

ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES OF TEACHING, AND
LEARNING IN MOTHER TONGUE AS A MEDIUM OF
INSTRUCTION: THE CASE OF SIDAMA LANGUAGE

THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENT OF DEGREE OF MASTERS OF ART IN CURRICULUM
AND TEACHERS' PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

BY

GASHAW ABEBE

JULY 2007

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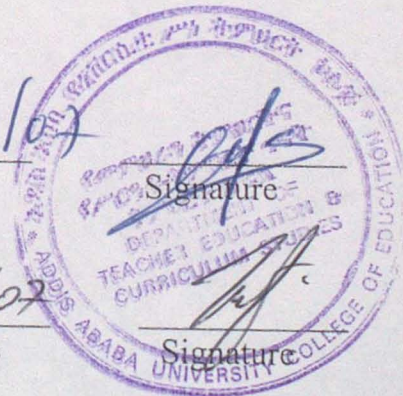
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Table of Contents

Acknowledgement	i
Table of Contents	ii
List of Tables	v
Abstract	vi

CHAPTER ONE

Background of the Study	1
1.1 Introduction.....	1
1.2 Statement of the Problem.....	4
1.3 Objectives of the Study.....	5
1.3.1 General Objectives	5
1.3.2 Specific Objectives	5
1.4 Research Questioner	6
1.5 Significance of the Study.....	6
1.6 Delimitation of the Study	7

CHAPTER TWO

Review of Related Literature	8
2.1 The Concept of Mother Tongue	8
2.2 Rationales for the Use of the Mother Tongue.....	9
2.3 Language Policy in Education and Consumer Opportunities.....	10
2.3.1 Pedagogical Opportunities	11
2.3.2 Sociological Opportunities	14
2.3.3 Psychological Opportunities	15
2.4 Challenges in Teaching and Learning in Mother Tongue	17
2.4.1 Qualified Teachers and Trainers.....	18
2.4.2 Supplementary Resource Materials	19
2.4.3 Attitudinal Problems	20
2.4.4 Orthographic Problems	21
2.5 Opposing Views on the Use of Mother Tongue as a Medium of Instruction.....	22
2.5.1 Views in Favor of the Use of Mother Tongue	22
2.5.2 Views Against the Use of Mother Tongue	24

2.6 Mother Tongue Based Education in Africa	27
2.6.1 Algeria	28
2.6.2 Morocco	29
2.6.3 Tunisia	31
CHAPTER THREE	
Research Design and Methodology	32
3.1 Method of the Study	32
3.2 Sources of the Data	32
3.3 Population Sample and Techniques	32
3.4 Data Gathering Instruments	34
3.5 Procedures of Data Collection	35
3.6 Data Analysis	36
CHAPTER FOUR	
Presentation, Analysis and Interpretation of the Data	37
4.1 Background Information of the Respondents	37
4.2 The Reaction of Students, Teachers, Parents and Principals Toward the use of Sidamigna as a medium of Instruction	40
4.2.1 Students Response on the Use of Sidamigna as a Medium of Instruction	40
4.2.2 Teachers' Opinion on the Use of (Sidamigna) as a Medium of Instruction	50
4.2.3 The Responses of Parents in the Use of Sidamigna as a Medium of Instruction	58
4.3 Teachers' Quality of Training and the Adequacy of Trained Manpower..	62
4.4 Teachers' Students' and Principals' Response on the Availability of Teaching-Learning Materials.....	69
4.4.1 Teachers Responses on the Availability of Learning Materials	69
4.4.2 Principals Response on the Availability of Learning Materials.....	79
4.5 Distribution of Sidama Language Textbooks among Students	80



4.6 Students' Level of Proficiency in the Major Skills in Sidama Language to the Knowledge of their Teachers	82
4.7 Teachers Knowledge and Ability in the Four Skills in Sidama Language	84
4.8 Students' Language Choice, Proficiency Level and Subject Preference ...	86
CHAPTER FIVE	
Summary Conclusion and Recommendations	93
5.1 Summary	93
5.2 Conclusion.....	96
5.3 Recommendations	98
Bibliography	101
Appendix	108

List of Tables

Table 4.1 Background of the Respondents	37
Table 4.2a: Students' Opinion towards Learning in their own Mother Tongue (Sidamigna).....	40
Table 4.2b: The Opinion of Students towards Learning in Sidamigna vis-a-vis in Amharic and English	44
Table 4.2c: Students Response on the Opinion of Parents and the Community	47
Table 4.2d: Students' Opinion on Teachers' Competency and Consistent Use of the Language in the Classroom	49
Table 4.3a: Teacher' Opinion towards Teaching in Mother Tongue (Sidamigna)	51
Table 4.3b: Teachers' Opinion on the Moral Characters of their Students in Learning in their Mother Tongue and its Contribution to the Language	53
Table 4.3c: Teachers' Response on the Views of Parents and the Community	55
Table 4.3d: Teachers' Opinion on the Interest of the Children Learning in Sidamigna vis-à-vis Other Languages (Amharic or English)	56
Table 4.4: Training of Teachers	62
Table 4.5: Quality of Training and Adequacy of Trained Manpower	65
Table 4.6: Teachers Response on Adequacy of Teaching and Learning Materials	69
Table 4.7: Teachers' Opinion on the Adequacy of the Language for Use as a Medium of Instruction	73
Table 4.8: Students Response on Adequacy of Learning Materials	76
Table 4.9: The Ratio of Students-to-Textbooks for the Three Subjects Considered in the Sample Schools.....	80
Table 4.10 Students' Language Competency in the four Language Skills	82
Table 4.11: Teachers' Language Competency	85
Table 4.12: Students language choice, proficiency level and subject preference	87

The main objective of this study was aimed at investigating the opportunities and challenges of teaching and learning in Sidamigna as a medium of instruction in the first cycle primary schools of Sidama Zone and Awassa Kifle Ketema Administrative Town.

