similar contexts and combined this will give us a more complete picture. Another limitation resulted from the instrument. This study also aimed to investigate communication strategies used by linguistic minority students. The data analyzed

were collected through observation checklists. However, to capture details of talk, conduct, complex social interaction, and behavior, videotape is often more fruitful. In light of this, the researcher used both digital videorecording and observation during the piloting. Despite its advantages, videorecording presented some practical challenges. Firstly, located at the back of the classroom, the researcher was unable to see the students' prespective, mainly focusing on the teacher's view on the classroom. Secondly, my attempt to move the camera from side to side the next sessions showed that my move attracted the children's attention and caused disruption. As a result, the researcher preferred to use observation checklists during the whole field visits in the classrooms.

1.8 Chapter Summary and Thesis Outlines

In this chapter the background and research problem, the aim of the research, the research objectives to be achieved in this study, and the research questions were presented, significance of the study, scope and delimitation, and limitation of the study were outlined, and the organisation of the study was presented.

In chapter two the researcher presents a detailed analysis of the educational literature pertaining to the theoretical orientation of this study, and literature relevant to the research topic is reviewed in terms of debates on linguistic minority, the role of primary language, monolingual and multilingual polices in Ethiopia, issues of language and identity, communication strategies learners use in second language education. The literature also reviews instructional practices that best meet the need of linguistically diverse learners, inclusive education, and, teacher's beliefs about linguistic diversity.

Chapter three presents an account of the theory that frames this study, the research design and methodology, and the rationale for selecting mixed-methods. Ways were discussed in which the sample for this study emerged as well as the procedures for data collection through survey questionnaires, testing, interviews, classroom observations used, document examination and how data were analyzed and interpreted. In this chapter issues of validity and reliability were discussed.

Chapter four reports on the quantitative and qualitative data that were generated in this study and the results of the data analysis and findings of the research are

examined and triangulated. In chapter five the results reported in chapter four are interpreted and discussed, with reference to the research objectives outlined in chapters one and three, respectively. The results of each subsidiary question are addressed in terms of the theoretical underpinnings stated in prior chapters.

Chapter six presents the relevance and implications of the findings of this study discussed in chapter five. Recommendations and implications for both future research and practice are outlined in this chapter.

CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Theoretical Framework

Interested in explaining the way language interacts with schooling, the researcher has chosen theoretical frameworks grounded in sociology of education literature and the post-structuralist theorizing of language and identity. Because the sociology of language theories propose the link between the home domain and the school system, and levels of language proficiency, they have become useful in explaining the importance of creating effective contexts for learning and the influence of linguistic issues on students' success in schools (Corson, 2001; Harmon & Wilson, 2006).

Further, the researcher has drawn on post-structuralist theory in conceptualizing the relation between language and identity, underlining the role language plays in constituting identity rather than identity being a pre given construct that is reflected in language use (Pennycook, 2004).

The two influential scholars in the area of socio-linguistic research for the improvement of linguistic minority students, Cummins and Bourdieu, base their work on a post modern thoughts that seek justice in diversity. Bourdieu's 'linguistic capital' has contributed to this study. According to Bourdieu, linguistic capital comes about as a result of historically determined interaction between peoples who speak different language or dialects. In Bourdieu's view, marked by the peculiarities of each individual social formation, one language or dialect, becomes dominant in a way that its native speakers are thereby advantaged over others. In terms of education and schooling, the linguistic capital thesis argues that some students possess the linguistic background that enables them to utilize the school environment and its facilities more efficiently than those who don't. They are better acclimatized to the curricula and other benefits that branch from it. However, such achooling remains a challenge for children who come from disadvantaged homes where the dominant home language is not the medium of instruction (Webb, Schirato, & Danaher, 2002; Corson, 2001; Thompson, 1994). This implies that the linguistic capital that is valued in education is not equally available to students from different sociolinguistic background. As a result, children from non-dominant linguistic backgrounds are often silent or they are forced to withdraw from taking part in them.

Bourdieu further discusses language transmission usually occurs in two spheres: at home and in school. Viewed from the perspectives of majority versus minority learners, language transmission becomes very different issue. In the case of L1 learners, language transmission at home and school are commonly taken for granted: at home, parents speak his or her language usually with their children, and at school this language is usually the only or major subject and medium of instruction. In the case of minority children, however, there is a mismatch between the language of the home and the language of the school. As a result, such schooling remains a challenge for children who come from homes where the dominant home language is not the medium of instruction.

Besides, literature in education gathers several variables that influence the school's processes of learning and teaching lessons in second language from those who possess the linguistic background in this regard. In particular, literature related to the education of linguistic minority students shows the complexity of the processes entailed in the acquisition of second language, and the considerable amount of time that it requires. Cummins (1981; 2000) notes several more years of direct L2 instruction are required before the students are fluent in all four skills areas. This includes acquiring speaking, listening, reading and writing skills, as well as applying these skills to different situations.

The academic setting demands a level of language proficiency that goes far beyond the language used in informal face-to-face communication. Cummins (1980) formulated an *'interdependence hypothesis,'* asserting that second language competence depends upon the level of development of L1. Cummins distinguished between two kinds of language mastery: *'interpersonal communication'* refers to oral communication skills that are used in everyday situations, while *'cognitive academic language proficiency' (CALP)* is achieved when the speaker can use language in decontextualized ways, including writing, permitting the use of the language as a cognitive tool. Cummins argues that if learners have achieved CALP in L1, this competence can be *transferred* to L2, permitting them to participate successfully in academic learning in L2. If, however, learners have not achieved CALP in L1, both academic learning and second language learning are adversely affected. Accordingly,

Cummins (1981; 2000) suggests beginning general academic instruction in the child's mother tongue until the child has become *highly competent* (i.e., has achieved CALP) in L1. Cummins further claims that mastery of academic languages is one of the most significant ingredients of academic success. Individuals who demonstrate effective use of academic language are able to extract meaning of new content, process it, and add it to previous knowledge. Proficient use of and control over academic language in L2 is the key to content area learning in schools. Given the nature of today's academic demands, lack of proficiency in academic language affects students' ability to comprehend and analyze texts, limits their ability and to express themselves effectively, and can hinder their acquisition of academic content in all academic areas (Cummins, 1981, Thomas & Collier, 2001; Ovando and Collier, 1985). It is difficult for students to learn cognitively complex material if they do not have CALP.

The linguistic/cognitive constructs outlined above are supported by the elementary pedagogic principle of moving from the familiar to the unfamiliar in educational practice (Cummins, 2000). Particularly, linguistic minority children are facing challenges in accessing academic language through the language that is not their first language, and lack access to the content area knowledge and academic skills that their L1 speaking peers are learning. As a result, they are likely to get further and further behind in their academic development while concentrating on learning L2 (Bialystok, 2001). It is self-evident that pupils at an elementary stage are likely to learn new concepts and content more effectively through the medium of a language that they know best.

Besides, to explore how linguistic minority students' identities affect their experience in school, this study has utilized and drawn theoretical framework from a poststructuralist conception of language and identity. Sociolinguistic theorists in second language learning have demonstrated strong connections between identity and second language learning. Second language classrooms are venues for learners to construct their identities, which are socially, culturally, and historically situated (Gee, 2000 and Luke, 2003). Informed by the theory of community of practice by Lave and Wenger (1991) and Wenger (1998), this study examines how linguistic minority learners negotiate their identities in an L2 academic classroom. Thus, the primary goal of the paper is to provide empirical evidence on how those linguistic minority

children participate and negotiate membership in their L2 academic classroom communities. Investigating those linguistic minority students' experiences and views within the classroom will reveal how the classrooms can be an essential forum where members of the classroom community negotiate their roles, identities, and positions in different levels of the academic communities that surround them.

Teachers' conceptions of teaching have also provided foundation for this study. Conceptions are specific meanings of phenomena and impact how individuals view the world (Pratt, 1992). This study perceived the construct of conceptions similar to Kitchen, Roy, Lee and Secada (2009), namely that conceptions constitute both perceptions and knowledge. Several studies note teachers' knowledge affect classroom practices. It is generally accepted that teaching is greatly affected by the belief system of its practitioners. Horwitz (1987) points out that teachers beliefs influence their consciousness, teaching methods, teaching attitude, teaching policies, and finally, learners' development. Thus, this study focuses on researching teachers' perceptions and their knowledge regarding teaching children from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

Extensive research has found that students are better served at the school in the early years through their home language. Children having insufficient comprehension and command of the languages used as the languages of literacy and languages of instruction are likely to learn differently from those fully proficient in the languages used. This usually includes linguistic minority learners in multilingual settings, whose first language is a non-dominant language. Hence, it is necessary to know our learners in multilingual classrooms so that we are able to provide effective support for their future academic success.

2.2 Conceptualizing Linguistic Minority

Defining what constitutes 'linguistic minorities' often spark controversy. The concept is very complex because the term 'linguistic minorities' often has numerical, ethnic, political or social dimensions. Different authorities have defined linguistic minority from different perspectives. Mackey & Verdoodt (1975) as cited in Valdes (1995) present definition of the term- 'linguistic minority' as follows:

> By linguistic minorities we mean ethnic and linguistic groups that are non-dominant in their country and that, while wishing general for equality of treatment with the majority, also wish for a measure of differential treatment in order to preserve the basic, ethnic and linguistic characteristics which they possess and which distinguish them from the majority of the population (Valdes, 1995: 301).

Mackey & Verdoodt (1975) use the term, linguistic minority, to group and homogenize language speakers of non-dominant language background. The underlying assumption is that the group does not speak the majority language as primary language. On the other hand, Thornberry & Martin (2004) define it as a language that is used within a given territory by nationals that form a group numerically smaller than the rest of the state's population. Skutnabb-Kangas (2000) also conceptualizes 'minority' in terms of numbers. She considers 'minority' as an identifiable group or community of peoples whose language differ from the dominant group, and which is smaller in number than the rest of the population of a State, whose members have ethnic, religious or linguistic features different from those of the rest of the population.

On the other hand, De Vries (1987) proposes a somewhat broader definition and came up with two approaches to the 'specification' of minority. The first of these approaches, the 'demographic approach' focuses on simple numbers and labels the less numerous group minority and the most numerous group in a population a majority. On the other hand, when the simple numerical criterion is met, the qualitative aspect of being a minority follows. The second approach-sociological approach-focuses on the existing power relationships between groups and define minority status in terms of domination or subordination. Accordingly, minority group is a term referring to a category of people differentiated from the social majority. Rather than a relational 'social group', as the term would indicate, 'minority group' refers to the above-described.

For Ball (2010) the term linguistic diversity is a relative concept, and is often perceived in terms of national boundaries, giving some languages the status of majority language and others that of minority language on the basis of specific

national contexts. A certain language, for example, may be the most widely spoken languages in certain area by millions, and is a majority language, but in other area where only part of the population is of that language and culture, it has the status of a minority language in the face of other national or majority languages of those countries**.** Similarly, a minority language in a large country may be a majority language in a smaller country. However, the term 'minority' is often ambiguous and may be understood differently, and it may have both numerical and social or political dimensions. It is also used as a euphemism for non-elite or subordinate groups, whether they constitute a numerical majority or minority in relation to some other group that is politically and socially dominant.

In contrast, academic definitions for research purposes often make no mention of nationality as a criterion. Educators also use this phrase, linguistic minority, to identify children from homes and communities where school language is not the primary language of communication (Garcia, 1991). According to Garcia, linguistic minority is a term used to label and homogenize learners of non-L2 background. The underlying sociopolitical assumption is that these 'linguistically minorities' do not speak second language as a primary language. Thus, linguistic minority is an educational term used by educators to define learners enrolled in mainstream programs who are either non-L2-proficient or limited-L2-proficient (Garcia, 1991; Chiang & Schmida, 1999).

It can be pointed out that there have been many different ways to define and classify minority language groups. As can be seen, some authorities come up with quantitative definition, such as the number of individuals possessing a certain characteristic. When this simple numerical criterion is met, the qualitative aspect of being a minority often follows, i.e., it is used in reference to a group's relative societal advantage.

While conscious of the complexities surrounding the identification of minority groups, and the diversity of factors in defining the term, the researcher used the term as used by Garcia (1991). For the purpose of this research, 'linguistic minority' refers to children enrolled in mainstream classrooms who are either non-L2-proficient or limited-L2-proficient. It specifically describes students who speak a language other than Amharic in their homes and who do not have sufficient mastery of it.

2.3 Instructional Language Policy in Ethiopia

Ethiopia is a multilingual country where more than 80 languages are spoken. Various literature (Getachew and Derib, 2006; Cohen, 2000) write that instructional language policies had not been the reflection of this diversity.

The main goal of education is to transmit knowledge, values, norms and other elements of culture to which individuals belong. As an instrument of communication and exchange of ideas, language is a prime vehicle in this endeavor. Hence, what language to use as a medium of instruction at school has remained an important policy issue in multilingual country.

2.3.1 Monolingual Education in Ethiopia

In Ethiopia, the medium of instruction when modern education started at the beginning of the twentieth century was French with many other international languages and Amharic and Geez being taught as a subject. During the short-lived occupation period the Italian's attempted to provide education using Amharic. Tigrinya, Oromifa, Harari, Arabic and Somali in the six administrative units they have created-but only to promote their 'divide and rule' policy and 'pacification through apartheid' (McNab, 1989:78). May be as a reflection of the new ties established between Ethiopia and Britain after the liberation of the country in 1941, English became the medium of instruction in all government schools of the country. Amharic was taught as a subject first, and later on became a medium of instruction for the first two grades (grade *1* &2). After several years of deliberation in 1963 it became a medium of instruction for elementary education (grades 1-6) while English was retained as medium of instruction for grades seven and above. McNab (1989:79) explains the shift to Amharic as an expression of growing nationalism.

The military government that took power in 1974 had entertained the idea of using the other nationality languages as a media of instruction. In the 'Objectives and Directives of Education' document it called for the creation of a language academy that will hasten the development of the remaining Ethiopian languages into medium of instruction. Hence, it stated that 'Amharic' shall be the language of instruction until such time that there are teachers and textbooks in other languages (Daniel &

Abebayehu, 2006). Therefore Amharic continued to be the medium of instruction for primary education (grades 1-6).

A significant step taken by that government was its policy decision to conduct literacy programs in the nationality languages. Accordingly, fifteen languages (Amharic, Oromigina, Tigrigna, Wolayitgna, Somaligna, Hadiyigna, Kambatigna, Kunamiga, Tigre, Sidamigna, Siltigna, Gediogna, Afarigna, Kefa-Mochigna and Sahogna) were used in the literacy campaigns that were successively held in many rounds and in which millions were made literate. A further policy decision taken was to transcribe these languages in the Ethiopic script traditionally used for Geez and Amharic mainly and Tigrinya to a limited extent. Most of the other 15 languages were unwritten before 1974 (McNab, 1989:85). This attempt had laid the foundation for the development of the languages. The government, however, did not push forward to use them as a media of instruction in the formal system.

Viewing language issues from the above perspective within the Ethiopian socio-cultural and linguistic context, monolingualism and so monoculturalism used to be the norm almost from the introduction of schooling up to1991. Thus, it was perceived as a coercive devise and hegemony which, as a result had been taken as an internal linguistic and cultural colonization. Thus, the Amharic monopolized language of education and administration policy run during the Imperial and Dergue era has often been claimed as a cause of the oppositions from the public side and mushrooming of ethnic based factions fighting for their respective ethnic groups` linguistic, cultural and economic rights (Markakis, 1974; Laitin, 1992; Bangay, 1998; Aklilu, 2001).

2.3.2 The Emergence of Multilingual Education in Ethiopia

The use of mother tongues in education (MTE), and administration was put into effect in 1991, with the coming of EPRDF into power toppling the Dergue regime. The ‘Charter’ adopted by the ‘Conference for Peace and Democracy’ held in Addis Ababa from July 2-6, 1991 among other things, recognized the right of the nationalities to develop their history and culture as well as to use and nurture their languages. Based on this, the ‘Council of Representatives’ issued a policy guideline constituting:

- the use of Amharic as a medium of instruction continue in the areas where the mother tongue is non-Amharic

- Oromigna, Sidamigna, Wolayitiga and Tigrinya be used as medium of instruction as of 1991'92
- Studies be carried on the use of other nationality languages as a medium of instruction as soon as possible, while in the mean time continue offering education as in the past
- the medium of instruction for junior and secondary schools continue to be English and
- that English be taught as a subject as of grade one
- The right to choose the scripts in which the respective languages were to be written.

Thus, implementation started immediately by translating the textbooks in Amharic into the five languages. To this end, the Geez script was retained for Amharic and Tigrinya while the Latin script was opted for Oromifa, Somali, Sidama and Wolaita. Finally, this policy guideline was further strengthened and substituted with minute changes by the New Education and Training Policy in 1994 which, among many things, put the use of mother tongues in the primary education (grade 1-8).

The shift from Amharic to MTE was so swift that within a few short months of the inception year of the policy, some Ethiopian languages with more than one million speakers became languages of education for nearly half of the students enrolled in public primary schools and other languages, no fewer than twenty, followed the path within a few years of the original shift, 1992. Various Studies on MTE in Ethiopia generally agree on the pedagogical and socio-cultural advantages it has played (Hoben, 1995; Mekonnen, 2005; Hughe, Benson, Berhanu and Mekonnen, 2006).

Yet, others criticize the rush in formulating and implementing the policy (Ayalew, 1999; Wagaw, 1999). Tekeste attributes (1996) the hurry in implementing MTE to the buried interest of the people that was not paid enough attention during the previous government. Besides, Daniel and Abebayehu, (2006) claim that the implementation of MTE by the regional states was so swift since the speakers were afraid that any delay to introduce the 'given' rights may lead to reversing their linguistic human rights.

Taking the above context into consideration, no one can overlook the linguistic and identity revitalization besides the pedagogical advantages of the formulation and implementation of the MTE in Ethiopia. Yet, on the other hand it sounds logical to question the causes for and implications of the abruptness of the process. In light of this, this paper argues that the emergence of MTE in Ethiopia had had more of a political motive more than a pedagogical motive which can further be witnessed from the power relationships during the emergence and implementation of the policy.

2.4 The Role of Primary Language in Education

An investigation into the role of language in learning shows no language ever completely replaces the mother tongue. When children are offered opportunities to learn in their mother tongue, they are more likely tt succeed in school. Consistent with the theories underpinning this study, Garcia (2002:28) emphasised the importance of home language to children's language development. He acknowledged:

> Children utilize native language abilities as a tool to construct higher-order thinking processes. Limiting their opportunities to learn in their first language will limit their cognitive growth and related academic achievement.

Garcia's argument is consistent with the notion of the importance of building on early language experiences and extending them throughout the school years. In addition, Collier and Thomas (2002) found that those students who had a large part of their education in their first language were the most successful, and had a high level of bilingualism and school achievement. These findings were echoed in Collier's (1995) earlier position, that understanding of the notion of 'uninterrupted' cognitive development is the key to understanding the need to maintain home languages. Parents and children who continue to communicate in their home language instead of the school second, are building on the child's real level of cognitive development. Presumably, when children converse in their second language with their parents, they may be communicating at a lower level than they are capable of in their home language, using a limited vocabulary, which often leads to frustration either for children and parents (Wong Fillmore, 2000).

As indicated above, the early years are important for maintaining and teaching home languages. A number of key scholars argue that home language learning should take place early in the school programme as it builds the foundations for cognitive and academic development; and especially forming concepts and knowledge in subjects and literacy skills in the second language (Collier, 1995; Cummins, 2000; Skutnabb-Kangas, 2000). Skutnabb-Kangas explained that those children, who had mother tongue language as the main medium of education in primary school, were more competent in their second language and their general school achievement. The duration of mother tongue education was the most important predictor of educational success ahead of socioeconomic status (Skutnabb-Kangas, 2004). With this point in mind ideally then, education in the mainstream majority language should begin early in immigrant children‟s life, alongside their home language education, but not before children begin formal schooling, and not at the expense of home language development. Furthermore, Wong Fillmore (1991) believes that second language learning for linguistic minority children should only begin once children have a good basis in their first language. She explained that too many children lose their first language as a result of learning the mainstream language. This, she argues, can have negative effectson their overall development and especially on the integrity of the family.

Vygotsky believed that cognitive development occurs through the child's conversation and interactions with more capable members, that is, teachers, peers and adults (Dembo, 1994:377). These significant others provide the child with information necessary for the child to grow intellectually. Dembo further notes that Vygotsky believed that higher-level thinking develops best in social contexts, hence the need to create learning situations in which teachers, parents and more capable others interact directly with learners who are at lower levels of thinking. It can be concluded that the child's discovery is assisted by family members, teachers and peers, and most of the guidance is communicated through language which, in the context of this study, happens to be the learner's mother tongue.

As the child develops, language is converted to internal speech as it becomes an internal process and organises the child's thoughts (Dembo, 1994). According to Donald, Lazarus, & Lolwana (2010:57), Vygotsky showed that developing inner

speech is a crucial step in early cognitive development. Children begin with talking aloud so as to organise their actions, perceptions and experiences. This talking aloud gradually becomes silent and changes to an inner conversation. The inner speech merges with thought and the child becomes capable of thinking through language. This shift is the very origin of thinking itself and of the further course of cognitive development, an indication of the significant role played by language in learning and teaching, particularly at primary school level.

With reference to Vygotsky, Donald et al. (2010:55) contend that the place of language in cognitive development raises issues such as the disadvantages of having to learn through the medium of a second language. Donald et al. go further to declare that there are two critical educational implications from Vygotsky's theory. The first implication is that language in all its forms is a critical tool in teaching and learning since it is the principal way people interact and transmit knowledge. This shows that the learners' cognitions are shared through language; hence reflective discussions with others provide opportunities for cognitive growth.

The second critical aspect raised by Donald et al. (2010) is that of the confidence of learners. Those students who are not confident in their ability to use language in an academic context will tend not to interact, leading to more loss of confidence. Valdes (1995) claims that questioning, critical thinking and collaboration became impossible for students who understood too little L2 despite having the cognitive capacity that was available through their first language. Thus, such experience where students fail to cope with the language of the school can be frustrating, making them educationally disempowered.

Home language is an important asset that linguistic minority students and indeed all students bring with them. Research has already shown that bilingualism or multilingualism has a positive influence on children's linguistic and educational development (Baker, 2000; Cummins, 2000; Skutnabb-Kangas, 2000). As children continue to develop their first and second language, they gain a deeper understanding of language processing and decoding, and they may develop more flexibility in thinking because of processing information through two languages. Cummins (2001) stressed that the level of development of children's mother tongue is a strong predictor

of their second language development. The knowledge and skills that children have already acquired in their mother tongue can be transferred to new language learning. The more solid the foundation in the first language is, the better the educational outcome in the new language will be.

Besides, if pupils do not fully acquire their first language, they may have problems later in becoming fully literate and academically proficient in the second language. This is supported by evidence from research which indicates that pupils learn academic material and other languages most successfully when they begin school in the language they speak most comfortably (Cazden, 1988; Cummins, 2000a; Cummins, 2000b). The interactive relationship between language and cognitive growth is very significant. This implies that everything acquired in the first language (academic skills, literacy, concept formation, and learning strategies) will be transferred from first language to the second language. That is, the first language will act as a foundation to the learning of other languages. .

2.4.1 Literacy and Home Language

As argued previously, the early years are important for developing literacy learning. Children's participation in social settings both inside and outside the school contributes to their literacy learning. Early home language experiences are an integral part of children's literacy development, and lay the foundations for life long learning. The significance of oral language is often underestimated as a vital element in literacy development. Kazee, (2001), Bloom (1998) and Tabors (1997) all reported that preschoolers add five to ten words per day to their vocabulary. This has obvious implications for linguistic minority children who start school with a vocabulary and understanding in their home language but very little knowledge of words in the majority language spoken at school. Furthermore, as Cummins' developmental interdependence hypothesis (1981b) supposed, literacy development in the first language helps children learn their second language, and this facilitates knowledge transfer from one language to the other.

Studies on cognitive processes in literacy acquisition show a close relationship between the development of language and literacy skills (Durgunoglu, 1998). This is

because language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) develop concurrently and are interrelated (Stanovich, 1986; Stanovich & Cummingham, 1998). As children gain in oral language proficiency, they generally increase their phonological awareness as well (Snow et al., 1998). The correlation between phonological awareness (the ability to recognize differences and similarities in the sounds of language) in preschool and reading in the first few years of schooling for L1 learners is very strong (Blachman, 2000; Bryant, MacLean, Bradley, & Crossland, 1990). Phonological awareness is strongly correlated with reading achievement for young learners (Adams, 1990).

The phonological subskills termed 'phonemic awareness' involve the ability to segment words into their smallest unit of sounds, phonemes, and manipulate them, by deleting or blending phonemes, for example. Mastery of phonemic awareness appears to be a prerequisite for learning to read alphabetic languages because it is linked to decoding written words, which in turn is important for comprehension (Juel, 1991). By age 5 or 6, the majority of L1 learners attain phonemic segmentation skills (Calfee, Lindamood, & Lindamood, 1973). Phonemic awareness has been shown to predict later reading skill (Maclean, Bryant, & Bradley, 1987). Phonological awareness has also been shown to predict second language learners' reading comprehension (Carlisle et al., 1999).

Further, it appears that vocabulary size may spur children's development of phonological segmentation skills, as finer discrimination is needed to recognize additional but similar-sounding words (Goswami, 2001; Walley, 1993). Thus, children with more limited vocabularies, such as L2 learners, may be at risk for slower natural development of phonological awareness skills and may need explicit instruction to learn the phonological and phonemic skill of segmenting sounds. Phonemic awareness training has been shown to be effective with second language learners and to be linked to later reading and spelling success (Stuart, 1999).

Additionally, early literacy skills that include letter recognition, decoding skills, and knowledge about print and reading, have been shown to be related to successful reading acquisition in instructional contexts. Of these various skills, letter recognition is the best predictor of later reading success for L1 learners (Adams, 1990;

Scarborough, 1998; Vellutino & Scanlon, 2001). That is, children who can identify more letters of the alphabet in kindergarten tend to become more successful readers later on (Scarborough, 1998). By first grade, word recognition is a strong predictor of later reading comprehension (Juel, 1991).

Similarly, reading and writing, those twin skills that comprise 'literacy,' are highly correlated (Tierney & Shanahan, 1991). Reading and writing appear to be most closely linked through spelling and word recognition in the early years (Adams, 1990; Templeton & Morris, 2000; Tierney & Shanahan, 1991). Reading and writing should be thought of as interacting with one another rather than one contributing to the development of the other exclusively (Tierney & Shanahan, 1991). Reading and writing together influence children's academic achievement in a variety of subject areas (Tierney & Shanahan, 1991), laying the foundation for academic success or failure.

2.4.2 The Role of Home Language in Identity Formation

It is often assumed that language plays a significant part in identity construction and identification. Language is a means of identification among the members of the community to which one belongs. Nemeth (2009) claims that the one's mother tongue is an essential part of who he or she is, and is central to his or her individual identity, personal concept of self, and group identity. Similarly, Delpit and Dowdy, (2002) write, 'just as our skin provides us with a means to negotiate our interactions with this world… our language plays an equally pivotal role in determining who we are' (xvii). It is the language used to nurture a person from the time he is born and it is the language in which he learns about the world and how he fits into it. It is so important to support and honor this powerful beginning and to help the child see that this part of his life is valued and understood. Nemeth (2009) further notes in the early years, children don't think of language as an academic subject. It is just part of who they are. In a classroom where the teacher only speaks the language of some children and not others, linguistic minority learner may feel like he or she is rejected and may even be treated that way by other children. If the teacher finds a way to use some of every child's language, he or she can support the value of each language and support each child's self esteem.

A child's home language is a reflection of family, tradition and his or her community. According to Fishman (1991), language plays an important role in identity formation because it is the symbol of 'ethnicity,' and the role of home language acquisition is critical for building a strong cultural identity. Besides, home languages are important to maintain children's home relations with family members. Some communities and families think they help their child by telling the school they want their child to learn only in L2. Woldemariam (2007) described that the communitity in North Omo wanted their children to be fluent in Amharic, and they recognised that academic and social success depended on Amharic language proficiency. Similarly, Sánchez & Thorp, (1998) found that very young children often mistakenly pick up the message that their home language has minority status in society and is of little value. However, research says that pushing a young child too quickly into L2 may have negative effects (Wong Fillmore, 1991). It is vital that early childhood programs have a strong, united position that is made clear to the parents. Parents need to know that, if it is their desire to have their child succeeds in second language, then supporting their home language in the early years is the best way to make that happen.

As previously stated, home languages spoken by linguistic minority parents play a central role in their children's identity formation. Identity formation begins in the home, and children begin to construct their identity from a very young age (Siraj-Blatchford & Clarke, 2000). Later, as children enter mainstream society, the process of developing positive identity depends on the status of the language and whether or not it is accepted and respected by their classmates, as well as teachers in the school and community. Bialystok (2001) claimed that this psychosocial dimension is vital in learning. Language plays a major role in children's well being through their sense of belonging, and in forming identity that assist in their daily interaction.

Additionally, for children, the extent to which their home language is valued and supported in settings such as school depends on macro influences often outside the influence of children and parents. Whether or not tachers are able to understand and speak the child's home language, will affect the extent to which they are able to support and promote languages. The messages teachers relay to children may influence the ways in which they value their home language. For instance, insisting students to assimilate into monolingual type of educational program or discouraging

use of L1 in classroom may damage their self-esteem and strongly influence students' views of themselves as learners and their learning pathways (Cummins, 1981b and Skutnabb-Kangas, 2000). When they suggest children should stop learning their home language, it is harmful to children's language development and their respect and appreciation for their own language. Besides, the messages that teachers communicate to parents can play a significant role in children's educational progress. These interactions between teachers and children, and parents and teachers can become subtle but sure avenues for maintaining inequalities in the education system (Cummins, 2001). Learning and maintaining home language is a central factor in children's cognitive development, and that it has an important role to play in second language learning which may, in turn, boost academic outcomes. Arguably too, children's healthy identity formation is dependent on home language maintenance. Hence, it is essential that for early education teachers to know how to support overall language development while also facilitating the process towards second language learning.

To enhance the educational experience of a linguistic minority student and his or her peers, a teacher should utilize the native language of the linguistic minority student since, like all students, their language is part of their cultural identity. Cummins (2001:19) emphasized that, 'To reject a child's language in the school is to reject the child'. Allowing linguistic minority students to speak their native language can be used as a learning experience for students who speak only the medium of instruction, while providing linguistic minority students with an opportunity to demonstrate their ability to speak a different language. Often times, this gives linguistic minority students a sense of confidence they might not feel when trying to communicate in L2. Besides, affirming and acknowledging pupils' home language in the school context is essential for educational reasons. These include, functional labeling for objects in the classroom and show the words in L2 and also in the the child's home language, and materials and supplies in the languages of every child in the class. Quane and Glanz (2010) and Sade (2011) assert that learning that values children's language and culture and affirms the identity of each learner promotes self-esteem and additive bilingualism.

Similarly, Cummins (2001) believes that the way children from linguistic minority backgrounds learn, is influenced by 'identity negotiation' between child and teacher. Linguistic minority children's identity negotiation in school and classrooms always either reinforces or challenges patterns of coercive relations of power in the wider society. For instance, the devalution of their language or the use of labels such as 'incompetent' and 'weak' reflect negative stereotypes and low expectations about their academic performance and can lead to underachievement and failure in schools. Sade, (2011) and Nemeth, (2009) also underscore rejecting children's linguistic identity may damage their academic development, self-esteem, and their identity in their community, and note that students' linguistic identity should be acknowledged and given importance in their school. For linguistic minority learners, the first place they can receive positive validation in their L1 is in the classroom. Hence, teachers have to facilitate safe space in which cultural awareness can be mediated and discussed.

In actuality, supporting the home language while also supporting the learning of second language can seem rather complicated because there may be different languages in the classroom. However, affirming and acknowledging pupils' home language in the school context is essential for social, emotional and educational reasons. In addition, the use of a student's home language in the classroom affirms the identity of language minority students while reducing linguistic barriers. These include, functional labeling for objects in the classroom, and show the words in L2 and also in the the child's home language, and materials and supplies in the languages of every child in the class. For instance, teachers can use children's home languages in classrooms when they are introducing new vocabulary. In this way, linking the home language vocabulary with the language of the classroom, they can legitimise children's home language. This makes it possible for them to believe their language is valued, and that it is a legitimate and natural form of communication that exists on an equal footing with the majority language (Lantolf & Pavlenko, 2001; Ladson-Billings 2000; Clarke, 1996; Volk & Long, 2005).

2.5 Teaching and Learning in Linguistically Diverse Classrooms

2.5.1 Introduction

Several scholarly studies have been done on teaching and learning in a setting where learners from different language communities are taught in one classroom. Some of these studies refer to the educational needs of learners from minority groups (Spolsky, 1986; Molyneux, 2009; García, 2009).

Corson (1993) argues about the inclusion of minority language and culture in the education of minority language children from the social justice point of view. Corson sees incorporation of 'critical approaches to language policy and ideologies of literacy and pedagogy in multilingual societies by giving priority to the pursuit of social justice as an explicit social practice' (Corson, 1993: ix), as both ideal and just. For him, the basic social justice problem in the education of the minorities lies in deciding where and when to provide a form of language learning and development that will protect the life opportunities of children who would otherwise have had no access to social contexts where their mother tongues are used. He finds that on the one hand, there may be very few opportunities for these children to master the varieties, styles and functions of their mother tongues to allow them to become competent users of those languages. On the other hand, the same children would be put at risk cognitively and academically, if placed in learning situations that require them to use the majority language.

Benson (2004) identifies three groups that tend to be affected by unfair language policies in education namely, women and girls, minority linguistic groups, and minority social groups. According to him, minority linguistic groups are those that possess or identify with a language which is not the dominant language of the society and which is different from the majority one.

Corson (1993) further observes that the legitimate influence of education on language use is clear cut in that education 'seeks to capitalize on the central role of language in learning, in understanding and in knowing' (Corson, 1993:7). At the same time, language development is a major goal of schooling and thus language remains the most accessible pedagogy and evaluation available to schools. Corson (1993) finds that education has a major influence on language in terms of its appropriateness,

standard or non-standard forms, functions, status, structures etc. Thus, for schools to become places of both learning and justice, a balance has to be struck between a view of language as socially valuable on the one hand, and intellectually valuable on the other. To do this, he argues, schools should put an emphasis on meanings that are dependent upon choices among styles, modes and settings of discourse as opposed to stressing on meaning as signification.

The role of the school in social and cultural reproduction has long been recognized (Fishman, 1980; Apple, 1982). Apple (1982) for example, identifies the major social functions of schools as follows: 'selection and certification of workforce, maintaining privilege by taking the form and content of the dominant language and culture and legitimizing it as the knowledge to be passed on, creation and recreation of an effectively dominant language and culture and legitimizing new knowledge, new classes and strata of social personnel'. By concentrating on the dominant language and culture, it could be argued, that schools look after the interests of some social groups better than, if not at the expense of, other social groups and it uses language as the vehicle of its power distribution (Hornberger & Ricento, 1996), a practice that results in social injustice and inequalities both in schools and in society.

2.5.2 Inclusive Education

The term inclusive education describes the educational policies and practices that allow all learners to have access to a single education system responsive to diversity (Green, 2001).

The philosophy of inclusive education has been adopted by numerous countries around the world. One of the most important insights emerging from the policy of inclusive education is that the focus will be shifted from learners' weaknesses to emphasizing and building on their strengths. This approach is in agreement with the asset-based approach that focuses on individuals' capacities, skills, and assets rather than weaknesses and problems (Swart, 2004).

Successful education for linguistically diverse students, according to Coady, Hamann, Harrington, Pacheco, Pho, Yedlin (2003:26), means 'the academic and social development of each student is supported in culturally and linguistically responsive ways'. Similarly, Gibson (1997:446) contends that schools should provide more

opportunities for linguistic minority students to create multiple identities in the school setting: 'Student identities are constantly negotiated and transformed through the experiences that students have in school and in their lives outside of school'. Gibson cross-examined several cases of minority students' failure and success at school and found that minority students do better in school when they feel strongly anchored in the identities of their families, communities, and peers and when they feel supported in pursuing a strategy of additive acculturation. The inclusion of linguistic minority students is the key in their language learning process. They need a safe environment where they feel included in the classroom and the school setting. It may lower their affective filter in language learning and improve the efficiency of language learning (Krashen, 1981).

Inclusion is more than an instructional method among teachers. It is a school structure that promotes the integration of minority students into mainstream as well as a school culture in which principal, teachers, and class peers offer help to accommodate linguistic minority students and provide a comfortable environment for them (Moore, 2003; McBrien, 2005). Inclusive education has been defined as a value-based practice that tries to turn all students into full members within the local school community (Keyes, Hanley-Maxwell, & Capper, 1998). As Kennedy and Fisher (2001) indicate, the value of inclusive education lies in that all students should feel welcomed in the school, classroom, and larger community. A common practice for linguistic minority students is to pull them out of mainstream classrooms and give them intensive second language support. However, some studies show this kind of pull-out approach can cause unwanted side effects. Because linguistic minority students are pulled out of their mainstream classrooms, they seem to be a special group of students. Kennedy and Fisher (2001) worry that the pull-out approach may worsen the discrimination at school and created among students and teachers low expectations for minority student. Capper and Frattuara (2000) analyzed several pull-out programs and pointed out some weaknesses with them. For example, linguistic minority students may develop feelings of being inferior or students who need extra assistance. It takes extra work for mainstream teachers. According to Capper and Frattuara (2000), this means that it is hard to track these students by schools and teachers and ministry of education and it may also lead to teachers' low expectations for them. However, there is no cure at all. The ultimate goal of pull-out programs is to help linguistic minority students

improve their L2 in a short time with intensive assistance so that they can cope with the more difficult academic content in class; however, such programs cannot avoid causing possible discrimination and inequity in schools.

Scholars claim that schools should be safe places for linguistic minority students. McBrien (2005) indicated that linguistic minority students face many obstacles, among which, a major obstacle is social and individual rejection. For example, students may feel they are not welcomed or their identities are not recognized at school. They may be alienated because of their accents and origins. The rejection comes from stereotypes, prejudices, or discrimination. Therefore, according to Cushner (1998), school educators need to make efforts to work out ways to prevent bullying and an unwelcoming atmosphere, and at the same time, encourage mainstream students to develop an understanding toward linguistic minority students and the langauge and culture they bring to the class. Similarly, in Olsen's (1997) ethnographic study, he found that most linguistic minority students cannot find a supportive environment at school, especially in learning L2. They are often marginalized and teased because of their accents when they speak L2. Although it takes a shorter time to develop oral proficiency in L2 than academic proficiency, still, gaining academic L2 skills is critical in their school success (Cummins, 2001). Linguistic minority students' language learning is greatly influenced by their home languages, identities, and cultures (Cummins, 2000; Moore, 2004). In linguistic minority student second language education, respecting and recognizing linguistic and cultural differences need to be stressed.

During linguistic minority students' language learning process, psychological support should be on site, too. Many linguistic minority students have experienced stressful or horrible events. Helping them to learn to cope with these stresses is important. With respect to anxiety, SLA researchers have tried to find what caused language anxiety among linguistic minority students. Scovel (1991:16) believed it is a psychological construct which most likely stems from the learner's own 'self' in the sociocultural context, for example, the way he or she sees self, sees others such as peers and teachers, and the target language communication situations. Language anxiety can also be a result of 'insufficient command of the target language' (Horwitz, 2001:118). It occurs due to the linguistic difficulties that linguistic minority students face in

learning and using the target language. There are also extrinsic motivators, such as the different sociocultural environments and people's own concerns about ethnicity and, otherness (Scovel, 1991). The social status of the linguistic minority students and their families, a sense of power relations between them and the native speakers can also contribute to language anxiety. Linguistic minority students might have felt imbalanced power relations when they tried to become a member in her classmates' friend-circles. Also, their anxiety could stem from her low mastery of L2.

As acknowledged by many other researchers in the field (Dörnyei 2003, Rossiter 2003; Brown, 1994), affective contributions should be given considerable thought because of their centrality in second language learning. As pointed out by Gordon (2007) negative emotions can inhibit language production. For example when a child feels intimidated, tense or overwhelmed he or she can 'freeze', go blank, have a mental block or become speechless whereas when a child is relaxed and happy they are likely to be more prepared to understand or speak the target language. London (2003) found that children who are not in full command of second language may experience difficulties understanding instruction. These children, who are in the process of acquiring L2, have to think about ideas and solve problems in L2. This may create academic and emotional problems, and may lead to frustration, and ultimately damaging their self confidence and self-esteem, almost to the point of feeling helpless (London, 2003).

Other situations that may give rise to similar affective states include not having adequate interaction with speakers of L2, limited [L1 and L2] proficiency and low motivation (Gass and Schachter 1989). Negative attitudes or adverse comments of native speakers of L2 can also cause learners of the language anguish. Although this tends to affect older children and adults most it can also easily upset younger children. For teachers, probably a further investigation of these factors could possibly help them to identify the difficulties linguistic minority students are experiencing and help them make the classroom setting less anxiety-provoking and hence to improve learners' performance in L2.

Similarly, interactions between linguistic minority learners and more proficient speakers are an important part of the process of language acquisition. Long (1996)

reviewed research on the role of interaction in SLA and concluded that although there was some debate over interactions are a necessary component of L2 development, they have been shown to facilitate language learning. Interactions with proficient speakers of a target language allows linguistic minority students to develop their L2 competence because it connects 'input, internal learner capacities,…and output in productive ways' (Long, 1996:452). Gass (2003:234) made a stronger claim for the role of interaction, stating that the research has suggested that 'conversation is not only a medium of practice, but also the means by which learning takes place.

Not all interactions are equally facilitative of language learning. Long described facilitative intearactions are those interactions in which learners must negotiate for meaning. In negotiating for meaning, both linguistic minority students and more proficient speakers must make 'adjustments to linguistic form, conversational structure, message content, or all three, until an acceptable level of understanding is achieved' (Long, 1996:418). Long further suggest that interactions are particularly beneficial to students when they contain negotiation work that triggers interactional adjustments by native speakers or more competent speakers. When proficient speakers make adjustments to their speech to accommodate the linguistic capability of a lower proficiency interlocutor, they are not only providing learners with linguistic input, they are ensuring that the input is comprehensible to the learner. Long provided evidence that the comprehensible input that proficient speakers produce is more helpful to learners' L2 acquisition than the unmodified input that learners would receive if more proficient speakers did not modify their speech. Additionally, cooperative proficient speakers work to maintain the conversation, asking frequent questions and making repairs when needed. Thus, facilitative interactions require a great deal of accommodation and effort on the part of the more proficient speaker.

Various scholars have suggested inclusive classroom strategies for elementary teachers in linguistically diverse classrooms (Jacob & Mattson, 1990; Whitehead, 1996; Coelho, 1998; Clauss-Ehlers, 2006). These include: classroom predictability and acceptance of all learners linguistically and culturally as individuals and as speakers of a language (Coelho, 1998; Clauss-Ehlers, 2006); instructional activities that maximize opportunities for language use (Clauss-Ehlers, 2006); and instructional

content that utilizes students' diversity by integrating cultural and linguistic experiences throughout the curriculum (Clauss-Ehlers, 2006).

Other strategies include inclusive displays through the visual environment of the classroom which could give important messages to students about their membership in the classroom community (Coelho, 1998; Curran, 2003); partners and peer tutors (pairing/grouping) to facilitate peer interpretations (Whitehead, 1996; Coelho, 1998; Curran, 2003); cooperative learning using group brainstorming and learning teams (Jacob & Mattson, 1990; Coelho, 1998; Curran, 2003); and offering support for language learning (Coelho, 1998; Clauss-Ehlers, 2006).

Having discussed what different scholars suggest as inclusive strategies in multilingual classrooms, below we will go through studies that have been done on managing linguistic diversity to shed light on how teachers employ such strategies when dealing with linguistically diverse learners.

2.5.3 Strategies for Managing Linguistic Diversity

Several studies show that teachers carry out various strategies to manage learners in multilingual classrooms. The strategies include grouping or pairing learners with same mother tongue to enhance discussion in a familiar language (Cummins, 2007; Lucas & Katz, 1994), involving linguistic minority community members and parents to mediate language barriers (Lucas & Katz, 1994) as well as using bilingual children as peer interpreters within the classroom (Lucas & Katz, 1994; Curran, 2003), cooperative learning (Curran, 2003), and code switching (Adendorff, 1993; Arthur, 1994).

2.5.3.1 Using Bilingual Children as Peer Interpreters

This is a commonly employed strategy in multilingual classrooms. Lucas & Katz (1994) write that students from the same linguistic background are grouped together and assisted by peers who are more fluent in the medium of instruction. This enhances peer interpretation from students who are not only more proficient in the medium of instruction but also share L1 with members of the group.

2.5.3.2 Pairing Based on Native Languages Spoken

In multilingual classroom, grouping learners on the basis of shared L1s enhances classroom talk and discussion, when the children are allowed to discuss concepts and share ideas in a language they are most comfortable with. Wang (2006) asserts that in collaboration with others, the experienced peers offer scaffold assistance to other learners and guide them to complete tasks or solve problems that would not be successfully completed or solved without the peers' assistance. Such collaboration provides an environment in which peers give and receive help from each other, exchange resources and information, give and receive feedback, challenge and encourage each other and jointly complete a given task. Pluddemannet, Mati, & Mahlalela-Thusi (2000) however, advise that native language grouping should be employed with cautions. The authors emphasize that linguistic minority children should not be stigmatized by being classified into native language groupings throughout the school day. It is advisable to look for other strategies that could be used in combination with native language.