Although a lot of effort has been exerted in promoting Sidamigna as a medium of instruction in the zone, much remains to be done and other problems to be tackled. Hence, this paper is specifically aimed at identifying those problems and suggest possible solutions to the problems identified. To achieve this end, a descriptive survey method was employed. The source of the data for the study were students, teachers, principals, parents and education bureau officials. The sampling techniques applied in the study were simple random sampling, purposive and availability sampling (techniques).

The instruments used to collect the data were questionnaires, interviews and focus group discussions. The data collected were analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively. The data gathered though questionnaires were analyzed by using frequency counts and their percentages; where as the data gathered through interview and focus group discussions were analyzed using descriptive statements and/or explanations.

The findings of the study indicated that students, teachers principals, education bureau officials and parents were supportive of using Sidamigna as a medium of instruction. In the study it was also found out that textbooks are prepared for the students are in line with their age and ability. The students also confirmed that their learning in their mother tongue has also helped them to follow their lessons with out difficulty, to actively participate in the classroom and to feel proud and develop confidence in their own language for being used as a medium of instruction. However, the majority of the students and parents preferred if Amharic and English were used as a medium of instruction, the majority of whom chose English.

The findings of the study also reveled that there is deficiency of educational materials. Textbooks are in short supply; supplementary reading materials, references, teachers guides and library facilities are almost absent. Moreover, lack of commitment and interest by some teachers to teach in the language, a mismatch between the training program and the knowledge gained when put in actual practice, shortage of the duration of the training program for teachers, lack of involvement by parents in school activities were the major problems identified during the study.

Based on the findings, supply of the necessary curricula materials, upgrading unqualified teachers, supervising and evaluating the training program at TTI, persuasion of students, parents and the community to ensure participation and suggested. Moreover, further in depth investigation of the problems at all levels in also recommended.

CHAPTER ONE

Background of the Study

1.1 Introduction

People use language to communicate, explain and share their ideas, feelings and attitudes to one another in their day-to-day activities. Language is not used only for communicative purposes, it is also used as a cultural tool. That means, language other than the purpose it serves for transmitting information, it also serves as a means of thinking collectively. That is why Foley J. and Thompson, L. (2003:112) noted that “language is used for creating knowledge so that the language and knowledge we create with it are resources for the development of the individual with the community in the community”:-

Language plays an important role in the social and cultural life of any society. It is through language that people plan their lives and remember their past; they form their social and individual identities. Through language, people engage themselves in some constructive, artistic or problem solving activity through interpersonal exchange of ideas (Hazel, 1992:88).

The role that language plays in any society is far reaching. Over and above its instrumentality of serving a society for the purposes outlined above, the importance of language in an educational institute is even of par-amount importance. It plays a central role to the whole process of education particularly in the education of children at an earlier level. To this end, while emphasizing the effect language has in education and as part of a determining factor for effective teaching and learning process, Hazel (1992:63) states that “Language is useful not only for guiding learning but also a means for making learning manageable. That means language is used not only for communication purposes but is also used for organizing group thoughts for reasoning, planning and to review our actions. Hence, if teaching and learning is medicated primarily by the use of language,

then it goes without saying that enabling the child to have access to education in the language in which he/she feels most comfortable is unquestionable.

Nevertheless, since most countries in the world are multilingual, the question of which language is most appropriate and useful in educating the child has often been fiercely held and hotly debated agenda among different scholars' professionals, politicians and educationalists.

Regarding the choice of the right language in educating the child for reasons of its pedagogical benefits, the U.N Convention on the rights of the child states it as follows:

All children have the right to education, (article 28), and the right to learn and use the language of their family [mother tongue]. When a child begins learning in his/her first language, the child is more likely to succeed academically and is better able to learn additional language(s) (Collins, 1996:354).

Moreover, Skutnab Kangas (2006:2) argues that "When education is in a language the child doesn't know, whether due to family choice or lack of an alternative, this is violating the child's rights."

Although learning in the mother tongue is the "child's honored right" it is also believed that educating the child in the mother tongue is vital for the survival of the language among the language communities. "Unless the minority languages are protected through educating the child in the mother tongue, the chances of the long term survival in modern society may be severely diminished." Hence, for such languages to survive, in their respective communities, education must be given in the mother tongue (Collins, 1996:54; Mallea, 1997:66).

Moreover, the proponents of the mother tongue education further argue that depriving the child from learning in the mother tongue is to squander the linguistic resources of the nation by discouraging the child from learning in the mother tongue (Cummins, 2006:3). Similarly, excluding, minimizing or rejecting the child's home language in school makes

the child "disabled" and it is much less likely that the child can participate actively and confidently in classroom situation (Collins, 1996:241).

✓ In addition to this, the opportunities which the mother tongue education offers to a child also includes opportunities such as easy access to education, a sense of ownership towards his/her own language and self confidence (Gfeller, 1999:17-19).

On the other hand, in spite of all the possible opportunities the mother tongue education offers to the child (be it pedagogical or psychological), other groups of scholars also come up with arguments against the use of the mother tongue education. For instance, (Gagnon and Tully, 2001:245) state that "The use of different languages for different language community could result in a regional or national disunity as well as inter group conflict." To the contrary, other scholars confirm that diversity of language and national unity can coexist. According to them, the co-existence of two or more languages is rarely a cause of tension, disunity, conflict or strife (Collins, 1996:315).

Contrary to the statements by Collins above, mother tongue education is opposed for reasons related to geographical, social and intellectual mobility. "Children who are educated only in the mother tongue will be isolated or restricted to their immediate local community; they cannot interact with the wider community; they will not have the right to expect what other communities offer such as job opportunities" (Brown, et al, 1980:667; Duran, 1983:667; Gfeller, 1999:41).

It is believed that the overall success or failure of children's learning is dependent for the most part on the attitudes societies hold towards the existing education system. The positive or negative attitude they develop towards using a particular language either promotes or retards the students' progress in their education system. The negative attitude by parents or the community and its effect on children's learning has been stated by Gfeller (1999:7) as follows;

not knowing that every individual in any language community can learn, read and write his/her own language, develop a negative attitude towards their own language as not equally useful for educational purposes. As a

result, minority speakers often feel that they do not need to learn their languages in school. Since they know it already, they want their children to become proficient in the majority language.

The quality of teaching and learning process depends, among other things, on the availability of support materials such as teaching aids and supplementary readers to re-enforce the knowledge students have gained in the classroom. It is said that "Not all information comes from the teacher. Being well organized means making sure that children have access to books and other forms of stored information and use them creatively (Vivan Cook, 2001:121). Moreover, the production of materials in many minority languages is difficult to achieve. Funding may be difficult to secure for such separate minority language materials" (Collins, 1996:241; Gudmund, 2003:141).

In spite of all the pros and cons on the use of the mother tongue as a medium of instruction, Ethiopia, as its education policy, "has consciously attempted to assess the linguistic needs, problems and priorities of the nationality languages and there by establish guidelines in its constitutions where by these nationalities can foster the application of their own culture, the knowledge of their language and its mastery in spoken and written form." Taking this opportunity, different nationalities of Ethiopia are now using their nationality languages as a medium of instruction to educate their children in their mother tongue. Among these nationalities is the people of 'Sidama', in Sidama zone, the specific area of this study where the language 'Sidamigna' is widely spoken and used as a medium of instruction for the first four years of primary schools.

The main purpose of this study is therefore aimed at investigating critically the challenges and the opportunities in the teaching and learning in the mother tongue as a medium of instruction in Sidama Zone.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Primary education in "Sidamigna" has been under way since 1993. The language now operates in 534 first cycle primary schools of 21 Weredas and one Kifle Ketema

administrative town. The language is also used specifically at the level of a language of teacher training program to prepare teachers for mother tongue education.

Although the teaching-learning process is still proceeding as per the state planned language policy, there are still some problems which teachers and students complain about as a potential hindrance for effective utilization of the language as a medium of instruction.

Therefore, the purpose of this study is aimed at investigating the challenges with regard to the teaching and learning of 'Sidamigna' as a medium of instruction. On the basis of these, the researcher has come up with the following research questions that need to be answered in order to achieve the purposes of the study. Hence, the study addresses the following basic questions.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

1.3.1 General Objectives

Mother tongue based education can successfully be carried on if the potential challenges for its effective implementation are identified by research and there by suggest possible solutions to the challenges identified. Hence, the general objective of the study is to investigate the real language picture in schools as the language of instruction in the first cycle primary schools in Sidama Zone and Awassa Kifle Ketema Administrative town.

1.3.2 Specific Objectives

- To find relevant information on some of the major challenges facing the effective teaching and learning in the mother tongue in the area understudy.
- To find out what the attitude of students teachers, parents, principals and education bureau officials are towards using Sidamigna as a medium of instruction.

- To identify the strength and weakness of the present situation of teaching and learning in Sidamigna there by suggest areas of intervention in the future.

1.4 Research Questions

1. Are there adequate material resources such as textbooks, supplementary readers and reference materials for effective use of the mother tongue (Sidamigna) as a medium of instruction?
2. Is these appropriately and sufficiently trained manpower to effectively carryout the teaching and learning in the language?
3. What are the reactions of students, teachers, parents, principals and education bureau officials towards the use of Sidamigna as a medium of instruction?
4. What are the major difficulties encountered in the use of Sidamigna as a medium of instruction.
5. What efforts have been exerted to alleviate the problems encountered for effective implementation of the mother tongue?

1.5 Significance of the Study

The study is believed to be significant for the following reasons:

- The study may provide a better understanding of the present situation of the use of "Sidamigna" as a medium of instruction in the zone.
- The information obtained in the study may provide relevant information (on some of the problems) for the consideration by those responsible for decisions on language activities and policies
- The study may provide the necessary recommendations for improving the mother tongue education in elementary schools in the future.
- The knowledge acquired from the study may provide information to researchers who have interest in making further studies on mother tongue education.

1.6 Delimitation of the Study

Ethiopia being a multilingual country, a study that tries to investigate the challenges facing the effective implementation of mother tongue education should be conducted at country wide level. But due to factors of time and expense, it will be practically difficult to obtain measures from all linguistic groups of first cycle primary schools that currently operate nationwide. This study is therefore, limited to one specific area of the southern Nations Nationalities and Peoples Region (SNNPR), the "Sidamigna Zone" and the surrounding areas where the nationality language, "Sidamigna", is spoken and used as a medium of instruction.

So as to make the study more manageable, it was conducted on sample schools selected from a population of 21 Woredas and one Kifle Ketema of 1st cycle primary schools. The study is also delimited to first cycle primary schools of grade 4.