In addition, this strategy, which pairs two students of differing abilities and backgrounds, this especially entail working with a variety of other students, both linguistic minority children and native speakers, at different types of activities (Saravia-Shore & Garcia, 1995; Snowman & Biehler, 2003). When native Amharic speaking children are paired with linguistic minority learners, they become teachers and resources for each other, often relating better to each other than they would to a teacher (Kline, 1995). Furthermore, peer tutoring promotes communication, motivates students, and helps learners attain higher levels of achievement while developing friendships between students from different backgrounds (Saravia-Shore & Garcia, 1995; Snowman & Biehler, 2003).

The academic and social benefits of pairing have been recognized by educational scholars who investigate culturally responsive teaching strategies (Crandall, Jaramillo, Olsen, & Peyton, 2001; King, 1982; Webb, 1988). For the tutor, peer tutoring enhances the development of leadership and interpersonal skills, self-confidence, and self-esteem. It also offers the tutor the opportunity to work one-to-one with a peer who is performing at a different level of achievement, facilitating a new appreciation and understanding of others who may be different (Webb, 1988). Peer tutoring

actively engages tutees in learning as their partners model the L2, and they practice speaking in authentic, conversational situations. As they interact, converse, listen, and share ideas, there is immediate feedback, clarification, and modification. Because students with limited Amharic speaking skills are often apprehensive and afraid to seek help from a teacher, working with a peer has many benefits for young learners (Curtin, 2006; Cummins, 2007; Lucas & Katz, 1994).

Peer tutoring can be implemented in any subject area and may be used to revise and complete assignments, practice new skills, review for tests, solve problems, and gather information (Vaughn, Bos, & Schumm, 2003). Although most children welcome the opportunity to work with a classmate because of learning style preferences and because peer tutoring is more fun than working alone (Carbo & Kapinus, 1995), there are some potential pitfalls in pairing students. For example, students may get off-task and spend more time socializing than working, and higher-achieving students may become resentful if asked too often to help their lower-achieving peers (Vaughn, Bos, & Schumm, 2003). Attentive monitoring of activities, thoughtful decisions about pairing students, and specific guidelines and rules about working together can help to minimize these problems in classrooms.

2.5.3.3 Cooperative Learning

A wealth of research has demonstrated that cooperative learning is an instructional approach that benefits all students, and, in particular, students from diverse linguistic backgrounds (Kline, 1995; Johnson & Johnson, 1990; Slavin, 1991; Willis, 2007). Grouping students from different linguistic backgrounds into heterogeneous groups and instructing them to collaborate and cooperate with each other on activities and problem- solving tasks has been found to promote inter-ethnic friendships, develop cross-cultural understandings, and build teamwork while also enhancing literacy and language acquisition among linguistically diverse students (Crandall, 1999; Saravia-Shore & Garcia, 1995; Slavin, 1990; Snowman & Biehler, 2003). Cooperative learning also assists diverse students in developing intellectual autonomy (Crandall, 1999). Furthermore, because young children are extremely interested in their peers, cooperative learning provides a perfect opportunity for them to interact and collaborate with friends and other young people who are likely to become friends.

During cooperative learning, students work together in small groups that are positively interdependent (Jacob & Mattson, 1990; Curran, 2003). The children could be grouped on the basis of native language or level of proficiency in mother tongue education. An assumption in some socio-cultural approaches is that higher cognitive skills of individuals develop through participation in socially and culturally organized activities. From a socio cultural perspective, collaboration plays an important role in thinking and learning. According to Wang (2006), through collaboration, learners interact among themselves, engage in completing tasks and solving problems and explore answers to the tasks and problems. As they work together, learners support and assist one another to bring about learning. Jacob & Mattson (1990) and Cheng (1996) carried out research on the employment of cooperative learning with limited L2 proficiency students in the mainstream classroom, and found that cooperative learning resulted in increased language proficiency, improved academic achievement and improved social relations among students. The study also showed that students' participation in the classroom increased.

Interactions between linguistic minority learners and more proficient speakers are an important part of the process of language acquisition. Long (1996) reviewed research on the role of interaction in second language acquisition and concluded that although there was some debate over whether interactions are a necessary component of L2 development, they have been shown to facilitate language learning. Interaction with proficient speakers of a target language allows language learners to develop their L2 competence because it 'connects input, internal learner capacities . . . and output in productive ways' (Long, 1996:425). Cummins (1991) also notes the more children interact and play with their friends or classmates, the more comfortable they feel, and the faster they develop converstional language. According to Cummins (1991), playground language is where linguistic minority children learn the fastest in language acquisition. Lack of conversation or limited conversation due to language barriers in the classrooms impedes language development. More conversation promotes language development. Children need to ask questions, explain things and negotiate meaning between themselves and other children, between themselves and teachers, they need to continue their oral language development during school years in order to expand their vocabulary (Clay, 1998; Whitehead, 1996). This could be achieved by providing as much as possible opportunities for the children to use the

language, for instance group work and role-play. This will build up children's confidence to use the language.

2.5.3.4 Code Switching

The term code switching has been defined variously by different scholars. Kamwanagamalu (2010) defines code switching as the inter-sentential alternating use of two or more languages or varieties of a language in the same speech situation. On the other hand, Baker (2001:101) defines it as 'any switch within the course of a single conversation, whether at the word or sentence level or at the level of blocks'. A related term, code mixing has been defined as the 'intrasentential use of two or more languages or varieties of a language (Kamwangamalu, 2010:116). Although code mixing and code switching have traditionally been used as distinct terms, in the recent years, the terms have been used synonymously.

On the other hand, some scholars have defined code switching from its communicative resourcefulness to multilingual education settings. Adendorff (1996:389) defines code switching as 'a communicative resource that enables teachers and learners to accomplish social and educational objectives'.

The issue of whether the students' mother tongue should be used in the classroom has always been the subject of discussion by researchers. The ability to code switch is an important tool for the individual in the learning process within the context of a multilingual society. Code switching can allow children to understand subjects well in their local languages while learning the majority language. Every conversational interaction between the learner and the teacher reveals to the learner not only information about language but also information about the world in which this language use is occurring. In their ethnographic study, Chimbganda and Mokgwathi (2012) found that code switching was used in second language classrooms as a pedagogical resource to clarify the knowledge of the subject matter and to reduce the social distance between the teacher and learners.

Using students' native languages in classroom can also help them develop L2 proficiency. Although it may appear contrary to common sense, maintaining and developing one's native language does not interfere with the developing of L2

proficiency. Experience shows that many people around the world become fully multilingual without suffering interference from one language in the learning of the other (Beardsmore, 1993). Research findings show that one of the best predictors of second language proficiency is proficiency in the mother tongue. Cummins' linguistic interdependence principle (1981) explains this phenomenon by identifying a common underlying proficiency that enables academic and literacy-related skills to transfer across languages.

On the same tone, Arthur (1996) emphases that allowing the interaction of learners and teachers can lead to the negotiation of meaning, and offers a more effective way of assisting learners' comprehension, but restricting the language can decrease their participation especially those who are not competent enough in L2 as they are dis couraged from expressing themselves well. According to Arthur (1996) many bilingual teachers try to facilitate their learners' comprehension through using code switching practices in order to provide a good level of bilingual support, so in cases where learners are just restricted to only L2, they find it difficult to understand everything; therefore code switching could be a good practice to be used in multilingual classrooms.

Besides, native language use and development have psychological benefits in addition to serving as a practical pedagogical tool for providing access to academic content, allowing more effective interaction, and providing greater access to prior knowledge. Using and valuing students' native languages in schools and classrooms supports and enhances the students' learning because they themselves are indirectly valued (Lucas, Henze, & Donato, 1990). The use of students' native languages can also increase their openness to learning by reducing the degree of language shock they are encountering. Because 'relations of power and their affective consequences are integral to language acquisition' (Auerbach, 1993:16), student learning can also be enhanced by integrating students' native languages into their educational experiences, thus giving their languages a status more comparable to that of second language (Auerbach, 1993).

One could have reason to feel that code-switching could be used as an alternative way of using two languages in lessons, because it offers teachers and learners flexibility in

their interaction and in the process allows the learners a great opportunity for participation in the lesson (Arthur & Martin, 2006). Creese and Blackledge (2010) state code switching can be seen as a resource for linguistically diverse community for it supports students to comprehend lessons in detail.

Nevertheless, the use of the mother tongue in the classroom depends on how teachers believe in it. Thus it is wise to make teachers aware of the language not only about its structure and semantics, but also about its social and cultural aspects that can make it either a 'good' or a 'bad' language (Kostogriz, 2009). Cummins (2000) is of the opinion that in a linguistically diverse classroom there is a need to release the monolingual instructional approach and advocate a multilingual classroom should exert educational efforts that take into account and builds on the diversity of the languages and literacy practices that children bring to school.

This means teachers should recognize learners' language and culture and try to be creative and flexible in their lesson preparations and deliveries in order to cater for all the learners. In most cases, teachers insist on the separation of languages from which L2 is supposed to be strictly separated from the learners' vernacular languages although sometimes these learners are not well equipped with necessary L2 skills, and sometimes put strict rules forbidding learners from code switching in classrooms. This, according to Jones, (2010), will contribute to learners' poor performance and lack of motivation.

Additionally, scientific evidence from studies with young L2 children (Zentella, 1997) reports that younger children show more lexical item code switch than older children. A common assumption to explain this finding is that children code switch when they do not know the word in one language. It is incorrect, however, to assume that all cases of this type of code switch are the result of incomplete knowledge of one of the languages. In some cases, children might be momentarily unable to access a word for a concept in the language in use, but can access one more readily in the other language. On the other hand, older children seem to manipulate their linguistic codes for a wider variety of stylistic purposes and situational demands than younger children do (Zentella, 1997).

Coupled with the increasing occurrence of code switching practices in second medium of instruction, recent research trends evidence and recognize the academic benefits of code switching. In terms of language use, Cook (2001) maintains that instead of considering learners who resort to code switching practices in a second instructional language as deficient users of the second, they should rather be viewed as multi competent language users.

2.5.3.5 Use of Visuals

As classrooms become more diverse, visual aids are valuable and possibly necessary instructional tools while accommodating the many different learning styles of multilingual and multicultural learners (Curtin, 2006). Pictures, cartoons, maps, graphs, charts, diagrams, videos, and other multimedia resources enhance learning and have been found to be especially helpful to students whose first language is not Amharic because they help reinforce key ideas by presenting information in alternative formats (Carrier, 2005). For linguistically diverse learners, visual teaching aids ensure that learners attach meaning and mental images to words and concepts through the use of concrete instructional materials (Curtin, 2006).

There are myriad ways that teachers can incorporate visuals into lessons. Student constructed visuals such as drawings, posters, graphic organizers, storyboards, and autophotography can increase motivation and help students, especially second language learners, express their thoughts through non-verbal means of expression (Carrier, 2005; Moran-Ender & Ender, 1995; Crandall, Jaramillo, Olsen, & Peyton, 2001). Teachers can also develop their own visuals such graphic organizers, flash cards, games, and handouts that include pictures and symbols that correlate with specific lessons. The use of multiple and varied visual aids also can capture the interest of students who require frequent stimuli to keep them engaged in learning.

2.6.3.6 Parental Involvement

Research studies show that parental involvement has a positive impact on the learners' performance and academic achievement, increased cognitive competence, enjoyment, attendance and fewer behavioral problems (Martinez & Velazquez, 2000; Green, 2003; Epstein and Clark, 2004). When teachers involve minority parents as partners in their children's education, parents appear to develop a sense of efficacy

that communicates itself to children with positive academic consequences. Parental home support with reading particularly benefits learners' reading achievement, expressive language skills and language comprehension (Clark & Clark, 2004). Besides, Parental involvement is vital at early school level so that young children succeed academically and personally. As classrooms become heterogenous, it will be even more important to build bridges between the home and school and find ways to increase parental participation (Allison, 2003; Allyn, 2004; Clark & Clark, 2005).

Studies further show that when parents are involved in decision-making in the learning of their children, they develop confidence and a sense of own efficacy, which impacts positively on students' learning and diminishes the negative stereotyping that teachers often develop (Cummins, 1986; García & Otheguy, 1987; Greenburg, 1989). This means that involving community members, especially parents, in the schools would have a dual advantage, that is, it would serve as a strategy for dealing with the language diversity in the classroom and also boosting the achievement of the learners as well as reversing teachers' negative attitudes and stereotypes.

Communication between parents and school also play a critical role in supporting native language development and second language proficiency. Research supports teaching parents to promote their children's native language skills at home, which in turn helps children, learn L2 more quickly because proficiency in the native language supports and increases proficiency in second language (Faltis, 1993; Perez & Torres-Guzman, 1996). Baker (1992) describes most minority language parents are eager to see their children succeed in school and the broader society. They also want their children to learn L1 and to be proud of their cultural heritage. Though few empirical studies have been reported, it seems that parents with these dual language goals tend to act more on promoting second language learning than on their expressed desire for mother tongue learning. This behaviour in turn affects children's self concept: they sense that the home language is less important, resulting in weakening of L1 in favour of L2. Hence, positive identity commences at home and teachers and school adminstrartors tell parents that home language is to be valued and developed (Simich-Dudgeon, 1986; Siraj-Blatchford & Clarke, 2000).

Nevertheless, certain challenges arise in involving parents in school activities. Romanowski (2002) concurs that the main barriers to parental involvement are school-based, such as undervaluing of parental importance and hostile school environment; parents' lack of majority language proficiency and low level of formal education which inhibits their communication with school and providing academic support to their children; discrepancies between school culture and home culture, such as parents' expectations of teachers.

Several empirical studies promote the parents' role as a child's first teacher in learning (Wong Fillmore, 1991). Effective home-school communication and parent involvement in children's education enhances educational success and academic outcomes. Some of the benefits of parent involvement include collaboration, building mutual trust and effective partnership.

Generally, teachers of linguistically diverse learners employ a variety of strategies in an attempt to be inclusive and to make content accessible to learners who may not speak the school languages. It is, however, important to note strategies that work with one group may not necessarily work with all other groups (Coelho, 1998). As such, teachers in multilingual classrooms need to adopt more inclusive approach when working with linguistically diverse groups. To do this, teachers must have the appropriate skills for dealing with linguistically diverse learners and attitudinal predisposition that is positive towards diversity.

2.6 Language and Identity

The relationship between language and identity is significant and multifaceted. Coulmas, (2005) states that language allows communication as it is an expression of thoughts, and it is also a marker of identity where group membership can differentiate individuals in terms of social class, religion, race and ethnicity based on the way these individuals talk and interact with one another in specific contexts.

Within the frame of traditional modernist views, identity is viewed as a unified, cohesive essence and a set of determined and achieved characteristics. To this end, an individual's identity is fixed as his or her class, socioeconomic status, gender, and ethnic identity. It is constructed within the notion that the self is separate from the

world. These modernist constructs have been criticized for its narrow representation of the self as an 'essential core' and a 'set of stable personality traits that are a social in nature' (Broughton, 2002:3). Scholars in feminist and cultural studies (Bhabha, 1994; Butler, 1990) view identity to be constructed and constituted through social, cultural and professional practices. However, Pavlenko (2002) argument challenges the Western perception of identity as universal on the basis that the concepts of 'self' differ in different cultures and ethnic groups.

The modernist idea of identity centers on its dualism about relations of reality (i.e., objects or subject, self or other, individual or society, ego or world). According to Gu (2010), 'mind' or 'society' and 'object' or 'subject' binaries are a 'product of Modernism' that provide a historical and philosophical account of mind and society split and a critical examination of binary epistemology, which has been prevalent in Western discourse. She clarified that the dominant assumption of self in Western society traces back to the Cartesian individualistic subject constructed by the claim that 'reason exists within the individual mind'. The Cartesian subject illuminates a self-distinguished from the other.

Post structuralist theory was developed from the objections that were raised to the structuralist paradigm to the study of social factors. According to Pavlenko (2002), post structuralist theory attempts to explore and theorize the role of language in construction and reproduction of social relation. Besides, it investigates the role of social dynamics in the processes of additional language learning and use.

Within a post structuralist framework, language is viewed as the means through which identity is constructed (Gu, 2010; Pavlenko, 2002). At the center of the post structuralist's conceptualization of identity is the view of the identities of language users as multiple and fluid. Identity is fluid in that it is constantly changing based on one's experiences and multiple in that people adopt different identities depending on their environment (Block, 2007; Gu, 2009; Pavlenko, 2002).

Identity from a poststructuralist perspective involves two interrelated assumptions: firstly, identity is not a fixed entity; secondly, 'self' or 'other' relationships are historically, socially, culturally, religiously and ideologically constructed (Gumperz,

1982). These assumptions force us to consider the importance of knowing and understanding the self in terms of others and articulate subjects in the dynamic relationships between the individual and the social. Within poststructuralist approach conceptualizing self in new ways would mean to understand a sense of self and its formation within larger social processes in which social identities are produced, intensifies, or rejected through everyday social practices, with regard to changing social and material conditions of language, culture, life, and subjectivity (Collins & Blot, 2003; Watson-Gegeo, 2004).

2.7 Identity and Second Language Learning

In this study, language is viewed in its broad and sociolinguistic aspect rather than focusing only on grammar and vocabulary. This approach is consistent with a sociolinguistic understanding of language and identity. The concept of language in this particular study is certainly not limited to a 'set of rules for communication' (Gee, 1990). Rather, it is about a view of language as the key element for identity construction.

The relationship between identity and language learning has received a lot of attention from researchers in the field of second language acquisition. Norton (2000) argues that the second language learner's identity is multiple, a site of struggle, and subject to change. Gee (2000) also argues, among other things, second language classrooms, by and large, are venues for learners to construct their identities, which are socially, culturally, politically and historically situated. Second language classrooms are considered as important venues for learners to acquire L2 where teachers scaffold students to gain particular linguistic and academic competencies altogether. In this regard, participation in the classroom is seen as one of the efforts for students to acquire those competencies.

Research found that second language learners' identities were constructed, practiced, and revealed in a strong association with their school competences developed in particular learning contexts. Toohey's (2000:125) three-year longitudinal ethnography of second language learners in an elementary mainstream classroom, for instance, reported that the linguistic minority students' identities were 'the product' of specific school participation and social integration which together resulted in the development

of their school competences in language, academics, behavior, and social relations. Those linguistic minority learners also perceived their L2 language proficiency and academic competence in accordance with: their positioning in discursive practices (access to second language learning); their socialization into the norms, values, and behaviors of the classroom community; and their subsequently endowed social identities.

The relations between identity and the development of second language (L2) proficiency was described in Day's (2002) one year ethnographic case study in a mainstream classroom. Discursive analysis of the social dimension of the classroom community revealed that his 'language learning, language choice, social interaction, and identity were inextricably interwoven' (Day, 2002:54). From poststructural perspectives, Day (2002), like Toohey (2000), argued that linguistic minority students' negotiation of identities depended on their situatedness in specific social network within classrooms as well as the types and qualities of L2 practices in which they engaged for the improvement of second language proficiency.

Among a variety of competences required in school, second language competence played a crucial role in linguistic minority students' identity negotiation. In her qualitative study, Morita (2004) investigates how non-native English speaking learners struggle to negotiate their membership in classrooms. Morita (2004) discusses some serious difficulties non-native English speakers experience in gaining recognition as legitimate members in their classroom communities, leading to the construction of inferior identities, in which they consider themselves incompetent. In similar vein, Skilton-Sylvester (2002) focused on how learners' identities affect their willingness and ability to attend second language classes. Skilton-Silvester included data from interviews with teachers that revealed second language classroom created identities for learners that affected their learning within the classroom. To illustrate, one teacher mentioned that he had been told that students were not interested in working, so he did not consider bringing materials related to employment to the class.

Previous researches have also suggested the interdependency among: linguistic minority students' feelings and emotions; identities; and varied school practices in L2 acquisition, academic learning, and cultural adaptation (Day, 2002; Duff, 2002;

Goldstein, 1995; Norton Peirce, 1995). Day (2002), for instance, pointed out that her case study participant's affective engagement during social interactions consciously and unconsciously influenced his classroom participation and access to second language practice, and subsequently shaped his language and academic identities. The contradictions and tensions in identity negotiation was also reported in Duff's (2002) study of linguistic minority students. As second language learners, the participants consistently received expectations regarding 'how they should behave and speak, and which language they should use and when, whether L1 or L2. Their identity negotiation, therefore, often made them feel being caught between two unfavorable options: silence or mockery and hostility.

The perceptions and orientations of proficient speakers towards language learners also influence the opportunities that learners have to engage in L2 interactions. Rather than being willing partners in negotiation for meaning, researchers have found that proficient speakers often avoid interactions with linguistic minority students (Norton, 2000; Cervatiuc, 2009), or respond to linguistic minority students negatively with lack of attention, ridicule, mockery, rudeness, anger, and rejection (Derwing, 2003). Research has been done on the impact of negative reactions from native speaker to linguistic minority student's attempts to initiate interactions, but it has been suggested that it may have an inhibiting effect on learners' motivation to engage in communication with proficient speakers (Clément, 1980).

Adding to the complexity of identity negotiation is that the dominant group may position the minority group in certain ways, which may be desirable or undesirable to learners (Trent and Gao, 2009). Learners may choose to conform to or contest this positioning. They may successfully foreground certain identities to position themselves in particular ways, claim the right to speak, and achieve fuller participation (Norton Peirce, 1995). However, the resisting of positioning might have a negative impact on participation. Learners in Trent and Gao's (2009) study resisted and rejected the identities offered to them and enacted their preferred identity positions by adopting a strategy of non-participation in the classroom community. Thus, negotiating imposed identities created tensions for learners and influenced the nature of their participation. Kanno (2003) warns that labeling low proficient students as incompetent and peripheral members may lead to the legitimatization of their

marginality. That is, by taking it for granted that low proficient students are not full participants, many members may neglect unbalanced power relations and accompanying marginalized feelings that non-native students may experience in the community.

Norton (2000) further argues that the second language learner's identity is multiple, a site of struggle, and subject to change. As Norton and Toohey (2001) explain, the construct of investment seeks to make a meaningful connection between a learner's desire and commitment to learn a language, and the language practices of the classroom or community'. Learners can choose to invest in various aspects of their lives (family, work, education, etc.); their investment is representative of a desire to acquire a wider range of symbolic and material resources, which will in turn increase the value of their cultural capital. For instance, she raised the construct of 'investment'. If learners 'invest' in a second language, they do so with the understanding that they will acquire a wider range of symbolic and material resources, which will in turn increase the value of their linguistic capital.

Though many researchers have emphasized the social sphere of the language learners' identity negotiation, it is also equally crucial to capture identity in a holistic manner which encompasses both the learners' internal (intrapersonal, psychological, emotional, etc.) and external (interpersonal, social, contextual, etc) processes of identity negotiation. As a result, many poststructural identity researchers often explain individual identities with the common descriptors, such as 'dynamic,' 'fluid,' 'complex,' and 'multiple.' Since there are intricate links between the learners' identities, language acquisition, socioemotional experiences, and the context of learning, their emphasis on the complexity of identity negotiation as an integral part of human experiences is crucial.

2.8 Communication Strategies

Selinker (1972) proposes the concept of 'communication strategies', which he defines as a by-product of a learner's attempt to express meaning in spontaneous speech through a limited target language system.

In early work, communication strategy was regarded as language learners' problem-solving behavior in the process of target language communication. One of the definitions most often referred to is the one provided by Tarone 1980, who considers communication strategies to be an interactional phenomenon: 'a mutual attempt of two interlocutors to agree on a meaning in situations where requisite meaning structures are not shared'. Thus, communication strategies are utilized to bridge the gap between the linguistic knowledge of the second language learner and that of the target language interlocutor in real communication situations so as to avoid communication disruptions. Tarone's definition has been criticized in that it does not account for situations where there is no or delayed feedback, as in lectures.

In contrast, Færch & Kasper (1983) have adopted a psycholinguistic approach and recognize communication strategies as being a part of the planning process. The strategies are used when the learner has problems with the original plan and cannot execute it: 'potentially conscious plans for solving what to an individual presents itself as a problem in reaching a particular communicative goal'. It has been argued that 'problematicity' shouldn't be regarded as a defining criterion of communication strategies.

According to Bialystok (1990), communication strategies may be used equally well in situations where no problems have arisen, as is the case when a native speaker gives a road description to a stranger using a long definition instead of the actual word. Bialystok has also questioned 'consciousnesses' as a criterion in defining communication strategies.

On the other hand, Brown (1987) writes communication strategies as a conscious employment of verbal and non-verbal tools for communicating an idea when precise linguistic forms are for some reason not available to the learner right at that spot in communication. In other words, communication strategies are applied to facilitate one's transmission of messages in the production of oral expressions, and they can be in either verbal or nonverbal forms. For instance, paraphrasing, circumlocution, and approximation are the verbal mechanism, and eye contact, facial expression, gesture, and mime are called nonverbal mechanisms. As to Brown, these mechanisms are all techniques which can be utilized to smooth one's message. Hence, communication

strategies are plans that learners or speakers adopt in order to carry out communicative task effectively.

Several definitions of communication strategies have been proposed since the concept was first introduced by Selinker in 1972. However, there have not been universally unified definations of communication strategies due to different approaches and methodologies adopted by researchers to study learners' use of communication strategies. Tarone (1981) and Brown's (1987) view that strategy is consciously employed by language users. From the pedagogic implications of consciousness rising being included in language teaching methods, Faerch and Kasper (1983) and Bialystok (1990) believe that strategy use is potential consciousness. However, it is clear that communication strategies are specific means employed by language learners or speakers to cope with their difficulties in producing the intended utterances in communication.

2.8.1 Taxonomy of Communication Strategies

The early taxonomies are based on surface structural differences in the utterances and have proposed several linguistic possibilities to express a thought. Tarone (1981) has, from an interactional perspective, claimed that there are strategies intended to overcome the differences between the learner's and the native speaker's linguistic knowledge as well as strategies that are applied when there does not seem to be any solution to the problem. In Tarone's taxonomy, five main categories are distinguished: avoidance, paraphrase, conscious transfer, appeal for assistance and mime. In avoidance strategies the learner decides not to say anything in order to avoid communication problems. There are two possibilities; topic avoidance where the problem is avoided and message abandonment where the learner starts to refer to an object but gives up because it is too difficult. With paraphrase Tarone means the rewording of the message in an alternate, acceptable target language construction, in situations where the appropriate form or construction is not known or not yet stable. Paraphrase is divided into approximation, wordcoinage and circumlocution. Conscious transfer involves translating word for word from the native language, literal translation, or the use of a native language term, language switch. In appeal for assistance the learner asks for the correct term, whilst non-linguistic signal is the use of non-verbal strategies.

Færch & Kasper place communication strategies in a model of speech production. The model (Faérch and Kasper, 1983, 1984) has two phases: a planning phase where the plan is developed and an execution phase where the plan is executed. If there are problems with the plan so that it cannot be executed, the learner either avoids the problem which leads to a change of the communicative goal and reduction strategies, or faces the problem and develops an alternative plan which leads to achievement strategies. With formal reduction the learner communicates by means of a system that has been phonologically, morphologically, syntactically, or lexically reduced, whereas functional reduction involves a reduced communicative goal. Besides Tarone's 'topic avoidance' and 'message abandonment', Færch & Kasper also include meaning replacement as a functional reduction. The use of a 'meaning replacement' strategy implies a more general reference to the subject. Achievement strategies can either be to solve problems in the planning phase, compensatory strategies, or to somehow get hold of the missing term, retrieval strategies. The subtypes of 'compensatory strategies' are based on a different code ('code switching' and 'interlingual transfer'), a different code and the IL code ('inter-/intralingual transfer'), only the IL code ('generalization', 'paraphrase', 'word coinage' and 'restructuring'), discourse phenomena ('cooperative strategies') or nonlinguistic communication ('mime', 'gestures', etc.). 'Generalization', 'paraphrase' and 'word coinage' correspond approximately to Tarone's 'approximation', 'circumlocution' and 'word coinage' respectively.

The most severe criticism of the traditional taxonomies has been directed towards their psychological credibility. Kellerman 1991 claims that some of the strategies demonstrate the same underlying cognitive processes and should therefore not be classified as different strategies even if they have different linguistic realisations. It has also been argued that the strategies are not generalised over task, language, and learner. The more practical problems concern the definitions of the strategies, that are sometimes too vague, and the choice of some criteria, for instance, 'the construction of a new word' as a definition for 'word coinage' excludes all the words created by the learner but that already exist in the language.

More recent taxonomies are based on underlying processes involved in the production of communication strategies, which makes them psychologically plausible. Bialystok

(1990) has expressed the importance of strategies differing in a psychologically correct way. Her theory is therefore based on the distinction between 'analysis' (and 'knowledge') and 'control' which is firmly grounded in cognitive psychology. Bialystok's 'analysis-based strategy' is an attempt to convey the structure of the intended concept by making explicit the relational defining features. The speaker modifies the content of the message by using his knowledge about the concept, e.g. to give information about it. A 'control-based strategy' is the manipulation of form of expression through attention to different sources of information. Contrary to 'analysis-based strategies' the speaker here keeps the original intention with the utterance and turns to different means of reference outside the L2.

A lot of studies have been done to categorize communication strategies into different categories, and they are classified into two major categories: achievement or compensatory strategies, and reduction or avoidance strategies. Bialystok (1990) notes that the variety of classifications developed differ primarily in terminology rather than in the substance of specific strategies. Although the terms may be defined differently by various researchers, they are basically used to the same or similar types of strategies. When learners encounter communication difficulties, they may employ one strategy, or they may employ several strategies to overcome the problems at the same time.

2.8.2 Emperical studies on communication strategies

A number of studies which have investigated the relationship between the choice of communication strategy and language proficiency point out that the proficiency level of the learner influences the strategy usage. A learner's language proficiency is a potentially influential factor in the choice of communication strategies. It is found that learners with different target language proficiency levels drew upon different sources of knowledge to solve their communication problems. Wannaruk (2003) studied the effects of language proficiency on frequency and types of communication strategies. The subjects were divided into low proficiency and high proficiency. Wannaruk noted the most employed communication strategies by the less proficient students included gestures, code switching strategy, appeal for help and topic avoidance. Cummins (2000) and Bialystok (2001) further state that learners use non linguistic signals and appeal for help when they fail to communicate in L2. While non linguistic signals and

appealing for help assist the understanding and learning of conversational language, these kinds of cues are absent or reduced when individuals listen to, speak, read, or write in academic language, often found in school settings.

Several studies have also indicated that when low proficient L2 students have more difficulty speaking L2, they tend to employ non linguistic signals more (Krauss & Hadar, 1999). On the other hand, Sack (1992) claims non linguistic signals are said to be used as support to verbal output or to signal appeal to the interlocutor. However, Oda, (2001) reported multiple non linguistic signals in one clause are taken to indicate L2 speech disfluency. Some studies have also suggested that proficiency affects the type of strategies chosen by learners. In Dornyei's (1995), students with low oral proficiency tended to use appeal for help strategy when they do not know the answer to the questions or they could not understand some words or the whole sentences during the interaction.

A recent study on the field of communication strategies was conducted by Palupi (2008). She conducted on communication strategies used by primary school children. The data analysis indicated that low proficient children used avoidance and message abandonment strategies which they employ when they have difficulties in expressing what they intend to say. These behaviors can negatively affect the content of the interaction and are common among low-proficiency learners. One possibility is that they lacked the lexis to continue and consequently abandoned the message altogether.

Similarly, Cenoz (1998) notes hesitations and pauses may signal an implicit appeal for an 'answer', or they may simply be the student's way of providing a bit of breathing room while he or she searches for the desired term or expression. Chen (1990) studied the relationship between L2 learners' strategic competence and their target language proficiency. The results indicated that high-proficiency learners employed linguistic-based communication strategies more frequently while the low-proficiency learners used time gaining and repetition strategies. ASHA (1985) also reports that pauses hesitation, and repetition most often signal the learner's struggle to find the term he or she needs, and indicate disfluencies on the part of the learners.

Below, the most influencial taxonomies in the communication strategies research which will be used to inform the taxonomies of the present study will be discussed. Some key empirical studies on language learners' use of communication strategies are reviewed, as they are closely relevant to the present study with respect to the methodology and subjects.

I. Tarone (1977)

Tarone, Cohen, & Dumas's (1976) framework of communication strategies was the first taxonomy which identifies six types of communication strategies involving four elements of language, i.e., phonology, morphology, syntax, and lexicon. However, it was criticized for its account of learner language only based on error analysis (Faerck & Kasper, 1983). It was later revised by Tarone (1977). Within the same terminological framework developed in previous study (Tarone, Cohen, & Dumas's, 1976), Tarone carefully examined the communication strategies used by nine subjects from three different first-language backgrounds, (Spanish, Turkish, & Mandarin) learners of English. They were asked to tell the stories depicted by the pictures in both their native languages and English. The results show that L2 learners performed the following communication strategies when narrating the stories in the target language:

a. Avoidance: it occurred when the learner did not want to continue the topic because of certain difficulty and then move on to the other topics
b. Paraphrase: Tarone states that paraphrase is the 'rewording of the message in an alternate, acceptable target language construction, in situations where the appropriate form or construction is not known or yet stable' (1977:198).
    - Approximation: this was used when the learner could not use the exact word but its hyponyms which share some of the same semantic features.
    - Word-coinage: the learner made up a new word based on their interlanguage knowledge.
    - Circumlocution: the learner intended to express the meaning by giving examples or his or her knowledge about the concept.

c. Conscious transfer: one of Tarone's subjects, Mandarin speaker, literally translated the meaning in Mandarin word foe word. Tarone (1977) points out that for L2 learners of other languages, the learners employed 'language switch' without bothering to translate literally.
d. Appeal for assistance: this occurred when the subject asked the experimenter for the correct term.
e. Non-linguistic signal: Non linguistic signals refer to the act of that a speaker uses non-verbal means to express his or her meanings.

Tarone's study is relevant to the present study from two aspects. First, the children from different first language backgrounds could show preferences in using different communication strategies. However, an explicit explanation of the reasons for the differences was not given. Second, the typology of communication strategies used by the learners offers a guideline for researcher to carefully look at how L2 children deal with the problem of vocabulary insufficiency. However, the criteria for distinguishing between some of the communication strategies were not explicitly stated. For example, 'paraphrase' might include 'circumlocution' but not 'word-coinage', since 'word-coinage' might involve using L2 learners' knowledge of word formation rules to create a non-existing word in L2 vocabulary.

II. Faerch & Kasper (1984)

Faerch & Kasper (1984) elicit taxonomy of communication strategies based on a study of Danish learners of English in a face-to-face conversation situation with Danish learners at various educational levels and native speakers of English, and a study of German learners of English in a role play conversation situation with English native speakers. The taxonomy consists of two major types of communication strategies, namely reduction strategies and achievement strategies, which result in different types of solutions to problems at all linguistic levels.

The first major type of communication strategies, reduction strategies, could be either formal or function; however, a distinction could not be clearly made due to lack of evidence in their data. However, Faerch & Kasper suggest that for formal reduction learners communicate by means of 'reduced' system, in order to avoid producing linguistic errors at the phonological, morphological, and syntactic and lexical levels.

As for function reduction, the learner reduces their communicative goal in order to avoid a problem which may be non-linguistic related, for example, avoiding the topic being discussed (topic avoidance), discontinuing the message to be delivered (message abandonment) or changing the meaning of the message (message replacement).

The second major type of communication strategies proposed by Faerch & Kasper is achievement strategies referring to the learner's attempt to solve problems in communication by expanding their communication resources. Faerch & Kasper's (1984) typology of achievement strategies consists of two sub-types, namely compensatory strategies and retrieval strategies. The compensatory strategies were further sub-categorized based on the resources available to the learners as code-switching and interlingual transfer (using L1 knowledge), inter-/intralingual transfer (using both L1 and IL/L2 knowledge), generalization, paraphrase, word-coinage, and restructuring (using IL/L2 knowledge), cooperative strategies (requesting others' knowledge) and mime (using non-linguistic resources).

2.9 Teachers' perceptions toward linguistic minority Students in the mainstream classroom

The perceptions of teachers have been found to play an important role in their interactions with their students. The types of perceptions that mainstream teachers have towards linguistic minority students are likely to affect what these students learn in the classroom. Teachers in various studies were portrayed as holding negative as well as positive perceptions. According to O'Brian (2011), the main themes around areas of challenge when working with linguistically diverse students were that teachers included difficulties with instructional accommodations, challenges in communication, lack of support necessary when linguistic minority students are included in instruction, and negative overall teacher views of linguistic minority students.

Time is a major concern for mainstream teachers of linguistically diverse learners (Verplaetse, 1998; Youngs, 1999). With schedules stretched to the limits, teachers are frustrated with the demands placed on them by their schools. Even the most welcoming teacher may feel resentment when linguistic minority student is enrolled

in her or his class because of the lack of time teachers are given to adequately prepare for students' needs. The individual attention linguistic minority students often require takes more time than even the most sympathetic teacher may be able to afford (Youngs, 1999). Modifying tasks, meeting with linguistic minority students after class, finding interpreters to communicate with linguistic minority parents to discuss linguistic minority students' progress all require time, time that teachers report they simply do not have.

Teachers may also believe that linguistically diverse learners have been misplaced in their mainstream classes, and have the belief that real teaching and learning for linguistically diverse students only happens in an L2 classroom. Some teachers have even voiced the opinion that linguistic minority students should stay in a separate classroom until they are able to speak the second language proficiently (Nixon, 1991; O'Brian, 2011; Reeves, 2006; Youngs & Youngs, Jr., 2011). Nixon (1991) found teachers do not believe linguistic minority students have enough language skills to be in the mainstream classroom; they believed there should be transitional classes before students are put in mainstream classes. While other teachers have the belief the best way to learn second language would be to just put linguistic minority children in the mainstream classroom. The thought is that the more they are surrounded by the language, the more quickly they will learn; linguistic minority children should only use L2 so they can learn the language more quickly. This contradicts the research results about how long it takes to learn a language. Cummins, (2001), found that it takes one to three years for linguistic minority learners to develop conversational proficiency in L2, but five to seven years to develop academic language, or the language needed for reading, writing, speaking, and listening in the content area.

Another issue is that many teachers view second language learners from a deficit perspective (Rodriguez et al., 2010). Teachers seem to think that linguistic minority students are not as 'intelligent' as native students, therefore, they cannot learn as easily. Similarly, Barcelos (2006:14) explains that teachers often use the 'language as a deficit' theory in which 'learners are viewed, compared, and judged according to an ideal view'. This theory implies that there are erroneous ways to use language. If teacher beliefs are oriented in the 'deficit' model, they will instruct students as though there is a problem to be fixed. When this happens, teachers tend to perpetuate a

subordinate status among linguistic minority speakers. Teachers who believe in 'language as a deficit' orientations perpetuate 'subordinate statuses' for languages other than the majority. Cummins (1989) states mainstream teachers must adopt a new set of beliefs in order to be effective with the linguistic minority students in their classrooms, and they need to accept linguistic minority students as students in their classroom. He further claims that teachers should not blame the students or their families for low achievement, but instead focuse on what the students bring to the classroom.

Fairchild and Edwards-Evans (1990); Edl, Jones, & Estell, (2008); Ferguson (1998); Reeves, (2006); and Noddings, (2005) further underscore that teachers teaching children whose mother tongue differ from that of the language of instruction often show lower expectations of those children and demand less from them. In other words, a student's language proficiency influenced a teacher's view of whether a particular student was a low or high academic achiever. When teachers expected their students to do well, interaction between them was what guided their expectations to be fulfilled. Similarly, if teachers have lower expectations for the students, then those students will perform lower than their peers. It has been said that inclusion of linguistic minority students in the mainstream classroom is good in theory, but does not work in the real world.

In addition, teachers may make wrong assumptions about linguistic minority students based on incomplete understandings of second language acquisition processes.As has been mentioned beliefs about the processes of learning a second language may negatively cloud teachers' perceptions of the school-aged language learner. The belief that learning L2 is only a matter of briefly immersing school-aged learners in the target language may color teachers' perceptions toward linguistic minority learners (Schmidt, 2000). The idea that linguistic minority learners' native language is only a crutch that inhibits the acquisition of L2 has been found to be well-ingrained in many monolinguals (Walqui, 2000). A third second language acquisition myth is the belief that the greater the amount of L2 input, the more quickly linguistic minority learners will acquire the language. Krashen (1985) argues that too much input can overwhelm the language learner.

Other misconception mainstream teachers have about linguistic minority students is that all linguistic minority children learn L2 in the same way. For instance, the 'silent period' is recognized as an important stage for some second language children. Research (Clarke, 1996; Tabor, 1997; Curran, 2003) has shown that initially learners experience a period in which they are reluctant to speak the target language. The silent period may vary among linguistically diverse learners, and those who are young or described as introverts may experience an extended period in which they may not communicate in the second language. The silent period is described as a time when linguistic minority children may appear frightened and withdrawn, but are in fact preparing themselves to speak the second language by processing the language, their surroundings, the rules, relationships, and expectations of their new environment (Short & Echevarria, 2005; Curran, 2003). Many early childhood teachers working with linguistic minority children become concerned when children refuse to speak L2 after several months' exposure. Hence, teachers must learn to recognise and understand the nature of the 'silent period' in children's second language development. Furthermore, most teachers have been trained to teach children much like themselves, which in many cases are monolingual individuals who come from the mainstream population, which can create additional challenges in the classroom (Swartz, 2003).

Such misconceptions about the nature of second language acquisition may lead teachers to develop erroneous perceptions of linguistic minority learners. For example, teachers have been found to confuse linguistic minority learners' language proficiency with cognitive ability (Clair 1995; Harklau, 2000; Walqui, 2000). The findings of Harklau's 1994 study and Verplaetse's 1998 study of interaction patterns between teachers and mainstreamed second language students suggest that teachers frequently underestimate students' language ability and consequently their cognitive ability. Mistaking students' inability to produce long, complex utterances for a symptom of miscomprehension, teachers can easily misread the cognitive abilities of their linguistically diverse learners. Conversely, some linguistic minority students' adept conversational ability has been mistaken for a higher degree of L2 proficiency than the linguistic minority students possessed (Walqui, 2000). Linguistic minority student who have been in schools 6 months or longer, may have gained BICS, or basic interpersonal skills (Cummins, 1980). However, just because they speak fluent

L2 doesn't mean they are ready for the concepts at a certain level. The students may lack CALP, or cognitive academic language proficiency (Cummins, 1980). Cummins hypothesized that CALP takes 7 to 10 years to acquire at grade level while BICS can take as little as 6 months. Students' mastery of BICS may lead teachers to conclude that their conversant linguistic minority students' difficulties with content are not a linguistic but a cognitive problem. Basic understandings of second language theory could prevent this misconception (Thomas &Collier, 1997; Cummins, 1981b).

Research on teachers' perceptions toward minority languages show those teachers who have not received training in second language teaching do not see a role in themselves. Teachers who work with linguistically diverse students need research based information, resources, and strategies to tackle challenges. Cummins (1997) writes that the focus of most teacher education programs was to prepare teachers to teach content areas. As a result, teachers completing teacher education programs were often sent to their classrooms with limited preparation for teaching linguistically diverse students. Lucas, Villegas & Gonzalez (2008) note general education teachers need language-related knowledge and pedagogical competence to nurture all children. Lucas, Villegas & Gonzalez outline the knowledge and skills needed for teachers to be linguistically responsive. To be effective, teachers should be exposed to understanding of second language acquisition. In particular, teachers need deep content knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge, and knowledge of how children and adolescents learn in a variety of settings.

In general, beliefs and knowledge of teachers about learning and teaching have a significant impact on their practice. Both teacher beliefs and knowledge have numerous sources. King and Peralta (2011) describe teacher education programs, prior experiences in schools, either as students or teachers; personal or life experiences, world view, and family shape teacher beliefs. Similarly, the teacher's knowledge is shaped by various background sources namely, course work, teaching experience, disciplinary knowledge, apprenticeship of observation derived from time spent in school, personal characteristics, and school context (Borg, 2003; Grossman, 1990).

2.10 Views about Language

Ruiz developed the language planning orientations model in 1984. The primary intent of the model is the 'promotion of cultural democracy and social justice' (Ruíz, 2010:167). Ruiz's theoretical dimension on the value of mother tongue education what he (1988:4) terms 'orientations' is relevant for this study because it accounts for the role that perceptions play 'towards language and its role, and towards languages and their roles in society' (Ruíz, 1984:16), and it's usability in understanding language use and choices in multilingual contexts.

According to Van Dijk (1996), language ideology is a set of beliefs, values, and opinions shared by a social group, and that group members use ideologies to understand language use and choices in multilingual contexts. Similarly, Martinez-Roldan and Malave (2004) link language ideology to discourse to characterize the development of beliefs and attitudes towards the learning and use of particularly language. Therefore, teachers' assumptions about second language teaching, bilingualism, the relative value of languages and the way they respond to diversity are central to their language policy making and to the shaping of their everyday teaching practices. The three language orientations are language as a problem, language as a right and language as a resource.

2.10.1 Language as a Problem

The language as a problem perspective sees local languages as problems standing in the way of assimilating linguistic minority groups into the dominant culture and language. This orientation also links language matters with other social problems that characterize such groups such as poverty, low educational achievement, little or lack of social mobility among others (Hornberger & Ricento, 1996). As a result, this orientation views language as underlying problem.

One of the main reasons given for advocating language as a problem orientation is the socio-historical context of multilingual societies (Ruiz, 1984). Thus, under this orientation, linguistic diversity is viewed as a threat to cohesiveness in society, the same notion that informs the one nation one language ideology (Bamgbose, 1991; Pattanayak, 1986). It also advocates unity with uniformity (Fishman, 1978). This implies that monolingualism in the dominant language is seen as the ideal for

cohesiveness in society, a disposition that undermines diversity. However, Smolicz (1986) argues that 'one nation one language' ideology is an attempt to impose one language on all groups and might cause a lot of disagreement among people. Skutnabb-Kangas (1988) also argues that the main concern of education should be that of advocating for the use of indigenous languages as well as offering practical strategies for the realization of such goal.