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CHAPTER TWO

Review of Related Literature

2.1 The Concept of Mother Tongue

Different scholars understand the phrase mother tongue from different perspectives. Foley and Thompson (2003:98-99) describe mother tongue as the first language the child learns in a naturalist way and not through formal schooling. According to Fisseha (1997:167) "mother tongue" is the language used by the community to which he/she belongs provided that he/she has already acquired the language. That means the language an individual communicates with the members of the community he belongs having the same specific culture is the mother tongue. On the other hand, Fisseha (1997:168) also defines "mother tongue" as the language in which the pupil is most adept, in which he can express himself and the one he can best understand and through which learning can best take place.

Nevertheless, Thompson and Foley (2003:99) assert that a speaker's dominant language or the most frequently used in every day life cannot necessarily be taken as mother tongue. For Foley and Thompson, it is the language on which the speaker relies for intuitive knowledge of language, its form, structure and meaning. Moreover, mother tongue for bilinguals and multilinguals is also taken as the language chosen for complex, cognitive reasoning (Foley and Thompson, 2003:99).

In addition to this, first language, home language, family language, heritage language and community language can also be used as synonymous for mother tongue according to Foley and Thompson,(2003:99).

A more elaborated definition of mother tongue is given by (Mackey, 1979:47). Mackey sees mother tongue from three perspectives, i.e. the criteria of primacy, proficiency and association. The criteria of primacy classify the notion 'mother tongue' as the first language. For some countries, according to Mackey, the first language is taken as the

language of one's mother, for others, it is the first language learned and still understood. The criteria of proficiency refers to the view that people understand mother tongue as the language best known or most often used. The final definition of Mackey attaches to mother tongue to association or belonging to a cultural or ethnic group.

2.2 Rationales for the Use of the Mother Tongue

Several scholars have forwarded various reasons for using mother tongue in education. They view the use of mother tongue from pedagogical, sociological, psychological and political point of view. Pedagogically, mother tongue education helps the learner achieve better academically because the medium of instruction is in their own mother tongue (Hoben, 1994:168). Sociologically, it asserts the identity of the groups, Cohen, G (2000:184); politically, it empowers linguistic and cultural minority ethnic groups in many parts of the world (Hoben, 1994:182); and psychologically mother tongue education help develop self esteem, confidence and emotional well being.

Bowers in Mamo (1988:168) explains the reasons behind using mother tongue in education as follows:

It is naturally quicker and easier to use the mother tongue to create written symbols, to know sounds and concepts than to use those of an unknown or foreign language. A person who has to speak, read, write, learn and think in a language with which he is unfamiliar is at a disadvantage. His capacity to express himself is handicapped, communication is showed down and misunderstanding cause frustration and tension.

Moreover, the other reasons that necessitates the use of mother tongue for education is the population mobility with the desire for better economic conditions, the need for labour, constant flow of refugee resulting from conflicts between groups, oppression of one group by another or ecological disasters (Cummins, J., 2006:1). Hence, because of the accelerated mobility of labour force and the displacement of people and other factors, the language once dominant in one state is destined to be a minority language in another state (Mackey, 1979:43). More than that, the worry that linguistic, cultural, racial and religious

diversity may threaten the identity of the host society, some countries promote educational policies that will make the problem disappear. They pursue a policy of assimilation. This assimilation policy in education discourages students from maintaining their mother tongues (Cummins, 2006:2). The increased growth of communication networks and uniformization of mass media that threatens the very existence of diverse languages of the world necessitates the use of mother tongue (Mackey, 1979:43). In opposition to these, a movement arose in an effort to promote the survival of the languages of the immigrant population, their ethnic tongue, the ancestral language so as to make it the home, the native idiom of the next generation, the language of their communication and their schooling. This movement necessitates, among others, a policy of minorities in relation to language in education. This called for an assessment on the role language has to play in the context of education whether the "mother tongue," "national language", "official language," or international language is to be employed.

2.3 Language Policy in Education and Consumer Opportunities

Several countries design their language policies on education depending on the objectives education is aimed to achieve. In countries with multicultural and multilingual societies, the language policy on education is designed from the point of view of local, ethnic, cultural and national objectives. Mackey (1979:49) argues that in a pluralistic society, language policy on education is dependent on the prior or specific importance the language is made to serve in the education of the individual citizen through the employment of either local or international language. According to Mackey, if priority is to be given to science and advanced technology with its needs for engineers and technicians, the language policy has to put the most weight on one or more of the few international languages which gives access to such knowledge. On the other hand, if the objective is on the maintenance of local, self sufficient, self reliant and self sustaining economy, privilege is to be given to local languages.

Regarding language policy in relation to education, scholars (Ansre, 1972; Bagunywa, 1970; Gachukia, 1970; Kunene 1978; in Wolfson and Manes, 1985:241) propose the wise

choice on the type of language to be beneficial if viewed from pedagogical, sociological and psychological point of view.

It can therefore be concluded that the provision of education which employs the use of the mother tongue as a medium of instruction is believed to offer pedagogical, sociological and psychological opportunities to the learner.

2.3.1 Pedagogical Opportunities

Mother tongue education advocates argue that it is best to begin with a considerable use of the child's native language [mother tongue] and engage in a careful transition to other language (Gory et al, 1986:123). This means, if the Child's mother tongue is employed as a medium of instruction, there would be a continuous opportunities for him /her to progress effectively through his/her educational system. On the other hand, if the [child] who has to speak, read, write, learn and think in a language with which he is unfamiliar is at a disadvantage. His/her capacity to express himself/herself is handicapped communication is slowed down and misunderstanding cause frustration and tension (Bowers in Mamo, 1988:168).