2.10.2 Language as a Right

Language as a right orientation views local languages as basic human rights for their speakers (Ruiz, 1984). This perspective is more focused inside linguistic minority communities, and positioned between national aspects of the language as a resource and child centered aspects of the language as a problem orientation. Provision for mother tongue education represents a language as a right perspective (Phillipson Skutnabb-Kangas, & Africa, 1986). The language as a right orientation has shaped the discourse on mother tongue education. As a result, groups and individuals are entitled to the use of the language of their choice.

On the other hand, in a language-as-right orientation, the protection of minority groups' linguistic rights is emphasized as a main purpose of language planning. Skutnabb-Kangas (1988) investigates bilingualism and multilingualism issues with respect to linguistic minority children's education through the comparison of several educational programs in different countries. Based on the results, she claims that bilingualism or multilingualism has become the general norm in the world, not because of the desirability and benefits of multilingualism, but because of the power relationship between powerless minority languages and powerful majority languages in host countries. She also mentions the opposing perspectives of minorities and majorities concerning multilingualism. Minorities think that keeping their language is a right based on the notion that every language is equally valuable and should be respected, whereas majorities think that multilingualism provokes societal divisiveness for the nation. She considers that 'linguicism' (Skutnabb-Kangas, 1990:13), a term that refers to 'ideologies and structures which are used to legitimate, effectuate and reproduce an unequal division of power and resources between groups which are defined on the basis of language (on the basis of their mother tongues)',

rather than bilingualism-as desirable, has been practiced in educational programs for linguistic minorities in host countries.

Skutnabb-Kangas (1994:625) describes two levels of linguistic human rights for linguistic minorities: 'an individual level and a collective level'. First, mother tongue must be identified positively by its users and this positive identification must be respected and accepted by other language users at an individual level. Second, linguistic minority groups must have the right to develop and to maintain their mother tongues in the field of education at a collective level. However, she claims that the current educational policies in most European countries do not promote this type of multilingualism in general. In this regard, Skutnabb-Kangas (2000:569) clearly states that 'one of the basic linguistic human rights of persons belonging to minorities is-or should be- to achieve high levels of bi-or multilingualism through education'.

2.10.3 Language as a Resource

The language as a resource orientation promotes linguistic pluralism and considers local languages as a resource for individual and the national system as whole (Baker, 2001). Ruiz (1984) also notes language as a resource orientation promotes languages as personal and national resource and attaches great importance to communication and identity values attached to it by its speakers.

The language as a resource orientation is founded on the idea that for language to have any value, it must have some sort of extrinsic utility (Ruiz, 1984). Similarly, Baker (2001) writes the language as a resource orientation views language not only in terms of their economic bridge building potential, but also to build social bridges across different groups. This orientation is based on the linguistic pluralism ideology and leads to both language maintenance and language enrichment programs (Wiley, 1996).

Although these three orientations are always competing, they are not incompatible. Ruiz (1984) notes that whereas one orientation could be desirable than another in a specific context, having a repertoire of orientations from which to draw could be most desirable. Ruiz (1984), however, cautions that whereas the language as a resource orientation could contribute to greater social cohesion and cooperation, the language

as a problem offers no hope of affording such a benefit while the language as a right orientation has had mixed results.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Paradigm

Any research inquiry requires at least one paradigm as a frame of reference. Cohen & Manion (1994) define paradigm as the philosophical intent for understanding a study, whereas Morgan (2007) views paradigm as the set of beliefs and practice that guide a field and argues that paradigm helps the researcher to summarize his or her beliefs. Harvey and Macdonald (1983) have identified three most influential paradigms. The positivist paradigm that pre-dominates natural sciences states that the goal of knowledge is merely to describe the phenomena that we experience and that observation and measurement are at the center of the scientific inquiry (Krauss, 2005). They underscore that we come to know about a phenomenon through repeated practices. To positivists, knowledge is objective and exists independently but can be apprehended. Positivists, however, have been criticized for their over dependency on quantification. Ions' (1977) disagreement is not directed only at quantification, but at quantification when it becomes an end in itself, i.e. a branch of mathematics rather than a human study seeking to explore the gritty circumstances of the human conditions. Besides, they are blamed for their regard of human behavior as passive and controlled, thereby ignoring intention, individualism and freedom (Habermas, 1972). Despite such criticisms, their perspectives are still applied in social sciences and humanities.

Positivism was superseded by the post-positivist perspective. O'Leary (2004) writes post-positivists see the world as ambiguous, variable and multiple in realities, i.e. what might be the truth for one individual may not be the truth for another. Post-positivists emphasize on the subjectivity of knowledge, and that it cannot exist independently of us. Hence, to understand knowledge, we have to engage ourselves in constructing, discovering and experiencing the phenomenon qualitatively (Wittgenstein, 1974). The social world can be explored from the perspective of the persons who are part of the ongoing action being investigated.

Post-positivism has also been criticized for being uneconomical in that there is a need for a thick description because many events cannot be reduced to simplistic interpretation (Geertz, 1973). Besides, Morrison, (1993) notes that reality is

understood to be multi-layered and complex, and there is little or no room for generalizing the findings. Although it has these limitations, post-positivism theories are applied when issues in the social sciences should be studied in their natural setting without being manipulated.

The third paradigm is Post-modernism. Post-modernism aims to examine social conditions in attempt to bring change. It recognizes the importance of social world that includes language, culture, and human institutions and subjective thoughts. It places a high value on the reality of the inner world of human experience in action (Johnson & Onwuegubezie, 2004). Besides, it aims to liberate the oppressed and the disempowered, redress inequality and to promote individual freedom within a democratic society (Littlejohn, 1989). This paradigm, however, has not been used as widely as positivists and post-positivists theories.

This study aims to explore challenges experienced by learners with a limited proficiency in Amharic and for whom the language of teaching and learning is not their mother tongue. In order to achieve the stated aim, questionnaires, tests, observation checklists, interviews, fieldlnote and document examination are used to collect data. Therefore both the positivist and post-modernist paradigms seem appropriate frameworks within which to show the intent, motivation and expectations of this study. The study uses methods of positivists as there are quantifications of the results of survey questionnaires, language proficiency tests, and classroom observation checklists. The post-modernists paradigm believes that each individual constructs their own view of the world based on experiences and perceptions. In this form of research paradigm, the researcher relies upon the participants' views of the situation being studied and recognises the impact on the research of their own background and experiences (Creswell, 2009).

3.2 Reseacrh Design

The purpose of this inquiry is to explore challenges multilingual classrooms pose to students in primary schools in Arba Minch. Over the past two decades, a challenging environment has been created in this area by the enrolment of second language learners in (first grade) primary schools with Amharic as the medium of instruction. The research explored the existing situation and analyzed challenges to learning and

the perceptions of teachers concerning linguistic diversity and the inclusion of linguistic minority children in linguistically diverse classrooms.

This study specifically tries to address the following research questions:

(1) What difficulties do linguistic minority groups encounter when learning in multilingual classrooms?
(2) What communication strategies are employed by the students to cope with the challenges?
(3) How do students negotiate their identities when they learn in multilingual classrooms?
(4) How do teachers make sense of teaching in multilingual classrooms in inclusive schools?

Therefore, to gain fuller and comprehensive understanding of a complex matter from different angles, a mixed method design is desirable. The rationale for mixing both quantitative and qualitative data within one study is grounded in the belief that often neither quantitative nor qualitative methods are sufficient by themselves to capture the trends and details of a particular situation (Ivankova, Creswell & Stick, 2006). Researchers (Caracelli & Greene, 1993; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Green & Caracelli 1997; Tashakkori & Teddlie 1998) agree that when used in combination, quantitative and qualitative methods complement each other and allow for a more robust analysis, taking advantage of the strengths of each.

In addition, a mixed methods study allows for greater validity in a study by seeking corroboration between quantitative and qualitative data. Bryman, (2006) & Creswell and Plano Clark (2007) argue that mixed methods research helps answer the research questions that cannot be answered by quantitative or qualitative methods alone, and provides a greater repertoire of tools to meet the aims and objectives of a study.

Hence, to understand the educational experiences of linguistic minority children, the main approach the researcher used for answering the research questions is a mixed methods research design.

This study in particular follows a mixed method concurrent design as both the quantitative and qualitative phases of the research study occur at similar times (Mertens, 2009 and Creswell, 2005 & 2012). In a mixed research methods, data collection can be introduced at the same time (concurrently) or one after the other (sequentially). Besides, when qualitative data collection precedes quantitative data collection, the purpose is to first explore the problem under study then follow up on this exploration with quantitative data. Alternatively, when quantitative data are followed by qualitative data, the intent is to explore with a large sample first to test variables and then to explore in more detail with few cases during the qualitative phase (Creswell, 2005).

In summary, this research project falls into a mixed concurrent design, as it involves gathering data at the same time.

Below, the researcher describes the research setting, the research participants, the sample in this study, the research tools used in data collection, and the methods of analysis.

3.3 Setting of the Study

As SNNPR (Southern Nations, Nationalities and People's Region) is linguistically the most diverse region of Ethiopia, it has been chosen as the main setting for the study. Data (2010) writes SNNPR is the third largest (after Oromia and Amhara) regional states, and is a region with over 45 linguistic groups (2007, PHC of Ethiopia). The study was conducted in three primary schools in Arba Minch, a linguistically diverse town in the region. In addition, care was taken in the selection of the schools to represent what Holliday (2007:8) calls the 'judicious balance between taking opportunity to encounter research setting while maintaining the principle of social science'. In this case, the schools were chosen because the learner population represented a good mix in terms of language diversity.

3.4 Research Participants

The main participants in this study were students and teachers. The sample consisted of grade 1 students and their teachers from linguistically diverse township primary schools. Grade 1 classes were chosen because it is at this initial level children start

primary schooling with a previously constructed knowledge, including their first language from home and community environments. The fact that first grade is a critical year in children's language and literacy development; the researcher chose to focus on that grade. The early year of education is the foundation for the development of the child in his or her intellectual and social aspects.

All grade 1 teachers were taken as sample with availability sampling technique. Both teachers and students were asked to complete survey. Each child in grade 1 class was asked what language he or she spoke at home and the results were recorded, tallied, and converted in to percentage illustrating the linguistic diversity of these classes. Finally, children who were learning in their second language were sorted out.

3.5 Participating Schools

In the North Omo zone, multiplicity of languages and dialects has placed challenges in implementing mother tongue education sources noted the increase in numbers of the non-L2-speaking population (Woldemariam, 2007). The linguistically diverse population resulted in an increase in the number of learners with limited Amharic proficiency, placing demands on schools to meet the needs of these learners.

Hence, this study includes linguistically diverse primary schools in Arba Minch. It focused on three primary schools, hoping that it could help to produce large amounts of data for analysis. That is, in order to understand the phenomenon of linguistic diversity in education, this researcher deemed it necessary to gather extremely rich, detailed and in-depth information. The sample comprised three schools that were drawn from different residential areas in order to learn more about the phenomenon under study. To this end, the schools were selected on the basis of learners' linguistic composition in the target classes. This is so because of the fact that different residential areas represent different learner population.

A detailed description of each of the schools is provided in the sections that follow.

Table-1

Schools	**Linguistic composition of learners**
School-A	12 languages
School-B	7 languages
School-C	4 languages

3.5.1 School-A

This is a government primary school which draws a large percentage of its learners from informal settlements in the town. The villages in this part of the town have been named after certain community. The villages were labeled Konso 'Sefer', Gofa 'Sefer', and Dawero 'Sefer' because these communities were the first to settle in these residences. The children in this school represent 12 different L1s, namely Amharic, Gamotstso, Wolayitaththo, Gofatstso, Afan Oromo, Afan Konso, Gantatstso, Zeysetstso, Derashe language, Gurage language, Siliti language, and Dawerththo. Most of the children come from families who make their livings by collecting wood, catching fish and performing hard physical work. Some of the children come from adjacent areas.

In school-A, the school director agreed that the researcher could carry out the study in the school and provided the information on the composition of the learners.

3.5.2 School-B

This is also state owned primary school located in a newly established village. This school draws learners from different linguistic backgrounds. The school draws learners from 7 different home languages. This is indicative of the school's diversity, and therefore places interest to this study. The languages represented are Amharic, Gamotstso, Gantatstso, Wolayitaththo, Derashe language, Afan Oromo, and Gurage language. However, Gamotstso, Gantatstso, and Wolayitaththo speaking children exceed in number.

School-B had been chosen purposively based on possibility that it could have a desired composition of learners. In this school, the school director agreed that the researcher could carry out the study in the school and provided the information on the composition of the learners.

3.5.3 School-C

This is also a government primary school, located approximately five kilo meters away from the center of the town. The school is in the middle of industrial zone consisting of factories namely, textile factory, cotton ginning and state farm. The learners in this school represented 4 different home languages, namely Amharic, Gamotstso, Wolayitaththo, and Afan Oromo. Most of the learners come from working class family who predominantly speak Gamotstso and Wolayitaththo. There are also children who speak Afan Oromo as their first language. These children come from a village called Abullo. Abullo is a village where a predominantly Afan Oromo speaking Guji community live.

The Guji community was once pastorals who used to live on the other side of Lake Abaya. Later, they moved and settled in Abullo, and began farming. Abullo is approximately five kilo meters from the school. So, these children have to get up early to get to school on time. What is unique about these children is they come from family who speak mainly Afan Oromo.

This school had also been chosen based on the possibility that it could have the desired composition of learners. In this school, four languages were reported, and it presented the minimal diversity.

3.6. Methods of Data Collection

Methods refer to the road you take to your destination (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010). In view of this, methods refer to the ways in which the researcher gathers the data he or she needs to answer the research questions. In choosing the methods of data collection to use in an inquiry, Silverman (2000) advises that one should question the extent to which the chosen methods will offer valid, reliable, and objective data.

In this regard, the researcher of this study used multiple data sources to answer the research questions. McMillan (2000) states that the use of different data collection methods boosts the credibility of the inquiry. The data collection instruments described below are used to address the research questions.

3.6.1 Questionnaires

A descriptive survey was conducted to allow the researcher to examine and describe the specific phenomenon directly from the research subjects about facts, opinions, and behaviors. Researchers often employ survey questionnaire to study bilingualism, multilingual education, as well as second language pedagogy (Johnson, 1992).

In this inquiry, simple survey methods were utilized to obtain the benefits of verbal and numerical data. In particular, it aimed at gathering demographic information to present a profile of the population under study. There were two sets of questionnaires; that is, one set was for the students and the other was for the teachers. The items in the student's survey questionnaire contained questions on personal particulars, (participant's age, sex, first language, ethno linguistic identity etc.) the child's kindergarten experience, and other languages they can speak. These data were used to illustrate the distribution of home languages and to select a sample of students, i.e. the focal class that consisted children whose language at home is not Amharic to continue with the next phase of the study.

Similarly, the items in the teacher's questionnaire were designed to collect information on personal background, years of teaching experience, native language, their qualifications, other languages they can speak, and their training.

3.6.2 Tests

Linguistic minority students are not monolithic. Conceivably, there are differences among them in their L2 proficiency. So, it is important to look at their differences with respect to their level of second language proficiency. In light of this, they were given Placement Tests. Such tests are appropriate to measure the current performance level of learners. On the basis of Placement Tests, second language children were classified in to three different categories : students with high proficiency in their L2, students who are deemed to have medium proficiency, and those students who

possess little or low proficiency in L2. Hence, to measure students' overall proficiency, tests were designed in Amharic. The Amharic Placement Tests consisted of four main components: oral proficiency test, listening comprehension, reading comprehension, and writing skills.

3.6.3 Observations

Multilingual classrooms include students who speak two or more different home languages, and these students come to school with a varying levels of proficiency in the language of instruction. It is, therefore, obvious that language related communication problems occur among students and between students and teachers. In such situations, interlocutors demonstrate different communication strategies to overcome communication problems. So, in order to catch up these behaviors, the researcher preferred to use observation.

Gay, Mills & Airasian (2009) states that observation, although highly subjective, is a valuable research tool that helps to capture classroom interactions. In this study, non participant observation techniques were used to record children's communication behaviors in classrooms. Non Participant Observation as described by Kothari (2004) is a process whereby the researcher remains detached and does not intervene in the activities. During observations, checklists were used to record classroom communication strategies the children employ to cope with difficulties.

3.6.4 Interviews

Merriam(1998) describes interviews as a 'conversation with a purpose' where the interviewer elicits information from the participants. In order to ascertain what the participants think and feel and how they describe their subjective reality, an indepth individual interview was conducted with the research subjects. The major purpose of an indepth interviews was to generate rich data with the thick description (Neuman, 2000) of children's and teachers' own perspectives on their overall experiences in school. Neuman (2000) further explained that in-depth interviews in general are useful for capturing the seldom emphasized perceptions of the subjugated groups of people in social stratification, including children, and for increasing the study's authenticity by giving a fair, honest, and balanced account of social life from the viewpoint of someone who lives it everyday.

The questions in the interviews were open-ended and were specific enough in intent to explore the research questions while still allowing for individual responses. Learners were asked to give their account of language use practices in mainstream classroom, i.e. their backgrounds, challenges they encountered during instruction, the ways linguistic minority students negotiate their linguistic identities and their otherness as they learn in L2, and the type of support (if any) they received from the school. Interviews were also used to explore teachers' instructional practices in multilingual classrooms with regard to their perceptions and strategies in their management of linguistic diversity among learners in their first year of primary school. Questions focused on problems and challenges teachers faced as they offered instruction in multilingual classrooms, instructional and classroom managing strategies employed in assisting second language learners, and issues related to teacher's perceptions and ideology about language and having linguistic minority students in their classrooms.

3.6.5 Fieldnotes

Qualitative observations require that the researcher takes field notes on the behaviors and activities of individuals at the research site (Creswell, 2009). Qualitative researchers tend to collect data in the field at the site where participants experience the issue or problem under study. Hence, the researcher has to attempt to gather up-close information by actually engaging or interacting with, talking to directly to people, and seeing them behave and act within their context, which Creswell (2009) refers to as a major characteristic of qualitative research.

In this study, classroom (or lesson) observations were done and field notes were kept by the researcher during data collection. This involved the reflections, critical incidences, memos of the researcher's observations and experiences throughout the data collection period (Patton, 2002). The researcher maintained extensive field notes of all the activities and reflections. The researcher spent time with the teachers in school cafeteria, hallways, and around the schools in general. Besides, field notes were used to record students' communication behaviors in classrooms, out of classrooms and in playgrounds.

3.6.6 Document Examination

Documents are any kind of written or printed materials pertaining to the research questions. According to Yin (2003), documents are useful sources of data because they help the researcher develop a broader perspective of the context under study. Yin notes that the most important use of documents in research is to 'corroborate evidence' from other data sources. In this study, documents and artifacts found in the schools were used for corroborating data obtained via interviews and observations. Hence, the researcher made efforts to explore documents such as policy papers, schools' vision and mission statements, posters found on site, learners' exercise books. The researcher participated in school-wide events, collecting photographic data of the inside and outside spaces of the school. Inside the school the researcher photographed multilingual signage, artistic representations of the school's diversity, posters relating to the school's key operating principles underlying linguistic policy, and visual data from classroom. These data provided a visual landscape of the diverse spaces, identities, and linguistic and cultural mapping of the schools.

3.7 Data Collection Procedures

In this inquiry, questionnaires, tests, observation, interviews, field notes, and document examination were used to collect data.

The initial stages of data collection were to orient teachers and students the main purpose of the study and gather the participant's personal information. Questionnaires were distributed to student and teacher participants as soon as they had agreed to participate in the research project. The object of using the survey questionnaire was to give the researcher information and knowledge about the participants' general background, i.e., participants' native language, additional language proficiency and teachers' trainings, etc.

Returning to the adminstration of the questionnaires (Appendix-A), with the help of the home room teachers of each school, 201 questionnaires were given to student respondents, and all were retained. Both the researcher and the home room teachers assisted children who failed to fill out the questionnaires. Similarly, teachers were asked to fill out the questionnaires, and all the questionnaires were returned.

After receiving successfully completed questionnaires, as a preparation for test administration sessions, the researcher analyzed participant's responses on all these questionnaires. This helped the researcher to understand the participant's background and to present profiles of the population under study.

The students' overall language proficiency was examined based on their scores of Placement tests conducted a few days after receiving the questionnaires. Listening, reading, and writing exams were administered on the same day. The listening test (Appendix-B) consisted of two tasks (10 items), in which the learners listened to oral input and wrote them on the space provided. The reading test (Appendix-B) consisted of two tasks (10 items), in which learners chose from multiple choice answers. The writing test (Appendix-B) also consisted two tasks (10 items), which required students to fill missing letters and match pictures and write the words on the space provided.

The next task was conducting speaking test with second language learners. The topics about the subjects to talk included general topics about family, schooling, and identifying objects. The oral proficiency test is measured by a 5-minute oral interview. The researcher managed to conduct the interview with co-researcher. Both the researcher & co-researcher possessed the same copy of an oral proficiency grading sheet (Appendix-C) adapted from the in-house test used by a California state department of education.

One of the objectives of this study is to investigate the communication strategies linguistic minority children employ to cope with communication problems. Hence, observation check list was adopted for the data collection as it caters for the specific needs of the researcher in addressing the research question. Classroom observation checklist (Appendix-D), supported by field notes, produced both quantitative and qualitative results. During observations, data were recorded by using an intermittent tally system. For this purpose, Tarone's (1977), Tarone (1980), and Faerch and Kasper (1984), taxonomies were adopted to elicit and describe the communication strategies used by the linguistic minority students. The psycholinguistic perspective of Faérch and Kasper (1983, 1984) and the interactional view of Tarone (1980) have been widely employed to investigate the application of communication strategies. A

part from being one of the most widely used classification system in second language research; these taxonomies seem to be the one which fit the data.

The classification of the most common communication strategies adapted from Tarone (1977), Tarone (1980), Faerch and Kasper (1984), include message abandonment, topic avoidance, word coinage, approximation, use of non-lingustic signal, literal translation, code switching, use of all-purpose words, appeals for help, time-gaining strategies, and circumlocution.

Besides, observational data provided descriptions of the situation, lessons, and interactions. Observation notes were taken of teachers' and students' behaviors while communicating in three distinct classes. To authenticate the researcher as an observer, a co-observer was used. Observations of three classes at three schools took place for a period of three weeks. Through ongoing observation throughout a period time, the researcher and the co-observer attempted to be as close to the subjects as possible. During classroom observations, Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2000) have advised a twenty-second interval to move from left to right and enter data in the appropriate column using an easy code like a tick.

Interviews were conducted (Appendix-E) with both the students and teachers after capturing the results of classroom observation. The forms of interview applied in the present study were in-depth and semi-structured interviews. In-depth interviews were carried out with children of each school. Data were gathered from 27 students. They were representative of three different linguistic groups. The interviews were conducted in the child's first language; that is, Gamotstso, Wolaytaththo, and Afan Oromo. The reason why the interviews were conducted in the child's first language was the children were not able to express their feelings and thoughts in Amharic. Hence, teachers who spoke and understood Gamotstso, Wolaytaththo, and Afan Oromo conducted the interviews. All the interviews were recorded for latter analysis.

Besides, in order to elicit more information from the interviewed students and obtain an in-depth of their experiences, the researcher constructed and used appropriate probing questions. By using probing questions, the researcher got detailed data and thus gained comprehensive understanding of linguistic minority children's school life. In particular, the questions in the interview guide were related to linguistic minority

students' educational experiences in multilingual classrooms and how linguistically diverse classrooms make them negotiate their identities.

To understand teachers' experiences working these children and their ideologies of linguistic diversity, the researcher conducted semi-structured interviews with each teacher using the interview guides (Appendix-E). Each interview section was approximately 45 minutes. The researcher interviewed fifteen teachers. The interviews were audiotaped by a digital voice recorder with the participants' permission and then transcribed to be reviewed and analyzed. The goal of the interviews was to understand teachers' instructional practices in multilingual classrooms.

The questions in the interview guide for the study were related to teachers' reflections on teaching young children from diverse linguistic backgrounds. In particular, the questions included teachers' instructional practices in multilingual classrooms with regard to their perceptions and strategies in their management of linguistic diversity among learners.

Qualitative observations are those in which the researcher takes field notes on the behaviors and activities of the individuals (Creswell, 2009). In this study, observations (Appendix-F) were done by the researcher and his assistant and notes were taken. However, note taking while participating could be difficult, so the researcher used a combination of actual notes and head notes (Lahman, 2000). Head notes are mental notes and notes that are transcribed at the next possible moment. Lahman (2000:37) suggested that 'these notes are not considered weaker than observational notes and added a richness of synthesis that the observational notes did not have'. The researcher also took time after each classroom visit and after the interviews to write head notes and reflect on the overall experiences.

Finally, documents (Appendix-G) are useful because they assist the researcher gain a broader perspective of the context under study. To this end, school policy documents and physical artifacts were collected, observed and analyzed in order to gain a broader perspective and understanding of linguistically diverse learners and linguistic diversity in the schools environment. Documents scuh as schools' mission and vision

statements (Appendix-G) were explored. Besides, physical artefacts are useful because they assist the researcher develop a broader perspective of the schools and classrooms linguistic landscape. The researcher took careful note of all the texts and pictures adorning the classrooms and the way the schools were furnished. The language-linked posters including number charts, the alphabet, and posters with pictures and related vocabularies, mathematical signs and symbols (Appendix-G) were collected that the researcher thought were relevant for his study.

3.8 Data Analysis

The process of data analysis involves making sense out of the data (Creswell, 2009); which requires the skill to depict the understanding of the data in writing (Henning, 2004). In other words, data are analyzed and interpreted via a process which involves preparing the data for analysis, conducting different analyses, moving deeper and deeper into understanding the data, representing the data, and making interpretation of the larger meaning of the data.

3.8.1 Quantitative Data Analysis

The quantitative statistical data generated from survey questionnaires, language proficiency tests, and observation check lists in this study were captured and subjected to analysis to provide both descriptive and inferential statistics.

In this study, the researcher employed survey questionnaires as first technique to obtain data. The items in the questionnaires were designed to collect information from the students and teachers. The survey questionnaire for the students was used to account for gathering demographic information. Each child was asked what language they spoke at home and the results were recorded on a list illustrating the multilingual nature of the classes. Similarly, the questionnaire for the teachers was used to illustrate the distribution of the participant teachers' native language, additional language proficiency, and teachers' training to work with linguistically diverse students, etc.

The questionnaires both from the students and teachers were coded to prepare the contents for the descriptive analysis. Descriptive statistics was used to describe the data and illustrate the trends within the research context. Statistical computations such

as frequency distribution were employed to illustrate questions on personal particulars, linguistic identity, child's kindergarten experience, teacher's qualification, additional languages the research participants speak, etc. The descriptive analyses of the results of the survey were reported in frequencies and percentages.

The overall proficiency scores were obtained from the Placement Test. The Amharic Placement Tests consist of four sections. The listening test consists of two tasks (10 items), in which the learners listen to oral input and write them on the space provided. The reading test in which learners choose from multiple choice answers consists of two tasks (10 items). The writing test also consisted two tasks (10 items), which required students to fill missing letters and match pictures and write the words on the space provided. Finally, learners' oral proficiency was measured by a five-minute oral interview with the researcher and co-interviewers. The aim of this oral interview was to determine each learner's oral proficiency. During interview, each learner would tell the interviewers about their background, schools and their villages, subjects learned at school, duties after school, and describe images on the pictures. With regard to grading of oral test, there were five categories which had the same weighting and contributed to the overall scores of the speaking proficiency: content (20%), grammar (20%), vocabulary (20%), pronunciation (20%), and fluency (20%). The grading criteria for oral test were adapted from the California State Department of Education oral examination rating scale. For the sake of grading, each of the interviewers gave a raw score (1-5 points for each category) to each subject, and the points under each category were multiplied by 4 and added up to have a score out of 100 points. Each subject's final oral test score was an average grade given by both interviewers.

Subsequently, the data gathered via test results were processed using numerical analysis. Standard scores are used in norm-referenced assessment to compare a student's performance on a test to the performance of other students' performance (Lodico, Spaulding, & Voegtle, 2010). A standard score specifically Z-score was used to categorize learners. For the present study, the scores obtained from listening, speaking, reading, and writing tests were recorded and added up, and these scores were used as an indicator of the learners' general Amharic Proficiency.

This study also examined the use of communication strategies by linguistic minority students in terms of the type and frequency. The use of communication strategies has been investigated using Faérch and Kasper's (1984) psycholinguistic perspective and Tarone's (1980) interactional view.

Both the researcher & co-observer identified communication strategies based on the above taxonomy of interactional strategies. Data elicited from observation checklists of interactions between student-teacher, student-student, and from oral group discussions were used to identify communication strategies employed. Following the identification of the types of the communication strategy, the frequency of use for each type of communication strategy by the participants was tallied. They were then manually counted, added, and finally the average score was taken. Then they were classified and analyzed in relation to the points under investigation.

The qualitative dimension, however, was analyzed by the participants' use of communication strategy from the observational notes. The observational notes taken during class were transcribed and analyzed by systematically organizing into categories according to the communication strategies use.

3.8.2 Qualitative Data Analysis

3.8.2.1 Transcribing the qualitative data

Interview guides were available in three languages (Gamotstso, Wolayitaththo, and Afan Oromo) for the learners. An interview guide was also in Amharic for teacher use during interviews. All interviews were audio-recorded. The students' interviews were transcribed and translated into Amharic by research assistants, whereas teachers' interviews were transcribed by the researcher. The interviews were checked by listening to the recordings and reading through the transcriptions. They were found to be accurate record of the interviews. Finally, both teachers and learners interviews were translated into English by the researcher. The translated interviews were validated by bilingual colleagues for accuracy and interpretation.

3.8.2.2 Data Analysis

The qualitative data were subjected to thematic analysis. They were analyzed from transcriptions of the interviews, fieldnotes, and selected documents (policy

documents, mission statements, and physical artefacts) collected during observation sessions. Content analysis (Gillham, 2000b) is the primary method that was used in analyzing the interview data. In addition to analysis of the interview transcripts, qualitative information gathered via field notes and from documents and artefacts were reviewed, developing preliminary categories and common themes. While content analysis serves as the main framewok of analysis, critical discourse analysis also provided some useful insights for the current study. In particular, it was employed to analyze ideologies of teachers in mainstream schools concerning linguistic diversity and inclusion of linguistic minority students in classrooms. Van dijk (1996) notes that ideologies are the foundation of the social beliefs shared by a group and that group members use ideologies to guide their interpretations, discourses and other social practices in a specific social domain. Therefore, teachers' language ideologies include their views and perceptions towards language diversity and language learning, as schools can be viewed as highly diverse social contexts. Besides, critical discourse analysis was employed to analyze the content on schools mission & vision statements, all texts and pictures adorning the classrooms and schools. To this end, this study attempts to bring to the surface the way the schools respond to linguistic diversity.

All processes and stages of coding are tracked in order to show the stages of the analysis. The analysis followed a staged process outlined below:

Broad coding

As has been described, the qualitative data were subjected to thematic analysis. All of the data were coded, first to validate the themes, and secondly to ensure the reliability of coding. The qualitative data were initially read through chronologically to generate broad participant driven categories (free nodes) from the data up with no references to the research question.

Grouping themes into categories

The research questions were then introduced and categories created (tree nodes). The data were organised in two ways. First, data were organised according to the specific research questions: there were sets of themes on challenges students faced, on negotiation of identity, and on teachers' instructional practices with regard to their

perceptions and strategies in their management of linguistic diversity. Second, each theme was broken down into subthemes, where data referred specifically to one of these three categories.

Analyzing the Supplemental Data

Similarly, documents, such as policy papers, mission and vision statements, and physical artefacts were qualitatively analyzed. The first task, therefore, was to group the data into common segments that formed meaningful or potentially meaningful units of information. The segments needed to be heuristic, i.e., able to stand on their own without needing any further information to be understood; so that hidden meanings could be extracted. These units served as the basis for defining the categories and in this manner, themes or categories became evident, and add richness to the data by showing how schools reacted to language diversity.

Generating summary statements using memo

Memos are summaries of the data generated by the coders. These memos formed the basis of the findings section, illustrated by data from interviews and field notes taken in each school. In addition to this, the documents and physical artefacts were analysed and used for illustrative purposes. This process ensured that the data from the interviews, observation field notes, and documents examination were triangulated as part of the process of confirming themes, findings and conclusions.

3.8.2.3 Coding

Gibbs (2007) sees coding simply as what the data one is trying to analyze is about while Punch (2000:204) defines coding as the 'process of putting tags, names or labels against pieces of the data'. This assigning of labels to pieces of data is done with the aim of assigning meaning to those pieces of data. The following sections provide a detailed discussing of the coding patterns used.

3.8.2.3.1 School Codes

In keeping with the promise for confidentiality and anonymity pseudonyms have been used for all the schools used in this study. The highly diverse school has been coded as School-A, while the moderately diverse school has been coded as School-B. The school with minimal diversity has been coded as School-C.

3.8.2.3.2 Teacher Codes

All the participating subjects bear the same code as the school code. For instance, 'T1A' refers to the participating teacher one from school-A while 'T2B' is used for the participating teacher two from school-B. In school C, 'T1C', 'T2C', 'T3C', etc. have been used to refer to the participating teacher one, two, three, from school-C.

3.8.2.3.3 Student Codes

In order to maintain the anonymity of the students, in all the excerpts provided, the researcher used the codes 'S'. All the student participants bear the same code as the school code. For example, 'S1A' refers to the participating student one from school-A while 'S2B' is used for the participating student two from school-B, etc.

3.9 Validity and Reliability

In this inquiry, both qualitative and quantitative methods were used, and both validity and reliability had to be established.

The survey form was adapted from a language survey that was designed by authorities for the purposes of assisting researchers in collecting data from schools for a language policy assignment. The survey questionnaires both for students and teachers were adapted from various language use and behavior sources (Cohen, 1975; Foley, 1981; Cummins, 1984).

The form accumulated information from the research participants about personal backgrounds, ethno-linguistic identity, additional languages the participants know, etc. The questionnaires would contain items that would include indicators of an overall diversity. It was hoped that a more complete picture of the linguistic diversity of the participant population in the target schools would be presented.

The main purpose of the tests was to measure the children's level of proficiency in the language of instruction, i.e. Amharic. As any other tests, language proficiency tests had to be validated in terms of their content and construct. Amharic language expert who was working in MOE wrote the test items for each skill based on grade 1 syllabus. After the test writer completed the task of writing the items, the tests were presented to specialists of testing in the National Examination Agency. The

responsibility of this team was to examine whether the items contained in each tests were appropriate and representative. Based on the recommendations, some of the items were modified. For example, sounds having multiple phonetic features such as (ቐ ቢ ሚ) were avoided from listening, reading, and writing tests.

Communication strategies behavior form was developed from the research data on second language learners' communication strategies. The psycholinguistic perspective of Faérch and Kasper (1983) and the interactional view of Tarone (1977 &1980) have been widely employed to investigate the application of communication strategies in second language pedagogy. Triggered by the communicative strategies proposed by Tarone (1977), Tarone (1980), and Faerch and Kasper (1984), this study is designed to elicit and describe the communication strategies used by the linguistic minority students in multilingual classrooms.

The communication strategies behavior form was the result of several pilot practices, careful scrutiny and refinement. That is, it measures what it is meant to measure.
Qualitative researchers perceive validity, i.e., truth value, credibility, dependability, trustworthiness, generalizability, legitimation, authenticity as being an unclear and ambiguous concept (Dellinger & Leech, 2007). More than seventeen terminologies for validity in quantitative research discipline have been documented (Guba & Lincoln, 2005; Maxwell, 1992), but there is no agreed-on definition of validity in qualitative research (Dellinger & Leech, 2007).

However, according to Maxwell (1992), validity in qualitative research is concerned with whether the interviews, observations, and content analysis contain the information that the researcher thinks they contain. There are several other ways in which the researcher attempted to address validity concerns. Involvement with the participants was intensive and long-term. Interviews were intensive in that the lists of questions addressed many aspects of the literature and attempted to address the research questions themselves in a variety of ways. This facilitated richness of data.
Besides, repeated observations were made to further develop an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon under study. This procedure enabled the researcher

and his research assistant to obtain more experience with the participants in their natural setting, which gave the researcher more accurate or valid qualitative findings. Reliability refers to the extent to which a test or data collecting procedure provides similar or roughly similar results when used by different people or when utilized on various occasions by the same people (Ahuja, 2001; Oppenheim, 1992). Regarding reliability, tests were administered to the target group. Having scored the papers, the researcher analyzed each item in terms of item difficulty and item discrimination.

There are different ways of verifying test reliability. Among these, internal consistency method of analysis is the one commonly used (Ahujia, 2001; Backhoff, E., Larrazolo, N., & Rosas, M., 2000). As determined by the Cronbach Alpha method of internal consistency, the reliability coefficients of listening, speaking, reading, and writing tests were 0.92, 0.93, 0.94, and 0.91 respectively. As a whole, the reliability coefficient of language proficiency test was 0.93, i.e. it was high. Similarly, the reliability of the observation and the oral test were determined by Intra Class Correlation. Intra Class Correlation is method which is commonly used to determine inter rater reliability. As the Intra Class Correlation method indicates, the reliability of the classroom observation was 0.924 and that of the oral test grading was 0.93. This means, the reliability of both instruments was high.

DiBattista and Kurzana (2011) write item discrimination power is a technical indicator of the extent to which items discriminate between high and low achievers. To this end, the discrimination coefficients of the items constituting each test were computed to identify ‘good’ and ‘bad’ items.

As has been mentioned, reliability has to do with the consistency of the measurement or the degree to which an instrument measures the same way each time it is used under the same circumstances. In this study, the researcher used in-depth interviews adapted from, and based on the interview protocol developed by Inoue (2005). During the interviews, the interviewers probed unclear responses to gain an in-depth understanding of the participants’ interpretations, as suggested by Ginsburg (1997). Besides, Neuman (2003) suggests reliability has to do with the issue of dependability. Dependability of data was established by capturing all the interviews on a tape, and was transcribed manually in writing. Attempts were made to reproduce the interview

scripts as accurately as possible to eliminate possible threats to reliability of the instruments used in this study.

3.10 Ethical Issues

According to Babbie (2007) and Babbie and Mouton (2008), researchers have a duty and obligation to abide by the code of conduct that governs most professions. Neuman (2003) argues that researchers have a moral and professional obligation to be ethical, even when research subjects are unaware of or unconcerned about ethics.

When conducting research, social scientists enter into the private lives of their participants (Berg, 2001). Researchers therefore have to make sure that the privacy, the rights, and the welfare of their participants are guaranteed (Kumar, 1999).
Fetterman (1989) outlines some underlying ethical principles that need consideration in research: permission, honesty and trust, anonymity, and rigorous work. Firstly, zonal and district education offices granted the researcher permission to conduct the research. Secondly, consent was obtained from school administrators, the teacher participants, and students. Thirdly, honesty and trust is communicated verbally, and the researcher attempted as far as possible to communicate openness and trust in his self-presentation and general demeanor (Fetterman 1989).

After obtaining consent, the researcher approached the principals, teachers of the participating schools and students, where their roles as participants, right to choose to be participants and to participate or not in this study were explained to them. They were assured of confidentiality that participation was voluntary and were given a guarantee that they could withdraw from the study at any time and that no personal details would be disclosed. Confidentiality of information collected in the schools was also ensured and that no portion of the data collection would be used for any purpose other than this research.

In addition, the schools' names are not mentioned and the teachers are simply referred to as T1, T2, T3, etc., and the students are S1, S2, S3, etc. This was done in order to maintain anonymity, so that the participants felt more comfortable being researched. And finally, every effort has been made to ensure rigor in my research. The primary

means of achieving this involves the effective use of multiple sources of data (survey questionnaire, tests, observation, interviews, fieldnotes, and physical artefacts).

3.11 Summary of the Pilot Study Results

The pilot study is a smaller scale study as a trial run as preparation for the main study (Oppenheim1992, and Morrison 1993). One of the major advantages of conducting a pilot study is to increase the likelihood of success in the main study. It may indicate the success or failure of the theory and the concept that is relevant to the research questions, as well as the methodology of the study (Wilson and McLean, 1994). Hence, conducting a pilot study is an essential aspect of good research design.

The pilot version of the present study was conducted in one of linguistically diverse primary schools in Arba Minch during the first semester of 2012/2013 school year.
The pilot study used a mixed methods design utilizing both quantitative and qualitative data: (1) distributing questionnaires to target students and teachers, (2) conducting language proficiency tests, (3) observing lessons, (4) interviewing students and teachers, (5) observing the students in and out of classrooms, and (6) examining documents and artefacts.

The pilot was conducted in one primary school in Arba Minch with a total of fourty-seven students and six teachers. Firstly, the survey questionnaires were distributed to students and teachers to obtain demographic information. All the participant students and teachers returned the filled in survey questionnaires. The survey results provided demographic data and assisted to present a profile of the population under study and to select a sample of students, i.e., the focal class that consists of second language learners. Based on the responses of the questionnaires, language proficiency tests were administered to classify students based on their results. The interview results revealed that the participant students encountered great difficulties in educational settings. Limited Amharic proficiency is a serious barrier that hinders the education of linguistic minority children. Besides, teachers' interviews showed that they had trouble dealing with language diversity.

Generally, the overall results of the pilot study revealed the possibilities of investigating challenges linguistic minority children experience using the given data collection instruments (questionnaires, tests, observation checklists, interviews, fieldnotes and document examination).

That is, the data collection instruments employed in the pilot study were tested for their suitability in making analysis and investigation of the barriers linguistic minority children facing in the classrooms and the perceptions teachers held about linguistic diversity. However, some modifications were made in the data collection instruments based on feedback from the pilot study. For example, a few items from the questionnaire were avoided as they were irrelevant, and a few others were revised in terms of content and language clarity. The pilot study also served as a basis for including additional interviews questions and spending relatively more time for observing lessons. In other words, because of the pilot study results, a more prolonged form of observation and interviewing were done. In summary, the pilot study served to fine-tune the instruments and assisted the researcher in familiarizing himself with students and their teachers in the school settings.

CHAPTER FOUR: PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

The overall aim of this study is to explore language related challenges experienced by learners with a limited proficiency in Amharic and for whom the language of learning and teaching is not their mother tongue. This exploration offers insight into findings, and further represents lives of language minority students, their sufferings and classroom teachers' concerns. The application of a mixed method concurrent triangulation design can be seen throughout this chapter via quantitative and qualitative methodological tools.

This chapter reports the findings from the quantitative and qualitative data analysis. As stated in chapter three, the quantitative data generated from survey questionnaires, tests, and classroom observation checklists are presented. Similarly, the qualitative data generated from interviews, data produced from observations done in the schools, the data generated from documents & artefacts are presented.

Firstly, survey questionnaires were distributed to first grade students and their teachers. Students who have a home language other than Amharic were identified through the home language survey. Next, the researcher summarizes descriptive quantitative data upon classroom teachers through which readers will have a basic understanding of the whole teacher population. Teachers' responses to the questions were categorised into main ideas to identify categories. Findings from the data analysis are grouped together by themes that emerged: basic background information about their L1 and an indication of additional languages spoken. This information was required to gain insight into the teacher participants' preparations to accommodate learners acquiring L2 in their classes. Information was also requested on the nature of formal teacher training.

As the study further required data to be collected on the language proficiency of second language learners, language proficiency tests were employed. The responses of learner participants were therefore compared with the performance of other learners, i.e., normative data were employed. Finally, the students were classified as

high, medium, and low proficient based on their proficiency level. According to the grading rubric, 27 children (7 children from school-A, 10 children from school-B, and 10 children from school-C) whose L2 proficiency was low were selected for interviews and close observations.

Thirdly, data were collected through observation checklists. After the checklists were completed, the data were analyzed using statistical analysis. The quantitative analysis involved frequency count of communication strategies employed by the participants. Following the identification of the types of communication strategies, the frequency of use for each type of communication strategy by the participants in each classroom was tallied and tabulated.

The qualitative data relied upon the following methodological tools: interviews with students and teachers, fieldnotes, and examination of documents and physical artefacts.

The first section comprises a thematic summary of interview data with students and teachers, in an effort to describe challenges second language classroom poses to students, and teachers' instructional practices in relation to their perceptions, strategies, and knowledge in their management of linguistic diversity among learners. The co researchers interviewed 27 students, and the researcher interviewed 15 teachers.

Section two comprises a categorized and thematic summary of observation data, in an effort to describe learners' use of language in and out of classroom, type of interactions, and teachers' teaching strategies.

Communication strategies learners employed were observed. Observation notes were taken in class sessions. The notes included topic of the day, exchanges between interlocutor and some of the strategies observed by the researcher and his assistant.
The last section comprises a discussion of school language policy and a description of the physical artefacts collected from classrooms and schools, many of which are attached as appendices.

4.2 Results from Analysis of Quantitative Data

The aim of this section is to present the results graphically in figures or tables and describe the findings. The results are based on the responses obtained from the questionnaires filled by the participant students and teachers, test results, and classroom observation checklists.

4.2.1 Questionnaire

4.2.1.1 Student Questionnaire

Two hundred one survey questionnaires were distributed to the student participants: sixty-eight questionnaires were completed at school-A, seventy-five at school-B, and fifty-eight at school-C. All the questionnaires were returned, and the return rate was 100%. Through the use of the survey questionnaire, it was possible to identify learners who were attending schooling in their second language in the mainstream classrooms.

Students' Background

School-A

A. Gender

A total of sixty-eight students responded to the survey with males, 36 (52.94%) out numbering females, 32 (47.05%).

B. Age

The age range was quite wide from 6 to 15 years old, with the highest percentage 7 year old category.

C. Birthplace

The majority of the students 41children (60.29%) were born in Arba Minch, and the remaining 27 children (39.70%) were born in adjacent areas and in other places where a language other than Amharic is spoken.

D. Children's Kindergarten Experiences

Indeed, of the children who began formal schooling in this section, 45 (66.1%) attended kindergarten, and 23 children did not participate in pre-school programs. Among second language children, about 25 children (55.5%) had completed pre-school programs in Amharic medium kindergarten, and 20 children (44.4%) did not go to kindergarten.

School-B

A. Gender

A total of seventy-five students responded to the survey. Out of these children, thirty-seven were male and thirty-eight were female.

B. Age

The children contained in this section were aged between 6 and 14 years, with the highest percentage 7 year old category.

C. Birthplace

Of the seventy-five children, 50 children (66.6%) were born in Arba Minch Zuria (adjacent areas), and in other places where a language other than Amharic was widely spoken. The remaining 25 children (33.3%) were born in Arba Minch.

D. Kindergarten Experiences

Of the children enrolled in this particular classroom, forty-five children (60%) attended some form of pre-school, and thirty children (40%) did not participate in pre-school programs. Among second language children, 32 children (51.61%) have been to kindergarten, whereas 30 children (48.38%) did not have formal pre-school exposure.

School-C

A. Gender

A total of fifty-eight students responded to the survey. Out of these children, thirty-one are female and twenty-seven are male.

B. Age

The children contained in this section were aged between 6 and 13 years, with the highest percentage 7 year old category.

C. Birthplace

Twenty-five children (43.1%) were born in suburb of Arba Minch where Gamogna and Wolayetigna are widely used. Seven children (12.06%) were born in Abullo a place where Afan Oromo is mainly spoken. Other children were born in Arba Minch Zuria, i.e. adjacent areas, and in other places where languages other than Amharic are spoken.

D. Kindergarten Experiences

Of the children enrolled in this section, 33 children (56.89%) attended some form of pre-school, and 25 children (43.10%) have not been to kindergarten. Among second language children, 20 children (44.4%) had completed kindergarten, whereas 25 children (55.5%) did not have pre-school exposure.

Students' Home Languages

Table-2 below indicates the number of participants who responded to the questionnaire in school-A, B, & C.

Students' Home Language	School-A		School-B		School-C	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
Amharic	23	33.82	13	17.33	13	22.41
Gamotstso	22	32.35	46	61.33	30	51.72
Gofatstso	6	8.82	-	-	-	-
Wolaytaththo	3	4.41	8	10.66	8	13.79
Derashe language	3	4.41	2	2.66	-	-
Afan Konso	2	2.94		-	-	-
Gantatstso	2	2.94	2	2.66	-	-
Afan Oromo	2	2.94	3	4	7	12.06
Gurage language	2	2.94	1	1.33	-	-
Zaysetstso	1	1.47	-	-	-	-
Siliti language	1	1.47	-	-	-	-
Daweroththo	1	1.47	-	-	-	-
Total	68	100	75	1000	58	100

As summarized in table-2, the student population in *school-A* is claimed to speak different home languages: 23 children speak Amharic, 22 children speak Gamotstso, 6 children speak Gofatstso, 3 children speak Wolaytaththo, 3 children speak Derashe language, 2 children speak Gantatstso, 2 children speak Afan Oromo, 2 children speak Gurage language, 2 children speak Afan Konso, one child speaks Siliti language, another child speaks Zaysetstso, and again one child speaks Daweroththo as their first

language. As can be seen, in this particular class 12 different home languages are represented. It is noteworthy that there are more second language learners than children whose mother tongue is Amharic. Among 68 students who are enrolled in this mainstream class, 23 students speak Amharic as first language. The remaining 45 students, who speak a language other than Amharic, are required to take language proficiency tests that are designed to evaluate proficiency in Amharic.

Similarly, the mainstream class in *school-B* consists of 75 students that represent 7 different home languages. Among the seventy five students, the total number of second language learners who are contained in this section is greater. The total number of second language children is 62, and all of these children would take language proficiency tests.

The target section in *school-C* includes 58 children, and of which 30 speak Gamotstso, 13 children speak Amharic, 8 speak Wolaytaththo, and the remaining 7 children speak Afan Oromo as their first language. This section also contains significant number of second language children.

In sum, the target classrooms contained children who speak different home languages. It is noteworthy that there are more second language children than those whose mother tongue is Amharic. The classrooms reflect an increasingly rich linguistic diversity, and this brings with it a challenge because students have varied levels of L2 proficiency. Whereas some of these students are able to participate in mainstream classes, significant number of young children face a daunting challenge in learning academic content and skills through Amharic while still developing proficiency in Amharic. The teachers in the research setting had also to cope with Amharic L1 and L2 learners in the same classroom and had to teach at different language levels to individual learners in the class.

4.2.1.2 Teacher Questionnaire

The total number of surveys distributed to teachers was 15. Of those distributed, and all were returned. The survey aimed at gathering basic information about their L1 and an indication of additional languages spoken, and a teacher's qualification and training.

Among the 15 teacher participants who responded to the 'first language' question, 8 teachers reported that *Amharic* was their first language; 4 teachers indicated that *Gamotstso* was their mother tongue. The remaining 3 teachers, each one speaks *Afan Oromo*, *Zeysetstso,* and *Kambatigna* as their mother tongue. In terms of additional language proficiency, 9 out of 15 teachers reported that they speak languages other than Amharic. 6 teachers indicated they did not speak a language other than Amharic. Of the participants who reported that they know additional languages, 5 mentioned they had attained a very good level of proficiency listening, speaking, reading, & writing Gamotstso. 4 teachers mentioned a good level of proficiency in listening and speaking Gamotstso. Therefore, 9 of the participants were classified as multiligual and six as monolingual.

As mentioned earlier, the schools serve linguistically diverse community with children from a range of ethnic backgrounds. There are currently twelve different languages spoken. The languages spoken by the teachers are quite limited compared to the range of languages spoken by the children. This means that a lot of the children do not have bilingual support from their teachers as they do not speak their languages.

The participant teachers were asked about their qualification. They reported that their credentials ranged from a certificate to a diploma in education with an endorsement to teach in first cycle primary school. Out of the 15 teachers involved in the study, 14 were graduates of a pedagogical training program from teacher training institutions. Only one teacher had a diploma from Teacher Education College in Amharic. Courses they attended in teacher training institutions include *Psychology, Pedagogy, English, Mathematics, Amharic, Gamoththo, General Science, and Social studies.*

Results from the survey indicated that the participant teachers received content knowledge courses (General science, Mathematics, & Social science), pedagogical content knowledge subjects (Pedagogical science), language lessons (English, Amharic, & Gamotstso), and courses on theories regarding early child and adolescent experiences, social and cognitive development (Psychology). However, to be successful with diverse learners, today's teachers need extensive coursework that include content and theory related to best practises in the instruction of linguistically

diverse students. Teachers need to draw on established principles of second language learning, course content and theory integrated principles highlighting the interdependence between first and second language acquisition, including how cognitive development of the first language transfers to the second language (Cummins, 1981; 1991). Course content also emphasize research demonstrating the importance of the native language in promoting linguistic minority students' academic, linguistic, cognitive, and psychosocial growth.

4.2.2 Tests

In order to sort out second language learner's general Amharic proficiency, Placement tests were administered.

A standard score specifically Z-score was used to categorize students. Standard scores are used in norm- referenced assessment to compare one student's performance on a test to the performance of other students' performance. Standard scores estimate whether a student's scores are above average, average, or below average to peers (Lodico, Spaulding, & Voegtle, 2010). A standardized Z-score represents both the relative position of an individual score in a distribution as compared to the mean and the variation of scores in the distribution. A negative Z-score indicates the score is below the distribution mean. A positive Z-score indicates the score is above the distribution mean. Z-scores will form a distribution identical to the distribution of raw scores; the mean of Z-scores will equal zero and the variance of a Z-distribution will always be one, as will the standard deviation (ibid).

The subject's overall language proficiency was examined, and the scores obtained from listening, speaking, reading, and writing tests were added up. Z-score was computed based on the students' scores of the four tests. Students were classified into three based on the following categories:

Category

Low: if $z<-0.67$(the lower 25 percent of the scores)

Medium: if $-0.67<Z<0.67$(the meddle 50 percent of the scores)

Upper: if $Z>0.67$(the upper 25 % of the scores)

Accordingly, among the 45 second language students contained in the target section from school-A, 7 second language children deemed to have low proficiency in L2. The target section from school-B consists of 62 second language children, and 11 second language children were classified as low proficient. The target group from school-C consists of 45 second language learners, and 14 children were categorized as low proficient learners.

Finally, children who scored low in Amharic Placement language tests were taken as target group to pursue with the next phase of the study.

4.2.3 Classroom Observation Checklist

In this study, classroom observations were done by the researcher and his assistant and field notes were taken. To increase the reliability of observational evidence, use of multiple observers is recommended (Creswell, 2009). Both the researcher and his assistant observed the selected classes for a week each. We observed 3 lessons of 40 minutes each day for 4 days in each clasroom. 39 lessons amounting to 26 hours of observations were done.

To examine the communication strategies that the learners used, the communication strategies typology proposed by Tarone (1980) and Tarone (1977), and Færch and Kasper (1984) were used for the analysis of the data. The classification contained eleven types of communication strategies: (1), topic avoidance, (2), message abandonment, (3), code switching, (4) literal translation, (5) word coinage, (6) approximation, (7), appeal for assistance, (8), use of all-purpose word, (9), Non linguistic signals (10), time gaining, and (11) circumlocution.

Table-3: Types of communication strategies used by low proficient L2 students in School-A, B, & C

No	Communication Strategies	School 1		School 2		School 3	
		Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
1	Non linguistic signal (gesture, nodding)	136	46.25	127	42.19	156	43.94
2	Time gaining (they…um…etc)	71	24.14	68	22.59	67	18.87
3	*Code Switching (use of L1, i.e., 'Masha', 'Deyesha', etc)*	43	14.62	47	15.61	84	23.66
4	*Appeal for Help (ask friend, i.e., non-verbally, ask friend using L1)*	30	10.20	44	14.61	37	10.24
5	*Use of All Purpose Words (What is it? It is…)*	9	3.06	15	4.98	11	3.09
6	*Message Abandonment (begin & stop, i.e., It is)*	5	1.70	-	-	-	-
7	Approximation	-	-	-	-	-	-
8	Circumlocution	-	-	-	-	-	-
9	Topic Avoidance	-	-	-	-	-	-
10	Word Coinage	-	-	-	-	-	-
11	Literal Translation	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total		294	100	301	100	355	100

The results in table-3 show the communication strategies employed by low proficient second language children. As seen in the table, there are six types of communication strategies employed by learners of section-E in school-A and according to the frequency of communication strategies; the most frequently used was 'Gesture' which was used 136 times (46.25%), followed by 'Time Gaining Strategy', 71 times (24.14%), 'Code Switching' strategy 43 times (14.62%), 'Appeal for Help', 30 times (10.20%), and the least used communication strategies were 'Use of All Purpose Words' 9 times (3.06%) and 'Message Abandonment' 5 times (1.70%).

Similarly, the findings in table-3 show the communication strategies employed by the learners of the target classroom in school-B. As can be seen, five types of communication strategies were employed. Accordingly, the most frequently used was

‘Non Lingustic Signals’ which was used 127 times (42.19%), followed by ‘Time Gaining Strategy’ 68 times (22.59%), and the least used communication strategy was ‘Use of All Purpose Words’ at 15 times (4.98%).

Table-3 also shows the communication strategies employed by learners of the target classroom in School-C. According to the table, there are five types of communication strategies employed during group and whole class discussion; the highest level of communication strategy used by the learners is allocated to ‘Non Linguistic Signals’ by a frequency of 156 (43.94%), followed by ‘Code Switching, 84 times (23.66%), ‘Time Gaining’ strategy 67 times (18.89%), ‘Appeal for Help’, 37 times (10.24%), while the lowest level goes to ‘Use of All Purpose Words’ by a frequency of 11 (3.09%).

Overall, what is noticeable is that the target children in all the three classrooms had almost employed similar communication strategies, but they did not have the same frequency use. The relatively high percentage of ‘gestural’ use indicates limitations in the learners’ second language proficiency. When L2 learners face difficulty in expressing their thoughts, because of their own limited resources of the target language, they use non-verbal means to help them overcome the break down during oral communication (Krauss & Hadar, 1999).

The next highest number of strategy besides gesture is ‘time gaining strategy’. According to ASHA (1985), hesitations, false starts, filled and silent pauses, and other dysfluent behaviours may be displayed by second language learners because of a lack of knowledge of L2.

Code switching is the third strategy mostly employed by the subjects. It appeared that learners drew on their L1 resources by code-switching, and used it as a communicative strategy. Second language learners code switch to their L1 for various reasons. They may switch for convenience or because they find it difficult to express themselves (Tarone, 1977; Faerch & Kasper, 1983). In this study, however, the children reverted to their L1 for they couldn’t recall the specific words in L1.

Appeal for help is the next strategy after code switching. The children used the strategy of 'appeal for help' when they wanted assistance from their friends and teammates. The children asked for help when they didn't know the answers to the questions, or when they couldn't understand some words or the whole sentence during lessons.

Overall, the findings imply that linguistic minority children's linguistic competence is insufficient, and appeared to have the target language problems.

4.3 Qualitative Results

This research also employed a qualitative mode of enquiry to understand problems linguistic minority children experience in second language classrooms and to explore teachers' instructional practices working with young children from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

4.3.1 Interviews

In this study, interviews were conducted with learners and teachers after observations were done in each classroom. Based upon this inquiry and his understanding of the data, the researcher identified themes from across all the data. Three major themes are as follows: (I) Challenges learners experience (II) Negotiation of identities, and (III) Teachers' instrucational practices in their management of linguistic diversity.

4.3.1.1 Learner Interviews

The learner interviews were conducted to investigate the educational experiences of linguistic minority children in the mainstream classrooms. There were about 27 students involved in the interviews. The interviews were conducted in *Gamotstso, Wolayitaththo, and Afan Gujii*. The lack of children's proficiency in *Amharic* is a major factor for them to use their home languages in the interviews. The interviews were conducted by two teachers who acted as research assistants. The audiotapes in Gamotstso, Wolaytaththo, and Afan Gujii were transcribed directly from the audio recordings, and checked by listening to the recordings and readings through the transcriptions. After transcribing the interviews from the audio tape onto paper, the research assistants translated them into Amharic. Later, the researcher translated each

interview into English. Finally, both Amharic and English translations were presented to other research fellows for accuracy of translation.

The major themes that emerged from students' experiences include (I) Challenges they faced (II) Negotiation of identities. The researcher narrowed his focus to finding themes that were relevant to the research questions. He also has included some direct quotations from the interviews to illustrate and substantiate the experiences.

4.3.1.1.1 Challenges faced by learners

Firstly, the researcher wanted to know what linguistic minority learners felt about learning in second language. When the children were asked about their experiences in L2 classrooms, they reported that they encountered serious problems. Not surprisingly, the learners expressed that they felt daunted and found learning in L2 extremely challenging.

To describe these, the actual words of the students are given below.

> **Int:** *Your first language is a language other than Amharic, and you are attending school in your second language-that is Amharic. How do you cope with this situation?*
>
> **S7A:** *I find Amharic very difficult. I am from rural area and speak Gamotstso from birth to present time.* Here schooling is in Amharic and I don't know Amharic.
>
> **S1B:** *I find learning in Amharic very challenging. I speak Gamotstso from an early age. Besides, I always speak Gamotstso with my family at home.*
>
> ***S9C:*** *There is problem. I don't understand when they teach. Besides, I don't speak any other language except mine [Afan Gujii]*.

The above children claimed that they have been in difficulty of learning in second language. They stated that they were hard of hearing and unable to speak, as a result

of the language of instruction being different from their first language. Some of them added that they don't know any other language except their own. They explained they had no exposure to Amharic, and encountered constraints of communication since they started learning. Some of them described that Amharic has never been spoken among their family members, and did not have enough opportunities to use Amharic outside the classroom.

Based upon what the students said in the interviews, the researcher could identify at least three types of challenges: language barrier, social isolation, and emotional insecurity.

4.3.1.1.1.1 Language barrier

Nearly all the students noted that the language barrier is the most apparent of the problems. They emphasise language barrier is extremely critical, and lack of Amharic language skills inhibited both their understanding and expressions. When learners were asked what aspects of language they found difficult, they said the following

> **Int:** *What aspects of Amharic language do you find difficult?*
> **S8B:** *I listen a little bit of Amharic. I find words and their meanings difficult. Speaking is also a problem.*
> **S10C:** *I cannot speak Amharic; I know only Afan Guji.*

The children reported that their command of Amharic appeared to be restricted, and their expressive language skills limited their ability to express themselves adequately. Some of them also described they hear but are not able to comprehend what their classmates and teachers are saying in Amharic. As a result, they would manage to seat idle the whole day in the classrooms.

Besides, the children reported that they experienced problems comprehending texts in Amharic.

> ***S2A:*** *There are lots of problems. Reading is difficult, and so are alphabet letters. Both Amharic and Gamotstso letters are difficult.*

S2B: *I don't know Amharic alphabet letters, and I have been having problem with letters and words' meaning.*

S4C: *I don't know Amharic alphabet letters. I have not learnt letters.*

The children have described that they lacked knowledge of speech sounds of Amharic language and its distinct features that contribute to differences in meanings. They stated that they were not exposed to letter acquisition in Amharic. Young children who have difficulty in discriminating individual letters of the alphabet will have trouble in learning. They also reported they couldn't read and write in Gamotstso. There is substantial evidence to suggest that mother-tongue education programmes are capable of producing functionally literate readers in 2 to 3 years (Cummins, 2000). As outlined above, children never learnt to read in Amharic. Thus not being taught in the mother tongue can put children at a distinct disadvantage for their potential future learning trajectory. Insistence on immersion program to language learning is likely to result in a fragmented development where the child is denied the opportunity to develop proficiency in either language.

They also stated that they found words and their meanings difficult to understand.

S2B: *I have been having problem with words while learning. I find them very difficult.*
S2C: *I find words and their meanings most difficult.*

The children also claimed that they had difficulties understanding vocabularies and using words during learning. Obviously, vocabulary is a primary determinant of comprehending, and these learners do not possess the linguistic capacity to take part in Amharic medium instruction.

The children further described, the challenge is more severe while learning environmental science and mathematics.

S6B: *Besides, I don't understand mathematics and environmental science. I find the words difficult.*
S7B: *Yes. I find words and their meanings difficult. I don't understand the words in mathematics.*

The children noted that academic vocabularies in mathematics and environmental science have made it difficult to understand lessons. Mathematical and scientific languages can be said to be characterized by the use of language in ways that are different from other everyday language. This may be attributed to the fact that these learners may have had little exposure to academic language required for the more complex language of formal schooling.

4.3.1.1.1.2 Social barriers

Although the language difficulties experienced by linguistic minority children were significant, they were also found to experience social isolation. The social challenges more or less can be classified in two categories: peer relations and exclusion by teachers.

I. Peer relations

The children claim that a lack of Amharic proficiency works as a barrier to preventing interaction with their classmates. They reported that they faced discrimination when they tried to interact and socialize with children who speak Amharic.

Interviewer: *In the classroom, are you sitting on pupils who speak Amharic or on one whose mother tongue is Afan Gujii?*
S8C: *I sit with Guji children.*
Interviewer: Why do you prefer to sit with Guji children?
S8C: *We speak the same language. Since I don't understand other children's language, I don't want to sit with them. They themselves do not want to sit with me.*

When the above child was asked whom he preferred to sit with, he replied he chose children who spoke his language. He claimed that a lack of Amharic proficiency

works as a barrier to preventing interaction with Amharic speaking students. When he tried to practice Amharic, his classmates did not want to work and learn together.

Similarly, **S2B** has said the following about classroom interaction and socialization:

> ***Interviewer:*** *Do you prefer to sit with children speaking Gamotstso?*
> ***S2B:*** *Yes.*
> ***Interviewer:*** *Why?*
> ***S2B:*** *Since I know Gamotstso, I prefer children who speak my language. I want also to try Amharic but they don't have desire to talk to me; they don't play with me.*

Student **2B** felt that interactions with their classmates are necessary for learning Amharic, but these interactions are not always positive. For students like 2B, incidents like being excluded from games and other activities rob these students of the excitement and motivation of learning the second language.

Similarly, **S5A** describes that he experienced negative contacts when he tried to join children who speak Amharic.

> ***S5A:*** *[I sit] With children who speak Gamotstso.*
> ***Interviewer:*** *Why?*
> ***S5A:*** *Since I don't know Amharic, I prefer to sit with children who speak my language. I suppose they help.*
> ***Interviewer:*** *Why don't you prefer to sit with other children?*
> ***S5A:*** *I want them, but they don't want to be with me. They want theirs.*

The above child prefers children who speak his language because that's where he feels more comfortable. He stated that he had difficulty in interacting with peers which made him humiliated to engage in language learning process. Interaction mainly involves contacts between peers on matters of learning. The quality of

students' learning processes, which in turn determines their persistence, is determined by their social interactions with peers.

In a few cases, the linguistic minority children were hindered by their own lack of Amharic proficiency, which got in the way of their pursuit of relationships with more proficient students.

> ***S2B**: I'm afraid of speaking with my classmates. I don't understand what they are saying. So, I don't know how to reply to them.*
> ***S4C**: They [proficient children] don't say anything; but I don't want to join them because my Amharic is not good.*

Due to lack of Amharic proficiency, the students were typically isolated from more proficient students. They preferred to be only with children who spoke their language because speaking with the majority language speakers means they need to think a lot about their own language use. Instead, they tend to be alone, together with same language group, who share their ideas.

On the other hand, some students complained that there are a few Amharic speaking children, and their class contained children who spoke mainly Gamotstso and Wolayiththo, and that hindered the process of learning Amharic effectively.

> ***S3C:** We always speak Gamotstso; many children speak our language. Only a few children speak Amharic in our class.*
> ***S8C:** There are no many children who speak Amharic in class and in Abullo. I don't have friends who speak Amharic.*

The above children and other children from school-C claimed that few of their classmates spoke Amharic as first language, and that affected their Amharic language development. Their classrooms contained children who spoke *mainly Gamotstso, Wolayiththo, and Afan Gujii,* and they often socialized mainly with children who shared their home language.

II. Exclusion by teachers

The children also stated that they faced discrimination from some of their teachers. They said the following statements in relation to teachers' unfair treatment.

> ***S2A:*** *They don't ask me. They ask other students.*
> ***S5A:*** *They don't help anything. They don't ask me; they ask other students.*
> ***Int:*** *Who are these other students?*
> ***S5A:*** *Children who speak Amharic*

The students explained that teachers did not ask questions and involve them in activities. As they noted, teachers always turn their attention to children who speak and understand Amharic. This could result in the children feeling invisible, and cause them to withdraw from most group activities. Eventually, the child may experience social and linguistic isolation.

Similarly, students had the following to say:

> ***S3C:*** *I don't ask them & they don't want to talk to me.*
> *They don't look at my notebook. They look at other children's notebook.*

The above child narrated that teachers didn't treat him like other children. He explained teachers didn't examine his work and monitor his progress. He noted teachers were treating students differently, favoring learners who speak the school language while ignoring students who were struggling.

In some cases, children reported that their teachers did not show interest to talk to them, and they [teachers] blamed them for remaining silent.

> ***S7A:*** *Teachers blamed me for not speaking Amharic.*
> ***Int:*** *Why don't you speak?*
> ***S7A****: I don't know Amharic, and that is why I keep silent.*
> *They don't talk to me; they talk to other children.*

S2C: *The teachers don't talk to me; they always blamed me for remaining silent. They opt for children who understand Amharic.*

The above children couldn't speak Amharic; they chose to be silent since they have had little or no exposure to Amharic. However, they felt that their teachers didn't include them in interactions because of their inability to speak Amharic. They complained that their teachers always approached proficient children, and didn't show interest in them.because of their silence.

4.3.1.1.1.3 Psycological barriers

The children have expressed anxiety as a barrier to participation in mainstream schools. They reported that their level of confidence affected the degree to which they are willing to take risks in the use of Amharic.

How often do you use Amharic in classroom?

S6B: I get embarrassed to speak up. I keep quiet because my Amharic is not good.

S4C: I want to ask questions, but my Amharic is poor. I know only few words.

Although the children wanted to speak Amharic, they were concerned about spoken Amharic, especiallt about their poor command. Due to their low confidence caused by such concerns, the children became reticent students in the classroom.

Inter: *How do your classmates react to your usage of Amharic during class?*
S3A: *I know little Amharic, and when I speak, they insult and laugh at me. So, I speak to children who speak my language.*

One important issue for student **3A** is how much not having a good command of Amharic prevented him from bonding with his classmates. Besides, he is reluctant to share ideas with others in fear of hurtful and negative remarks. He noted how verbal abuse affected him emotionally.

> ***S6B:*** *Other children are teasing when I try to speak Amharic. I speak my language. They don't talk to me. I feel very lonely.*

Psychosocial discomfort has unfortunate academic consequences as evident from S6B's account of his experiences. He echoed being victim of teasing by peers led to loneliness, and this can lead to social and emotional difficulties which further affects academic confidence and successful outcomes.
Similarly, **S2C** has the following to say:

> ***S2C:*** *They laugh when I make mistakes in Amharic. Because of this I don't speak Amharic in front of them.*

S2C said that when he was unable to say something correctly in Amharic, his classmates laughed and made fun of him. As a result, the voices heard in the classrooms were that of those who speak the school language while these particular language minority voices remained silent.

> ***S8C:*** *My Amharic is not good enough. When I speak, my classmates laugh at me.*

The above student mentioned shyness and concern about the reactions of others when speaking Amharic. The learner is reticent to expose himself to peer-to-peer shamings.

In the above extracts, students reported that they do not want to speak in Amharic and choose to remain silent rather than embarrass themselves in front of their L1 peers. Such feelings of frustration may cause the learners with limited Amharic proficiency not to learn effectively. This eventually causes psychological harm to children, with negative consequences for academic and social development.

4.3.1.1.2 Negotiation of identity in multilingual classrooms

This study seeks to explore how linguistic minority learners who attend schooling in their second language negotiate their identities in linguistically diverse classrooms.

Some dominant themes that emerged from the findings are: self-reflection and construction of identity in L2 classroom community.

4.3.1.1.2.1 Learners' Self-Reflections

Participants showed different types of self-reflection about their linguistic identity, language preference, and second language learning.

When learners were asked about language preference, some children noted the importance of home language for identity as follows:

> ***Interviewer:*** *Do you prefer to have lessons in Amharic or in your first language?*
> ***S1B:*** *In Gamotstso.*
> ***Interviewer:*** *Why do you prefer Gamotstso?*
> ***S1B:*** *I speak Gamotstso from an early age. Gamotstso is my language. Besides, I always speak Gamotstso with my family. It is the language of my family.*

The student above reported that he has been speaking his first language since childhood, and 'Gamotstso' is a language that not only links him to his heritage but usually involves daily interaction with family members as well. Besides, his linguistic identity, *'Gamotstso is my language'*, is well represented in his school language preference. He noted that 'Gamotstso', his home language, is part of who he is and described his desire to attend schooling in it.

In the extracts below, two children, **S2C & S10C,** expressed that they don't understand Amharic, and preferred to be schooled in their own language.

> ***S2C:*** *In my mother tongue [Gamotstso].*
> ***Interviewer:*** *Why?*
> ***S2C:*** *I don't know Amharic, but I speak my language very well.*
> ***S10C:*** *In my own language [Afan Gujii].*
> ***Interviewer:*** *Why?*

S10C: *I don't know any other language. That is why I prefer to learn in my own language.*

Both children**, S2C & S10C**, expressed the importance of attending schooling in their home language. Their interpretations of *'Gamotstso'* and *'Afan Gujii'* as *'in my mother tongue'* and '*in my own language'* respectively depict their perceptions of the home language as an important part of their identity.

Some children expressed their desire to achieve bilingual identity:

S8B: *I know Wolayitaththo. Since I don't know Amharic, I would like to know Amharic.*
Interviewer: *Why? S8B: To talk to different people here.*

Similarly, **S9B** said the following:

S9B: *... I also want Amharic.*
Interviewer: *Why?*
S9B: *I understand if I learn in my language, but I want to know Amharic. If I speak Amharic, I can talk to other children.*

The above students represented themselves as members of specific group, and claimed to achieve a bilingual identity. They want to learn Amharic by retaining their first language. They noted that if they are bilingual, they can talk to different people. Because they wanted to be accepted by the community they were in, their peers in particular, the children wished to acquire Amharic.

4.3.1.1.2.2 Negotiation of identity in L2 classroom

4.3.1.1.2.2.1 Language use & identity negotiation

In this study, linguistic minority students were asked how other learners reacted when they used their home language. The following were some of the responses:

S7A: *They say 'she is Gemu'. They also insult by saying 'Geze, Dagagna'.*
Interviewer: *What is your reaction then?*
S7A: *I just keep on speaking it.*

Student 7A, Gamotstso speaking child, claims that she has been labeled *"Gemu, Geze, Degegna*" by her classmates for speaking *Gamotstso.* She reports that she has been scorned with the derogatory labeling *'Gemu, Geze, & Dagagna'*, and claims there is a stigma attached to it. Nevertheless, the respondent appeared to pursue using her language.

S1C also described that he experienced rejection when he used his L1, as he narrated in the following excerpt:

S1C: *They tease me.*
Interviewer: *What do they say?*
S1C: *They say speak your 'Gamotstso language' there at 'Channo'. (Channo is small village near Arba Minch)*

Student **1C** reported that his classmates have been putting pressure on him to speak his language in his vicinity. Besides, they have been forcing him to use the language he does not yet speak.
Similarly, **S7B** describes his friends were teasing him about his language.

S7B: *They mock and say, 'Why does he speak Gamotstso?' 'He has to speak the language we understand'.*
Interviewer: *Yes, how do you react?*
S7B: *I reply that I speak in my language, not in your language.*

Student **7B** was of the opinion that some pupils reacted more unfavorably when he spoke Gamotstso. He reported his classmates wanted him to use the language they

understood. However, he contested the negative remarks and replied that let everyone use their language.

> ***S9B:*** *They say 'he only knows Gamotstso'.*
> ***Interviewer:*** *Do you know Gamotstso?*
> ***S9B:*** *I am not Gamo, I am Wolayeta.*
> ***Interviewer:*** *Do they call you Gamo?*
> ***S9B:*** *Yes, they say 'he only knows Gamotstso'.*
> ***Interviewer:*** *What do other pupils say when you use Wolaytaththo?*
> ***S9B:*** *They don't like.*

Student **9B**, whose first language is 'Wolaytaththo', contested his ethno-linguistic identity when his classmates identified him as 'Gamo'. He felt unhappy when others viewed him as 'Gamotstso' speaker. He further noted that his classmates felt unhappy when he used his language, and finally excluded himself.

Learners also reported that their teachers were also discouraging while they were using their L1, and wanted them only to speak in Amharic. Some of the L2 learners responded as follows:

> ***S4A:*** *When Gamotstso teacher enters, he tells us to speak only Gamotstso; other teachers tell us to speak only Amharic. They tell us not to use Gamotstso.*

Student **4A** describes that his Gamotstso teacher encouraged the use of their first language, whereas other mainstream teachers rejected the utilization of L1 during instruction.

Student **6A** replied similarly that their teachers rejected use of L1, and reminded that they should use only Amharic.

S6A: *The teachers tell us not to speak Gamotstso; they tell us to use only Amharic*.

In the extract below, one of the learners reported that teachers rejected their L1, and felt that they [teachers] imposed their language upon them.

S7B: *They don't let us use Gamotstso; they tell us to use their language.*

On the other hand, a student, whose home language is Afan Oromo, reported their teachers do not allow use of their first language because they [teachers] don't understand Afan Oromo.

S8C: *They do not allow us to speak in our language.*
Interviewer: *Why not?*
S8C: *They do not understand our language.*

Responses of the children show that they are not allowed to speak their first language in the classroom. The data suggest teachers are not welcoming the children's attempt to use and interact in their first language.

The children were further asked about parents' encouragement of schooling in L1 and responded as follow:

Interviewer: *In which language do your parents want you to attend schooling?*
S6A: *In Amharic.*
Interviewer: *In Amharic?*
S6A: *Yes.*
Interviewer: *Why?*
S6A: They say 'schooling in Amharic is good for personal growth'. They also say 'Gamotstso is not helpful'.

Student **6A** describes that his parents wanted him to attend school education in Amharic. He explained that they valued education in Amharic, and believed that it provides an opportunity for individual growth. He also stated they [parents] told him that education in Gamotstso is not worthy of.

Similarly, **S7B** had the following to say:

> ***Interviewer:*** *In what language do your parents want you to attend schooling?*
> ***S7B:*** *In Amharic.*
> ***Interviewer:*** *In Amharic?*
> ***S7B:*** *Yes.*
> ***Interviewer:*** *Why?*
> ***S7B:*** *They say to me 'You don't go far if you know Gamotstso. You had better learn in Amharic'.*

Student **7B** describes that his parents showed preference for Amharic, and have been telling him that Gamotstso won't take him further.

> ***Interviewer:*** *Do they want you to learn in Amharic?*
> ***S6B:*** *Yes.*
> ***Interviewer:*** *Why?*
> ***S6B:*** *They say 'Gamotstso doesn't help. Be good at Amharic. Amharic is fine'.*

S6B also reported that his parents preferred Amharic to Gamotstso, and told him that Gamotstso is not important to him. They believe Amharic is good and appropriate for schooling.

4.3.1.1.2.2.2 Negotiation of competencies

The focal students constructed various identities that were often based on their changing sense of competence as a member of a given classroom community. A common identity described by many of them was being less competent than others.

> ***S7C:*** *If I commit mistakes while speaking in Amharic, they shout insults at me. Since then I refrained from using Amharic during group work.*

A major challenge the above student faced was being unable to gain legitimate membership in the mainstream classroom. The identity as a language deficient student the boy held was not accepted. Finally, he decided to give up trying after he realized the irreconcilable differences in language proficiency.

On the other hand, although children are eager to interact with more proficient children, practice Amharic, and hence their language learning, they resisted the opportunity to speak.

> ***S1C:*** *I always listen to other children. I want to speak but I know a little bit of Amharic. That is my problem. They ask me to speak, but I am afraid.*

As shown in the above quote, despite S1C low Amharic proficiency, he tended to have difficulties in fully performing as competent members in the classroom, especially when he is interacting with more proficient learners. As a result of this frustrating experience, he has lower confidence in his ability of Amharic, resulting in marginalized identities in a classroom community.

Another challenge the students faced was not being able to contribute to class discussions as much as they desired. Owing to difficulties, i.e., oral skills, they constructed his identity of being a less competent student, as narrated in the following excerpt:

> ***S5C:*** *I want to speak Amharic. But I am afraid to speak it. Other children in the group mock at my Amharic.*

Thus, student **5C** was primarily afraid that he would not meet his classmates' expectations regarding competence, especially linguistic competence. He had a strong

desire to participate as a competent member. However, he hesitated to speak because of being judged as a less competent participant by his peers.

Students seemed to develop this type of identity, i.e., being less competent, based on the difficulties they were experiencing in the classroom, such as a lack of second language proficiency, and not being able to contribute to discussions as much as others.

4.4.1.1.2.2.3 In-Group Affilation

In the interviews held, there appears to be varying degrees of 'othering' among the respondents based on their proficiency on the other language. To this end, linguistic minority children chose to affiliate to a specific group, i.e. the *'we-group'* versus the *'others'* to identify themselves from the majority group children.

> ***S3A:*** *They speak Amharic, and we speak Gamotstso. But when we speak Gamotstso, they tell us not to speak it.*

In the above extracts, language has been used as the main binding force in creating the *'we'* and the *'they'* dichotomies. There is, however, a sense of *'us'*, among those who speak Gamotstso, Wolaytaththo, and Afan Oromo. The L2 learners' language the *'we'* code represents in-group speech. It connotes intimacy, and the *'they'* code represents the more dominant group and is tied with distance and unfamiliarity.

In sum, the extracts above show the ways in which linguistic miority students negotiate their identities in an L2 classroom. The extracts demonstrated that language learning and teaching includes significantly more than a set of discrete items to be learned, namely language preferences, class group identity, communicative comfort level in using second language, and the dynamics of participation including resistance.

4.3.1.2 Teacher Interviews

The interviews probed teachers' educational experiences in multilingual classrooms with regard to their perceptions and strategies in their management of linguistic diversity among students. The interviews were conducted in Amharic, and were

translated into English. The transcribed version and the Englsh translation were made available to a colleague confirmation of content and accuracy of translation.

Based upon what the teachers said in the interviews, the researcher could identify three sub themes under teachers' instructional practices in their management of linguistic diversity among learners: (I) Teachers' perceptions of linguistic diversity (II) Teachers' perceptions about the role of L1 (III) Teachers' teaching strategies towards multilingual classrooms

4.3.1.2.1 Teachers' perceptions of linguistic diversity

When the teachers were asked to express their perceptions about linguistic diversity, their answers were more or less uniform. Below were their responses:

> ***T3A:*** *Here we have several languages, and their presences have created controversy. So, when there are more languages, there is always problem. …And all languages are not equally developed. So, we must use the one that has developed.*

In the above extract, the teacher perceives linguistic diversity as a problem that caused a lot of controversy and created difficulties to the progress of the class. She notes that as minority languages' are not well developed, it is necessary to use a highly developed language for education.

When she was further asked about inclusion of linguistic minority children in the classroom, she has expressed her views in the extract below:

> ***T3A:*** *…As they don't know Amharic, it is good that they are taught in a separate classroom.*

According to teacher 3A, the presence of linguistic minority children in the classroom delays the progress of the class because the teacher needs to devote more time to them. The teacher's remarks *'As they don't know Amharic'* reveal that if they don't know Amharic, they don't know at all, they have a deficit and lack the cognitive and linguistic capacity to perform academically in the classrooms. Thus, she believes

school has to include the children after they have received exclusive language instruction in the school language.

Similarly, in the extract below, one of the teachers reflects a monolingual ideological view and perceives language diversity as a challenge.

> ***T4B:****I often hear people say multiplicity of language good. For me, it is a source of disagreement.*

Teacher **4B** has taken the view that language diversity is a problem and believes that it is a source of tension and conflict. With regard to the presence of linguistic minority children in the classroom, teacher 4B reflected the following:

> ***T4B:*** *The presence of these children poses a serious challenge in our work. I suggest that the school should keep these children in a separate room….*

Besides, he has expressed that linguistic minority children have posed serious challenges in their duty. He perceives the children as a burden, and should not be part of the mainstream classrooms.

On the other hand, although they are few, some of the teacher respondents perceive language diversity as a resource.

> ***T2A:*** *You have to develop your language and at the same time it is important to learn other languages. But, you have to value your language first. This is what I always tell to my students. So having several languages is not a problem.*

Teacher **2A** perceives language diversity as a resource and describes the importance of maintaining and valuing one's language. In addition to seeing linguistic diversity as a resource, he advises the children to learn other's languages. He also favors the presence of linguistic minority children in the mainstream classrooms, and believes both the majority group and linguistic minorities have to learn together.

The majority of the teachers have expressed, to different degrees, assimilationist views, leading to a monolingual ideological orientation. The teachers' negative perceptions towards linguistic diversity can be brought by their incapability to respond to issues of diversity in their classrooms. Besides, nearly all the teachers have expressed the most negative attitudes towards inclusion of linguistic minority children in the mainstream classrooms.

4.3.1.2.2 Teachers' perceptions about the role of L1

In addition, the participant teachers were asked about mother tongue based multilingual education and language learning. The following statements are taken directly from the interviews:

> ***T1A:*** *It is good to learn in one's first language. But most of our people here, particularly those from the countryside want their children to learn in Amharic. You know why? Our children learn the local languages from their mothers and fathers.*

Teacher **1A** describes that learners learn better when taught in their first language. He, however, reveals that there are practical obstacles to implementing it in this particular zone. Members of the local language communities hold negative attitude towards mother tongue education. The increasingly growing parental demand for Amharic as medium of instruction has been appeared as one of the main contributing factors for rejection of mother tongue education.

In the interview, he further elaborates that 'what I suggest is it [Gamotstso] should be given as a subject'.

Likewise, teacher 1B believes teaching 'Gamotstso' as a subject and using Amharic, language of wider communication, as language of instruction.

> ***T1B:*** *My opinion is that it would be fine if students learn their language as a single subject and focus on Amharic.*

The responses of both teachers show there is very little demand for education in mother tongue due to the fact that the zone is linguistically diverse. Both perceive linguistic minority children as fully assimilated into the majority language. A contradiction arises from their views. On the one hand, they advocate that children benefit from mother tongue education, and, on the other hand, they suggest that the languages of linguistic minority children should be given as a subject.
However, not all teachers who responded were in agreement. The following quotes were also taken directly from the interviews:

> ***T5C:*** *I am in favor of mother tongue education. If they learn in their first language, they will not have much problem.*

In the extracts above, the teacher thinks that children benefit from mother tongue medium, and emphasizes home languages as assets which can facilitate the process of learning in children.

Besides, the participant teachers were asked about language use in linguistically diverse classroom. When asked how they specifically validate the learners' first language, their beliefs ranged from those requiring strict L2 only classrooms to those allowing children to use their L1 whenever they needed.
One of the teachers said,

> ***T1B:*** *If learners use their first language, or switch between Gamotstso and Amharic, it helps them to comprehend the lesson, discus & solve problem.*

The above teacher stated that L1 should not be considered a hindrance to learning. In explaining why he thought the use of mother tongue is necessary, he pointed out that L1 use facilitates classroom activities due to the fact that use of L1 provides opportunities to discus and solve specific problems.

On the other hand, some of the participant teachers have prohibited the use of L1 in the classroom which is perceived to be an impediment to learning. One of the teachers

below discredited the students' mother tongue as a learning aid. The teacher's argument is that using L1 in the classroom deprives students' second language learning.

> ***T5C:*** *I would prefer it if they wouldn't speak. I tell them to pay attention to Amharic. Since their first language is not helpful to learn Amharic.*

Similarly, teacher **3A** had the following to say:

> ***T3A:*** *It hinders their effort to develop Amharic. It may also hinder communications with others. Besides, I am not able to hear and speak their language in same way.*

Teacher **3A** also believes that students should never use their first language in the classrooms. She believes that allowing children to use their home language affects their second language development. She added that she excludes L1 from class because she is not able to understand what they say.

Similarly, the participant teachers were asked about language learning, specifically about conversational and academic language. They replied as follows:

> ***T4A:*** *With regard to language used in class, for instance we use special words in class. For instance, we received oxygen from English, and we often use it in class. The language we use in class is book language. The one we use outside is simple and what everybody knows.*

The above mentioned teacher describes that there is difference between every day and school Amharic. He also notes that school language is similar to book language and requires extra cognitive demands as children try to understand new content, such as oxygen. In addition, the teacher is asked time needed for full acquisition of a second language, and he states, 'I don't know that, but you learn in school'.

Similarly, the teacher below reports that academic language consists mainly of academic vocabularies, whereas the one used outside consists of social languages.

> ***T3C:*** *Of course, they are not the same. Because, the Amharic language used in the classroom settings is widely consisted of academic terms, issues, concepts and the like… With regard to the time, I don't know, but they learn it here.*

On the other hand, some teachers reported that they see no difference between social and academic language abilities.

> ***T3A:*** *I don't think there is difference between the two. But in classroom we sometimes use English words. This is because we don't have Amharic equivalent.*

The above teacher **(T3A)** and others appear to have limited conceptualization of the difference between conversational and academic languages. Most of the teachers perceived that if students understand every day language, they can understand school language. Besides, they attribute the difference to code-switching.

When further asked what they thought about children's use of L1 at home, one of the teachers reported as follows:

> ***T3A:*** *Actually, my personal reflection is that families should have to allow their children to engage in pre-school learning and let them use Amharic at home.*

The above mentioned teacher and the remaining teacher respondents held the belief that native language use at home would slow Amharic acquisition. They believe factors outside the school setting, particularly language use within family, affects student's second language development. They said that they advise parents to speak only Amharic for they believe that the more children are exposed to Amharic, the better and quicker they will acquire the language.

4.3.1.2.3. Teachers' teaching strategies

Teachers were asked to describe teaching strategies they employed during instruction, and responded as follows:

> ***T3A:*** *I use teaching aids in the classrooms. I also use charts and drawings.*
>
> ***T2B:*** *Regarding strategies, I use teaching aids. I also try to use objects that they can see and touch.*
> ***T4C:*** *The teaching technique that I use in the teaching and learning process is that I often use pictorial illustrations and models.*

The respondents mentioned that they would always try to have concrete materials or pictures to help with their explanations. The teachers highlighted they often used visual aids to teach knowledge and skills. With language difficulties they would try to be more pictorial in their teaching methods.

Another topic that appeared to be in the forefront of the participants was the unpreparedness of teachers for linguistically diverse classroom and linguistic minority students. Mainstream teachers clearly wanted to see improvement of linguistic minority students' Amharic proficiency, but did not know how to use effective strategies to help them. Nevertheless, most of the teachers in this study showed a strong interest in hoping to learn more about linguistically diverse students and ways to provide more support to assist their second language learning.

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

5.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss the findings from chapter four, and the data are interrogated within the context of the theoretical underpinnings noted in chapter two of this study in an attempt to provide answers to the research questions.

The purpose of this inquiry is to explore challenges multilingual classrooms pose to linguistic minority students in three primary schools. Just as Gamo Gofa is a linguistically very complex zone, the demographics of classrooms in Arba Minch reflect the same linguistic complexity. This is because, various languages, namely Amharic, Gamotstso, Wolayitaththo, Gantatstso, Gofatstso, Afan Konso, Afan Oromo, Daweroththo, Zeysetstso, Gurage, Derashe, and Siliti languages are represented in the classrooms. It should be noted, however, that demographic multilingualism in a classroom does not necessarily imply multilingualism in any one individual and there are possibly many monolingual speakers in these classrooms. In other words, it is because of this multilingual linguistic complexity that problems emerge related to learning in these classrooms.