Regarding the opportunities mother tongue education provides the child, scholars (Cummins, 1979; Modiano, 1968 and Engles, 1975) in Thonis (1981:162) assert that "The child's use of his his/her first language is essential not only to achieve the proficiency necessary for academic success but also serves as a base for the acquisition of second language literacy skills there by enabling him/her to have a balanced bilingual competent in both languages." That means students who are provided education in their own language not only succeed academically but their learning in their mother tongue also lays the foundation (background knowledge) for the acquisition of second language. That is why Thonis (1981:180) states that "First language strength contributes to second language acquisition"; and "if one can read in one language much of his ability transfers to second language (Alkins, 1992:119)." Hence, if instructions using the first language is essential for the child to achieve the proficiency needed for academic work and second language

acquisition, then it goes without saying that the actual language the child is to receive education has to be in the mother tongue.

Concerning language of instruction and its importance to children at least at early primary level, Zuengler (1981) in Wolfson and Manes (1985: 249) indicate that the educational system should make better use of the local language in early primary education, because most of the rural children can only speak their vernacular language at the time of starting primary education.

The above idea has also been shared by other scholars like Eddy (1978); Troike (1981); Hakuto (1986) and Ovando (1990) in Levine (1992:376) by briefly stating as follows:

Children do not learn well when thrust in to a totally new language setting. ...Children can even learn higher order skills in their native language rather than rudimentary and simple skills in a second language.

According to these scholars, the learning difficulties of children in the first years of primary education can be attributed to from not only learning through the medium of their mother tongue but also results in children to fall behind in their subject areas. That is why Hoben (1994:10) states that the language best known by the learners is the most effective medium of instruction.

Research evidence suggests that children learning in their mother tongue have advantage over those learning in a second language. The result of the study indicates that:

Children learning in a second language will need several years before their second language is as good as that of children who have been speaking it since birth. ...It may take 5-7 years to master the decontextualized language skills necessary to function well in their language (Levine, 1992:337).

This confirms that learning problems of children arise when they are being educated through the medium of second language. Lewis (1962:210) metaphorically expressed this same view saying: "if students learn the curriculum in a language not of their own, they fail to stand up the running stream of the language".

While emphasizing on the importance of the child's mother tongue for educational success, Spolsky (1972:30) also states as follows:

✱ *Most teaching takes place through language and learning depends on the pupils ability to understand what his teacher says and what is in his book. Without communication between teachers and pupils, there is little chance of effective education. Language barrier blocks their learning, discourages their efforts and reduces their chances of success in their educational system.*

This implies that children's inability to understand the language of instruction is one of the major factors that contribute to their learning difficulties. The problem would be more serious if both the teacher and children do not share the same language.

As Spolsky puts it:

"the use of a common language as a medium of instruction increases participation and removes the communication deficiencies between the teacher and the child. Since both the teacher and the child have the same language, they can bring in their feelings and experiences in mutual communicative situation." (Spolsky, 1972:3)

In line with this, Gfeller (1998:193) also states:

"If the language of instruction and the mother tongue are identical... students' ability to identify, specify, talk about new abstract concepts, detailed subjects is enhanced. On the other hand, if the language of instruction is different from the mother tongue, the level of cognitive development and level of language proficiency do not much."

✱ If children at the early primary level are made to be educated in their mother tongue, they would be able to understand concepts much faster than through language they are not familiar with. This offers the child the opportunity to interact freely with their teacher through questioning and answering in areas of difficulties and misunderstandings.

It is by considering the pedagogical opportunities mother tongue education offers the child that UNESCO (1953:1) and US commission for Civil Right (1975) recommended in their document on the child's right in the choice of language for education by stating it

briefly. "It is axiomatic that the best medium for teaching a child is his/her mother tongue" (UNESCO in Collins, 1996:227), Cummins (1981:40).

It is also from this stand point that the objectives of education and training policy of Ethiopia (1994) was designed with regard to language in education as highlighted in article 3.5 by stating it briefly as follows:

"...cognizant of the pedagogical advantages 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 the nationality languages." (1994:23-24).

2.3.2 Sociological Opportunities

Language is useful not only for communicative purposes but is also a means by which culture and history is expressed (Steiner, 1995, in Schultz, 2001:124). This implies that language other than for communicative purpose serves as a tool for sharing and jointly developing the knowledge which in turn ensures an organized social life to exist.

Hence, since language and culture are inseparable, children who learn in their native language will often find the knowledge, culture and history reflected in the curricular materials. This fosters in the minds of the child that his/her language is also the equal of others, even with the dominant language that is equally valued for education. This in turn not only increases the child's motivation to learn but also helps him/her to actively participate in the social life of the society he/she belongs to.

With regard to mother tongue in education and the sociological benefits it offers to the child, Gfeller (1999:17) states that "Children who learn in their mother tongue develop a sense of ownership, self confidence and a secured identity." This view indicates that educating children in their own language (mother tongue) adds delight to the language community and culture that in turn offers the child additional motivation to learn. On the contrary, if they are made to learn in a language alien to them, they also become alienated from their home culture, language and families

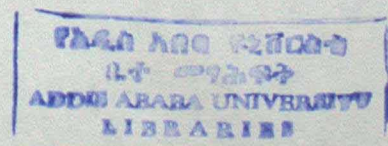
Schultz (2001:126) adds another sociological benefit a child could gain as a result of learning in his/her mother language. As to him, "Educating the child in a language of his/her own will help him/her to connect what he/she has learnt in the classroom to the home culture to avoid alienation." This is to say that enabling the child to learn in his/her mother tongue helps promote better understanding between the home and the school. In line with this, Kuper (1998) in Dereje (1988:188) states that in primary schools where the language of instruction is nether spoken by the children nor by their parents, both the type of knowledge and common interaction appears so distant from the one used at home. This results in cognitive and pedagogical difficulties. Cummins (2006:6) also states that children who do not learn in their mother tongue when they grow up, there will be a linguistic gap between the parents and the children. They become alienated from the culture of both the home and the school.