As such this research aimed to explore the existing situation in second language classrooms and analyzed the barriers to learning and the perceptions of teachers concerning linguistic diversity and education of linguistically diverse children. On the whole, the results revealed that both linguistic minority children and teachers face many complex challenges in a multilingual classroom environment. More detailed results of the study will now be summarized in relation to the literature review and with specific reference to the original research goals that motivated the research.

Based upon this inquiry and the researcher understanding of the data, he identified themes from across all the data. Four major themes are as follows: (I) The challenges faced by learners (II) Communication strategies learners employ (III) Negotiation of identity, and (IV) Teachers' instructional practices in their management of linguistic diversity. Besides, each major theme has various sub themes.

5.2 Challenges faced by learners

The findings indicated that linguistic minority students encounter problems in their daily school lives due to their limited Amharic language proficiency. Classroom observations, interviews with linguistic minority children and classroom teachers exposed detailed aspects of these problems. As beginners, linguistic minority children find themselves in an environment that is different to them and consequently face a number of different challenges as they struggle to adjust to mainstream classes.

The challenges that they meet every day could be categorized into three: language barrier, social challenge, and psychological problems.

5.2.1 The language domain

One of the most fundamental yet formidable contributors to the overall poor academic performance of linguistic minority children in this study is that of language. The children's responses show that they were raised speaking their home language with very little exposure to Amharic, and found L2 classrooms challenging. This finding is consistent with the findings of a number of researchers such as (Mekonnen, 2005; Heugh, Benson, Gebre Yohannes, & Bogale, 2012; Woldemariam, 2007; Benson, 2002), who reported that although there are many factors (low levels of teacher education, poorly designed materials, and lack of adequate school facilities) that present difficulties to second language learners, the most overwhelming of which is the language barrier. Learners who begin their schooling in a language they know well stand a better chance of academic success than who begin in an unfamiliar language. When the children switch to L2, their low level of proficiency in L2 would make learning more difficult.

Participant students and their teachers from the present study also reported difficulties associated with language. The learners' lack of Amharic language skills is inadequate and inhibits both their understanding and expression. As has been mentioned, classroom instruction in the schools is done in Amharic; and most of linguistic minority children come into contact with Amharic for the first time and experience some degree of difficulty.

The participants' statements reflect that there are several challenges in Amharic language learning: being able to communicate with classmates and teachers orally, basic vocabulary to converse fluently, and mastering a high level of academic language to understand instructions. Most notably, the children found it difficult to converse in Amharic, lack early literacy skills (recognising sounds, connecting sounds to symbols, developing vocabulary), and academic concepts and vocabulary in content-area classes.

The children reported that they were raised speaking their first language in their environments with very little exposure to Amharic, and lack proficiency levels that would enable them to communicate and interact during instruction. They said they did not have sufficient skills in the Amharic language to communicate and produce an answer that can be understood by others. In other words, the children have not acquired the 'BICS' in Amharic and can not communicate adequately in everyday conversation. *Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills* (BICS) in second language learners are estimated to take approximately two years to develop and allow learners to communicate through Amharic in everyday situations (Cummins, 1981; 2000; Thomas & Collier, 1997). This type of language tends to be used in relation to personal matters, real objects, and present events, and includes the aspects of language like basic vocabulary and grammar, to converse fluently in undemanding situations (Cummins, 2000). Most linguistic minority children in the research setting were faced with a sudden transfer from L1 at home to L2 when starting formal school. The mainstream classroom presents a particularly challenging context to some learners with limited Amharic proficiency, as most activities place considerable language demands on the learners who have to understand instructions and follow directions in Amharic.

Shifting to another language for learning purposes is also a difficult task for some learners. The ability to converse in an L2 does not necessarily indicate that a learner has the language proficiency required to learn at school. The language proficiency required for school includes all language domains (phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, pragmatics), and all four language skills (listening, speaking, reading, writing), which have to be acquired in each domain. In addition, these domains and skills have to be mastered within each learning area (Cummins, 1981; 2000). To

become linguistically proficient and competent in any language requires time and input. Language acquisition occurs over a number of years and requires stimulation and feedback in the target language from communication partners (Cummins, 2001; 1980; Thomas & Collier, 2001; Ovando & Coolier, 1985). Linguistically diverse learners need to master BICS, which take two to three years to develop. Hence, an appropriate learning environment is essential for the development of spoken language abilities.

As has been mentioned, most linguistic minority children were not exposed to early literacy skills. In many cases, the children are learning to read for the first time in grade one, and lack knowledge of letters, letter-sound correspondence, and decoding skills. Mastery of alphabet letters appears to be a prerequisite for learning to read because it is linked to decoding written words, which in turn is important for comprehension. Early literacy skills which include recognising sounds, letter recognition, and knowledge of vocabulary have been shown to be related to successful reading acquisition in instructional contexts (Adams, 1990; Scarborough, 2001; Vellutino & Scanlon, 2001). Of these various skills, letter recognition is the best predictor of later reading success for learners (Vellutino & Scanlon, 2001). That is, children who can identify more letters of the alphabet early tend to become more successful readers later on. By first grade, word recognition is a strong predictor of later reading comprehension (Juel, 1991).

Besides, as studies show, knowledge of letter names facilitates children's ability to decode text and apply the alphabetic principle to word recognition. Knowing the letters of the alphabet at school age is related to both short-and long-term reading proficiency (Adams, 1990). For most children letter names help them connect the sounds in words and letters in print.

The finding also indicated that children lacked the vocabulary needed to express their ideas and feelings both orally and in written language. They described that they know fewer words and less about their meaning, and tend not to get the important contextual practice they needed. When students know only limited vocabulary, they don't have sufficient foundation from which to peg complex concepts and understanding gets stuck. Vocabulary enhancement is an essential part of

comprehensive language and literacy skills that educates children to be successful in oral communication and in emergent writing and reading. For students who are learning L2 and who don't have the same amount of L2 vocabulary that L1 speakers do, vocabulary becomes even more important. Research (Kazee, 2001; Bloom, 1998; Tabors, 1997; and Verhallen & Schoonen, 1993) shows that L1 children have already learned to use a large amount of words before they are six years old, while low proficient second language children must catch up. Typically, this vocabulary deficit may affect minority language children in a negative way when they spend their whole school day immersed in an unfamiliar language and are not able to build on their vocabulary in their first.

As the children voiced, they typically experience difficulty understanding the language of mathematics and environmental science. They mentioned that words in mathematics and environmental science were often complex. In the classroom that the researcher observed, teachers had presented tasks that were set in everyday life contexts and made use of everyday usage words. There appeared to be an assumption that using everyday contents and language would facilitate learning. However, some of these words were unusual and therefore raised questions about assuming that students would be familiar and would be able to make a link with the mathematical and scientific concepts embedded in those words. For example, the teachers used the following vocabularies when explaining mathematical and scientific concepts in lessons: 'ሩብ'' (quarter), 'ኣንዝ' (number), 'የስሜት ህዋሳት' (sense organs), 'ቫይታሚን' (Vitamin), 'ለ·ል' (globe), etc. Most of the linguistic minority children are not familiar with some of academic vocabularies and would be unable to make link with the mathematical and scienticfic concepts embedded in those words. For instance, understanding the word 'ሩብ' is crucial to the students' successfully doing the task. Knowing that 'ሩብ' is one of the four equal parts has major implication for how the problem statement is converted into a mathematical equation and then a solution is sought.

In academic discourse, students are often individually responsible for constructing meanings and must rely on their own understanding of both the language and concepts involved. As students are engaged in mathematical and scientific problems,

it appeared that their understanding of the problem statements require the integration of linguistic, arithmetic, and scientific processing skills. At one level the children appeared to make sense of the languages in which the mathematics and scicence problems were coded. This involved making sense of the grammar and usage of words (Cummins, 2000; Thomas & Collier, 2001; Ovando & Collier, 1985). As a result, progress in core subjects may certainly be hindered by this lack of learning resources. So, scholars suggest that it is especially helpful to younger students to use their home language in academic learning. This can enable them to build a foundation of math, science, and social science concepts in the later grades of elementary school where language becomes more decontextualized and cognitively demanding.

The finding further indicated that the children were unable to read and grasp information due to lack of reading skills in their L2. The ability to read is foundational skill for learning. As the survey data show, most Amharic speaking and some L2 children were placed in Amharic medium preschools to acquire verbal communication skills in Amharic as preparation for learning reading and writing. More proficient learners who have acquired Amharic by the time they enter grade 1 will have an advantage over learners who have to transfer suddenly from L1 to L2. In a sudden transfer situation, linguistic minority children will have to acquire Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS) simultaneously with Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP), presenting a challenge when they have to understand curriculum content (Cummins, 2001; 2000; Thomas & Collier, 1997; Ovando & Coolier,1985).

In addition, learning to read is a complex process and it is esential that it happens early. Ensuring children master these skills is essential component of addressing the learning crisis. Scarborough (1998) notes vocabulary size has been found to be moderately correlated with reading proficiency in grades 1-3; that is, children with larger vocabularies tend to develop into more proficient readers in the early grades. Literacy skills in the lower primary grades, in particular, have been shown to be a good predictor of later educational success, and children who gain reading fluency during lower primary are unlikely to lose it even if they drop out. Regardless of the specifics of any given language, research shows that the trajectory of a child's reading progress at the end of grade one can predict his or her skills at the end of primary school because reading skills are self-reinforcing (Scarborough; 1998). Early learning

success in reading, also contributes to higher retention rates because children who are successful early on are more likely to remain in school longer. This link is particularly important for linguistic minority children, who remain the most educationally marginalized.

Basically, literacy skills build onto listening and speaking skills, and most of the teaching taking place in grade 1 depends on these two basic communication skills. For learning to take place it is, therefore, of the utmost importance to have proficient listening and speaking skills in the medium of instruction. It is assumed that grade 1 learners are able to understand and speak the medium of instruction, as the language learning area builds on these skills.

5.2.2 The social domain

The finding also indicates that linguistic minority children had difficulty integrating socially with their mainstream peers. They reported that they have encountered isolation from their classmates when they tried to work together. There is a substantial body of research which demonstrates social isolation that second language learners face in mainstream settings could lead to loneliness, unhappiness and rejection (Cheng, 1996; Jacob & Mattson, 1990). These scholars have clearly shown that loss of a sense of belonging hinders school performance and decreases motivation for learning and schooling.

This was borne out in the present study with many of the children reporting how difficult it was for them to interact with more proficient classmates. The children explained that their classmates were not willing to work together because of language barriers, which made them humiliated to learn from each other. Thus, a lack of Amharic proficiency works as a barrier to preventing interaction with Amharic speaking students. Studies by Clay (1998); Gass (2003) and Dembo (1994) highlight peer interaction as a significant factor in helping minority language children feel included in schools. Having relationships with native and more proficient students provide academic gains and adjustment for linguistic minority students. In contrast, lack of involvement places linguistic minority students in isolation, making them anxious. Those students experiencing less contact with more proficient students are less likely to feel academic gains. There is a strong social component to second

language learner's adaptation to the classroom (Tabors, 1997). Learning to interact and communicate in the classroom is the first step in this socialization process. Interaction in the classroom may be initiated with single peer interaction and gradually progress to socialisation in the larger group. Social interaction, as a source of stimulation and feedback, is viewed to be essential for language acquisition, based on an interpretation of Vygotsky's theories on cognitive development (Dembo, 1994).

Besides, they reported incidences of exclusion, particularly relating to exclusion from play and other activities. Exclusion and isolation in terms of being left out of a game, left alone, having no one to play with or not being invited to join in games, were viewed by students as contributing to making children feel that they are not included or do not belong in school. The social nature of language requires that students interact in language situations in order to learn to use language effectively. A number of studies (Saravia-Shore & Garcia, 1995; Snowman & Biehler, 2003; Carbo & Kapinus, 1995) have shown that the peer experiences of children are an important predictor of children's school adjustment and academic success. Children who experience greater peer acceptance and positive peer relationships tend to feel more positively about coming to school, participate more in classroom activities, and achieve more in the classroom.

Additionally, children's involvement in games is of paramount significance. At the same time, by attending these activities and interacting with peers, many opportunities for Amharic practice were created. According to Cummins (1991), playground language is where linguistic minority children learn the fastest in language acquisition. The more they play with their friends or classmates, the more comfortable they feel with the school environment, and the faster they develop BICS. In elementary school, children may benefit a lot if teachers involve linguistic minority children in learning activities that are less demanding in Amharic, for example, physical education and music classes. Participating in these activities does not often only mean belonging to a group, but it is linked with the socio-linguistic adjustment of students. Through the activities, they get to know each other and, most importantly, improve their Amharic language skills.

Besides, by their own admission, some children avoided interacting with Amharic speaking children because of the challenges in using Amharic fluently. Instead of considering such differences of language proficiency as positive challenges to be embraced for success, the children preferred the ease of sheltering themselves among the same language peers. More specifically, students from linguistic minority background have feelings of self-consciousness and inadequacy about their accents, grammatical errors, and limited vocabulary, and in some cases, this led to silence and lack of participation. My observations also witness that linguistic minority students socialized with children from their own linguistic backgrounds. Connected to familiarity is the fear that goes along with linguistic challenges that caused some students to hesitate in their efforts to cultivate relationships with more proficient students. They preferred to be only with children who spoke their language because speaking with more proficient student means they need to think a lot about their own language use.

In addition, data analysis showed that linguistic minority children found it difficult to establish friendship with native speakers. They described that although they were keen on making friends and developing their social circle, more proficient speakers kept distance from them. When linguistically diverse children and more proficient classmates learn together, both need to adapt in order to work together effectively.

During the observations times, it was worth noting that the class was divided into several groups. Native Amharic-speaking children formed themselves in a group, and linguistic minority students formed themselves into several groups based on their home languages both in and out of classrooms. For instance, with regard to assistance they received, the students identified their L1 friends as their helpers. Peer acceptance can lead to peer relationships and it is from these peer relationships that friendships may form. Saravia-Shore & Garcia, (1995) and Snowman & Biehler (2003) stated that peer relationships are an important aspect in the development of prosocial behaviors and positive socialization which is linked to helpfulness, friendliness, and positive attitudes towards others.

On the other hand, some of the participants commented about the existence of a small number of native Amharic speaking students in their classroom and schools, and

expressed concern that there were many linguistic minority students in class, making the learning atmosphere and class discussions challenging. Their classmates would always speak Gamotstso and Wolayiththo to each other, and did not have opportunities to use Amharic both inside and outside classroom. They were aware that interaction with Amharic speaking children would be good for practicing Amharic and school adjustment.

In some primary schools in Arba Minch, the Amharic L1 learners are in the majority and, as peer conversation partners, may provide excellent opportunities for social communication with linguistically diverse learners. Some suburban primary schools like School-C, however, contained more second language students and Amharic L1 learners are in the minority. In such situations, language is often the basis for categorisation and formation of groups where learners speak the same L1. It transpires that learners with similar linguistic backgrounds have a tendency to group together and revert to their L1, and valuable opportunities to use Amharic socially were not utilised.

In the context of inclusive education, this is worrying, not least because the notion of social inclusion underpins the philosophy of inclusion, but also because the quality of a student's life is highly dependent on the quality of their social relationships. As has been noted, more progress in language development occurs if learners spend more time interacting socially with native speakers. Similarly, as Wang (2010) pointed out, because 'the amount and the quality of interaction' plays an important role for language gains, developing these interactions must be addressed. Wang further notes if the mainstreaming is carried out within a classroom with peers who are speakers of the target L2 language, opportunities for interaction between language minority and language majority speakers may be increased.

The finding indicated that participant students also faced rejection from their teachers. The children narrated the attention that they had received from their teachers was insufficient. They described that they have not been picked upon to speak and answer questions by their teachers. They noted that teachers paid no attention to them and often focused their attention to those who spoke Amharic fluently. Such teachers' low expectations could affect children's school participation and achievement Fairchild

and Edwards-Evans (1990); Edl, Jones, and Estell, (2008); Ferguson (1998); & Noddings, (2005). Education, as Cummins (1989) states the teachers' concern should be to make the most of children's potential, strengthening and building upon the skills they bring. Whatever language children speak, they should be able to demonstrate their capabilities and also feel the success of being appreciated and valued. Teachers must build upon children's skills and provide young children opportunities to exhibit these skills.

Leyser, Kapperman, & Keller (1994) further note that teacher's perceptions towards linguistic minority students affect the classroom interaction between the students and the teacher, and which ultimately affects achievement. So, to assist linguistic minority children in overcoming academic challenges, teacher expectations of student achievement is more critical, and expectations should be high for all the students. By using a non-deficit approach in their teaching, teachers should take the time to observe and engage children in a variety of learning activities. Children's strengths should be celebrated, and they should be given numerous ways to express their interests and talents. In doing this, teachers will provide children an opportunity to display their intellect and knowledge that may far exceed the boundaries of language.

The children also reported that their teachers blamed them for remaining silent in the classroom. Some children learning Amharic as a second language may choose to be silent, since they have had little or no exposure to Amharic prior to starting school. This, they said, makes them feel rejected as well which could mean that they need more time to acquire Amharic. This seems to contradict popular assumptions that children easily pick up languages and instead confirms the view that in the initial stages of second language learning children actually progress much more slowly than native speaker.

Research (Clarke, 1996; Tabors 1997; Curran, 2003) has shown that initially second language children experience a period in which they are reluctant to start speaking L2. During the 'silent period' the children may sit and observe others, or join in an activity without speaking. It is evident that the teachers have misconception concerning second language learning that need to be rectified. Children who remain silent may feel rejected by teachers, if efforts are not made to include them in

interactions and to accept whatever level of participation these children are prepared to offer. Research suggests that teachers who lack a basic understanding of second language acquisition principles often hold common misperceptions about issues relevant to the education of linguistic minority students, including native language use and second language acquisition issues (Claire, 1995; Reeves, 2006). Researchers have also concluded that teachers without specific second language learner-related preparation may hold less supportive attitudes and practises toward bilingualism or hold negative language stereotypes.

On the other hand, teachers reported that linguistic minority students had difficult time making friends, describing them as 'alienated' from their mainstream classmates. The social nature of language requires that students interact in language situations in order to learn to use language effectively (Clay, 1998). As has been discussed, linguistic minority children have difficulty socializing with their mainstream peers, and often turn to each other when they feel isolated from the mainstream. Clearly, teachers need to challenge their students by providing cooperative learning activities where linguistic minority children get equal participation in working with academic contexts (Whitehead, 1996; Crandall, 1999).

5.2.3 The psychological domain

Psychosocial stress was evident among the linguistic minority students interviewed for this study. The learners with limited Amharic proficiency battle in this regard for they are too shy to communicate in Amharic in front of their peers. This shyness prevents them from demonstrating the little understanding they have because they cannot communicate in Amharic. This finding is consistent with the findings of a number of researchers such as (London, 2003; Brown, 1994) who reported that second language children feel some level of stress, embarrassment or discomfort in the process of transition from home to mainstream school. The scholars note that linguistic minority learners might feel a linguistic disconnect, which in turn impact interactions with peers and teachers.

The fact that linguistic minority students enter mainstream classes with limited L2 skills, they are likely to feel nervous and anxious about taking part in Amharic-medium classes; they often suffer from high levels of anxiety because of reduced self-

confidence due to higher demands in Amharic proficiency, which consequently impede their relationships with Amharic-speaking peers. Krashen's Affective Filter Hypothesis (1985) is closely connected to the environment where linguistic minority students learn a second language. The learners' emotional state acts as an 'adjustable filter' which freely passes or hinders input necessary to acquisition. Language input, therefore, must be achieved in low-anxiety contexts. There are many factors affecting this process including motivation, self-confidence, comprehensible input, and the creation of an environment that fosters a low affective filter. For linguistic minority students in this study, the affective filter seemed to be more intertwined with confidence in Amharic mastery. It also seems to be true that personal characteristics influenced the affective filters. Some children knew little Amharic, but were afraid to answer questions in class. The results of the observations also revealed that linguistic minority students were often very quiet and interacted less in the classroom, remaining as far away as possible from the action of the classroom.

The researcher observed that many of these negative behaviors were not present on the playground where the children interacted in their L1 with peers from their own language group. The researcher field note shows that linguistic minority students felt more safe and comfortable being with their L1 classmates and Gamotstso teachers, to whom they could freely ask questions and ask for a favor. This verifies the findings that communication barriers in the classroom, caused by poor L2 proficiency, contributed to a large extent to these learners' emotional problems. Getting in mainstream classes does not mean that linguistic minority students have proper chances to interact with Amharic-speaking students.

Besides, the children mentioned shyness and concern about the reactions of others when speaking Amharic. They echoed that their spoken Amharic is illegitimate and seemed to be somewhat concerned about what other students thought of their Amharic skills. Their accent and inability to speak Amharic fluently prevented them from responding to their classmates. In other words, the reason students gave for the fear of being 'found out', having others know that they are not perfect Amharic speakers, is that other children laugh at them when they utter words or make mistakes. Because of this, the children conceal their own feelings of inadequacy when learning Amharic. Olsen (1997) asserts that the use of unfamiliar language may cause a sense of shame

which results from feelings of insufficiency. Although there are some benefits from observing mainstream peers and teachers use of academic, social, and interpersonal communication in Amharic, linguistic minority students' peripheral participation makes them feel marginalized from classroom discourse (Duff, 2001). These negative feelings will adversely affect the students' learning process and may lead the students to hesitate in taking advantage of learning opportunities.

As linguistic minority students' language anxiety level was high, they are reticent and seldom interact with mainstream children. As the data on the challenges show, linguistic minority children appeared to feel 'very shy', 'afraid of speaking', 'silent' 'quiet', and 'lonely'. The various stressers such as 'Daro Yayyays'-[Gamotstso & Wolayithatho equivalent to English 'terribly shy'], *'Babbays'* [Gamotstso & Wolayithatho equivalent to English 'I am afraid of'], *'Tarkka…Ta Kanchche…'*, [Gamotstso & Wolayithatho equivalent to English ' loneliness'], and '*Hin Sodadhaa'* [Afan Guji equivalent to English 'I am afraid of'] experienced by the children are emotional handicaps which often affect learning. A safe classroom environment with minimal anxiety about performing in a second language is essential for linguistic minority students to learn. Learning is enhanced for most students when they are in a safe environment, rather than a threatening one. Brown (1994) notes learning a second language is a complex process that demands emotional and cognitive reactions from the learners. The learners' affective state strongly affects his or her learning in general and his or her learning a second language in particular. However, because linguistic minority children have been found to feel anxious and ignored in classrooms, teachers of linguistically diverse students need to be vigilant about creating such environments. They can do this by establishing classroom rules that respect all students and encourage cooperation (Verplaetse & Migliacci, 2008). As teachers have had the most constant contact with the linguistic minority learners in the classrooms, they have to offer many opportunities for interaction.

While the language barrier, social challenges, and psychological factors are the most apparent of the problems associated with educating linguistic minority students, there are many other issues that also present challenges. Teachers reported that generally Amharic speaking children are at a definite advantage and sympathize with linguistic

minority learners. Nearly all teachers agree that a significant number of linguistic minority children did not participate in pre-school education programs.

Indeed, pre-primary schooling prepares children for a solid elementary education by teaching basic literacy and numeracy skills. Further, responses from the survey questionnaires and teachers interviews indicated that most of second language learners did not attend kindergarten, and started their schooling with little knowledge of Amharic. Few of them attended one year of pre-school education and speak Amharic with a level of proficiency suitable for social communication, but not for academic purposes. Typically, when they begin primary school, instruction is offered only in the language of the majority group and most children quickly learn the rudiments of that language in order to fit in socially and succeed in learning tasks. This situation is different from that of their L1 peers who come to class with pre existing knowledge of Amharic.

As has been described in chapter three, most linguistic minority population is comprised of people from various linguistic backgrounds. Most of this population, however, is made up of poorly paid casual labourers. Linguistic minority children, in particular, come from very poor economic backgrounds and have a low rate of literacy even in their home language. For the children, these factors may often contribute to circumstances such as low participation in pre-school programs. All of these circumstances mean more obstacles for both linguistic minority children and the education system.

The Ethiopian government has introduced mother tongue education in 1991, and the education system begins for all students at the age of 7 with first grade. This however is not the case with pre-primary education. Having realized the significance of early years of education for children's later cognitive and social growth, ministry of education developed an Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Policy Framework in 2010 (MoE, 2010). The document notes a high number of children enter grade 1 with no pre-school experience, and are beginning their education with disadvantage. The Policy Framework has got four pillars, namely parental education, heaith and early stimulation program (Parental to 3+ years), community-based preschools (4 to 6+ years) and non-formal school readiness., and the four pillars

except the community-based pre-school would be piloted in the selected regions for a minimum of two years (MoE, 2010). However, it has not been implemented in this study research setting.

Research shows that there is a continuum of development of language and literacy throughout life, but the most important period, particularly for acquisition of language, occurs before first grade (Scarborough, 2001). In other words, kindergarten is a critical year for all children-a year of transition from preschool programs or home to formal schooling. Preschool education is important, in particular, for children from linguistic minority background.

For linguistic minority children, kindergarten, possibly, is the only place where they receive relevant input and support to develop both social and academic language skills. Preschool learners are not required to use sophisticated language, which means that the cognitive demand on preschool learners is lower. They improve their Amharic language skills through direct, meaningful experiences in which Amharic is comprehensible. However, when young children acquire an L2 with more ease, it seems to be linked to the simultaneous development of L2 with L1. Simultaneous acquisition refers to the exposure of a child to more than one language from an early age (Tabors, 1997). In this way, all the languages develop simultaneously.

The participant teachers also reported the frequent absence of parents in most aspects of their children's education. Research demonstrates that children are successful when schools show support for parents as the child's primary teacher and when parents are welcomed and involved in all aspects of their educational life (Martinez & Velazquez, 2000). Unfortunately, in the case of linguistic minority parents, involvement is frequently minimal. The teachers believe parents have no interest or concern in their children's education. This belief could have impact on the manner in which teachers treat students. The literature, however, indicates the belief that parents are generally disinterested in their children's education is a misconception. It is actually the ambition of most parents that their children's futures include becoming well educated (Romanowski, 2002; Green, 2003).

Some of the teachers noted that there is another factor that has a negative influence on parental involvement in their children's education. The long work days associated with labor frequently prevent parents from attending meetings and school related activities. Available research and literature repeatedly point to certain specific practices to increase the level of involvement on the part of children's parents. Virtually all of the solutions involve efforts on the part of teachers as well as other members of the community, indicating that this issue is best addressed through a collaborative effort. Some researchers suggest that School administrators should create a parent-teacher advisory committee, should address issues that are most important to these types of parents. Such issues might include enrollment procedures, communicating with teachers and administrators, grading policies, class expectations, and contact information (Romanowski, 2001). Meetings with can also be viewed as an opportunity for parents to express themselves about their own potential contributions to their children's education (Martinez & Velazquez, 2000).

5.3 Communication strategies employed by learners

One of the objectives of the present study was to examine the use of communication strategies by linguistic minority students to overcome communication problems. The findings show different emergent strategies were employed to handle communication problems due to the students' limited language proficiency. In this case, they relied on various strategies to cope with the problems and get the intended message across to the interlocutor.

There were eleven (11) types of Communication Strategies found in this section: message abandonment, topic avoidance, circumlocution, approximation, word coinage, non linguistic signals, using all-purpose words, literal translation, code-switching, appealing for help, and use of time gaining strategy. However, there were six (6) Communication Strategies used by subjects in the teaching and learning process: non linguistic signals, time gaining strategy, code-switching, appeal for help, using all-purpose words, and message abandonment.

The children used 'non linguistic strategy' at high rate, which means that these students do use their hands, facial expression, eye contact and body movements to express their meanings. The next highest number of strategy besides non linguistic

signals was ‘time gaining strategy’. ‘Code switching’ was the third strategy mostly used by the subjects. The children used code switching while working with one another since they share a common L1. The use of time gaining and code-switching varied from participant to participant. On the other hand, they used ‘appeal for help’, ‘use of all-purpose words’, and ‘message abandonment’ in a very low rate. It is believed that linguistic minority students have problem with vocabulary, since they use these strategies in low rate.

This finding is consistent with that of (Wannaruk, 2003) who indicated that students at different proficiency levels employed different communication strategies to overcome communication problems. The study divided second language learners into high, middle and low groups according to their oral proficiency levels. The data used in the analysis was taken from classroom interactions, and indicated that learners with a low level of oral proficiency used more avoidance strategies, non linguistic signals and L1-based communication strategies such as code switching and appeal for help. In many cases, the reason why low proficient L2 learners employ these communication strategies is that their interlanguage systems are developing and insufficient. Their proficiency levels are the reflection of their inadequate interlanguage systems.

What follow are the discussions of certain strategies the research subjects employed to cope with oral communication problems. In each section, some dialogues are extracted to present linguistic minority children’s use of communication strategies.

5.3.1 Non-linguistic signals

The use of non linguistic signals refers to the act that learners use nonverbal means to express his or her feelings and thoughts. These nonverbal expressions include eye contact, mimicking, facial expression, body languages, drawing, pointing, and so on. The following examples demonstrate the learners’ use of non linguistic signals during class:

Dialogue One

T: **ይሄ የለበሽው ልብስ ቀለም ምን ዓይነት ነው**? (What is the color of your clothe?)

S: silent

T: **ሞክሪ ምን አይነት ነው**? (Please, try)

S: silent

T: **ሰማያዊ ነው**? (Is it blue?)

S: Nodded her head. (Gesture showing that the color of her shirt was not 'blue'.)

In the above example, the learner was not able to tell the color of her shirt. The teacher was encouraging the learner to answer the question, but she remained silent. No attempt was made to retrieve the word. Besides, when the teacher said that it was blue, the student gestured it wasn't.

The following example also shows how non linguistic signals were employed by the learners to overcome language barriers.

Dialogue Two

T: **የቤት ሥራ ሰርተሃል**? (Have you done homework?)

S: Nodding his head (Indicating that he didn't.)

T: **ለምንድነው ያልሰራኸው**? (Why didn't you do your homework?)

S: silent

T: **አስቸጋሪ ነህ** (you are difficult to manage.) **እነማን ግሩፕ ነህ**? (To which group do you belong?)

S: pointing at one of the students.

In this example, the learner found it difficult to communicate freely in the target language. When engaged in communicative situation, he lacked the vocabulary and the language items needed to get his meaning across. However, he used gesture to tell the teacher the intended word.

The following examples also demonstrate the learners' use of gestures during Amharic lesson sessions.

Dialogue Three

R: **የመኖሪያ ሠፈርህ የት ነው**? (Where is your residential area?)

S: **ወላይታ** (Wolayita)

R: **አሁን የምትኖርበት ሠፈር የት ነው**? (the village you are currently living?)

S: Here it is. (Gesture: stretching hand.)

In dialogue three, gesture was used to convey the message: 'stretching hand' indicates 'the location of his village'. The gesture was in accordance with the oral sounds when the teacher rephrased the question.

Dialogue Four

R: **በጣም የምትወድው የትምህርት ዓይነት ምንድን ነው**? (Which subject do you like most?)

S: **አ**? (What?)

R: **በጣም የምትወደው ትምህርት ምንድን ነው**? (The subject you like most?)

S: This one (pointing to the teacher)

As can be seen, in the above dialogues 'non linguistic signals' occurred with pauses, and can be considered as a sign of a problem. The learners did not know the intended word, or could not retrieve the target word, and gestured to show the specific features of the intended meaning. In some of the cases, the learners would point on the person and location if they did not know the word for the person and location; thus indicating a problem. In dialogue one above; the learner did not know the word for the name of the color 'blue'. Here, no evidence of attempt to retrieve the word is shown, so it could be assumed that the problem was perhaps an unknown word rather than a word which could not be retrieved. As a result, non-linguistic signals were used to convey message to the interlocutor.

Sacks (1992) notes non-linguistic signals such as ‘yeah’, ‘uh-huh’, ‘mm’, head nodes and smiles can be used to express listenership, acknowledgment of what the current speaker is saying, and to indicate that the current speaker can continue their turn. However, in the current study, linguistic minority children found it difficult to communicate freely in Amharic. When involved in communicative situations, they often lacked some of the vocabulary and the language items they needed to get their meanings across. As a result, they couldn’t keep the interaction going for an extended period of time.

The relatively high frequency of non linguistic signals also demonstrates limitations in the children’s L2 proficiency. Several studies have indicated that when low proficient L2 students have more difficulty speaking L2, they tend to employ non linguistic signals more (Krauss & Hadar, 1999), and the less proficient a speaker is in the L2, the more gestures will be produced. In addition, multiple non linguistic signals in one clause are taken to indicate L2 speech disfluency (Oda, 2001).

On the other hand, the employment of gestures as coping strategy to facilitate comprehension is a common phenomenon during the non-verbal phase of additional language acquisition. It is a phase of active observation and rehearsal, usually done quiet (Tabors, 1997). Some of the participant teachers perceived the children’s silence as a problem. It seems that the teachers may not have adequate knowledge about the silent period of L2 acquisition. Gestures should be viewed as normal behavior during the initial phases of second language acquisition. Hence, children should not be forced to produce language and all attempts to communicate should be accepted.

5.3.2 Time gaining strategy

Time gaining was also employed as communication strategy by the learners. The children were often making pauses while replying to the teachers. From among several time gaining practices, the following are a case in point:

Dialogue Five

T: **ሰዎቹ ምን እያደረጉ ነው**?

(What are the people doing?)

S: እነሱ … (they) እ…እ…እነሱ… (they)

T: ሰዎቹ ከበሮ ይመታሉ ። (the men are playing drum)

In the above example, the learner paused for a while and uttered the word 'እነሱ' which means 'they', and again kept on pausing. Meanwhile, the teacher understood the problem and assisted the learner. Here, the learner was unable to say 'ከበሮ' perhaps because the word 'ከበሮ' (Drum) is less frequently used word.

Dialogue Six

T: ይህ ምንድነው? (What is this? - showing a picture of calf)

S: እ… (um) እ… (um) እ… (um)

T: ምን ይባላል? (What is it?)

S: እ… (um…) እ… (um) እ… (um)

T: እሺ በጋሞኛ ምን ይባላል? (What do you call this in Gamotstso?)

S: Maraa (Calf)

In the above example, the learner was asked to look at a picture and name the animal. But his answer was followed by hesitation and short pause. The teacher posed the question again, but the learner was unable to express his thoughts. Finally, the teacher asked him to answer in 'Gamotstso', i.e., learner's home language. Again the student paused for a while and responded 'Maraa' which means 'Calf'. This may demonstrate that the learner had a language problem specifically a vocabulary problem. Interestingly, after short pause, he replied using his home language.

Dialogue Seven

R: እንደምን አደርክ! (Good morning!)

S: እግዚአብሔር ይመስገን ደህና ነኝ? (I am fine, thanks God!)

R: **ስምህ ማን ነው**? (What is your name?)

S: **እኔ** 'B' **ነኝ።** (I am 'B')

R: **ድምጽህን ከፍ አድርግ**! ((Speak out loudly!) **የትምህርት ቤታችሁ ስም ማን ይባላል**? (What is the name of your school?)

S: **እ**? (What?)

R: **የትምህርት ቤታችሁ ስም ማን ይባላል**? (What is the name of your school?)

S: Long pause

R: **አታውቀውም**? (Don't you know?)

S: Nodded his head (: indicating that he didn't know)

Scholars of communication strategies write that speakers often pause to stall and to gain time in order to keep the communication channel open and maintain discourse at times of difficulty. For Tarone (1977), pauses and hesitations are viewed as the temporal variables in speech performance. Pauses and hesitations are phenomena demonstrating that the speaker is planning what he or she is going to say which involves looking for the appropriate word. Cenoz (1998) pointed out that pauses and hesitation have been regarded as a problem when speaking a second language but according to Cenoz pauses can have several functions. Pauses can be used to hand over the turn to another speaker; allow the speaker to breathe; and to mark demarcations in the speech.

However, in this study, the children employed a large number of time gaining strategies due to their more limited command of the target language. They often employed fillers to convey messages when they didn't know how to express their thoughts in Amharic. The finding is also in line with ASHA's study (1985) in that a large number of pauses and hesitations indicate that the learners have problems using L2 in the classrooms. ASHA (1985) notes phenomena such as longer pauses, repetitions, hesitations, and more explicit utterances like 'umm', '*I mean'* indicate that the learners have problems using L2. These become highly frequent when lexical difficulties in language production are being experienced.

5.3.3 Code-switching

When second language learner switches between first language and second language, they are employing a strategy called 'code switching' (Tarone, 1977; Faerch & Kasper, 1983; Bialystok, 1983). Learners might use their first language for a variety of reasons. They may switch for convenience, or because they don't know the target word. Besides, they might use code switching because they are not able to retrieve the target word or the L2 equivalent words may not exist.

In the classes observed, learners often switched to Gamotstso and Wolaytaththo when they failed to recall an Amharic equivalent. The following examples demonstrate the different contexts of using L1 in Mathematics, Amharic, and Environmental science lessons sessions.

Dialogue Eight

T: showing picture of knifes; asked the total number

S: እሱ 'Mashsha' ነው ። (It is knife.)

T: ቢላ- ሶስት ቢላዋ። (There are three knives.)

Likewise, the teacher posed the question to another student:

Dialogue Nine

T: Showing picture of goats and asked the total number

S: 'Deysha'. (It is goat.)

T: ሁለት ፍየል. (Two goats)

The above dialogues occurred in math class, and the day's lesson was about 'union'. The teacher asked learners to tell how many knives and goats they find on the picture. The students switched into Gamotstso for words that they did not know in Amharic. Although the learners lacked some of the vocabularies and encountered problems in oral communication, they did not give up the conversation.

The following dialogue also demonstrates instance of code switching:

Dialogue Ten

T: **አሁን ስዕሎችን አሳያችኋለሁ እናንተ ደግሞ ምን እንደሆኑ ትነግሩኛላችሁ።** (Now I am going to show you pictures, and then you tell what they are.)

T: **ይህ የምታይው ምስል ምንድ ነው**? (What is this?)

S: Pito (Gamotstso equivalent for broom.)

T: **ቀጥሎ ያየኸውስ**? (What about the next picture?)

S: Ayalashoo (Gamotstso equivalent for crocodile)

T: **እ**? (What?)

S: Ayalaashoo (crocodile)

In these and other situations, the children often used code switching as coping strategy to overcome communication problems. For example, children from Gamo resorted to using Gamotstso: *'Deysha' for* '*Goat*' and *'Ayalashoo' for 'Crocodile*'. Similarly, the children whose mother tongue is Wolayitaththo used their native language, *'Mashsha'* for '*knife*' and *'Pito'* for '*broom*' to complete a task in Amharic. This tells that when low proficient second language learners have problems when employing proper words or expressions, they easily depend on their mother languages and inserted corresponding mother languages in their L2 communication.

Overall, when linguistic minority children faced difficulties in expressing themselves in Amharic, they relied on their mother tongues. According to Adendorff (1996) & Chimbganda and Mokgwathi, (2012), the reason for the employment of code switching could be due to the fact that L2 learners did not know how to say these words in L2, or they thought it was easier for the listeners to understand their messages.

In this study, however, the children found it difficult to express themselves in Amharic and reverted to their mother tongue to facilitate comprehension. In order to overcome linguistic deficiencies, the students resorted to the borrowing of lexical items from their first language. Recent research trends (Cook, 2001; Adendorff, 1996) recognize the academic benefits of code switching, and describes it as normal and typical of L2 acquisition.

5.3.4 Appealing for help

Appealing for help means that the learner asks the interlocutor for help. That is to say, learners appeal for assistance from their classmates by asking questions or using other nonverbal means such as facial expressions, eye contact, and so on. When the speaker asks for help, he or she does not know the answer to the questions or he or she could not understand some words or the whole sentences during the dialogue or interaction (Tarone, 1977). The following examples demonstrate the learners' use of 'appealing for help' during classes.

The teacher requested each learner to join their group, and provided activity.

Dialogue Eleven

T: **ፀሐይን የምትመስል ሆሄ ማን ናት**? (The teacher asked the learner to tell Amharic alphabet letter that looks like the Sun)

S: silent (looking at the group leader)

Dialogue Twelve

T: **በአቡሎ አካባቢ የሚሃኑ ሥራ ስር ምግቦች ንገሪኝ**?

(Tell me some of the vegetables growing in Abullo)

S: immediately began looking at friends from Abullo for assistance.

Dialogue Thirteen

T: **ሦስት ሲደመር ሦስት ስንት ነው**? (What will you get when you add three and three?)

S1: Heedzdza Gidenne? (Isn't it three?) (Turning to his friend)

S2: Sidiste Gaa (say six) (A friend offering help)

S1: **ስድስት።** (six)

The strategy of 'appealing for assistance' was employed during class. L2 children appealed for help from the group leaders and team members by using eye contacts and code switching. Learners often appeal for help from their friends when they encounter

difficulty in expressing their ideas because they trusted in the language knowledge of their interlocutors (Dornyei, 1995). In this study, in most of the sessions, the children turned to their classmates for help using eye contacts. This implies that the children asked other learners for help because they lacked vocabulary or did not know Amharic words. However, Dornyei (1995) underscores that the action to ask for help from friends is often verbally. In addition, the learners used this strategy because they might think that it would be better to ask someone else than to avoid the topic.

Several studies (Wannaruk, 2003) indicate that learners at different proficiency levels employ communication strategies at varying degrees. If learners are fully equipped with linguistic resources, they make less use of communication strategies than those who have less linguistic access. This suggests that students at different proficiency levels employ communication strategies in different quantities. In this study, it was found that there were six strategies frequently used by low proficient L2 children: non linguistic signals, time gaining strategy, code switching, appeal for help, use of all-purpose words and message abandonment. This shows that linguistic minority children were not competent enough in Amharic oral expressions.

Firstly, they often employed non linguistic signals to convey the messages when they did not know how to express their meanings in Amharic. Second, they used a large number of time gaining strategies to gain more time to utter a word and construct the sentences in Amharic. Thirdly, the children code switched to their first language when they did not know the words in Amharic because they are not yet proficient in the language. Fourthly, they appealed for help when they could not understand the messages or when they had difficulty in expressing the meanings in Amharic. Finally, all-purpose words and empty lexical items were used where certain words were lacking.

Overall, vocabulary problems accounted for more of speech production difficulties which linguistic minority children encountered. That is, most interruptions occurred in delivering the intended meaning when the children did not have sufficient vocabulary knowledge. In other words, the learners employed non linguistic signals, time gaining strategy, and code switching frequently, and produced few words. Hence, this can be

attributed that linguistic minority children were more likely to listen to Amharic than to speak it.

Besides, numerous academics (Cummins, 2000; Bialystok, 2001) have made note of the distinction between the language linguistic minority learners need for communication in informal, social situations and the language they are required to attain in academic settings. In discussing these different language registers, Cummins (2000) states that while non linguistic signals such as facial expressions, body language, and appealing for help assist the understanding and learning of conversational language, these kinds of cues are absent or reduced when individuals listen to, speak, read, or write in academic language, often found in school settings. As a result, academic concepts and content become more challenging as students progress to the next levels of education.

To sum up, given the fact that communication strategies are one form of human communication, linguistic minority learners' use of these strategies is an obvious justification for this fact, and on the other hand, a conclusive proof of their unsatisfactory proficiency level in oral production. The strategies used by children are helpful as they help them to get engaged in interaction smoothly. However, it also shows that the learners are not competent enough in Amharic oral expressions. A few utterances that they produced in oral proformance and their recourse to large number of non-linguistic signals, time gaining strategy, code switching and appeal for assistance is an indication of how serious the problem is.

5.4 Negotiation of identity in multilingual classrooms

One of the objectives of this study is to examine how linguistic minority learners negotiate their identity in multilingual classrooms. The learners' discourse on identity was conceived from representations resulting from their lived experiences and their classroom trajectories, including student to student, student to teacher, peer and student to parent interactions. Besides, it explores representations of linguistic minority student identity in the schools and illustrates the manifestation of these representations in classrooms.

5.4.1 Learners' self–reflections

When learners were asked to tell which language they preferred as the medium of instruction, some of them replied, '*Taa duuna birshidan qaalara, Gamotstson'* [in a language I picked first, in Gamotstso']; *'Tani nuu qaalara tamaranaw koyayaas'* [I want to learn in our language] and others responded, *'Afaan Koo waan ta'eefan baradha'* [in my own language, i.e., Afan Guji]*'*. Their interpretations of *'Gamotstso'* and *'Afan Guji'* as '*in a language I picked first, in Gamotstso' and 'in my/our own language'* respectively depict their perceptions of the home language as an important part of their identity; they were happy to express their linguistic identity and described the usefulness and the desire to have instruction in it. Thus, the student narratives point to the importance of their first languages in terms of forging their identities and its significance as a means to receive instructions. Delpit and Dowdy (2002) explain that the *'self'* is constructed through discourse, and that language choices are key to one's identity construction. A child's home language is the language of their family. It is the language used to love and nurture them from the time he or she is born and it is the language in which he or she learns about the world and how he or she fits into it. Nemeth (2009) further emphasizes that in the early years, children don't think of language as an academic subject. It is just part of who they are. Language choice, therefore, is believed to be an important indicator of one's ethnic belonging and identity.

In addition, the children narrated that their mother tongue symbolizies their origin. They refer to themselves as Gamo, Wolayita, and Guji because they speak Gamotstso, Wolayitaththo, and Afan Guji since childhood and claim that their mother tongues are their ancestoral languages. For the children, speaking one's ancestral language is not only a simple act of choosing a language but also a means of revealing one's identity. In a more complex case, they referred to themselves as Gamo, Wolayita, and Guji because their parents are originally from Gamo, Wolayita and Guji ethnic groups respectively. They maintain that their mother tongue promotes family cohesion, reconnects with their cultural roots, and plays a central role in retaining valued elements of their native cultural identity.