2.3.3 Psychological Opportunities

Students need clearly defined identities to be psychologically healthy and successful in school. For example, Banks (1988:43) says that "the individual who has a confused, non reflective or negative ethnic identification lacks one of the essential ingredients for a healthy and positive personal identity. This also means that children who are let to learn in a language of their own develop an awareness of their own cultural value and a clearer sense of worth of the role their language plays in the educational system.

In connection to this, Noddings (1995) in Shultz (2001; 126) pointed out that what children benefit from learning in their native tongue is the comfortable situation it creates and a feeling of lower stress so that they could develop competence in their school work confidently.

From what has been outlined by Shultz above, it can be inferred that children who achieve facility in learning in their own language, can develop a psychologically positive self image. This in turn puts interest and enthusiasm in the learner to perform well in all their



educational endeavors. Moreover, they will develop the confidence to interact freely with their teacher and peer (friends) in the teaching learning process.

Similarly, scholars like Levine (1992:374); Baker (1990:346) assert that educating children in their mother tongue "help develop positive attitude towards learning, maintains individual and group identity, self esteem, social and emotional well being". This implies that children who are not exposed to initial learning in their mother tongue are "slow and even retarded because of their language handicap". That means, the use of language media other than the child's mother tongue seriously affects the child in his/her academic progress and may even lead to develop negative attitude towards leaning. Moreover, Cummins (2006:6) also states that children who do not learn in their mother tongue when they grow up, there will be a linguistic gap between the parents and the children. They become alienated from the culture of both the home and the school.

Moreover, psychological problems such as confusion in thinking, emotional insecurity and school failures may result from not leaning in the mother tongue (Cummins, 1981:132).

Research evidence indicates that "children who are deprived of learning in a language of their own are characterized by educational psychologists as: "lowest ranking in academic achievement, (Casonova, 1992) lower academic tracks; (Bennet, 1991; Lindlollm, 1992; Oviedo, 1995); viewed as deficient, (Darder, 1991); subjected to low teacher expectation, (Frenett, 1992); and criticized more often than others, (Lindlollm, 1992) in Schultz (2001:129). This indicates that children who are exposed to learning in a language unfamiliar to them are likely to face psychological problems and are unlikely to succeed in their educational system.

Similarly, studies carried out by other scholars have also revealed that "children who have been taught in a language alien to them become discouraged, face high risk of not completing school, repeat years, experience high rate of educational retardation, lower rate of promotion at school and higher dropout rates (Cohen, 1970:649). The result of the

study clearly indicates that children deprived of learning in their own mother tongue face problems of psychological and cultural adjustment eventually leading to low level cognitive and academic achievement. This necessitate that use of mother tongue as medium of instruction because if the medium of instruction is that of their own mother tongue, their motivation to learn will be high, their self esteem and confidence will be increased and their cognitive development enhanced.

2.4 Challenges in Teaching and Learning in Mother Tongue

In countries with a high degree of linguistic diversity and underdeveloped local language resources, introducing those local languages into the system of education poses an enormous challenge to educators and education policy makers, especially with regards to human and material resources. According to language survey findings by Ohannessian, S and Ansre, G (1975:53-55, 62-63) a prior assessment for each of the following major challenges are to be given due considerations for effective implementation of the language program. These include:

- the selection of teachers, the training process, their language competence, the effectiveness of their work as well as the possible avenue for their professional improvement;
- Knowledge and experience of those in charge of teachers' trainers in modern development of language teaching theory, practice and methods;
- Adequacy of text and other reading materials;
- Attitudes of administrators, teachers, parents, children and the language community towards the language (to be used as a medium of instruction);
- Questions regarding orthographies; and
- Administrative and professional problems in implementing the program are identified as some of the possible challenges that need prior assessment in carrying out mother tongue education.

Moreover, problems related to the implementation of mother tongue as a medium of instruction, as identified by Gfeller (1999:6) also include the "adequacy of vocabulary" and the "choice of an appropriate script" for the particular language are a few among others.

2.4.1 Qualified Teachers and Trainers

It is said that the quality of teachers produced at any training institutes is affected by the quality of teachers recruited, the nature of the training curriculum, quality of teacher trainers and the duration of the training (Fransua, 1998:456). That means teachers who are well trained, qualified and equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge can effectively accomplish their task of teaching both enthusiastically and with interest. On the other hand, teachers who do not fulfill such pre-requisites—without adequate knowledge of the subject matter, not only contribute to the learning problems but are also liable to turn out "disadvantaged children".

In the same token, in introducing nationality languages in to the education system, the greatest responsibility lies on the shoulders of teachers that need to be "proficient in the nationality language as well as to be rich in specific vocabulary and cultural knowledge." This is to say that teachers who are assigned to teach in the mother tongue need to have strong command of the nationality language including in its reading and writing skills as well as rich in the cultural background of the participating students.

In countries where linguistic diversity prevails and who try to pursue a policy of mother tongue education, the major challenge facing its implementation is a desperate shortage of qualified teachers and the preparation of the necessary curricular materials in the nationality languages.