Fishman (1991) writes that language is a marker of identity, and home language plays critical in building a strong cultural identity. For children, the extent to which their home language is valued and supported in settings such as school, will affect their ethnic identity development, their view of self, and their orientation toward ethnic others. Hence, school communities need to value children's home language. This makes it possible for them to believe their language is valued, and that it provides a more rewarding environment, as school learning and experience become a continuation of home experience (Lantolf & Pavlenko, 2001; Ladson-Billings 2000; Clarke, 1996; Volk & Long, 2005).

The finding further indicated the children's acculturation process into the target language by maintaining their first language. The students represented themselves as member of specific group-Gamotstso, Wolayitaththo, and Afan Guji speakers and their desire to achieve a bilingual identity. They have described their interest in maintaining their first language and their aspiration to acquire Amharic as 'everyone else'. They explained that Amharic is important because proficiency in Amharic allows a person to communicate with a greater number of people. The children believe that mother tongue instruction is not sufficient and that they need to acquire Amharic-a language with wider communication functions, enabling them to interact in all spheres of life in the zone and region. Amharic appears to be the preferred language across language barriers in North Omo, and has emerged as the most likely zonal and regional *lingua franca*; therefore it is regarded by some as the first choice of L2.

As young learners, the children had the consciousness of knowledge of learning a second language. They are determined to improve their Amharic and decided to interact with other children in and out of classrooms. Most children replied*, 'I can get along with Amharic speaking children'* to acquire Amharic. When the children expected to develop their proficiency, they imagined themselves claiming the identity as 'student who can speak Amharic' in the future (Norton, 2000). The children's second language identities thus reflected not only their practice of actual Amharic oral language skills but also their perceptions of those skills within their given academic and non-academic contexts as well as their imagination of future progress. Importantly, their oral Amharic proficiency was practiced and imagined in varied

learning settings, i.e., socially interacting with peers in and out of class activities and playing with friends. According to Ushioda and Dornyei (2009), such kind of identity development can be considered as the *'ideal L2 self'* because the learners' attitudes reflected their personal wishes, and they might be able to construct their own L2 self through personal interests. For these children, the notion of bilingual identity arises from the need to communicate across speech communities. The children perceived Amharic as an important tool for communicating with other students.

In North Omo, the communities, the teachers, parents, as well as the learners, have an overwhelmingly positive attitude towards Amharic (Woldemariam, 2007). It is the most frequently preferred language in education and is regarded by some as the key to social mobility. The relationship between identity and language learning has received a lot of attention from researchers in the field of second language acquisition. Norton (2000) argues that investment and identity together signal the socially and historically constructed relationship of learners to the target language and their desire to learn and practice it. The notion of investment recognizes that learners often have variable desires to engage in the range of social interactions in which they are situated. If learners 'invest' in an L2, they do so with the understanding that they will acquire a wider range of material resources, which will in turn increase the value of their linguistic capital. In other words, if the relationship between the language learner and the target language is positive, then the learner has the desire to learn. If not, the learning process will be a struggle.

5.4.2 Negotiation of identity in L2 classroom

5.4.2.1 Language use and identity negotiation

The findings from this study have indicated that some of the children have experienced negative and adverse comments in relation to using the home language in school. There is evidence of teasing such as verbal aggression, emotional harassment and exclusion in the classroom and on the playgrounds. In this connection, Nemeth (2009) notes although adverse comments of native speakers of L2 tend to affect older children and adults most it can also easily upset younger children. This scenario was the case in the schools studied. The participant students reported that they have been scorned with the derogatory labeling *'Gemu, Geze, Degegna, 'speak your Gamogna*

language there at Channo'etc', for speaking their language, and claimed there is a stigma attached to the labellings. As has been stated in chapter two, the relationship between ethnicity and language is a powerful one. As described by Delpit & Dowdy (2002), ethnic identity is twin skin to linguistic identity. Our language embraces us long before we are defined by any other medium of identity. While language proficiency has proven not to be a trustworthy indicator of an individual's ethnicity, it is common for individuals to be considered outsiders of a particular ethnic group due to either a lack of language skills or the way in which they speak.

Addressing the barriers issues in schools requires an understanding of negative labelling of children from linguistic minority backgrounds and the corresponding negative influence on constructing a positive identity. Linguistic minority learner's school failure is an adaptation to discrimination and attendant barriers. Cummins (2001) supported this view by contending that discriminatory elements in schools that influence the perceived value of home languages in education may impact negatively on children's language learning and identity formation. (In Identity thesis MoE-New in Spanish identity)

Similar dissonance is found in other participant students. For instance, some children reported that they experienced hostile attitudes from their L1 classmates when they were writing in Gamotstso-a language that uses *'Latin script'*. One of the learners reported that her classmates insisted that she had to write her name in Amharic, but she resisted this pressure and wrote it in her own language. But in doing so, she contested the identity that has been imposed on her. As Nemeth (2009) notes, language has strong, inseparable, and complex ties with identity. When children compelled to exchange their own language with that of the majority, they may experience the unimportance of their native language. When the language minority child feels rejected on the basis of language, the child's sense of self is negated, which (Cummins, 1981b and Skutnabb-Kangas, 2000) can lead to lower levels of second-language attainment and underachievement. That most children do not succeed is no surprise and sadder still, because in the struggle to eradicate the old self and to gain a new one, the child may end up with little sense of self at all, leading to shattered self-esteem and academic failure.

Whether linguistic minority children's linguistic identities are nurtured depends on the quality of interactions between children and their peers at school. As children enter mainstream school, the process of developing positive identity depends on the status of the language and whether or not it is accepted and respected by their classmates in the school. Bialystok (2001) claimed that this psychosocial dimension is vital in learning. As children progress through school, valuing and maintaining the home language is particularly important as they adapt to learn the second language while building their cognitive competence. Therefore, teachers must be proactive and encourage children to speak and write in their first language in addition to the school language and take the initiative to affirm children's linguistic identity by putting posters in the various languages of the community in the classrooms and school compound. This makes it possible for them to believe their language is valued, and that it is a legitimate and natural form of communication that exists on an equal footing with the majority language (Lantolf & Pavlenko, 2001; Ladson-Billings, 2000).

On the other hand, in spite of their negative experiences, students commented that they were proud of being able to speak their language and felt quite confident about their ethnic identity. Home language is an important asset that linguistic minority students bring with them. Its importance lies in that students use it to communicate with family members and relatives, and they could build on their second language learning on the basis of their home language. The students desire to develop Amharic in the near future. In their minds their second language ability was a valuable asset which should be respected. Some even expressed that they felt happy being Gamo, Wolayita, and Guji. In their ways of defining who they were, they included such factors as their mother tongues, their birth places, and their ethnic origins. There were no indications of feeling of denying their ethnicity.

The children reported that teachers were also discouraging while they were using their L1, and warned them to speak Amharic only. Some of the discriminatory expressions the teachers used include, *'only speak Amharic', 'they [teachers] don't let us use Gamotstso; they [teachers] want us to use their language'.* This means these learners tend to be incompetent in Amharic as a media of instruction at the same time they are not allowed to use their L1 which might help them to understand well. In other words,

they were encouraged to use their L1 in mother tongue lessons and Amharic in all lessons, thereby affecting their sense of belonging as well as their access to content area development.

The reports from the students indicate that their teachers discouraged native language use in the classrooms. For students with little or no proficiency in Amharic, their native language is the only effective means for providing access to content area development. By discussing content in their native languages, students can interact more effectively and have greater access to their own knowledge and experience. As previously stated in chapter two, the increasingly low-level L2 comprehension skills of students forced them to use their first language. A study with young L2 children reports that younger children show more lexical item code switch than older children (Zentella, 1997). A common assumption to explain this finding is that children code switch when they do not know the word in one language. Hence, they draw on the other language. Nunan and Lamb (1996) further describe that there are strong pedagogical arguments for using L1 in L2 classrooms. They note that the exclusion of the mother tongue especially with L2 learners at lower levels seems impossible. This means these learners tend to be incompetent in Amharic as a medium of instruction at the same time they are not allowed to use their local languages which might help them to understand well. So, it is important to support and honor this powerful beginning.

The findings from learners' communication strategies use shown on Table-1 as presented in this chapter, actually confirm the prevalence of code-switching among the learners in all the schools. Researchers such as (Arthur, 1996 and Arthur and Martin, 2006) have stressed the importance of mother tongue use parallel to the official language in lessons. They believe code-switching is a good practice because it offers classroom participants a 'creative, and pragmatic' and safe practice between the official language of the lesson and the language which the classroom participants know. They stressed that the use of mother tongue parallel to the official language can allow the classroom participant to better accomplish the lesson and its pragmatic response used to explain texts and provide great access. This idea was also supported by (Creese and Blackledge (2010), who emphasizes that code switching has great pedagogical potentials such as increasing inclusion, participation and understanding in the learning process. Moreover, code switching can be seen as a resource for countries

with multiple languages like Ethiopia with its 89 languages, since it can help learners to understand subject matters in detail. Referring to the language situation in linguistically diverse classrooms, code switching can allow children to understand subjects like mathematics and natural and social sciences well in their local languages while learning the majority language. Sometimes there are certain terms or concepts that learners or even teachers may find difficulty to clarify in Amharic but they may explain it well if they were allowed to use their mother tongues. Therefore, allowing code switching in classes may unlock all the language barriers in the classrooms.

This already gives us a clue that learners find it difficult to understand the content of the lesson if they were to only stick to the use of Amharic alone. In cases where linguistic minority children are forbidden to code switch, they tend to be quiet and passive during lessons and rarely participate in class discussions. If teachers try to persuade them to participate, they simple keep silent. Teachers who insist on only using L2 in their classes end up talking to themselves with no inputs from the learners. This justifies the point that code-switching is really needed in this case to unlock the language restriction and allow learners' active participation in the lessons.

As has been discussed earlier, when children are not proficient in Amharic, teachers must consider those children's native languages as a key resource for teaching both content and Amharic. Beyond that, when children see that their languages are valued for coomunicative power and when they have the opportunity to develop their native language abilities, their self esteem and identity are strengthened (Auerbach, 1993).

Learners further reported their parent's objection to using and accommodating minority languages as media of instruction. They described that their parents show considerable desire for Amharic, and believe home languages are 'inappropriate'. The responses from the parents' views on the reasons for not choosing L1 as medium of instruction include: *'You don't go far if you know Gamotstso'. 'You had better learn Amharic'; 'Gamotstso doesn't help'; 'Be good at Amharic'; 'Amharic is fine'; 'Schooling in Amharic is good for personal growth'*; and *'Gamotstso is not helpful'.* Nearly all the children interviewed described that their parents valued Amharic and showed distinct preference for it as the most important language, and is a major asset

in social mobility. This view is in consonance with the opinion of Woldemariam (2007) that parents in North Omo would not subscribe to their children being taught in the mother tongue. They consider it a waste of time to send their children to school, which the children already learn at home.

Similarly, the participant children reported that parents didn't mind a bit of mother tongue education. Parents see Amharic as a language to be aspired. For instance, parents objected to accommodating Gamotstso, saying things like *'You don't go far if you know Gamotstso'; 'Schooling in Amharic is good for personal growth'; Gamotstso is not helpful'*. Clearly, parents' comments reveal the low status of local languages, which carries with it negative associations, despite recent efforts to improve the status of indigenous languages. They believe that local languages restrict societal functions and limited instrumental functions.

On the other hand, they viewed Amharic as the most important language, and desire their children to master it. The children described that their parents accepted the power of Amharic and is essential in helping them to succeed in life. In this connection, Woldemariam (2007) reports both parents in North Omo were found to underestimate the advantages of mother-tongue education, and would prefer to their children being taught in Amharic. Identity formation begins in the home, and children begin to construct their identity from a very young age. Children's identity is inclusive of their home language, and it may have a positive effect on both personal and collective self-esteem (Siraj-Blatchford & Clarke, 2000; Nemeth, 2009). Whether linguistic minority children's identities are nurtured relies on the quality of interactions between parents and their children at home. When parents tell their children that the language they speak is useless or isn't good enough, the children feel that they must hide parts of themselves.

Besides, when children are told to exchange their own language and culture with that of the majority, this may fundamentally damage their self-esteem. Sanchez & Thorp, (1998) found that young children, in particular, are susceptible to the powerful messages that dissuade the use of their home language in favor of the majority language. Some young children may even view their home language with a sense of shame. When the community and parents portray their languages as worthless with

speaking Amharic as the way to be ‘normal’, children may become alienated from their families. They may reject their native language - often the only language that their parents speak and along with it, their parents’ guidance and opinions.

Cummins (1986) and Skutnabb-Kangas (2000) further write the messages both parents and teachers relay to children can strongly influence their views of themselves as learners and their learning pathways. If Amharic is the sole language of instruction, children may be led to believe that the important knowledge and skills imparted at school must be learned in it. Thus, Amharic language is directly paired with the knowledge and skills necessary for achievement and status. In contrast, if children who speak the minority language are characterized as ‘deficient’, the child's home language is paired with lower status. The status of those who speak the dominant language is further enhanced. Hence, children must never be made to feel that their home language is any less or any more valuable than the majority language. When these messages are combined with a general societal devaluation of the minority language, the result may well be lowered collective self-esteem.

5.4.2.2 Negotiation of competencies and identity

The findings have shown that linguistic minority students experienced challenges in negotiating identities in order to participate and be accepted as competent, contributing members of their classes. Marginalizing, silencing, and imposition of certain stereotypical identities by others resulted in various forms of resistance on the part of the affected students, including withdrawing from class discussions and avoiding speaking in the classrooms.

A common identity reported by the children was being less competent than others, particularly more proficient students in classroom interactions. This finding pertains to how L2 serves as a mediating tool for gaining legitimacy and membership in the academic community of practice (Crawford, 2006). The development of such an identity is attributed to difficulties they have encountered in classroom participation, such as the inability to speak Amharic and inability to construct an argument in classroom discussion.

If a learner has a low expectation, he or she is more likely to believe that other pupil's reactions are mostly uncontrollable and that the only way to avoid bad interaction experiences is to avoid engaging in interactions with those people from whom one fears rejection or poor treatment. These phenomena correspond to Norton and Toohey's (2001) study that language learners are not only bound up in what they do individually but also in the possibilities their classroom communities offer them. This shows a powerful illustration of the relationship between the individual language learner, the classroom social context, and language learning. Language learning is a practice that is socially constructed and processes that constitute daily life. When linguistic minority children admit their inability to speak and read Amharic, they are positioned as learners who are 'incompetent'. More proficient students are viewed as 'competent' and 'knower' and it is that competence or knowledge that gives them power. Significantly, because linguistic minority children do not have access to that competence and knowledge, they are silenced.

The findings also indicated that because of the inability to express ideas in Amharic, the children avoided classroom discussions. In other words, the children's challenge seems to be related to linguistic competency. They seemed to think that they would not meet their classroom communities' expectation with regard to linguistic and academic competencies. Research indicates that second language competence played a crucial role in linguistic minority students' identity negotiation. Morita (2004) investigated how less proficient second language learners struggle to negotiate their membership in classrooms. Morita discusses some serious difficulties these students experience in gaining recognition as legitimate members in their classroom communities, leading to the construction of inferior identities, in which they consider themselves incompetent. Similarly, the children, in the current study, reported they have limited Amharic abilities, beginner level learners with negative perceptions about their competence. They felt threaten that their classmates may view them as less competent students so they would lose their faces in the classroom community.

Besides, due to their low proficiency, they were overly concerned about their spoken Amharic, especially about their use of language in different accent. Due to their low confidence caused by such concerns, they became relatively silent students in the classroom. By being too conscious of their proficiency, the children feel discouraged

to take part in the classroom discussion (McBrien, 2005). Their assessment of their own Amharic skills was mostly negative, though they often expressed a determination to try and a desire to learn. In some respects, their low estimation of their skills accurately reflected their low level of proficiency. When the children have difficulties in actively participating as competent members, they are likely to have marginalized feelings, which made them construct marginalized identity. From psycholinguistic perspective on second language acquisition, the children's challenge is linguistic problems accompanied by psychological issues such as anxiety and insecurity. From a community of practice perspective, however, their challenge is negotiating competence and membership in the classroom (Lave and Wenger, 1991).

Similarly, the children found speaking Amharic to more proficient speakers a much more unpleasant experience and reported being mocked by their classmates for their low Amharic proficiency. They noticed the gap between their actual Amharic abilities and their perceptions of them. They all were incapable of delivering what they wanted to say and they seemed to focus more on deficient aspects of their Amharic. Some studies demonstrate that such discrepancies can indicate language anxiety, which is constructed due to perfectionism (Gregersen & Horwitz, 2002; Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope, 1986, Scovel, 1991) and L2 users' unequal experiences in a community (Norton, 2000). Thus, while struggling to negotiate competent identities in a classroom community; linguistic minority students may become nervous and reticent members in the classroom. When linguistic minority students have difficulties in actively participating as competent members, they are also likely to have marginalized identity in classrooms.

On the other hand, few children reporteded classroom interaction event gave them a positive feedback and helped them to construct their identity as a legitimate member in classroom participation. These chidren as narrated in classroom participations they made a point and native speakers students listened and agreed with their points, and reported that encouraged and made them feel accepted. In this regard, it could be said that they were able to develop their identity as a relatively competent classroom member. This can be seen as a motivation, which helps them participate more actively in classroom discussions. Thus, they started to get confident and become a peripheral member is an indication that socially and academically conducive atmosphere can

help students build their identities as competent learners in the classroom (Cummins, 2000).

In sum, negotiating their sense of competence and identity presented a significant challenge. An identity described by most of the learners was being less competent than others. The children began to develop such identity based on the difficulties they were experiencing in the classroom, such as not fully understanding the school language, class discussions, reading texts, and not being able to contribute to discussions as much as others. Peer reactions of the kind reported above are likely to affect students' motivation to develop an L2. Here, it is worth stressing Cummins' coercive and collaborative forms of interaction (2000). Collaborative interaction gives all participants the power to draw on their experiences and perspectives. In collaborative interaction, the voices of all are listened to and respected. On the other hand, coercive interaction, in which the L1 experiences and perspectives are privileged are likely to lead low proficient students to disengage. Their participation ends up by withdrawal from interaction and resistance to dominant perspective. Where classroom interaction empowers such children, they are likely to participate confidently in instruction as a result of the fact that their sense of identity is being affirmed. Hence, the school can address such a contestation of identity in language use, which may affect negatively children's motivation by broadening teachers' and students' understanding of language from a monolingual view where a particular language predominates and has greatest value, to a multilingual view which is equally interested, tolerant, and encouraging towards all language use (Goldstein, 2000).

5.4.2.3 In-Group Affilation

The findings indicated that the children appeared to understand ethnic labels and use them to identify themselves and other. They used membership identification; that is, they use language to indicate alliance and to show in and out groups. Despite the imperative for learning the target language, linguistic minority children faced difficult time for mixing and maintaining friendship. When facing these problems, the children associated and socialized with students from their own linguistic backgrounds.

By making 'ethnicity' and 'language' relevant, the learners attempt to use the category bound attribute 'group identity' *to* create a sense of an 'in group' and 'out

group'. The *'in'* and '*out'* groups were defined, and children used language to indicate groups they are members of and which groups they are not. Essentially, it is argued that human being lives and finds meaning and belonging within the bounds of ethnocultural groups, and this membership is cast in *'We-They'* separate antipathetic relationships with other groups (Gumperz, 1982). To belong at once entails to be included in an ethnic community and to be separated and differentiated from another or several.

The L2 learners' language *'we'* code represents *in-group* speech. It connotes intimacy and is largely confined to home because it suffers lower prestige than the *'they'* code, which is the language of the more dominant group and is tied with status. It is possible that the present social context makes ethnic categories particularly salient, even to very young children. The students are likely to have had much more interaction with members of their own ethnic group and are more familiar with ingroup members. The friendship choices of children demonstrate clearly an ethnocentric pattern. However, the out-group is protected by excluding individuals whose group membership is different. The construction of the *'Self* and *Other'* hampers linguistic minority learners from having communication with the mainstream population, so, they have fewer mainstream students as their friends. This situation impacts on the academic and social relationship among learners. It also impacts negatively on communication among learners in schools.

Besides, early childhood is a critical time for establishing the foundation for cognitive and social development. Connolly (2007) notes there is good evidence that early childhood, before children have had a chance to form negative ideas about difference and *'us'* and *'them'*, can be a prime time for learning about and developing positive ideas about tolerance and respect for diversity.

Hence, teachers should apply different strategies or activities, i.e., small-group discussion, in classroom discussions in order to urge linguistic minority students with diverse language backgrounds to participate in classroom discussion (Cummins, 2007; Lucas & Katz, 1994).

This study tried to see the complex relationship between identities as reflected through second language learning. It demonstrated that language learning and teaching includes significantly more than a set of discrete items to be learned, namely individual learning preferences, class group identity, communicative comfort level in using second language, and the dynamics of participation including resistance. Thus, identity related factors are inseparable elements of language learning and need to be addressed in linguistically diverse classrooms. The way learners negotiate or contest their identities has impact in their academic journey. Hence, to improve participation and academic achievement of linguistic minority learners, teachers have to empower their students and instill in them a sense of pride.

Besides, it is crucial to acknowledge the importance of the minority language in education. Emphasizing the majority language alone may be psychologically damaging to speakers of minority languages (Nemeth, 2009).

5.5 Teachers' instructional practices in their management of linguistic diversity

The present study investigates teachers' instructional practices with regard to their perceptions, strategies, and knowledge concerning linguistic diversity among learners. There are three sub themes under this theme: (I) Teacher's Perceptions towards linguistic diversity, (II) Teachers' perceptions about the role of first language, and (III) Teaching strategies.

5.5.1 Teachers' perceptions towards linguistic diversity

This study investigated teachers' perceptions concerning linguistic diversity. The analysis of the data indicated that the majority of the teachers had negative perceptions towards linguistic diversity. Specifically, of the fifteen teachers interviewed, the majority (10 teachers) reported that they perceived linguistic diversity as a problem.

As has been said, the majority of the participant teachers perceived linguistic diversity in the zone as a problem. This finding agrees with Woldemariam (2007) who found out that teachers in North Omo would not subscribe to the children being taught in the mother tongue. The teachers supported 'language as a problem' orientation wherein

linguistic diversity is viewed as a problem to be solved and learning Amharic is thought to be the best answer. It seems that the teachers are not aware of the advantages of mother tongue education and the cognitive benefits it offers. Rather, they believe children should learn in Amharic due to the fact that Amharic enjoys more functional privileges than other indigenous languages in the zone. Amharic is thus seen as the key to economic and educational advancement. It is accorded very high status and has overall dominance in many spheres. Amharic is thus associated with elitism and is a major asset in social mobility.

According to the teachers interviewed, one of the challenges encountered in attempt to implement the use of mother tongue education policy in North Omo is that there are several languages and dialects in this sub region, and perceived multiplicity of languages has immense influence on the social, political, and educational activities of the zone. The teachers reflected that the issues of language of instruction remain to be sensitive and source of great contention in North Omo. They in particular cited the language controversy that the region faced during the implementation of the homogenized four Southern Ethiopian languages-**Wo**laita, **Ga**mo, G**o**fa, and **Da**wro-in to a primary school education that ended in bloody conflicts. In other words, the presence of several mother tongues is misinterpreted as accentuating interethnic conflict. In light of this reason, most participant teachers expressed assimilation of diverse groups to mainstream society.

The teachers also look at indigenous languages as inferior. They believe that indigenous languages lack scientific terminologies and cannot be used as media of instruction. This defeatist attitude towards use of indigenous languages for education may be connected to the inferior position accorded to indigenous language (Woldemariam, 2007). The communities including teachers perceive that their access to education would be limited if the mother tongue were the language of education. They consider indigenous languages as restricting children to local areas. As a result, teachers involved in the implementation of mother tongue education send their children to Amharic medium schools.

Whereas three of the teachers consider that linguistic diversity is a good thing, they perceived that its implementation and management is difficult. Here contradictions

emerge from their views regarding linguistic diversity, since they revealed a discrepancy in their views which tend to be positive towards the theoretical aspects of linguistic diversity but appear less positive towards the practical implementation of these principles in the classrooms. These teachers tend to favor the 'language as a right' orientation and acknowledge that students and communities should not be discriminated against on the basis of language but recognizes language as a 'problem' with regard to school achievement (Phillipson Skutnabb-Kangas, & Africa, 1986; Ruiz (1984). In other words, teachers' seeming acceptance of diversity in the community and school may actually represent their recognition of the inevitability of demographic changes, rather than a true acknowledgment of linguistic diversity.

Research has also shown that teachers' negative perceptions towards linguistic diversity can be brought about by perceived difficulties in dealing with it in the classroom (Dooly, 2005). Moreover, studies have documented the negative consequences of first language loss and the subtraction of bilingualism (Cummis, 2000, 2001; Thomas & Collier, 1997) concerning the children's language, cognitive, social and psychological development as well as the role of widespread negative perceptions of multilingualism, which can lead to the bilingual children's disempowerment at school.

On the other hand, despite these strong ideologies favoring monolingualism, the remaining two teachers consider linguistic diversity as an asset, and that every language is equally valuable and should be respected. They mentioned that diversity is an everyday part of life in North Omo and therefore is quite normal in the classroom. There is definitely a feeling from teachers that being exposed to diversity is the norm, and spoke of diversity in a positive way and believe that understandings about diversity has far-reaching benefits for the teaching and learning that happens in the classrooms. The teachers advovated 'language as a resource orientation' and viewed linguistic diversity as a source of expertise to be developed. Ruiz (1984) argued that schools have, by and large, adopted the language as a problem orientation, and called for a shift away from deficit-driven conversations and perspectives to those where linguistic and cultural diversity is viewed as a resource. In addition, they have identified value for mother tongue use and instruction, particularly in the early years of learning. This is partly evidenced in cases where these two teachers have been

found to codeswitch between Amharic and the mother tongue in order to facilitate understanding.

Generally, the conflicted findings about teachers' language ideologies suggest a struggle between inherent beliefs about the value of mother tongue for communication and the power associated with Amharic. It is noteworthy that most teachers favoured an assimilationst language ideology. This ideology gives exclusive attention to the majority language with the aim of making the minority groups adapt to the majority language and culture (Ruíz, 1984; Durgunoğlu & Verhoeven, 1998).

Language assimilation ideology presupposes that all speakers of the languages other than the dominant language should be able to speak and function in the dominant language, regardless of their origin (Cobarrubias, 1983). Most of the teachers in this study believe the assimilationst strategy as the only possible way to be able to perform successfully in diverse community such as North Omo. They consider Amharic language as the only option to become a full member and succeed at school. They infer the view that the minority languages are important within families or in the home environment but outside the home and the community it loses its value.

5.5.2 Teachers' perceptions toward inclusion of linguistic minority learners

An important sub theme that emerged in the process of analysis was regarding the personal feelings and perceptions towards inclusive education held by the teachers. The findings indicated teachers' perceptions about inclusion of linguistic minority learners were generally negative, although there were some exceptions. They claimed the presence of linguistic minority children created problems because of the difficulties in communication, and the difficulties were attributed to children's lack of proficiency in Amharic. They explicitly stated that linguistic minority children should not be included in mainstream classes until they have reached a good level of Amharic proficiency, and suggested students should quickly be placed into Amharic-only transitional classes. In other words, the teachers are concerned that enrolling linguistic minority children in a mainstream class before they are comfortable enough with the Amharic language may actually be detrimental to their learning. This finding is confirmed by Nixon (1991), who found that many teachers blame the children and do not believe the children have enough language skills to be in the mainstream

classroom. In a way, this is blaming the students for a lack of academic achievement rather than the teachers making the necessary accommodations to ensure success for linguistic minority students.

The teachers also articulated more assimilationist views insisting on the dominant view that more time and greater exposure leads to faster and better second language acquisition. They advocated language ideologies which reflect the urgency to learn Amharic and reinforce monolingualism and assimilation, without however being fully conscious of their pedagogical dimensions concerning mother tongue based multilingual education. Teachers' responses evidenced a predisposition toward an immersion approach, i.e., the more students are exposed to Amharic, the more they will learn. This may reveal an emphasis on the acquisition of behavioral interpersonal communicative skills, rather than the use of students' L1 as a means of developing academic cognitive skills (Cummins, 2000). Fortunately, research and literature clearly provide specific ideas to effectively break down the language barrier in order to educate language minority students.

Numerous studies have demonstrated that use of the L1 in the instruction of linguistic minority students is integral to advancing their academic, cognitive, and linguistic development in both the first and second languages (Cummins, 1981 & 1991; Thomas & Collier, 1997). Representative literature explains specific reasons for the use of primary language in instruction. In their longitudinal study on school effectiveness for linguistic minority students, for instance, Thomas and Collier (1997) concluded that native language support explains the most variance in student achievement and is the most powerful influence on minority students' long-term academic success. Similarly, Brunn (1999) demonstrated that linguistic minority students with the lowest understanding of L2 were failing in classrooms where L2 was the only language for instruction; however, in classes where both L2 and L1 were used for instruction, the students felt more comfortable and made better progress in acquiring content area knowledge than their peers. The children used their abilities in L1 to help make sense of the new language and the unfamiliar content.

In addition, teachers perceived these children as an additional difficulty. There was evidence from the data sources that teachers have insufficient time and complained

that the children's presence in the classrooms placed extra task on their teaching duty. There appeared that teaching in a mainstream classroom has become more time-demanding due to inclusion of linguistic minority children: extra time after school, extra teacher time in class away from other children, and a reduction in the speed in which the curriculum is covered. This view is echoed in the literature where a number of studies point to the fact that teachers' negative perceptions towards linguistic diversity can be brought about by perceived difficulties in dealing with it in the classroom (Dooly, 2005; Young, 1999). Teachers no longer have the luxury of time for children to acquire Amharic in isolated classroom. Teachers who employ scaffolding skills end up with successful students. Teachers' perceptions concerning the presence of linguistic minority children reveals misconceptions concerning linguistic diversity and learning, a limited perception of diversity as a source of problems, based on a language deficit assumption. Mainstream teachers need to accept that they are going to have linguistic minority children in their classroom and learn to teach them to the best of their ability.

Besides, misconceptions concerning the L2 children's ability regularly emerged during interviews throughout the study, as revealed from the teachers' frequent use of words such as 'they know nothing'; 'they don't have vocabulary to describe their difficulties'; 'they don't know anything' to refer to the language behavior of linguistic minority children. They seem to think that the linguistic minority children come to class empty headed, therefore, they cannot learn easily. They revealed a limited perception of bilingualism in the school context which reflects a monolingual ideological orientation, according to which the minority language or the bilingualism of minority children are perceived as an obstacle, as language deficiency and lack of knowledge that causes learning difficulties.

Thoughts that linguistic minority children are poor academic learners can be harmful. Educational deficit beliefs about linguistic minority students can lead to negative teacher attitudes that in turn in result in inferior educational services (Reeves, 2006). If teachers believe in all of their students, the students will be more successful. The participant teachers felt that linguistic minority children were poor academic learners and felt they came to class with no prior knowledge. Such misconception about the nature of second language acquisition may lead teachers to develop incorrect

perceptions of linguistically diverse learners. They have been found to confuse linguistic minority children's language proficiency with cognitive ability. For instance, the negative labels, 'they know nothing'; 'they don't have vocabulary their difficulties'; 'they don't know anything' suggest that teachers frequently underestimate students' language ability and consequently their cognitive ability. The teachers view linguistic minority learners from a deficit perspective (Reeves, 2006). The teachers also used 'distancing' language (them, those children, etc.) that conveyed their assumptions about who belonged and who was 'their student'. These results show that when teachers describe linguistic minority students, they often omit the student's L1 achievement. They assumed that the students had 'limited language', and felt students should receive Amharic language instruction in special class until they are fluent enough in Amharic.

While significant number of teachers feel that students should be kept in separate classes until they know Amharic, there are others who feel that linguistic minority children should be just placed in mainstream classes. This means that the children would be placed in mainstream classrooms and expected to learn Amharic with some extra support.

In this way, participants perpetuate the monolingual ideology ethos within schools, where speaking L2 is associated with power and knowledge. Besides, linguistic diversity is viewed as a threat to cohesiveness in society (Fairchild and Edwards-Evans, 1990; Leyser, Kapperman, & Keller, 1994). Contrary to the 'one nation one language' ideology for societal cohesiveness, Smolicz (1986) argues that it is an attempt to impose one language on the other groups that is destructive and divisive. The author instead argues for pluralism where the adoption of a majority or an official language needs not involve the rejection of minority languages.

5.5.3 Teachers' perceptions about the role of first language

Teachers expressed a variety of opinions regarding first language and its role in education. The findings indicated that more than half of (9 teachers) the participant teachers perceived mother tongue based multilingual education negatively, and was in favor of Amharic as a medium of instruction. They argued that there are several

reasons that need to be countered for mother tongue education in North Omo schools to be a reality.

The teachers commented that there is an apparent lack of interest for local language use in North Omo schools. Lack of enthusiasm in mother tongue education and an ardent push of Amharic as medium of instruction have been observed among teachers. The teachers view Amharic as a status language with many benefits. They accepted that the use of Amharic as a medium of instruction leads to palpable benefits in social mobility and affects pathways to further educational opportunities. This finding is consistent with other reports (Woldemariam, 2007) who revealed that the community, i.e., parents, students, and policy implementers, in North Omo area are unenthusiastic about mother tongue education. The teachers believe local languages place restriction, confining their children to their local environments. Thus, they consider it is useless to send their children to school to learn their own language. During informal discussion, one of the participant teachers spoke to the researcher that minority language is important within our families, and outside home it loses its values. He added that he believes that local languages have to be studied as subject, and not used as media of instruction.

On the other hand, teachers claim learners face challenges when Amharic is used as the language of education. Despite their conviction that learners understand better when they are taught in the mother language, they had a preference for Amharic. In other words, the elite, a category to which teachers are believed to belong, has strong negative perception towards the role of L1 in education. Early home language experiences are an integral part of children's literacy development, and lay the foundations for life long learning. Unfortunately, the participant teachers appear to be unaware of the importance of mother tongue education in cognitive development and the acquisition of additional languages. Baker (2001) notes that teachers, parents; even students could choose L2 rather than L1 as medium of instruction for schooling. As Baker, this results from the negative perceptions that communities may have formed towards the use of mother tongue in education, where mother tongues are seen as limiting upward mobility and employment opportunities. Likewise, teachers suggested that linguistic minority children should learn Amharic quickly, and integrate into the mainstream classrooms. This is based on the view that learning in

the target language from the beginning will result in effective acquisition of second language. The teachers advocate more assimilationist views insisting on the dominant view that more time and much exposure leads to quicker and better second language learning. It sounds that they lack awareness of the benefits mother tongue education offers to cognitive and academic development.

The finding also indicated that some teachers consider local languages as unsuitable to be media of instruction because most languages in the region have not yet developed and lack the necessary scientific vocabularies. They look at indigenous languages as inferior. This defeatist attitude towards use of indigenous languages for education may be connected to the inferior position accorded to indigenous language. In Woldemariam (2007) study, teachers reported that local languages used in the school are poorly developed. The grammatical structures and vocabularies of the languages are strange and are not conducive to convey knowledge and information in academic subjects. Some teachers also expressed there is profound lack of instructional materials in local languages and mother tongue books are rarely published. They, thereore, look at Amharic as a language of innovation. However, this only helps to threaten the continued growth of local languages.

Additionally, teachers' perceptions that lack of appropriate terminology in the mother tongues for educational purposes would not make much sense. The fact of the matter is that there is no language which is inherently inferior to an extent that it fails to accommodate scientific terminologies and new functions that it may need. Developing terminology does not have to be an insuperable problem for any language. Speakers of the language might either coin or borrow terms from other languages, which would facilitate communication and understanding amongst its speakers. From that perspective, Wolff (2002) argues that it is only through using the local languages as languages for teaching and learning that would make them develop. Currently in Ethiopia, several languages have been in use and have already achieved some considerable advance because new terminologies have been developed to cope with the many functions in the areas of science and technology.

On the other hand, the remaining seven teachers agreed students should be taught in their native language. They argued that the benefits of teaching children in their

mother tongue during the early years of formal learning outweigh the advantages of teaching them using Amharic as the medium of instruction. However, the teachers were aware of several challenges that need to be countered for mother tongue education in North Omo schools to be a reality. They pointed out that multiplicity of languages among children in the classrooms appears to be an inherent problem. They argue that it is impossible to offer mother tongue education in North Omo due to the linguistically heterogeneous nature of the region. Woldemariam (2007) also shares the teachers' views. She mentions that financial constriants were the major challenge to providing education in each language or dialect. They argued that the choice of which language or dialect of a language to use has been controversial matter in the region. In order to overcome the language controversy, the teachers felt that local languages should be studied as subject, and not used as media of instruction. This coupled with the negative attitudes towards local languages in general results in preference for second language over indigenous languages in education.

Besides, the participant teachers were asked about language use in linguistically diverse classrooms. When asked how they specifically validate the learner's first language, their beliefs ranged from those requiring strict L2 only classrooms to those allowing children to use their L1 whenever they needed.

Nine out of fifteen teachers viewed first language as a problem for second language children's learning, and prohibited the use of L1 in the classroom. For some of these teachers, using L1 in the classroom deprives students' second language learning. They contend that the children must be exposed to a significant amount of the target language input. This position is also shared by some linguists like Marton (1981). Marton maintains that from a psychological perspective not only at the moment of cognition but also when amassing fresh knowledge for his/her 'linguistic reservoir', the pupil is faced with a belligerent conflict between his native language and the second language system. Intriguingly, they emphasized the necessity for children to learn Amharic as quickly as possible in order to eliminate the language barrier between linguistic minority children and subject area knowledge. These are the same arguments that were peddled in this study against the use of L1 during instruction. However, research evidence shows that use of the L1 in the instruction of linguistically diverse learners is integral to advancing their academic, cognitive, and

linguistic development in both the first and second languages (Thomas & Collier, 1997; Cummins, 2001).

Another commonly perceived obstacle to the promotion of L1 use in classroom practises reported by teachers was having a variety of native languages represented in their classes. Some of the teachers commented that their lack of proficiency in the native languages of their linguistic minority students as an obstacle to communicating with and involving them in classroom activities. Research supports the value of encouraging linguistic minority students to use their native language in learning and concept development, even when the teachers do not know that language (Samway & McKeon, 1999; Tikunoff, Ward, & van Broekhuizen, 1991). Concerns often expressed by teachers regarding L1 incorporation in the classroom such as not being able to speak the L1 themselves or having multiple native languages represented often have ideological implications relating to how issues of power are embedded in classroom relations (Auerbach, 1993; Reeves, 2006). For instance, Auerbach (1993) maintains that the issue of language choice often boils down to teacher-student roles, with the teacher having the power to either negate or reinforce use of the L1.

In addition, using the learners' L1 is ideal in both linguistically homogenous as well as linguistically heterogeneous classrooms. Such practice promotes not only understanding of what is learnt but also boost learners self-esteem when they know that they and their languages are valued in school (Cummins, 2000 & 1981). Studies have shown that even where teachers may not speak the language(s) of the learners, using community members to speak to the learners and carry out some classrooms activities in their native tongues has been successful in fostering multiliteracy development. In fact some studies show that even just learning a few phrases in the learners' languages has been instrumental in boosting learners' self-esteem and in turn academic achievement (Nemeth, 2009).

On the other hand, five teachers articulated allowing students to use their native language. The teachers reported that L1 use can really be useful and the children may understand well. They believe that L1 use may also improve learners' performance for the better. They feel that if first languages are accommodated in lessons, they could certainly help learners to understand the subjects better. These views get

support from Cummins (2001) who emphasized that L1 use has a great potential of increasing inclusion, participation and understanding in the process and also develops a good relationship between teachers and learners.

Moreover, teachers believe use of L1 was indispensible, especially where the second language learners come from poor educational background. They claim that most linguistic minority children have poor proficiency in Amharic and a low rate of literacy even in their mother tongue. This means these children tend to be incompetent in Amharic as a media of instruction. So, they should not be discouraged from using their mother tongues, because mother tongue used concurrently with Amharic may help learners to understand and get the meanings correctly. This notion is also supported by Creese and Blackledge (2008) who claimed that using two languages has been a valuable resource that may contributes to the performance, lesson accomplishments and participation of learners. During observation, the researcher and co-observers observed some of these teachers switching to 'Gamotstso' and 'Wolayitaththo' while the children were hesitating and failing to respond in Amharic. The teachers did this to explain content to the children and mainly when addressing any of the 'Gamotstso' and 'Wolayiththo' speaking children in their class. However, the researcher and co-observers did not observe any instances where the teacher switched to 'Afan Gujii' when addressing any of the 'Afan Gujii' speaking children in their class. There is a possibility that 'Afan Gujii' speaking children interact amongst themselves in their L1 as happens with other languages. The researcher and co-observers observed several instances where children from the 'Guji community' associated and socialized among themselves, and their first language-'Afan Gujii' was spoken during exchanges.

Learning and understanding of subject content may occur successfully when there is a good classroom communication between learners and teachers and when there is a connection between schools and the society in which the school is operating. The presence of the society in which learning is expected to take place should be valued as far as the languages and cultures of the learners are concerned. It is necessary for the learners' mother tongues to be used parallel to the dominant language.

In addition, when the researcher asked teachers what they think about the children's use of their first language at home, they reported that the children speak their

language at home. However, they always insisted the children that they speak Amharic at home. This finding agrees with Reeves (2004) who surveyed teachers about their beliefs towards linguistic minority learners and found teachers' negative perceptions in relation to native language use at home. Reeves describes that teachers held the belief that native language use in school and at home would slow L2 acquisition.

Although many teachers advise parents and children to use Amharic at home because they believe bilingualism produces delays and confusion when learning Amharic, in actuality, proficiency in a native language leads to higher academic achievement (Cummins, 1992). Conversely, the loss of proficiency in the native language breaks down communication with family members and lowers self esteem. Assimilation policies that aim to discourage home language learning in primary aged children are contrary to Cummins' (1981) widely accepted developmental Interdependence Hypothesis. According to Cummins, through maintaining a constant level of the first language, children can build on it in the mainstream language thus supporting and facilitating their cognitive and particularly conceptual development.

From the discussion part of this chapter, it can be observed that the teachers' assumptions and the students' ideas are in contradiction giving rise to tensions as linguistic minority students negotiate their identities in their home and school lives. Teachers pressurize language minority students to avoid using their native language and become assimilated in the dominant language. The teachers reveal a limited perception of bilingualism which derives from a monolingual view of language functioning attributing the children's school difficulties to the use of the minority language at home and the perceived lack of support from their parents. Thus, they express the language - as a problem - orientation (Ruiz, 1984; Thomas & Collier, 1997), revealing misconceptions about bilingualism, relating to a common myth surrounding bilingualism, i.e., it delays the development of the school language, hinders academic performance and burdens the teacher.

Similarly, the participant teachers were asked about their knowledge base concerning language acquisition, specifically about conversational and academic language. The misconception between conversational and academic language can be seen in their

responses and they were more likely to confuse fluency in conversational language with academic language fluency.

Six out of fifteen teachers have said that they did see no difference between conversational and classroom languages. Four teachers have pointed to the linguistic demands of the classrooms that go beyond conversational fluency which would be required by the students to meaningfully participate in the classroom. Three teachers have said that *'the classroom language is very formal whereas the one we use outside is informal'.* The remaining two teachers have reported that *'there is difference between the two. School language is more of academic, and the other mentioned the kinds of language we use in school are similar to the ones we find in books'*.

Many participant teachers' perceptions of second language acquisition processes were not aligned with the findings of some second language acquisition research. The above responses point to teachers' apparent lack of knowledge towards linguistically diverse students and, hence, understanding of the relationship between L1 and L2 in the mastery of academic content. This affirms that many of them may be unable to distinguish between oral communication proficiencies and cognitive academic-language capabilities. Applied linguists believe that if pupils do not fully acquire their first language, they may have problems later in becoming fully literate and academically proficient in the second language. This is supported by evidence from research which indicates that pupils learn academic material and other languages most successfully when they begin school in the language they speak most comfortably (Cummins, 2001; Thomas & Collier, 1997). The interactive relationship between language and cognitive growth is very significant. This implies that everything acquired in the first language (academic skills, literacy, concept formation, and learning strategies) will be transferred from first language to the second language. That is, the first language will act as a foundation to the learning of other languages.

On the other hand, while learners may have attained a certain level of basic interpersonal communicative competence in L1, they lack what Cummins (2000), for example, termed cognitive academic language proficiency, and thus they find insruction too hard when they move to the next levels. While teachers may hear these students speaking to their friends in Amharic and think they know the language well

enough, teachers should be aware the academic language is much more difficult to learn.

The finding indicated that all of the teachers were unsure about how long it should take for second language learners to be fluent in Amharic. However, they pointed out that the children learn academaic languages after they come to school. This shows that there is a lack of knowledge towards second language children and second language learning among teachers. Earlier some teachers have even voiced the opinion that linguistic minority children should stay in a separate classroom until they are able to speak Amharic proficiently. While other teachers have the perceptions that linguistic minority children should only use Amharic. The idea is that the more they are surrounded by the language, the more quickly they will learn. This may reveal an emphasis on the acquisition of interpersonal communicative skills, rather than the use of students' L1 as a means of developing academic cognitive skills. Either way, many teachers held the perceptions that linguistic minority children should be placed into Amharic-only classes. Their responses evidenced a predisposition toward an immersion approach. Thus, they do not understand the need for native-language instruction. This contradicts the research results about how long it takes to learn a language. Cummins (2001) found that it takes one to three years for second language learners to develop conversational proficiency in L2 but five to seven years to develop academic language, or Amharic needed for reading, writing, speaking, and listening in the content areas.

The findings have also revealed that the participant teachers have in general negative perceptions towards mother tongue instruction and linguistic diversity, and are not aware of its benefits for the children's second language and academic development and consider diversity as a source of problem. The participant teachers favor school language policies and ideologies which reflect the urgency to learn Amharic and reinforce monolingualism and assimilation, without however being fully conscious of their educational dimensions concerning mother tongue education and linguistic diversity.

Besides, what needs to be examined is why so many teachers feel that linguistic minority children should not be placed in the mainstream classrooms. Many of the

negative comments from the interviews seemed to be rooted in the pedagogical philosophy of the teachers. Whether it was students not understanding instruction or including linguistic minority children slows the progress of the entire class and creates a tremendous amount of unnecessary work for teachers not, the difficulties seemed to originate in the weakness of the classroom teacher to effectively carry out research based suggestions when teaching linguistically diverse learners. In this regards, Lucas and Grinberg (2008) argue that teachers should be exposed to programs that promote the understanding of behaviors peculiar to sociolinguistic consciousness and valuing linguistic diversity. This could include the connection between language, culture, identity, and the sociopolitical contexts of language use.

5.5.4 Teachers' teaching strategies

Bennett (1990) has argued that teaching in linguistically diverse classrooms requires teachers to be fully aware of the differences between the learners and to be flexible enough to cope with the situations which may be very different from those in linguistically homogenous classrooms. Scholars find that what often appears to be effective teaching in relatively homogenous classrooms is not likely to be effective in multilingual classrooms (Clauss-Ehlers, 2006; Bennett, 1990).

The findings indicate that although teachers are aware of the linguistic differences amongst their learners, they lack adequate skills that would aid in their flexibility to the linguistic realities in their classrooms. Though the participant teachers replied that they have been employing a variety of instructional strategies to support linguistically diverse learners, for the most part, they used lecture, visual aids, and code switching. The strategies teachers had applied illustrated limited skills in the varied contexts.

The findings indicated that most lessons were conducted in whole class format, and lessons were delivered in a top-down approach in which the teacher instructed and children listened and responded. In cases where the teachers asked questions, the children responded in chorus. Thus, classrooms in which linguistic minority children interact with Amharic speaking peers will support Amharic development better than those in which the teachers do most of the talking. As mentioned earlier, the amount of whole-group instruction is large enough to raise concern that linguistic minority

children might have been cast too frequently in the role of language recipients rather than language producers.

Data analysis also indicated teachers used visual aids and other non-verbal communications during lesson presentation. The use of visuals, such as pictures and real objects, was identified as the most effective strategy by the participants in this study. Most teachers agree visuals can assist in teaching about concepts through the use of a variety of senses and have been found to be especially helpful to students whose first language is not Amharic. Classroom observations also showed that teachers often used visuals. Six of the teachers often used real objects, pictures, textbook illustrations and gestures to aid learning during Amharic, mathematics, and environmental science lessons. For instance, teacher 3A brought real objects like *'battery', 'bulb'*, and model of *'globe'* during environmental science lessons. Interestingly, teacher 2B used the necklace on her neck to describe the similarity between the Amharic alphabet letter *'ተ'* and the design in the shape of a cross. Similarly, Teacher 2A used facial expression to demonstrate feelings of happiness and sadness. The researcher also observed teacher 2A using his moustache and beard to tell their differences while presenting vocabulary lessons.

The use of visuals, such as pictures and teaching aids can assist in teaching about concepts through the use of a variety of senses (Bruno, 1982) and have been found to be especially helpful to L2 students (Vaughn, Bos, & Schumm, 2003; Wood & Tinajero, 2002). However, teachers did not utilize native language materials in the instruction of their linguistically diverse children. Especially the use of visuals such as charts, labels, posters, and flashcards in both Amharic and the native languages are all considered to be the better activities for educating linguistically diverse children. Brunn & Delany-Barmann (2001) describes the importance of developing a dual language word charts and other meaningful bilingual materials that help to explain or clarify the content that is presented.

It was also noted that in classrooms where Amharic was frequently used for instruction, on some instances the teachers used code switching as a strategy to clarify concepts that were deemed complex during the lessons. The findings from observations as presented below reveal instances of teachers using local languages

concurrently with Amharic especially when they are explaining difficult concepts, or when learners seem to not be on track. They switched from Amharic to Gamogtstso and Wolayiththo to make the content accessible to their learners.
For instance, teacher **3C** switched between Amharic and Gamotstso.

> ***T3C:*** *ይህ ምንድነው? (What is this?) (Pointing at his eye)*
> ***S:*** *ዓይን (eye)*
> ***T3C:*** *Haysi Aybee? (What is this? (Put the question to one of L2 learners in Gamotstso)*
> ***S:*** *Ayfee. (It is eye)*

Teacher **4C** is also bilingual and often used code switching while teaching mathematics.

> ***T4C:*** *ከአንድ እስከ አምስት ቁጥር ጥራ (count number up to five)*
> ***S:*** *አንድ ሁለት ሶስት አራት አምስት (Replied one of the children in Amharic)*
> ***T4C:*** *Istta pe dendadaa Ichchacha Gaaso Gamoththon payda (would you count up to five in Gamogna? (The teacher asked one of L2 learners)*
> ***S:*** *Tani? (Me)*
> ***T4C:*** *Ee (yes)*
> ***S:*** *Istta, Nam77a, Heedzdza, um.., Oydda, Ichchacha.*
> ***T4C:*** *Gooba (clever).*

At schools in which the student population is diverse and where linguistically diverse children continuously increasing, few teachers (five teachers out of fifteen) used children's home language and allowed learners to use their mother tongue in the

classrooms. These are teachers who reported during interviews that they encourage learners to speak L1, and feel that code-switching could really help learners understand the subject if it is used. Allowing learners to speak in their L1s or teachers to speak to them in their mother tongue is a commonly cited inclusive classroom practice. Researchers such as Pluddemann et al., (2000), Martin and Arthur, (2005) have stressed the importance of mother tongue use parallel to the official language in lessons. They believe code-switch is a good practice because it offers classroom participants a safe practice between the official language of the lesson and the language which the classroom participants know. This can be achieved through pairing or grouping of learners based on native languages spoken or it can also be achieved by the teacher learning a few simple phrases in the languages represented in the classroom (Nemeth, 2009).

Besides, allowing native language use also has important psychosocial benefits for the children. Children who are incompetent in Amharic tended to be quiet and passive during lessons and rarely participate in class discussions. However, when some of the teachers insisted on using mother tongue, i.e., 'Gamotstso' as shown in the above extracts, code-switching gave understanding of the subject content. This justifies the point that code-switching is really needed in this case to unlock the language restriction and allow learners' active participation in the lessons. These views get support from Cummins, (2000) and Delpit and Dowdy, (2002) who emphasized that when teachers incorporate students' L1 in the classrooms, it empowers linguistic minority children, increase their participation, and success in school by reducing the degree of language shock they are facing.

The finding indicates, of all the fifteen classroom teachers, five teachers placed their students in groups. The teachers feel that linguistic minority children have more opportunity to listen to Amharic and to produce output when working in groups. However, there was no system of grouping, and it was done spontaneously. They did not adapt the groupings for linguistically diverse classroom settings but rather followed practices for general heterogeneous groupings. Students can be supported through working with peers. This should entail working with a variety of other students, both linguistic minority and Amharic speakers, at different types of activities. In some activities, for example, it may be advantageous to mix linguistic

minority with Amharic proficient peers in a cooperative group effort. This opportunity to work with proficient Amharic speakers can be motivating for linguistically diverse children, while also providing meaningful opportunities for them to use Amharic.

Besides, peer tutoring which pairs two students of differing abilities and backgrounds together and cooperative learning where students are put in heterogeneous groups of five or six to complete an assigned task were not employed. These are strongly recommended strategies for teachers who work with linguistically diverse students; particularly they are very important, as they promote inter-ethnic friendships (Saravia-Shore & Garcia, 1995; Snowman & Biehler, 2003).

Besides, peers that include linguistic minority children and Amharic proficient student also offer certain advantages. For example, two linguistic minority students from the same language group can work together in their native language to complete a project, and then practice presenting their work in Amharic to other students in the group.

The findings further indicated that most of the teachers were not aware of some of the strategies employed in linguistically diverse classrooms. For instance, only teacher 1A mentioned he employed repetition as a strategy in an interview.

Research suggests that today's educators must implement sound, research-based strategies that recognize the needs, strengths, and experiences of students from diverse backgrounds and cultures (Saravia-Shore & Garcia, 1995; Hodges, 2001). Reviews of the literature on linguistically responsive teaching have found that cooperative or collaborative learning experiences improve academic performance and encourage socialization skills for all students, particularly for students from diverse backgrounds (Johnson & Johnson, 1990). Peer tutoring has also been effective in promoting student-to-student interaction in multilingual classrooms (Webb, 1988). With regard to parent involvement, several teachers commented that parents are not willing to participate and do not want to get involved in school activities. Research has substantiated that minority parents often feel intimidated in the school environment and apprehensive about becoming involved in the education of their child (Faltis, 1993; Baker, 1992; Perez & Torres-Guzman, 1996).

Because a child's success in school is positively related to the degree to which teachers involve the families of students in the educational process, teachers must reach out to parents in culturally sensitive ways (Baker, 1992). Parental involvement is especially salient at early school level to help young children succeed academically and personally at a transitional time in life. As classrooms become more diverse, it will be even more important to build bridges between the home and school environment and find creative ways to increase parental involvement (Allison, 2003; Allyn, 2004; Clark & Clark, 2005).

Finally, nearly all the participant teachers reveal their incapability to respond to issues of diversity in their classrooms and their need for further training. They explained that they lacked adequate training to work with linguistic minority children in light of the increasing number of second language students through out the zone. There is clear evidence that all the participant teachers were interested in receiving more training. While limited training will not totally prepare teachers to work with linguistically diverse learners, it appears that it will at least increase teachers' sensitivity to the needs of their linguistically diverse students.

While the teachers responded unfavorable with having linguistic minority children in their classroom, there is always room for teachers to benefit from more education. One way to decrease wrong perceptions is to provide professional development to teachers. As the data from teacher questionnaires indicate, in current primary teacher education programs, there is not a lot of training for pre-service and in-service teachers to work with linguistically diverse learners. With the growing number of linguistically diverse learners in the classroom, this may be an area that needs to be looked into further.

Teaching miltiligual classrooms is challenging and demanding, and teachers should be required to take at least a course or two about teaching linguistically diverse learners. Lucas & Grinberg (2008) have outlined what teachers should know and be able to do when working with linguistically diverse learners. These two authorities suggest that teachers should be exposed to programs that promote understandings about language, language proficiency, second language acquisition, and strategies for scaffolding instruction for linguistically diverse learners for both in-service and

preservice teachers. Such programs could include topics such as BICS and CALP and recommendation on the use of other languages. This knowledge would help teachers with differentiation and the planning of strategies that use different learning styles to ensure each child's learning, so that all children can participate in lessons and make progress.

5.6 The way schools & classrooms respond to linguistic diversity

In this study, documents and physical artifacts were collected, observed and analyzed in order to gain a broader perspective and understanding of linguistically diverse learners and linguistic diversity in the schools environment. Overall, the findings indicated that all the three the schools had no documents detailing school language policy. However, school officials reported that the schools accepted Amharic as medium of instruction. On the other hand, all the three schools summarized their goals, objectives, and values in mission and vision statements.

As can be seen, the schools' mission and vision statements (Appendix-G) advocate for a quality education for all students, and classroom instruction must be modified to meet the needs of all learners. In other words, the schools are committed to ensuring that all students have equal access to schooling. However, the documents do not say anything about children who speak a language other than school language and whose L2 proficiency is limited. Arba Minch is linguistically diverse area, and a significant proportion of children enter school not speaking the language of the classroom. If learners do not know the language used as a medium of instruction, they will have problems to develop educationally.

The findings further indicated that minority children referred to negative experiences in connection to home language use. The literature clearly reveals the importance of valuing and affirming the home language of minority language children (Hudelson 1987; Cummins, 2001). It is important to positively affirm minority language children's home language in school in order to promote and encourage multilingualism and home language maintenance and learning. The posters displayed in the classrooms and school compounds, one can see from the lists in Appendix-G that the posters are written in Amharic and English languages. The language-linked posters include number charts, the alphabet, and posters with pictures and related

vocabularies. Mathematical signs and symbols were illustrated in various number charts. The presence of Amharic posters is possibly due to the fact that it is the language of learning and teaching. However, this situation, although understandable, may be problematic as it suggests underlying ethnocentric assumptions. Ethnocentrism results when one's own language is applied as norm from which to judge other languages. This could result in these other languages being regarded as abnormal, below standard or wrong and therefore needing to be uplifted (van der Walt 1997). The possible impact of this is that because the learners are primarily exposed to the majority language, they are exposed to the underlying ideology that the dominant language is the only suitable language.

Besides, the unique thing about these posters is their monolingualism and mono-culturalism. Ideally these posters should have illustrated the linguistic diversity of the schools. The vocabularies are overwhelmingly Amharic and English, no other language is evident in the classroom. Hudelson (1987) contends that the school environment should be filled with print examples in diverse languages as this is important to successful language acquisition. Teachers may utilize native language materials such as word walls, labels, posters, and flashcards in both Amharic and the native language in the instruction of their linguistically diverse students. This means that the various teaching materials like posters that are used should portray prints written in a variety of languages, particularly the languages of the various learners present in the classrooms more especially since there is much concern regarding language sensitivity in Ethiopia at present.

In addition, the researcher did not observe dual language texts and artifacts of students' work. Cummins (2001) advises educators to be proactive in affirming children's home language, allowing them to translate academic work into and out of their home language and encouraging them to write bilingual texts. Through the writing of dual language texts, students are aided in the transfer of writing skills across languages. These texts will be used on an ongoing basis for literacy teaching as well as to promote children's home language use and development. Besides, creating dual language texts is an effective means of promoting intercultural education and enabling majority language children to gain knowledge about different languages and cultures (Cummins, 2001; Banks, 1997).

Additionally, the learners in multilingual classrooms benefit when the students, teachers, and the school community value linguistic diversity, and incorporate their languages into the classroom and curriculum by creating multilingual displays and signs, and demonstrating how various languages express ideas. In particular, teachers ought to promote home language maintenance and learning despite not being proficient in children's home language. By allowing minority language children to engage in such activities, teachers communicate a respect for children's language, culture and identity, thus promoting home language maintenance. Affirming children's linguistic identities by having posters in the various languages of the community around the school, and encouraging them to write in their mother tongues in addition to the majority school language can be very rewarding in terms of personality development (Nemeth, 2009; Cummins, 2001; Cummins, 2001). They also serve to communicate positive attitude toward linguistic diversity.

5.7 Chapter Summary

The discussion of results in this chapter focused on both the qualitative and quantitative data generated from the study. Descriptive statistical analysis of survey questionniares and observation checklists, together with interview responses, fieldnotes, and document examination were examined within the theoretical underpinnings presented in chapters two and three.

The results discussed revealed that the targeted students had difficulties that were essentially due to their inability to understand the medium of instruction. While the language barrier is the most apparent of the problems, linguistic minority students struggle for myriad reasons in schools. The children narrated limited Amharic proficiency is a serious barrier that hinders their potential. These children have to learn not only language, but also academic knowledge through an unfamiliar language. Participant children felt that the relationship between proficiency and interaction has limited opportunities to engage in conversation with their classmates and teachers. Proficiency in Amharic is a precondition to gaining access to Amharic-language interactions. The children's difficulties are also psychological that stem from frustration and anxiety. Lack of parental involvement and children lack of preschool education had impact on their language development and schooling.

The study is also concerned with students' use of communication strategies while achieving some of their tasks. Participants made use of six strategies: gesture, time gaining, code switching, appeal for help, and use of all-purpose words. The children resorted more often to gesture, switch to L1, and appeal for help when faced with lexical difficulties, which may indicate linguistic minority children's limited command of Amharic

Besides, participant children experienced considerable challenges with regard to negotiating their identities. They felt their classmates and teachers rejected their home language, which is salient part of their identities. Additionally, some participants felt they were denied participations as they attempt to acquire L2, which is vital for them to participate and be accepted as competent member of their classroom communities.

This section also discussed instructional practices of teachers in the mainstream classrooms with regard to their perceptions, knowledge and strategies in the management of linguistic diversity among students.

Although the teachers seem to acknowledge the value of diversity in rhetoric, they have expressed, to different degrees, assimilationist views which advocate 'one language for all' ideology, leading inevitably to the assimilation of their students. Most teachers do not seem to be aware of the role of mother tongue education in the children's language and academic development. Besides, most participant teachers' perception toward linguistic minority children's native languages as a classroom resource were negative. Finally, the general consensus amongst classroom teachers was that children should avoid using their L1 at home, and practice Amharic instead.

While there is a growing body of research-based information on strategies for diverse students, these teachers appear to use only limited strategies. For example, of the six different strategies that have been judged to be effective in linguistically diverse classrooms, as discussed in earlier sections, they were only able to point out two strategies, i.e., visual aids and group work.

Teachers have in general positive attitudes towards mother tongue education, but they appear less positive towards the practical implementation of this principle in diverse community.

CHAPTER SIX: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS & RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Introduction

The previous chapter (chapter five) in this study has presented detail discussion of what was collected and observed in relation to the objectives of this study and assist in answering the specific research questions. Firstly, the findings that relate to the first objective of the study, which deals with challenges linguistic minority students faced in multilingual classrooms were presented. Secondly, communication strategies low proficient second language children used were presented and discussed. Next, the data relating to the third objective of the study, which deals with how linguistically diverse classrooms make students negotiate their identities, were presented and discussed. Finally, teachers' instructional practices with regard to their perceptions, strategies, and knowledge in their management of language diversity among learners were discussed.

This chapter briefly reviews the main issues of the previous chapter, and discusses the implications of the data analysis that followed the outlined methodology in terms of exploration of the educational journey of linguistic minority students. It also links the literature and research reviewed to the actual findings and implications that they may have in the field of second language pedagogy. Conclusions and recommendations will be given in relation to the education of linguistic minority learners in early education setting. Recommendations for further research are also presented later in this chapter.

Literature and Methods Revisited

In the literature review, chapter 2 of this dissertation, the researcher briefly summarized critical theory in the field of second language education based upon post structuralist view.

Bourdieu views language as a capital and argues that the linguistic capital that is valued in education is not equally available to students from different sociolinguistic backgrounds (Webb, Schirato, & Danaher, 2000). Viewed from the perspectives of majority versus minority language speakers, linguistic minority children come to mainstream classroom with no or little knowledge of L2. They enter school without

appropriate competency in the dominant language, which puts them at a great disadvantage in academic settings. This makes communication difficult with the mainstream students and teachers as they are minimally understood and results in them being seen by both themselves and the others as non-speakers or less-than competent speakers. Besides, the lack of competence in the dominant language could exclude them from the activities of the school consequently denying their access to educational success.

Similarly, Jim Cummins theory (1986 & 2000) about two distinctive and separate sets of language skills essential for academic success is a basic tenet for the implementation of classroom practices for linguistic minority children in this study. In his often cited studies, Cummins (1981) refers to the type of language use as 'Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency', which he distinguishes from 'Basic Interpersonal Communication Skill'. Cummins argues that the academic language skills embody specific literacy and grammatical knowledge that students acquire as a result of both formal practice and direct instruction. According to Cummins, linguistic minority children have to learn not only language, but also academic content through their L2. Thus, they must acquire conceptual knowledge and the language through which to express this conceptual knowledge. It must be then recognized that not only do linguistic minority children have to learn conversational language necessary for everyday communication, but they must also learn the type of academic language necessary for successfully negotiating the education system. Consequently, they had trouble in communicating with mainstream teachers and students.

The researcher also draws on the poststructuralist notion of identity as a 'site of struggle' (Pavlenko & Blackledge, 2004; Norton, 2000). Identity, according to these authorities, results from internal subjective perceptions, self- reflection, and external characterizations. Hence, linguistic minority students are engaged in negotiating their identities as they interact with the native speakers of the target language as well as negotiate the identities imposed on them both in the educational and social settings.
With regard to research methodology, the study follows a mixed method concurrent triangulation design with both qualitative and quantitative collection of data in order to build on the strength of both the qualitative and the quantitative results. The data were gathered by questionnaire, tests, lesson observation checklists, interviews,

fieldnotes, and document analysis. The quantitative and qualitative findings were integrated and used as supporting evidence for each other. Finally, the researcher analyzed and categorized the data based upon initial research questions.

6.1.1 Challenges faced by learners

Linguistic minority children come to mainstream primary schools with different backgrounds and speaking different home languages. The findings indicate that these children face numerous challenges, and they badly need support from all stakeholders. The greatest challenges to linguistic minority student education fell into three broad categories: language barriers, socialization, and psychological problems.

Data from this study overwhelmingly indicate that the language barrier is concluded to be extremely critical, and it is one of the formidable contributors to the overall poor academic performance of linguistic minority children. Classroom instruction is done in Amharic, and many linguistic minority students do not speak the language in which they are instructed because their native language is a language other than Amharic. Students confirmed that limited L2 proficiency and building of conceptual knowledge through second language were significant factors impeding their progress. The former deficiency is reported by Carrow (1985) who states that any learner acquiring second language may initially experience difficulty with comprehension and expression, comprehension being the easier of the two. Whereas the later is evidence of Cummins' (1981) asseration that academic language which is context reduced and cognitively demanding is different from basic interpersonal communicative language.
The language barrier creates additional problem that go beyond comprehension. The children reported that they faced isolation both from their classmates and teachers. They claimed that they had trouble interacting, working and socializing with their classmates. This finding is supported by (Chappel, 1994; Harklau, 1994; and Penfield, 1987) who report that second language learners have difficulty socializing with their mainstream peers because of limited L2 proficiency. Chappel (1994) asserts that notion of social inclusion underpins the philosophy of inclusion, and the quality of a person's life is highly dependent on the quality of their social interaction. Exclusion by peers leads to loneliness, unhappiness and rejection. Similarly, Harklau (1994) has shown that lack of second language proficiency works as a barrier to hindering interaction with mainstream peers. Eventually, the loss of a sense of

belonging hinders school performance and decreases motivation for learning and schooling.

In addition to problems associated with socialization, the learners with limited Amharic proficiency are not confident to take part in class discussions and to speak in front of their classmates. They felt some level of stress and embarrassment when speaking L2, most often because of fear and peer-to-peer shaming. This finding is in agreement with the literature. Brown (1994) writes some learners with limited L2 are generally worried about everything that is in their second language learning process. They are nervous about every task, be it speaking, reading, or writing. Consequently, these students made conscious decisions not to participate in classes, thereby affecting their academic performance as well as their sense of belonging to the academic community in which they found themselves.

Besides, several linguistic minority students had no any pre-school experience, and were already beginning their education with a great disadvantage compared to many of their L1 classmates.

The frequent absence of linguistic minority children's parents in most aspects of their children's education is also another challenge. Research demonstrates that children are successful when schools show support for parents as the child's primary teacher and when parents are welcomed and involved in all aspects of their educational life (Romanowski, 2002). Unfortunately, in all the three schools, paretntal involvement is minimal.

6.1.2 Communication strategies employed by learners

One of the objectives of this study was to examine communication strategies used by linguistic minority learners. The findings in the use of communication strategies showed that the subjects resorted to six out of the eleven types of communication strategies specified by Tarone (1980) and Faerch and Kasper (1983). More specifically, the findings revealed that linguistic minority students employed non linguistic signals, time gaining strategy, code switching, appeal for help, use of all-purpose words, and message abandonment.

The children used a higher percentage of gestures when faced with lexical difficulties. When they did not know how to express their meanings in Amharic, they resorted more often to eye contacts, facial expressions, and gestures. The signs of gestures occurred with hesitation and pauses and considered as a sign of problem being tackled by retrieval when the subject didn't know the intended word and tried to use gesture to show the specific feature of the intended meaning. In some of the cases, the children would point on the object if they didn't know the object or the word; thus, indicating a problem. Second, they used a large number of time gaining strategies to gain more time to utter a word and construct the sentences in Amharic. They often uttered fillers and failed to articulate words due to their poor command of the language. A large number of pauses and hesitations clearly indicate that the learners have problems using L2 in the classrooms. Code switching was also used when the children did not know how to express the target words in Amharic. The children know their home language better than they know Amharic. As a result, they often switch to their L1 to enhance understanding of contents. Besides, they appealed for help when they could not understand the messages or when they had difficulty in expressing the meanings in Amharic. Finally, all-purpose words were also used when the students uttered empty lexical items where certain words were lacking.

In sum, this study indicates that vocabulary problems accounted for more of speech production difficulties which linguistic minority children encountered. That is, most interruptions occurred in delivering the intended meaning when the children did not have sufficient vocabulary knowledge. This trend is still evident in the studies by Tarone, (1977) and Faerch & Kasper, (1983) that most communicative disruption appears to be the result of lexical inadequacy and suggested strategy preference and second language proficiency level may prove to be related. The learners employed gesture, time gaining strategy, and code switching frequently, and produced few words. Hence, this can be attributed that linguistic minority children were more likely to listen to Amharic than to speak it. Besides, the number of communication strategies and the amount of language used by the children showed that they produced less language when communicating and interacting in L2 classroom.

6.1.3 Identity negotiation in multilingual classroom

This study provided analysis of identity practices and language learning in linguistically diverse classrooms. The findings suggest that linguistic minority students experienced difficulties and challenges in negotiating competence and identities, which was crucial for them to participate and be accepted as legitimate and competent members of their classroom. The findings presented specifically demonstrate how linguistic minority learners view the connection between language and identity and how they express their identities through language as they simultaneously learn language. In addition, the current study reveals learners' reflections and how they, in turn, contest and negotiate their identities.

In response to the question, regarding language preference, linguistic minority learners of the current study viewed an important link between language and identity. In this study, the children described that their home language is the language of their family. They also explained they have been using their home language from the time they were born. There is evidence of similar findings in a study by (Delpit and Dowdy, 2002; Nemeth, 2009) that language is an important part of one's identity. Delpit & Dowdy 2002) agree, describing one's language as being a reflection of their social identity-a reflection of family, tradition, and community. Similarly, Nemeth, (2009) notes that a child's home language is the language of his family, and the author feels that in the early years, children don't think of language as an academic subject. It is just part of who they are. As discussed in Chapter 5, the home language, as perceived by the learners themselves, is a part of who they are and is connected to their family's experiences and lingustic identity. The learners are also engaged in various linguistic practices that mark their linguistic identities. Such practices shared among this group of learners include the use of code-switching. These are practices they perform with members of their linguisic groups and during instruction.

As also demonstrated by this study, linguistic minority learners received negative reactions both from their classmates and teachers when they used their first language in classrooms. The children didn't feel comfortable speaking their home language in front of their classmates, and described negative experiences in doing so. The classroom is also a setting in which they do not use their home languages because teachers pressurize linguistic minority children to use L2. When teachers tell children

not to use their language and focus on practicing the majority language, they are telling the children that they must hide parts of themselves while at school or feel compelled to exchange their own language with that of the majority. This finding is consistent with the fidings of many other resaerchers such as Freedman, (1990); Cummins, (1986); and Robb, (1995) who report that language plays an important role in identity formation because the way one speaks further defines who one is and also very importantly, who one is not. Identity can also play an important role in promoting or inhibiting motivation towards learning a second language. Because identity is the basic reference point for an individual, it is understandable that the first language tied to a student's identity should be valued and respected.

6.1.4 Teacher's instructional practices in their management of linguistic diversity

In this study, the micro-level ideologies of teachers in mainstream primary schools concerning linguistic diversity, teaching strategies, and the role of L1 in education were explored. Here, considering the discussion set out in chapter 5, the researcher shall consider some of the insights this study has developed regarding teacher's underlying views about linguistic diversity, the role of L1 in education, teachers' teaching strategies, and the ways schools respond to linguistic diversity.

6.1.4.1 Teachers' perceptions of linguistic diversity

Furthermore, this study reveals the ideologies of teachers in mainstream schools concerning linguistic diversity and inclusion of linguistic minority students. The majority of the teachers, however, express the most negative perceptions towards language diversity, viewing it mostly as a source of conflict in the region. The teachers perceived language diversity as an obstacle to the social organization of the region, to the unity and coherence of its whole. This assimilation policy, which represents a language-as-a problem (Ruiz, 1984; Bamgbose, 1991; Pattanyak, 1986) views linguistic diversity as a social problem and threat to unity. Similarly, the participant teachers have expressed, to different degrees, assimilationist views which evolve around the 'one language for all' ideology. The same can be said about the participant's beliefs about inclusion of linguistic minority children in the classrooms. The teachers believe that the presence of linguistically diverse children create problems when they can't speak the second language concerning their adjustment to

the school environment and their communication with the teachers. Research has also shown that teachers' negative attitudes towards linguistic and cultural diversity can be brought about by perceived difficulties in dealing with it in the classroom (Dooly, 2005). They perceive these children as additional difficulty and suggest that children with the lowest understanding of Amharic should be placed in special class and receive instruction in Amharic.

Although few teachers seem to acknowledge the value of linguistic diversity in rhetoric, ambiguities are revealed from contradictions that emerge in their discourse concerning their desire to exclude linguistic minority children. Overwhelmingly, the participant teachers agree that linguistic minority children should be kept in separate classrooms and receive intensive instruction in Amharic. Thus, the teachers advocate the children's assimilation to the second language as an obligatory and urgent precondition for their success and full inclusion at school.

6.1.4.2 Teacher's perceptions about the role of first language in education

This study reveals a variation in teacher's perceptions towards mother tongue education. The majority of the teachers (9 vs. 7) perceived mother tongue education negatively, and reflected the urgency to learn in L2. They stated that indigenous communities in Gamo Gofa zone including them [teachers] often desire their children to attend schooling in Amharic. Each of the teachers alluded to the importance of Amharic. Some teachers referred to Amharic as language of wider communication. Others mentioned that Amharic is important for the empowerment of the learners. They also argue that minority languages are not well developed to be media of instruction. They believe that minority languages do not fit to provide quality education because they do not have the necessary scientific vocabularies.

Although the remaining seven teachers have positive perceptions towards mother tongue education, they have revealed a discrepancy in their views which tend to be positive towards the theoretical aspects of mother tongue education but appear less positive towards the practical implementation of these principles in the classroom. They argue that the presence of multiple languages in the region hampers the implementation of mother tongue education.

Concerning the use of the linguistic minority children's L1 in the classroom context, the majority of the teachers viewed first language as a problem for second language children's learning, and prohibited the use of L1 in the classroom. The study reveals that the various first languages of the children are often viewed as obstacles that need to be overcome. The primary mechanism employed for overcoming these challenges is to expose the children to as much Amharic as early as possible in the classroom and on the playground. Besides, children and their parents are strongly encouraged to speak Amharic in the home.

Thus, teachers reveal a limited perception of the interdependence of languages (Cummins, 2001) which derives from a monolingual view of language functioning attributing the children's school difficulties to the use of the minority language at home. Although the teachers seem to acknowledge the role of first language in education, they don't seem to be at all aware of its role in the children's language and academic development. Nearly all the participant teachers have expressed, to diiferent degrees, assimilationist views leading to the assimilation of their students.

6.1.4.3 Teachers' teaching strategies

Although the participant teachers had not received training in dealing with linguistically diverse learners, they had applied some coping strategies for managing the communicative challenges through experience. These included visual aids, group work, and repetition. Although uses of visuals, group work and repetition have been effective strategies to meet the needs of linguistically diverse learners, they are not aware of some of the strongly recommended strategies for linguistically diverse settings. Instructional formats like peer tutoring, cooperative groupings, code switching stimulate more active student engagement than formats like whole-group instruction and create an environment for second language and academic development. These strategies create opportunities for language use in which language minority children are more likely to participate, without competing with the whole class and perhaps feeling inadequate. Particularly, cooperative learning strategies in which students assist each other with drills and practice for material such as words or math facts. Cooperative learning strategies increase the quality of communication as students try to negotiate content-related meaning, because cooperative learning creates two-way tasks where each participant has information

that the others need (Lucas, & Katz, 1994; Kagan, 1986). Besides, cooperative strategies motivate students and encourage socialization skills for all students, particularly for students from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

In sum, an attempt was also made to discuss the contexts of the study in relation to the schools and classrooms that were observed. The observed schools and classrooms appeared more or less similar in terms of linguistic landscapes. As already discussed, in all the target schools, several labels were displayed in and ouside the classrooms. The labels were prepared in Amharic and English. For example, labels for teaching topics in science, mathematics, English, and Amharic were displayed in the corners. It is appropriate that signs in classrooms should be in diverse languages. Several studies stress the importance of a variety of opportunities to read and write in diverse languages to avail in the classroom. This would ensure parallel growth for both languages, in this case, Amharic and mother-tongue, thereby increasing chances of cognitive development at both levels, that is, in the mother tongue as well as in Amharic.

6.2 Recommendations

Linguistic minority children are becoming a greater component of our urban and semi-urban classrooms. Consequently, the education of linguistic minority students is an important issue for our educational system.

In examining recent literature in combination with analysis of data gathered in this study, the following recommendations are made. While some proposed changes may be general enough to transfer to a variety of environments, it is intended that these suggestions mainly be considered for schools and systems comparable to those included in the study. Recommendations arising from this study apply to several levels. They are organized under policy level, school level, and teacher education.

Policy Level

Some proposals would best be directed toward zonal authorities and education bureau, as they would need to be applied throughout the entire zone.

In the research setting, Arba Minch, the language policy in the education system recognizes Amharic as the main medium of instruction until grade four. In the fifth grade, English is introduced as the medium of instruction. As such, linguistic minority children have to learn Amharic at school and use it as a medium of instruction for the first four years before switching to English, a third language. It is evident then that it is easier for a learner to deal with two languages when one is their L1 than two languages when neither is their L1. It seems logical then that linguistic minority children should acquire competence in Amharic before they can be expected to learn in it and embark on English.

The first district-wide change would refer to policy involving pre-school education, which would prepare and assist students to cope more generally with academic requirements. A high number of children enter Grade 1 with no preschool experience, and some learners without any prior knowledge of or proficiency in Amharic are presently being taught in Amharic. Elementary teachers included in this study advocated strongly for mandatory preschool enrollment for linguistic minority children. Hence, Linguistic minority children ought to be placed in Amharic medium preschools to acquire verbal communication skills in Amharic as preparation for learning, reading, and writing. Children who have acquired L2 by the time they enter Grade 1, will have an advantage. Evidence from Immersion programmes suggests that the exposure to L2 provided in the programmes may result in learners developing good receptive and expressive language skills in L2 (Lemmer, 1995). In addition, it appears that better L2 proficiency was acquired when Immersion started earlier rather than later in the learners academic careers.

Linguistic minority students could therefore do better in L2 if they are taught in their first language. However, such a decision must be made in full cognizance of local realities. Gamotstso is one of the most widely spoken indigenous languages in the zone. Being the numerically dominant language, this study supports the need for Gamotstso medium school in Arba Minch. However, there is a misconception about mother tongue education in the area. The participant teachers revealed that there is acceptance of Amharic for communication, for education and for other purposes. Woldemariam, (2007) shares the views of the teachers. Woldemariam explained that the major barrier facing mother tongue education in North Omo is that the community

is unenthusiastic about it. Therfore, unless such perceptions are accompanied by a public awareness campaign around language and learning issues, the prejudice about mother tongue education persists. In the researcher opinion, policy makers would have to play a more interventionary role if they wish to extend the use of indigenous languages as language of learning, particularly at intial years of schooling.

School Level

Some recommendations would best be directed toward school systems, as they would be changes that would be widespread and would need to be applied throughout entire systems to be most effective. The language barrier is concluded by current study to be extremely critical. One way to combat the language barrier is that the schools could assign teachers who speak indegineous languages to help the learners with limited Amharic proficiency when necessary. Such teachers could help the learners who need further clarification about the lessons or the topics discussed, as well as those who do not adequately understand Amharic.

Linguistic minority students noted that they experienced isolation when they entered the mainstream classrooms. When the students could lighten their emotional burdens, such as loneliness, isolation, fear of ridicule, helplessness, and anxiety, it appears to become easier to reach and teach them. This implies that teachers can play an important role in helping mainstreamed linguistic minority students feel safer and more comfortable. These students need to be involved in conversation and interacted with as much as possible to develop their language abilities and skills. Besides, teachers should consider grouping together at specific times during the day children who speak the same or similar languages so that the children can construct knowledge with others who speak their home language.

While context cues such as facial expressions, body language, and appealing for help assist the understanding and learning of conversational Amharic, these kinds of cues are absent or reduced when students listen to, speak, read, or write in academic language–language that is tied to thinking or reasoning and content, often found in classroom settings. Cummins (2000) reported that while linguistic minority learners can learn conversational language in about one to two years, it takes several more years for second language learners to attain proficiency in academic language.

Teachers, then, need to be aware that even second language learners whose conversational skills in Amharic are well-developed will still require continued instructional support in academic language in order to meet curriculum expectations. They should also ensure that these children do not become socially isolated as efforts are made to optimize their learning. Care should be taken to play an important role in developing social awareness and understanding and in explicit teaching of skills to enhance social relationships between learners.

In addition, a child's home language is the language of his family. It is the language used to love and nurture him from the time he or she is born and it is the language in which he or she learns about the world and how he or she fits into it. So, teachers should support and honor this powerful beginning and help the child see that this part of his life is valued and understood. It [home language] is just part of who they are. In a classroom where the teacher only speaks the language of some children and not others, linguistic minority learner may feel rejected and may even be treated that way by other children (Nemeth, 2009). If the teacher finds a way to use some of every child's language at least some of every day, they can support the value of each language and support each linguistic minority child's self esteem. If the teacher does not speak the language, he or she should make efforts to provide visible signs of the home language throughout the learning environment through books and other relevant reading material in the child's language. It is important to celebrate diversity. Every child needs to feel recognized and valued every day.

Linguistic minority children, in this study, are faced with various other issues that arise related to the language problem. These children are often perceived as language deficient by their teachers but still had learning needs. In response to the inclusion of linguistic minority students, teachers should make the most of children's potential, strengthening and building upon the skills they possess. Education, as Cummins states, implies 'drawing out children's potential and making them more than they were' (1989, vii). Whatever language children speak, they should be able to demonstrate their capabilities and also feel the success of being appreciated and valued. Teachers must build upon children's diversity of gifts and skills and provide young children opportunities to exhibit these skills in the classrooms. A co-operative

learning environment and positive teacher-student interactions should be promoted by teachers so that all students feel included.

There is evidence of successful practices in engaging parents in the education process. Effective home-school communication and parent involvement in children's education enhances educational success. Home-school communication is therefore essential and it is advisable that parents and teachers work together in order to support children's development and retention of their primary languages (Wong-Fillmore, 2000; Caplan, 2000). It is important that parents of minority language children are advised and informed of the importance of home language maintenance and the benefits of continued use of the home language in the home. Besides, parents should be made aware of the cognitive benefits of first language as well as the importance of home language for other reasons, such as identity, culture and family cohesion.

The school environments should also include clear messages about celebrating all kinds of differences. This adds value not only for the linguistic minority students, but for all children by helping everyone grows up in a safe and positive atmosphere. Even if the students in the classroom are not bilingual, each child's language and culture should be reflected throughout the school and classrooms (Espinosa, 2009).

Teacher Education

This study supports the proposal of professional development for teachers in areas that would enhance their teaching practices regarding linguistically diverse students. The teachers also reflected that there was lack of professional resource development in seminars or courses related to teaching in diverse linguistic settings. Therefore, teacher educators may want to design courses or conduct workshops about teachers' experiences. Teachers sampled in this study specifically referred to the need for training in managing and meeting the needs of linguistically diverse students.

Practically, the study suggests that it is important for teacher educators to help teachers to shift their representations of linguistic diversity from being a problem to being a resource, challenge monolingual beliefs, and address inclusive education.

The study indicates that it is important for teacher educators to help teachers to shift their representations of diversity from being a problem to being a resource. An

example would be the use of dual-language books, where the text is in both Amharic and another language. There is a need to move from viewing difference as deficit to understanding and appreciating difference as the most fundamental trait of humanity, as positive, and enriching our lives (Ladson-Billings, 1995).

A significant number of teachers viewed mother tongue education and use of first language in classroom as a problem. Besides, linguistic minority children have expressed that they have experienced negative perceptions in relation to using the home language in classrooms. The student's first language is a useful tool for thinking and learning, an important component of their identity, and a valuable medium for effective communication in the family and the community. Hence, teacher preparation programmes should ensure that all teachers understand the roles that first language plays in learning, the importance of native language support in achieving academic success, and the sociocultural issues linguistic minority students face when dealing with the demands of mainstream education (Byrnes, Kiger, & Manning, 1997). The provision of training could inform teachers of the interdependency of first language and second language learning. For instance, participants differing beliefs about how much time it takes to become proficient in language may also have implications for teacher preparation programs.

Moreover, researchers suggest that the practise of promoting use of linguistic minority students' native languages in instruction is not only a critical pedagogical issue, but also a political one (Cummins, 2000). Thus, an important focus for teacher education programmes should be to provide teachers not only with content, theory, and teaching strategies in effective practises for linguistically diverse students, but also to provide opportunities for teachers to critically reflect upon and explore underlying ideologies and assumptions they may hold related to native language use and first and second language development processes.

6.3 Conclusions

To understand the lives of linguistically diverse students in linguistically diverse classrooms, this research adopted an exploratory study upon linguistic minority students at three main stream schools. This investigation has succeeded in exploring lives of linguistic minority students and answering the research questions that were

originally posed. The main research question, "How do linguistic minority students experience learning in multilingual classrooms within an inclusive framework?" and the four sub-questions were formulated in pursuit of understanding lives of linguistic minority students, who are usually invisible and inaudible in mainstream Amharic-speaking classroom. Through this exploratory study, the researcher believes, he could come across with keys to understanding how the teachers and educators could effectively support and empower these students.

The findings supported the initial assumptions that were reflected in the theoretical framework and the existing literature, and the data extended the researcher understanding of linguistic minority students and classroom teachers, and a primary school environment. Initially, the researcher thought of linguistic minority students as suffering group and mainstream teachers as supporting group, but this in depth exploratory study eventually helped the researcher to see the sufferings of the classroom teachers. Some accused linguistic minority students; some faulted the whole educational system that put classroom teachers as well as the students into a troubled situation, and some accused parents. Now this exploratory study upon linguistic minority students is over. The research questions were answered. However, the researcher feels strongly that his mission for the language minority students is not completed, yet. The fundamental goal of understanding lives of linguistic minority students in our communities and finding ways to empower linguistic minority students and classroom teachers in the educational settings remain to be fully answered as long as there are students whose voice is unheard. This project is over and the researcher is standing on the start line again to listen to voices of students, parents and teachers and deliver their messages.

6.4 Further research

In this study, the researcher has explored linguistic minority students' classroom experience and how they viewed their learning process. These data would add a valuable perspective and perhaps useful insights into the design of both instructional strategies and teacher education program implemented in linguistically diverse classes.

In research, such as the current study, researchers usually encounter additional problems that need resolving (Leedy & Ormrod, 2004). The findings of the current research lead to the identification of new questions relating to the education of teachers, parental involvement, as well as the provision of the most responsive environment to linguistically diverse learners.

This study may, however, serve as the underpinning for further research, and the following recommendations are made:

1. As there is a considerable variation in the rate of L2 acquisition owing to individual and external influences, research-based information on external influences on L2 acquisition is needed. Problems and issues facing some L2 learners, such as poverty, are certainly worthy of investigation.

2. Results from this study indicate that the main obstacle related to the education of linguistic minority children is language. Future studies will be able to draw upon the findings to expand the current literature on the achievement of linguistic minority students in mainstream classrooms.

3. Another important aspect that requires investigation is how the ethnic, cultural, and linguistic diversity of the population may be successfully incorporated into primary school learning and teaching Materials.

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Appendix-A: Questionnaires

Teacher's Questionnaire

Teacher's Language and Educational Background Survey

1. Name of the teacher _____ (Names will be kept confidential)
2. Sex _____
3. Age _____
4. Educational Qualifications: _____
5. Your first language: _____
6. Other languages known:
    - _____
    - _____
    - _____
7. Teachers' proficiency in other languages. (Put a tick (✓) mark)

Languages Known	To listen	To speak	To read	To write
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				

8. Describe language courses you have taken in teachers training institution.

Learner's Questionnaire

Learner's Language Background Survey

Learner's Name_____ names will be kept confidential)

1. Sex (circle one)

   a. Male b. Female
2. Age _____
3. Learner's place of birth: _____
4. Your first language: _____ (if you learned two or more languages simultaneously, please list them all)

   _____

   _____

   _____

5. Your ethnicity: _____
6. Have you been kindergarten? A. Yes B. No
7. If your answer is 'yes', how long have you attended KG classes? _____ year(s)
8. If your answer to question number '6' is 'yes', what was the main language of instruction in KG classes?
   - _____
   - _____
   - _____
9. Do you speak other languages than your native language?
   - No
   - Yes, Namely _____, _____, _____

Appendix - B: Language Proficiency Tests

አድምጦ የመረዳት ችሎታ ፈተና

ስም _____ክፍል _____ቁጥር _____

I. ቀጥሎ የሚጠሩትን ባለ አንድ ሆሄ ድምጾች በማድመጥ ሆሄያቱን በባዶ ቦታ ላይ ጻፉ

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

II. ቀጥሎ የሚጠሩትን ድምጾች በማድመጥ ቃላቱን በተሰጠው ባዶ ቦታ ላይ ጻፉ

6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

የንግግር ክህሎት ፈተና

1. ስምህ ማን ይባላል ?
2. የት/ቤታችን ስም ማን ተብሎ ይጠራል ?
3. ከየት ቀበሌ ወይም መንደር ነው የመጣሽው ?
4. የምትማራቸው የትምህርት ዓይነቶች ምን ምን ናቸው ?
5. ወደ ቤት ከሄድክ በኃላ ምን ታደርጋለህ ?