In order to alleviate such perceived problems, "teachers need to receive special and ongoing training in order to be capable in writing and reading in the language specifically for those teachers who are let to teach in a vernacular, with which they did not [learn] in their schooling (Konarek, 1996; Duetcher, 1995; cited in Altaye, 2001:25).

2.4.2 Supplementary Resource Materials

No matter how knowledgeable a teacher may be in the subject he is trained to teach, the text book is one that guides the teaching learning process. This does not mean that text books should be the only source from which to impart knowledge to the students. This is simply to say that textbooks are meant to serve as guides and starting points for both the teacher and students. If textbooks serve only as point of departure for both the teacher and students then it is imperative that in addition to the text books prescribed in the curriculum, students are expected to gain knowledge and information from other extra resource materials such as supplementary reading materials to reinforce the knowledge they have acquired in the classroom, and as a supplement in areas of their inadequacy and deficiencies.

That means, if the child's language proficiency in his mother tongue is to be achieved, a variety of reading materials in the language suited to the reading needs, interests and abilities of the child must be prepared; otherwise, the child's complete dependency on prescribed curricular materials will deprive the child from using his/her full potential for creativity, self sufficiency and self-reliance. The child may rather develop a feeling of dependency, become non-reflective with loss of confidence in himself/herself.

Although different scholars stress on the importance of extra curricular materials as a means of reinforcing learning, however, in multilingual and multicultural society, due to economic and skilled man power, the provision of such resource materials by the number of diversified languages for each ethnic minorities poses a major challenge.

Regarding the scarcity of supplementary readers and its impact on children's learning in mother tongue, Gfeller (1999:7) emphasized it in brief saying:

...the scarcity of reading materials in any language especially in rural areas influences reading acquisition; interactive, student centered methods usually assume print rich environment. If text books are the main source of information, reading skills may develop slowly; fluent reading may not be achieved widely.

Putting this differently, Thonis, (1981:176) adds other points of consideration regarding the need for supplementary reading materials in children's mother tongue.

Reading materials carefully chosen on the bases of the language needs and development levels of children contributes greatly to learning success...schools must consider seriously the addition of native tongue books and other materials to supplement classroom instruction and to extend opportunities for growth in reading and thinking skills.

2.4.3 Attitudinal Problems

The effectiveness of language policies in education in multilingual and multicultural societies is determined for the most part on the attitudes the language community, parents, teachers and children hold towards its use. The negative or positive values that these members of the society attach to the language can either retard or promote the development and use of the languages utilization.

In relation to attitude to language in education, Le page (1964:21) cited in Mitiku (2005) states: "The most important factor which determines how quickly a child learns is not the language he uses but the attitude of his parents, teachers and his peer groups towards the language used."

Children's enthusiasm and interest to benefit from learning in their mother tongue is seriously affected if the society-parents, teachers, students, etc hold negative attitude towards the language as, useful or useless for educational purposes. The effect attitudes have towards language particularly by parents has been raised by Wells, (1979:36) saying: "...parents who feel a strong sense of pride in their language and cultural background are eager to transmit their cultural heritage to their children. This in turn help their children succeed academically."

On the other hand, if parents have negative attitudes about the value of their cultural backgrounds or feel that they speak an inferior [language] are also encouraging their children to develop negative attitudes towards their first language (Cummins, 1981:36). This implies that if children develop negative attitudes towards their languages, as their

parents do, then it goes without saying that their attitude towards learning in their mother tongue will also be negative. As a result, they resort to learning in another unfamiliar language dominant in the area. This in turn affects their progress in their educational system and the development of the language. Similarly, Susan (1996:199) also states that

“the goal of educating children will bear positive results if parents have positive attitude towards their children learning at school. If parents have negative attitudes, they are imparting a clear message to their children that the school is not worthwhile and valuable to them (their children). Moreover, the parents [themselves] are likely to lose control of their children's value and destiny.

2.4.4 Orthographic Problems

Most writing systems operate on alphabetical principles. Both sending and receiving messages through writing require the acquisition of the alphabets along with the names of the letters as well as the sounds they represent. Without adequate mastery of these and other graphologies, communications through reading and writing poses a great challenge particularly if the language has not developed into a system of writing.

As Ohannassian and Ansre (1975:59-63) suggests before a new language is to be introduced into the educational system,

It is essential to know whether the language has been reduced to writing, whether the orthographies are adequate and whether there is any need for reform or standardization. ...since consistency in spelling is generally regarded as desirable for educational purposes, some consideration is to be given to the problem of orthography in most program concerned with teaching reading [writing] in primary schools.

Moreover, as Fishman (1968), in Muluneh (2000) stated “where different languages are used at different levels of education (primary and secondary), it is advantageous to students if both languages share the same script in order to save time that might be wasted in learning new script for the second language.

The problem of orthography, in languages which lack traditional writing system, becomes more serious if loan words are needed in case the native language /mother tongue/ fails to translate technical terms and scientific terminologies. Such problems prevent from using the language more extensively and flexibly in schools. In such situations, the language may resort to loan words to incorporate in to the language to compensate its deficiencies.

Although it is possible to incorporate loan words to supplement the language's deficiency, too much loan words in the language may put an impression in the learners that their language is not suitable for learning.