የሚከተሉትን ምስሎች ግለጽ ::

6. 
7. 
8. 
9. 
10. 

አንብቦ የመረዳት ችሎታ ፈተና

ስም _____ክፍል _____ቁጥር _____

I. ቃላቱ የተመሰረበትን የመጀመሪያ ፊደል አክብቡ፡፡

1. ገመድ

ሀ. ደ ለ. ገ ሐ. ጉ

2. ፈረስ

ሀ. ፐ ለ. ፉ ሐ. ረ

3. ሸሚዝ

ሀ. ዠ ለ. ሸ ሐ. ዘ

4. ትልቅ

ሀ. ተ ለ. ት ሐ. ል

5. ደወል

ሀ. ወ ለ. ል ሐ. ደ

II. ከዚህ በታች ለቀረቡ ጥያቄዎች የጎደለውን ፊደል ከሳጥኑ በመምረጥ አሟሉ

ን	የ	ና	መ	ባ

6. ግ_____ብ

7. ፍ _____ል

8. እ_____ት

9. ድ_____ት

10. አበ_____

የጽሁፍ ፈተና

ስም _____ክፍል _____ቁጥር _____

I. የጎደለውን ፊደል ሙሉ

1. ሸ____ ____ ሻ ____ ____ ሾ
2. ____ ____ ____ ዳ ____ ድ ____
3. ግ____ ____ ጋ ____ ግ ____
4. ኸ ____ ____ ____ ኼ ____ ____
5. ፕ ____ ____ ፓ ____ ____ ፖ

II. በሳጥን ውስጥ ያሉትን ቃላት ከምስሉ ጋር በማዛመድ በተሰጠው ባዶ ቦታ ላይ መልሱን ጻፉ

ኩባያ	ቦርሳ	ዶሮ	ኳስ	ላም





_____ _____ _____ _____ _____

Appendix – C: Oral Interview Grading Sheet

Student's Name: _____ Interviewer: _____ Date:_____

Content 20%	**Grammar 20%**	**Vocabulary 20%**	**Pronunciation 20%**	**Fluency 20%**	**Total**
Points	Points	Points	Points	Points	
Notes /Comments:					

Oral Interview Grading Criteria

Content (20%)	**1 Point**	**2-3 points**	**4-5 Points**
	The speaker was not able to understand and answer the questions.	The speaker only answered part of the questions.	The speaker was able to answer the questions with explanation.
Grammar (20%)	The speaker had poor syntactic structure.	The speaker had some persistent grammar errors causing understanding problems.	The speaker used clear sentence structure though with minor grammar errors.
Vocabulary (20%)	The speaker used only very limited and basic vocabulary & sometimes not accurately.	The speaker was able to use more intermediate vocabulary accurately.	The speaker was able to use advanced vocabulary accurately.
Pronunciation (20%)	The speaker had poor & un intelligible pronunciation.	The speaker had frequent problems with individual sounds and stress.	The speaker had clear and good pronunciation with minor pronunciation.
Fluency (20%)	The speaker was very slow and hesitant in speaking.	The speaker was able to keep at conversational speed but slow occasionally.	The speaker was confident and fluent in speaking.

Appendix-D

Checklist for Classrroom Observation

Name of the school _____ Grade/section _____
Date of observation _____ starting time _____ Ending time_____

Teacher observed _____ Subject _____ Lesson Topic _____
Observer _____ Co-observer _____

Students' communication Strategies	**Tick**	**Time-seconds**
I. Avoidance strategies		
1. Message abandoment		
2. Topic avodance		
II. Compensatory Stratigies		
3. Circumlocution		
4. Approximation		
5. Use of all purpose words		
6. Word-coinage		
7. Use of non-lingnisitic means		
8. Literal translation		
9. Code switching		
10. Appeal for help		
III. Time gaining Strategies		
11. Use of fillers/hesitation		

The above taxonomy of communication strategies was developed out of Tarone /1977/ and Færch and Kasper (1984) classifications.

Appendix–E: Interviews

Interview for Teachers

1. In this school you are faced with learners in class who speak different home languages and yet the medium of instruction is Amharic. How do you cope with this?
2. What are some of the specific difficulties these learners are experiencing in the classroom? What do you attribute to them?
3. What do you think would be the causes of these problems?
4. How do you feel about teaching learners who cannot speak or understand the medium of instruction properly?
5. How do the children in your classes differ from your expectations?
6. How do the above mentioned behaviors of pupils impact your teaching?
7. What do you think would be the appropriate solution to be taken to overcome the problems?
8. What teaching strategies do you apply to facilitate the teaching-learning process in linguistically diverse instructional contexts?
9. Do you encourage students to use or speak their first language during teaching and learning process?
10. How important do you think it is for linguistic minority children to attend education in their first language?
11. Is there any thing you have to say about the kind of language that children use inside the classroom (academic language) and outside the classroom (conversational language)? How long does it take to acquire the classroom language?
12. What do you say about friendship among pupils?
13. Which languages (L1 or L2) do linguistic minority children speak at home?
14. What is your opinion about language diversty and teaching pupils who speak different home languages?
15. What should the school and its teachers do to help linguistically diverse learners?
16. Have you taken any training that may help you teach children who attend schooling in their second language

Interviews for Students

1. Do you prefer to have lessons in Amharic or in your first language? Why?
2. In what language do you feel comfortable? Why?
3. What are some of the specific difficulties you are experiencing using second language as a medium of instruction?
4. In the classroom are you sitting on pupils who speak Amharic or on ones whose mother togue is Gamogna? Why?
5. What reaction do you get from other pupil when you speak your mother tongue in class?
6. What is the reaction from teachers at times you use your first language in class?
7. When you are learning in Amharic, you might fail to understand what he said. In such situations, who helps you?
8. How often do you speak Amharic in class? How do your classmates react to your usage of Amharic during class?
9. What language do you speak at home? Why?
10. What language do you often use in school? Why?
11. Which language do your parents want you to attend schooling? Why?
12. Who are your close friends?
13. Is there any support the school provides you? What kind of support?

Appendix–F Examples of observed lessons

Thirty nine classroom observations were carried out in each of the three schools. Through the use of the observations the type of interactions that exist during classroom practice, the choice, and use of language and how learners solve problems in the classrooms were observed. The observations done revealed the following:

School-A

I. Linguistic Minority Children's Use of Language and Interaction in the Classroom

Linguistic minority learners used their home languages (Gamotstso, Wolayetaththo, & Gantatstso) when they solved problems or tasks given in pairs. Learners found it difficult to pose questions and build upon previous responses using the language that is not their home language. In this classroom, there were other children who speak a language other than Amharic, but they were using Amharic during instruction.

II. Teaching Strategies

The teacher used Amharic, the official language of learning and teaching, and was broadly used for explanation, clarification, and to ask questions and provide feedback to the learners.

Classroom observations showed that teachers used demonstration. Three of the teachers (T1A, T2A, & T3A) often used demonstration during instruction especially during Amharic, mathematics, and environmental science lessons. They used real objects, pictures, textbook illustrations to aid learning. For instance, T2A brought real objects like battery and model of globe. Besides, he was often using Gamogna during instruction. Interestingly, T3A used the necklace on her neck to describe the similarity between the Amharic alphabet letter '*ተ*' and the design in the shape of a cross. Use of oral repetition of vocabulary was also commonly used by these teachers.

On the other hand, T4A and T5A have been employing the chalk-and-talk method, with learners receiving top-down information. The lessons were dominated by teachers' talk and learners' roles were that of spectators in the learning process.

III. Linguistic Minority Children's Use of Language out of Classroom

The children were observed using their home languages most when they were interacting out of classrooms. They were observed using Gamotstso, Gantatstso, and Wolayitaththo during break time and on the playgrounds.

School-B

I. Linguistic Minority Children's Use of Language & Interaction in the Classroom

The learners showed their preference for their mother tongue. They used Gamotstso, Gantatstso, and Wolayetaththo in the classroom for solving tasks in groups. Sometimes, learners switched between the two languages in their group discussions. Children particularly from Gamo and Ganta families who use their own mother tongue for communication at home appeared to be facing difficulty in grasping the instructions given by the teachers. During the observations of the classes, the researcher noticed several behavioral trends among the students. In mainstream class, children who speak 'Gantatstso' tended to socialize with one another and sit together when teachers did not assign seating arrangements.

II. Teaching Strategies

Among the five teachers observed (T1B, T2B, T3B, T4B & T5B), T2B and T5B used charts and pictorial illustrations to aid the teaching and learning processes. In addition to using teaching aids, T5B used code switching as a teaching strategy throughout the lessons, and learners were free to use their L1 in classrooms. On the other hand, T1B, T3B, & T4B occupied the largest percentage of talking time in their lessons, and were not involving linguistic minority learners in lessons. They provided opportunities for children who understand the medium of instruction. The dialogue took place between the teacher and certain individual learners.

III. Linguistic Minority Children's Use of Language out of Classroom

Linguistic minority children used their mother tongue outside the classrooms. Besides, it was evident in the observation that children who speak Gantigna, Gamogna, and Derashigna congregate during break time and after class, and do not often socialize with other children that group.

School-C

I. Linguistic Minority Children's Use of Language and Interaction in the Classroom

Learners used their home language to communicate ideas among themselves. Gamotstso, Wolaytaththo, and Afan Oromo appeared to be the language of choice for learners when they worked on tasks in groups and pairs. The researcher also noticed the children using their mother tongue to solve problems.

Learners interpreted and solved the task amongst them using their home language, and some of teachers (T3C & T4C) also used learner's home language to clarify issues emerging from the task. Most of the learners seemed to be more actively engaged with the content in their home language than when communication occurred in Amharic.

II. Teaching Strategies

Three teachers (T1C, T2C, & T5C) have been using lecture method throughout the observation periods. The teacher asked questions and learners responded mostly in chorus. The teacher failed to employ necessary and relevant teaching strategies to enhance learning. The teachers, i.e. T1C, T2C, & T5C, used Amharic only.

On the hand, T3C and T4C have been using pictures, charts and objects to help the children understand lessons. Both teachers intentionally used, on several instances, code switching as a strategy to explain concepts in Gamogna and Wolayetigna. They also used translation as a resource to improve and encourage maximum interactions

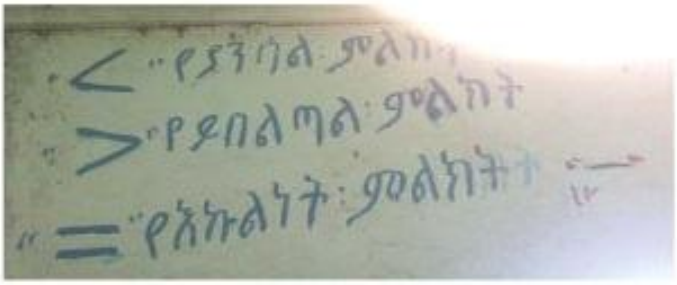
and participation in the classroom. Learners responded to teachers questions in their home language when necessary.

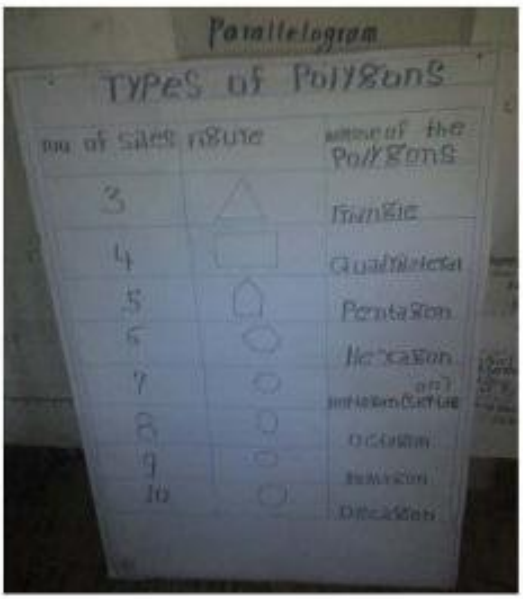
III. Linguistic Minority Children's Language Use out of the Classroom

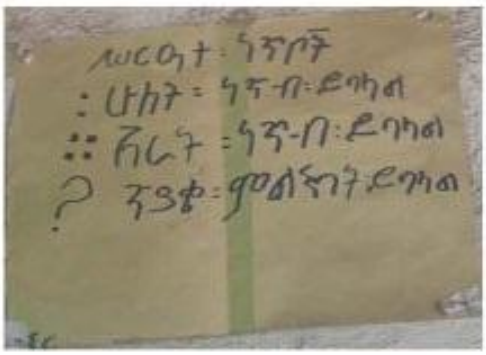
In the hallway the researcher observed, the children used their home language with one another. They usually drank water together, and in playgrounds they played together, and did any cooperative work together. Particularly, children from Abullo, who speak Afan Oromo, were less likely to participate in mainstream classrooms, and rarely willingly making contact with other students and teachers.

Appendix G

ARTEFACTS : SCHOOL-A

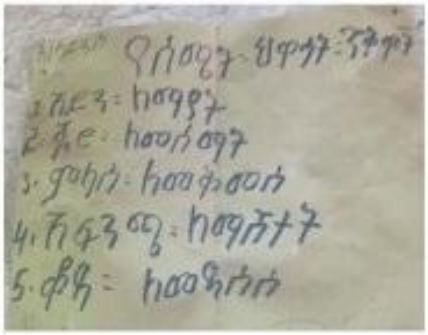






ARTEFACTS : SCHOOL-B

ARTEFACTS : SCHOOL-C



Appendix-H: Examples of Student & Teacher Interviews

Learners' Interviews

S3A

Interviewer: What is your name?

S3A: I am S3A.

Interviewer: Do you prefer to have lessons in Amharic or in your first language? Why?

S3A: In Gamotstso.

Interviewer: Why?

S3A: I understand in Gamotstso.

Interviewer: In which language do you feel more comfortable? Why?

S3A: It is Gamotstso that I know very well.

Interviewer: What are some of the difficulties you have encountered while attending school in Amharic?

S3A: I am having difficulty of reading Amharic. I listen a little bit but I find it difficult to respond.

Interviewer: In the classroom, are you sitting on pupils who speak Amharic or on ones whose mother tongue is Gamotstso? Why?

S3A: I sit with children who speak Gamotstso.

Interviewer: Why?

S3A: Since they speak my language, I choose them.

Interviewer: Do you use or speak your first language in class?

S3A: Yes.

Interviewer: What is the reaction from other children when you speak your first language in class?

S3A: They speak Amharic, and we speak Gamotstso. But when we speak Gamotstso, they tell us not to Speak it.

Interviewer: Do they tell you not to speak Gamotstso?

S3A: Yes.

Interviewer: What is your reaction then?

S3A: I keep quiet.

Interviewer: What is the reaction from teachers at times you speak your first language in class?

S3A: They say ‘speak in Amharic’. They don’t say any other thing; they simply teach.

Interviewer: You are learning in second language, and you might fail to understand what is said in Amharic. In such situation, who helps you understand the lessons?

S3A: There are one or two children who help.

Interviewer: What about teachers?

S3A: Gamotstso teacher helps.

Interviewer: How often do you speak Amharic in class? How do your classmates react to your usage of Amharic during class?

S3A: I know little Amharic, and when I speak, they insult and laugh at me. So, I speak to children who speak my language.

Interviewer: In which language do you speak at home? Why?

S3A: I speak Gamotstso with my sisters at home.

Interviewer: What about with your father and mother?

S3A: My father is not alive, but I use Gamotstso with my mother.

Interviewer: Why?

S3A: Since it is our language, we speak it at home.

Interviewer: What language do you often speak at school? Why?

S3A: The other children speak their language, and I speak Gamotstso.

Interviewer: Why do you often speak your language?

S3A: They speak theirs and I speak also what I know.

Interviewer: In which language do your parents want you to attend schooling? Why?

S3A: In Amharic.

Interviewer: Why?

S3A: They say ’if you want to be successful in life, you have to learn in Amharic’.

Interviewer: Do they say so?

S3A: Yes.

Interviewer: Who are your close friends? Why?

S3A: They are in the other section.

Interviewer: What about here?

S3A: There is only Degu here.

Interviewer: Does Degu know your language?

S3A: Yes, he knows my language.

Interviewer: Why did you choose Degu and others to be your friends?

S3A: We speak Gamotstso together, and we also play together.

Interviewer: You are learning in Amharic which is your second language. Is there any support you get from the school?

S3A: Yes, they support.

Interviewer: What kind of support?

S3A: They strive to help me know.

Interviewer: Thank you!

S3A: ok!

S7A

Interviewer: What is your name?

S7A: I am S7A

Interviewer: Do you prefer to have lessons in Amharic or in your first language? Why?

S7A: In Amharic.

Interviewer: Why?

S7A: Because I already know Gamotstso, and want to know Amharic.

Interviewer: In which language do you feel more comfortable? Why?

S7A: In Gamotstso.

Interviewer: In which language do you want to have lessons then?

S7A: I want to have lessons in both Amharic and Gamotstso. I want in both.

Interviewer: Do you want both?

S7A: Yes.

Interviewer: Why?

S7A: I came from Gamo area. It is in the countryside. Here, I live with my uncle. I started class this year, and the children speak Amharic. However, I sit with them and practice Amharic.

Interviewer: In which language do you feel more comfortable? Why?

S7A: I speak Gamotstso fluently.

Interviewer: Why?

S7A: I find Amharic very difficult. I am from rural area and speak Gamotstso from birth to present time. Here schooling is in Amharic and I don't know Amharic.

Interviewer: What are some of the difficulties you have encountered when attending class in Amharic?

S7A: When I am learning in Amharic, I have problems, when I want to ask

Interviewer: The problems you encountered?

S7A: I am having difficulty reading Amharic. But I can read Gamotstso without difficulty.

Interviewer: In the classroom, are you sitting on pupil who speak Amharic or on ones whose mother Tongue is Gamotstso? Why?

S7A: I sit with children who speak Gamotstso.

Interviewer: Why?

S7A: Since they (other children) are from Arba Minch, they speak Amharic fluently. But I speak Gamotstso fluently, and ask other children questions in Gamotstso. They tell me and I speak in Gamotstso.

Interviewer: Do you speak in your first language in class?

S7A: Yes, I use.

Interviewer: When you speak Gamotstso in class, what reaction do you get from other children?

S7A: They say 'she is Gemu. They also insult by saying Geze, Degegna'.

Interviewer: What is your reaction then?

S7A: I just keep on speaking it.

Interviewer: What reaction do you get from teachers in times you speak your first language in class?

S7A: I have never spoken to teachers. Gamotstso teacher has been speaking to me. But I have never spoken to other teachers.

Interviewer: You attend schooling in your second language, and you might fail to understand what is said or asked in Amharic. In such situation who helps you understand the lessons?

S7A: Gamotstso teacher.

Interviewer: No. When you attend schooling in Amharic?

S7A: I don't understand when they ask in Amharic.

Interviewer: Who do you ask when you don't understand?

S7A: I go home and ask individuals who speak Gamotstso.

Interviewer: What kind of support do teachers give you when you attend class in Amharic?

S7A: They don't give any help.

Interviewer: Don't they help you?

S7A: Teachers blamed me for not speaking Amharic.

Interviewer: Why don't you speak?

S7A: I don't know Amharic, and that is why I keep silent. They don't talk to me; they talk to other children.

Interviewer: How often do you speak Amharic in class? How do your classmates react to your usage of Amharic during class?

S7A: I don't speak Amharic. I speak Gamotstso with children who speak my language.

Interviewer: Why?

S7A: When I say something incorrectly, they laugh and make fun of me.

Interviewer: In which language do you speak at home? Why?

S7A: At home, I speak Gamotstso with a child. But others speak Amharic.

Interviewer: Why do you speak only Gamotstso?

S7A: I know Gamotstso, and that is why I speak it.

Interviewer: What language do you often speak at home? Why?

S7A: I speak Gamotstso with children who speak it.

Interviewer: Why?

S7A: I know Gamotstso, and I speak it also at school.

Interviewer: In which language do your parents want you to attend schooling? Why?

S7A: I want to learn both, but they prefer Amharic.

Interviewer: Why?

S7A: Since I already know Gamotstso well, they want me to know Amharic.

Interviewer: Who are your close friends? Why?

S7A: My close friends here or in my home village?

Interviewer: Here.

S7A: My close friends are children who speak Gamotstso.

Interviewer: Why did you choose them to be your friends?

S7A: Since I know Gamotstso fluently, the students sit nearby and work on exams with me.

Interviewer: Gamotstso exam?

S7A: Yes.

Interviewer: You attend schooling in second language. Is there any support you get from the school?

S7A: Yes, there is.

Interviewer: What kind of support?

S7A: They teach. They help us to know Amharic.

Interviewer: Thank you!

S7A: Ok!

S6B

Interviewer: What is your name?

S6B: I am S6B.

Interviewer: Your father name?

GS6: S6B A.

Interviewer: S6B A.?

S6B: Yes.

Interviewer: Now I am going to ask you questions, and hope you answer them.

S6B: Ok.

Interviewer: Do you prefer to have lessons in Amharic or in your first language? Why?

S6B: In Gamotstso.

Interviewer: In Gamotstso?

S6B: Yes.

Interviewer: Why?

S6B: I grow up speaking Gamotstso.

Interviewer: Aha, have you grown up speaking Gamotstso?

S6B: Yes.

Interviewer: In which language do you feel more comfortable? Why?

S6B: In Gamotstso.

Interviewer: In Gamotstso?

S6B: Yes.

Interviewer: Why?

S6B: What I know is Gamotstso; it is my language.

Interviewer: It is because you know it well, and it is your language?

S6B: Yes. It is Gamotstso that I know very well.

Interviewer: What are the difficulties you have encountered while learning in Amharic?

S6B: Yes, there is difficulty.

Interviewer: Is there?

S6B: Yes.

Interviewer: What is it?

S6B: What I know is Gamotstso. I don't understand Amharic, nor do I speak it. Besides, I don't understand mathematics and environmental science. I find the words difficult.

Interviewer: You speak Gamotstso, and you don't understand Amharic?

S6B: Yes.

Interviewer: In the classroom, are you sitting on pupils who speak Amharic or on ones whose mother Tongue is Gamotstso? Why?

S6B: I am sitting with children speaking Gamotstso.

Interviewer: Why is that?

S6B: I know Gamotstso and I need to conversation with them. I also would like to know them.

Interviewer: Why would you like to know them?

S6B: They know my language. Others don't know my language and speak their language.

Interviewer: Do you use or speak your first language in class?

S6B: Yes, I use Gamotstso.

Interviewer: Do you speak?

S6B: Yes.

Interviewer: What reflection do other students give you when you speak Gamotstso in class?

S6B: They tease me 'This boy does not know Amharic. He knows only Gamotstso'.

Interviewer: What is your reaction then?

S6B: I don't say anything.

Interviewer: What reaction do you get from teachers at times you speak your first language in class?

S6B: They ask me if I understand Amharic.

Interviewer: Do they ask whether you understand Amharic or not?

S6B: Yes.

Interviewer: Do they allow you to speak Amharic then?

S6B: They don't allow us to use Gamotstso.

Interviewer: Why?

S6B: It is because they don't know Amharic.

Interviewer: You are learning in Amharic, and you might fail to understand what is said in Amharic. In such situation, who helps you understand the lesson?

S6B: Gamotstso teacher tells when I don't understand.

Interviewer: Who helps you when you fail to understand lesson in Amharic?

S6B: Since I don't understand Amharic, I don't ask questions.

Interviewer: How often do you speak Amharic in class? How do your classmates react to your usage of Amharic during class?

S6B: Other children are teasing when I try to speak Amharic. I speak my language. They don't talk to me. I feel very lonely.

Interviewer: In which language do you speak at home? Why?

S6B: In Gamotstso.

Interviewer: Why?

S6B: What I know is Gamotstso, and I speak it here and there at home.

Interviewer: What language do often you speak at school? Why?

S6B: In Gamotstso.

Interviewer: Why?

S6B: I grow up speaking Gamotstso.

Interviewer: It is because you grow up speaking Gamotstso?

S6B: Yes. If I don't understand, I ask them in Gamotstso.

Interviewer: In what language do your parents want you to attend schooling? Why?

S6B: They want me to learn in Amharic.

Interviewer: Do they want you to learn in Amharic?

S6B: Yes.

Interviewer: Why?

S6B: They say 'Gamotstso doesn't help. Be good at Amharic. Amharic is fine'.

Interviewer: Who are your close friends? Why?

S6B: Children speaking Gamotstso.

Interviewer: Why did you choose them to be your friends?

S6B: I know Gamotstso, and they too speak Gamotstso.

Interviewer: Any other reason?

S6B: To exchange feelings.

Interviewer: What if you stay with classmates speaking other language?

S6B: I don't want to sit with them. They laugh when I try to speak in Amharic.

Interviewer: you are learning in second language. Is there any support you get from the school?

S6B: They support.

Interviewer: What kind of support?

S6B: They tell us to study hard.

Interviewer: Thank you!

S6B: Ok!

S8C

Interviewer: What is your name?

S8C: I am S8C.

Interviewer: Do you want to have lessons in your first language or in Amharic

S8C: I prefer to learn in Afan Guji [Afan Oromo].

Interviewer: Why do you prefer to learn in Afan Guji [Afan Oromo]?

S8C: Because I don't know any other language.

Interviewer: Don't you know any other language?

S8C: I know a little bit of Gamotstso.

Interviewer: In which language do you feel more comfortable?

S8C: In Afan Guji.

Interviewer: Why?

S8C: Firstly, it is my language. Besides, others understand me when I speak in it.

Interviewer: Is it a language you know very well?

S8C: Yes.

Interviewer: What are the difficulties you encountered while learning in Amharic?

S8C: Yes, there are problems. I don't know any other language. I don't know Amharic; I know a little bit of Gamotstso.

Interviewer: In the classroom, are you sitting on pupils who speak Amharic or on ones whose mother tongue is Afan Oromo?

S8C: I sit with Guji children

Interviewer: Why do you prefer to sit with Guji children?

S8C: We speak the same language. Since I don't understand other children's language, I don't want to sit with them. They themselves do not want to sit with me.

Interviewer: Don't they want to sit with you?

S8C: They look for children who speak their language; we also want to sit with children from Abullo.

Interviewer: Do you speak your first language- Afan Guji- in classroom?

S8C: Yes, I use my language.

Interviewer: What is the reaction from other children when you speak your first language?

S8C: They call us 'Guji'.

Interviewer: What is your reaction then?

S8C: I tell them to speak theirs.

Interviewer: What is the reaction from the teachers at times when you use your mother tongue in class?

S8C: They do not allow us to speak in our language.

Interviewer: Why not?

S8C: They do not understand our language.

Interviewer: When you are learning in Amharic, you might fail to understand what is said. In such situation, who helps you understand the lessons?

S8C: Sometimes, students explain to me.

Interviewer: What about the teachers?

S8C: Since they don't understand my language, they don't help me.

Interviewer: How often do you speak Amharic in class? How do your classmates react to your usage of Amharic during class?

S8C: I am afraid of speaking Amharic in the class. My Amharic is not good enough. When I speak, my classmates laugh at me.

Interviewer: In which language do you speak at home?

S8C: In Afan Guji.

Interviewer: Why?

S8C: They don't speak Amharic. We all speak in Afan Guji at home.

Interviewer: Which language do you often use at school?

S8C: I speak in Afan Guji; I do not know any other language.

Interviewer: In which language do your parents want you to attend schooling?

S8C: They want me to learn in Amharic.

Interviewer: Why?

S8C: There is no other school.

Interviewer: Who are your close friends?

S8C: My friend is Tsehay.

Interviewer: What language do your friends speak?

S8C: They are Guji.

Interviewer: Why did you choose them?

S8C: We speak the same language. Besides, we are neighbors and go to school together.

Interviewer: Is there support that the school provides you?

S8C: They don't support.

Interviewer: Thank you!

S8C: Ok.

Examples of Teachers' Interviews

T3A

Int: Good Morning, T3A!

T3A: I am fine, thank to Almightly God!

Int: Would you please tone up your sound a little louder?

T3A: Ok!

Int: Now I have been here in the school where you are serving as a teacher in order to gather the data needed for research on language and education. So, thank you so much for your willingness to hold on interview with me right now!

T3A: I also thank you so much for your invitation!

Int: Would you keep-your sound a little louder again please?

T3A: Alright!

Int: There are pupils who speak different home languages and Amharic is used as a medium of instruction,

T3A: Yes, of course!

Int: As a teacher, how do you cope with such diverse classrooms?

T3A: Actually I am teaching them in Amharic now, and I do think that those who speak Amharic as mother tongue are the most advantageous group of pupils in the teaching and learning processes. However, some pupils who speak other languages have hardly been communicating in the classroom. They really have difficulties in speaking and listening Amharic. Hence, they don't dare to respond to questions that I often attempt to put forward for the entire pupils of the classroom. Honestly speaking, teaching becomes boring for me because I have still been coming across several challenges. For example, pupils don't actually participate in the classroom teaching learning process: pupils neither respond to questions nor ask questions for. They prefer seating idle. Thus, teaching pupils who don't understand Amharic becomes a much more difficult job for me.

Int: What are the languages children speak in your classrooms?

T3A: There are children who speak Gamogna, Gofigna, Konsigna, Gantigna, Amharic, and other languages. Therefore, the teaching and learning process is a problem.

Int: What are some of the specific difficulties these learners are experiencing?

T3A: Primarily, linguistic minority pupils do not even know Amharic letters when they come first to school. They can't also count numbers. As they are completely don't know Amharic, they are not able to listen to what I am saying.

Int: What do you think would be the main cause of the problem?

T3A: In short, it is `inability` to communicate in Amharic.

Int: Are you saying "inability"?

T3A: Absolutely yes! The main is inability to speak and listen to Amharic. In addition, most of them don't have access to pre-school education. The reason for this is that most of them are coming from poor families.

Int: How do you feel about teaching learners who cannot speak or understand the medium of instruction properly?

T3A: In fact, I really feel disappointment and resentment. I become angry when I observe pupils who achieve high and low are promoted from one grade to another together without taking in to account the changes obtained in terms of knowledge and skill acquisition.

Int: How do the children in your classes differ from expectation?

T3A: You mean the pupils who don't speak Amharic?

Int: Yah! I am asking you about them in deed.

T3A: I really didn't see unique change up on pupils who don't understand Amharic. Most of these students score poor results while the pupils who speak Amharic perform better.

Int: How do the above mentioned behaviors of pupils impact your teaching?

T3A: Most of the time, these pupils prefer keeping quiet to trying to communicate in Amharic. Some of them also feel anxiety in the classroom, and refrain themselves from classroom participation.

Generally, the problems are emanated from the fact that they can't comprehend the lessons taught in Amharic. So, to help these students, I arrange extra time after school. I also spend time to meet their needs, and this has impact on my planning. As they don't know Amharic, it is good that they are taught in a separate classroom.

Int: What do you think would be solution to be taken to overcome these all problems?

T3A: As far as my personal opinion is concerned, it would be better to let them access to special classes and exert much effort up on them to ameliorate their listening

and speaking skills in Amharic. It is really good to educate them starting from the very beginning of Amharic letters.

Int: What strategies do you use to support and include linguistic minority children in the classroom?

T3A: I use teaching aids in the classrooms. I also use charts and drawings to help them understand lessons.

Int: Do you encourage students to use or speak their first language in the classroom?

T3A: As to me, I don't say that they need to use their mother tongue in the teaching and learning processes. Do you know why? It hinders their effort to develop Amharic. It may also hinder communications with others. Besides, I am not able to hear and speak their language in same way.

Int: How important do you think it is for linguistic minority children to attend education in their first language?

T3A: May I get the question again, please?

Int: How important do you think it is for linguistic minority children to attend education in their first language?

T3A: People say mother tongue education is good, but in our area there are many languages. Because of this, mother tongue education cannot be practical. One thing that I didn't tell you yet is that the majority of nationalities here in and around the town do not really like to attend learning in their mother tongue. Almost all parents want to educate their children in Amharic. I do suggest that their mother tongue should be given as a subject.

Int: Is there anything you have to say about the kind of Amharic that you use inside the classrooms and outside the classrooms? How long does it take to acquire the classroom language?

T3A: The language we use both inside and outside the classroom is Amharic. I don't think there is difference between the two. But in the classrooms we sometimes use English words. This is because we don't have Amharic equivalent.

Int: What does friendship among pupils as look like?

T3A: Pupils form friendship ties with ones they share the same language. For instance, children who speak Gamogna look for ones speaking their language, and so do other children.

Int: What do you think would be the reason for that?

T3A: I do think that lack of communication in Amharic led them to such group. Moreover, pupils who don't understand Amharic feel frustration and isolate themselves. Therefore, it would be impossible for them to learn Amharic.

Int: Ok! Ok! What languages do linguistic minority children speak at home?

T3A: It is known that pupils from different ethnic group would prefer to speak their mother tongue with their family members. But when they come to the school, they are required to use Amharic.

Int: So, what do you think about children's use of L1 or L2 at home?

T3A: Actually, my personal reflection is that families should have to allow their children to engage in pre-school learning and let them use Amharic at home. The families are also recommended highly that they must encourage the children to speak Amharic. The children already know their language, and what they lack is Amharic.

Int: What is your opinion about language diversity and teaching pupils who speak different home languages?

T3A: As I said earlier, language diversity places challenges in the teaching and learning processes. Here we have several languages, and their presences have created controversy. I was also in Jinka and they use Amharic. So, when there are more languages, there is always problem. And all languages are not equally developed. So, we must use the one that has developed.

Int: So, are you saying that diversity is a problem?

T3A: Yes of course. It is a problem.

Int: What do you say about inclusion of linguistic minority children in classrooms?

T3A: I said this earlier. As they don't know Amharic, it is good that they are taught in a separate classroom. These students have to learn Amharic in special class intensively. Both the students and teachers are suffering. They are not learning and we are not teaching.

Int: What would be your opinion on what must be expected from the school and its teachers to help linguistic minority children learn in second language?

T3A: Regarding the school, the management, parents and other concerned bodies should come together and discus about these children future. The school language is Amharic, and the school has also the responsibility to establish a special program to support these children. As far as school teachers are concerned, they will have to aware pupils and parents about the importance of Amharic in the teaching and learning processes.

Int: Have you taken training that enable you to teach pupils who speak different home languages and attend schooling in second language?

T3A: I, really, did not take any training that supports me to teach such student population. Rather, I have been trained to teach in Amharic particularly in primary schools.

Int: Thank you so much!

T3A: It is my pleasure!

T1B

Int: Hello, T1B!

T1B: Hello, Ato Abera!

Int: Would you please tone up your sound a little louder?

T1B: Alright!

Int: I have been here to carry out research concerning language and education. So, thank you so much for your willingness to hold on interviews!

T1B: I thank you, too!

Int: In classes you are teaching, there are pupils who speak different home languages, and attend class in their second language. As clearly observed now, Amharic has been serving as a medium of instruction. As a classroom teacher, how do you cope with such diverse classroom?

T1B: The children come to class with their first language, namely Gedoligna, Gantigna, Gamogna and Amharic, and teaching such multilingual classroom poses a lot of challenge. Some of these learners only speak their first languages and don't understand Amharic.

Int: What are some of the specific difficulties these learners are experiencing?

T1B: The problem I observed is they neither speak nor understand Amharic. Other students understand what you say, but cannot answer. In short, the root cause of the problem is inability to speak and understand Amharic.

Int: What do you think are the root causes of the problem?

T1B: The root cause of the problem is student begin schooling knowing only their native tongues and not the school language.

Int: Any other cause?

T1B: Some of the Children join grade one without attending pre-school education. Besides, the medium of instruction in Arba Minch Zuria [Adjacent area] is Gamotstso, but parents don't want their children to attend in Gamotstso medium

school. So, they send their children to Amharic medium school instead. When these children begin school, they get confused.

Int: How do you feel about teaching learners who cannot speak or understand the medium of instruction properly?

T1B: I really feel. These children know only their language and face serious challenge when they attend class in Amharic. For the most part, they don't take part in class activity. They often remain silent and feel anxiety when classes are conducted in Amharic. On the other hand, Gamotstso is given as one subject and children whose mother tongue is Gamotstso, actively participate and answer questions when asked.

Int: How do the children in your classes differ from expectation?

T1B: Yes. Since they don't know Amharic, they are lagging behind other children. Besides, they don't know Amharic, and they always encounter problems. They are not supported at home as they come from illiterate family. This is my opinion.

Int: How do the above mentioned behaviors of pupils impact your teaching?

T1B: There are several problems that prevent you from helping these children. For instance, it is very difficult to give extra help due to large number of students. With all these challenges, I arrange extra classes, and this places burden. It is very difficult to teach these children.

Int: What strategies do you use to support and include linguistic minority children in the classroom?

T1B: I tell them to work in group and help each other. Doing their assignments in group helps them to share ideas and learn from each other.

Int: What do you think is the possible solution to overcome these problems?

T1B: The solution I suggest is much should be done at kindergarten. I think it is kindergarten that prepares children for later school years. So, children who speak a language other than Amharic should begin learning Amharic right from kindergarten. The fact remains that children whose mother tongue is Amharic attend kindergarten and have an advantage. On the other hand, minority learners begin schooling without attending kindergarten, and, as a result, it leaves them at disadvantage compared to L1 learners. Besides, something should be done to improve the education of these children. Practically, it is impossible to provide mother tongue education for everyone. So, to assist these children, intensive instruction in Amharic literary and numeracy skills should be provided on Saturdays.

Int: Do you encourage students to use or speak their first language in the classroom?

T1B: I don't think it is a problem. If learners use their first language, or switch between Gamotstso and Amharic, it helps them to comprehend the lesson, discus and solve problem.

Int: How important do you think it is for linguistic minority children to attend education in their first language?

T1B: My opinion is that it would be fine if students learn their language as a single subject and focus on Amharic. Since Amharic is a language of wider communication, it will greatly benefit them in the future.

Int: So, are you saying education in second language does not pose problem?

T1B: There won't be any problem if they attend Amharic right from kindergarten.

Int: You use Amharic as medium of instruction. What is your opinion about the language used in classroom and the one used in day to day interaction?

T1B: I don't see any difference. The one used in classroom and outside are the same. But the classroom language can be second language for the learners.

Int: What is your opinion about friendship among students?

T1B: Regarding friendship, the students prefer having friends who speak their language. Most of the children come from speech community that uses one language. For instance, a village called 'Gero' consists a community entirely from 'Ganta'. Children from this village stay together both in and out of the classrooms. Similarly, children from 'Derashe' stay together and don't join other pupils.

Int: Which languages do linguistic minority children use at home?

T1B: Children whose first language is Amharic speak Amharic at home. So, do children who speak Gantatstso.

Int: So, what do you think about children's use of L1 or L2 at home?

T1B: In my view, it is good if they speak Amharic at home. They benefit if they speak Amharic. I also insist parents that their children will be brilliant if they use Amharic at home.

Int: What is your opinion about language diversity and teaching pupils who speak different home languages?

T1B: Diversity is fine, but it also is source of problem. For example, in Gamo Gofa zone, we have different languages. So, it is difficult to teach in their languages.

Therefore, in this case, diversity is a problem. And it is fine if they attend schooling in Amharic. That is my opinion.

Int: What about inclusion of linguistic minority children in your classrooms?

T1B: Having children who speak two or more different home languages is a problem and has adverse effect on pupil's achievement. Teaching multilingual classroom is challenging because you are not able to share thoughts and feelings. I don't know most of the languages children speak and I can't help them. Secondly, the children do nothing in the classroom. So, to make them learn, the school should sort them out and provide intensive instruction in Amharic. To overcome all these problems the children should be first exposed to Amharic right from kindergarten. Besides, they should allow their children plenty of time to practice Amharic.

Int: What should the school and its teachers do to help these children?

T1B: As clearly observed, an inability to understand the medium of instruction affects these children school work. Hence, we have to sort out these children and keep them in a separate room and provide intensive instruction in Amharic.

Int: Have you taken training that may help you teach children who attend schooling in their second language?

T1B: I graduated in 1972 E.C. and trained to teach in Amharic. I have not received training on how I teach such diverse student population. Of course, I know that I have to use teaching aids.

Int: Thank you very much.

T1B: Thank you, too.

T5C

Int: Hello, W/ro. T5C!

T5C: Hello, and you?

Int: As you know, I been here in this school to carry out research concerning language and education, last time I tried to observe to your class, and to day I am here to hold interviews. Thank you for your willingness.

T5C: Alright

Int: In classes you are teaching, there are pupils who speak different home languages, and attend class in their second language. As clearly observed now, Amharic has been serving as a medium of instruction. As a classroom teacher how do you with with such diverse classrooms?

T5C: In class I am teaching, there are children whose mother tongue is Wolayitaththo, Gamotstso, Amharic, and Afan Oromo. Guji children whose mother tongue is Afan Oromo find Amharic very difficult. Likewise, children who speak Gamotstso and Wolayitaththo as their first language find Amharic challenging. Therefore, then teaching and learning process is tough and challenging.

Int: What are some of the specific difficulties these learners are experiencing in the classroom?

T5C: The problem is they can't speak Amhric. They don't differentiate Amharic letters. The problem is language. For instance, children whose mother tongue is Afan Oromo could count numbers in their language, but they don't do this in Amharic.

Int: Do they count numbers in Afan Oromo?

T5C: Of course. They count numbers in Afan Oromo, but they don't count in Amharic.

Int: What do you think is the root cause of the problem?

T5C: The root cause of the problem is they don't know Amharic. In addition, both Guji and Gamo children do not pass through pre-school program.

Int: Don't they attend kindergarten? Isn't there?

T5C: Yes, if you go to Abullo, there is no kindergarten. Here in state farm too, they don't have kindergarten. Most of the children are from working class family who couldn't afford to send their children to kindergarten.

Int: How do you feel about teaching children who can't speak or understand the medium of instruction properly?

T5C: You feel but we are not responsible for this mess. Despite having challenges, we are making efforts to help these children.

Int: What kind of effort, for instance.

T5C: Yes, I make my own effort. For instance, I arranged class and taught them Amharic alphabet letters which they should have studied at kindergarten.

Int: How do the children in your classes differ from expectation?

T5C: There children do not take part in any activity.

Int: They don't participate?

T5C: They speak little, don't participate, and often remain silent. Besides, they are worried that their classmates mock at them because of this they don't want to participate in activities. They also come to class without doing homework. These children come from illiterate family, and don't receive any support at home.

Int: How do the above mentioned behaviors of pupils impact your teaching?

T5C: Of course, they don't pose much problem except of for their silence and reluctance to do assignments. Certainly I feel exhausted, but there isn't much to show for all my efforts.

Int: What strategies do you use to support and include linguistic minority children in the classroom?

T5C: I use teaching aids, group work and Amharic alphabetic charts.

Int: Do you use alphabet charts?

T5C: Yes, I use alphabet charts made from papers, and teach them.

Int: What do you think is the possible solution to overcome these problems?

T5C: Truly speaking, half the students don't understand Amharic. You feel unhappy when half students understand and the other half leaves class without understanding. Presently, these children are at a disadvantage. I don't think it is fair to keep these children together with those who have good command of Amharic and offer lessons.

Int: Do you encourage students to use or speak their first language in the classroom?

T5C: Do you mean what if they learn their language as a subject?

Int: No, the medium of instruction is Amharic, isn't it?

T5C: Yes.

Int: What if students use Gamotstso or Afan Oromo during class?

T5C: I would prefer it if they wouldn't speak. I tell them to pay attention to Amharic. Since their first language is not helpful to learn Amharic, I always tell them not to use their language.

Int: How important do you think it is for linguistic minority children to attend education in their first language?

T5C: I am in favor of mother tongue education. If they learn in their first language, they will not have much problem.

Int: Now you are using Amharic as medium of instruction.

T5C: Yes

Int: What is your opinion about language used in day to day conversation and the language used in classroom? How long does it take to acquire the classroom language?

T5C: Both are Amharic but the one used in class is formal.

Int: What do you mean by formal?

T5C: By formal I meant that we care about the language we use in the classroom, but we are not as such very much concerned about the language we use outside. We care or may not care at all.

Int: Ok, how long does it take to acquire the 'formal' language?

T5C: You learn it in school.

Int: How long does it take?

T5C: I don't know the time.

Int: How do you see friendship among students?

T5C: The children look for someone who speak their language so as to get help and to pursuer lessons. This is clearly observed during group work, and when they are together on the playground.

Int: Which languages do linguistic minority children use at home? What do you think about children's use of L1 or L2 at home?

T5C: They use their mother tongue at home. Those whose mother tongue is Wolayitaththo speak Wolayitaththo at home, and so do children speaking Afan Oromo.

Int: So, what do you think about children's use of L1 or L2 at home?

T5C: As I said earlier, they use their first language at home. However, I advise them to use Amharic at home as much as possible. I also communicate this same message to parents.

Int: What is your opinion about language diversity and teaching pupils who speak different home languages?

T5C: Linguistic diversity has adverse effect on teaching and learning process. Therefore, I suggest that these children should be exposed to Amharic right from kindergarten.

Int: How does linguistic diversity affect teaching and learning process?

T5C: There are several languages is Gamogafa Zone, and most of these languages are not developed. Besides, there has been a lot of disagreement over which languages to use as medium of instruction. As to me, the solution to settle this dispute is to give instruction in Amharic.

Int: What do you say about inclusion of linguistic minority children in your class?

T5C: The presence of these children of no use to me. My opinion is that these children should be kept in separate room and provided intensive instruction in Amharic.

Int: What would be your opinion on what must be expected from the school and its teachers?

T5C: I said earlier that they should be kept in a separate room and given intensive instruction. I think the school should think of special classes.

Int: have you taken training that could help you teach second language learners?

T5C: I didn't take training to teach such diverse student population. However, I took training in special needs, and it is about students with disability.

Int: Thank you very much!

T5C: Ok, I am also thankful.