2.5 Opposing Views on the Use of Mother Tongue as a Medium of Instruction

Opinions on the provision of education in relation to the use of language as a medium of instruction has been debated among different scholars, educators, professionals, intellectuals and professionals. Some argue in favor of the use of mother tongue as medium of instruction because of its pedagogical, sociological and psychological opportunities (as discussed under 2.3.1-2.3.3) it provides to the learners. While others argue against its use on the ground that it may result in social, economic and political plight to the society at large.

In the section that follows, some of these divergent views (for and against) on the use of mother tongue in education will be discussed in some detail.

2.5.1 Views in Favor of the Use of Mother Tongue

Scholars who support the use of mother tongue in education base their argument from the point of view of the linguistic rights of the child's learning in his/her mother tongue as highlighted in UNESCO's recommendation of (1953:11). "It is axiomatic that the best medium for teaching a child is in his mother tongue in (Cummins, 1981:40)." And this use of mother tongue be extended as late a stage of education as possible (UNESCO, 1965, in McNab, 1989:15). Collins being one of the supporters of mother tongue education

promotes the same principle saying: "Language is a basic human right; just as there is an individual right in the choice of religion, so is an individual right to the choice of language" (1996:354-355).

That means, children who are deprived of their right to learn in their own languages they not only fail to perform well in school but also become alienated from their own language and culture. The negative consequence of violating the child's honored right in learning in his mother tongue has also been strongly emphasized. Cummins (2006:7) for instance observes that:

To reject a child's language in the school is to reject the child. ...when the message... "leave your language and culture at the schoolhouse door," children also leave a central part of who they are their identities at the schoolhouse door. When they feel this rejection, they are much less likely to participate actively and confidently in classroom situation.

This means that if the children's mother tongue as a language of learning is rejected, they fail to perform well in school because their motivation and interest to learn will be reduced. This leads to resentment and frustration on the part of the students and the people towards a radical political doctrine (Franke, 1965) in Wolfson (1986:352).

Other proponents of mother tongue education also strongly oppose the idea of rejecting the child's mother tongue as language of learning by expressing it as a kind of "forced acculturation and a process of stripping identity" (Chin, et al, 1991 in Christen, 1996:110). Other scholars support mother tongue education on the ground that"

children who are let to learn from materials drawn from literature of the language alien to them which may emphasize on the culture, history, and other contextualization irrelevant to their own ethnicity, this would be wasting children's valuable time, and learning would also be devoid of meaning to them (Bowen, 1977; Tucker, 1977).

Hence, according to these scholars, children need to learn from historically and culturally relevant content for activities in their curricular materials if they are to progress effectively in their educational system.

Other scholars promote mother tongue education for reasons such as students participate actively in the classroom without language hindrance Gfeller, (1999:19); their learning in their mother tongue creates a comfortable situation, lower level of stress and develop competence in the school work confidently, (Schultz, 2001:126); they form concepts much faster than when they use any kind of unfamiliar language Wolfson (1985:289); it ensures the survival of the language and development in its literacy form as well as help create a harmonious society with equal opportunities such as jobs, and geographical mobility are few among others.

2.5.2 Views Against the Use of Mother Tongue

Mother tongue education though has been supported by many scholars because of the pedagogical, sociological and psychological opportunities it offers to children and to those of the language speaking nationalities it also meets with strong resistance and criticism from other scholars as a radical and misdirected way of learning.

Scholars like Hary Broudy (1975:175); Hirsch (1988); Arthur Sihlesinger, (1992); Diane Ravich (1990b); Olnek (1990) and Mattai (1992) in christen, (1996:1-2) argue that “educating children in their mother tongue is divisive and will lock out minority groups from the system by failing to teach them to participate both the culture of ones country and the intellectual and artistic achievements of the human race”. That means children who are let to learn in their mother tongue will make them think only about their own culture and reflect their won local identity, as a result, they will not have access to much of the world’s knowledge.

Others oppose mother tongue education stating “Though educating children in their mother tongue increases participation and combats educational disadvantages, it stimulates ethnic separatist tendency. It is divisive in its principle and harmful to the development of a multicultural and multilingual society (Epstein, 1997; Porter, 1990; Padilla, 1991; in Levine, 1992:380).

Other opponents of mother tongue education also promote the same principle saying:

Separating schools along national divisions (by nationality) in education within one country is unquestionably harmful and will (only) exacerbate latent community conflicts. ...It affects relationships between different age groups and generations of the same family (Lewis, 1962:93) (Garunov, 1972:7, 11).

According to these Scholars, allowing diverse languages to flourish thorough the system of mother tongue education can cause division among the citizens and may potentially lead to antagonism among the diverse ethnicities stemming from language differences. To avert this situation, Lewis (1962); Garunov (1972) also recommend that education if given in the nation's majority language [official/national] will help create a harmonious society and contributes to nation cohesion and national integration.

Contrary to this assumption, Collins (1996:353) counter argue on the so called dominant language use (national or otherwise), as a medium of instruction so as to maintain nation cohesion and political stability by briefly stating:

...the use of one language, the dominant language does not determine a country's national unity. Diversity of language and national unity can co-exist. The co existence of two or more languages is rarely a cause of tension, disunity or strife. Rather, it is political, economic and religious differences as prominent cause for the perceived problems (Collins, 1996:353).

That means, allowing diverse languages to thrive through mother tongue education, according to Collins, does not perpetuate the language minorities for civil strife nor does it result in regional or national disunity as well as inter group conflict more than political, economic or religious factors. That is why scholars like Monsoon (1989:50) and Gfeller (1999) on the roles different languages play in different situations and for different purposes briefly state as follows.

Different languages have different roles to play. The mother tongue has a role. The nationality language has a role and the official language has a role of its own. They are complementary and can coexist peacefully.

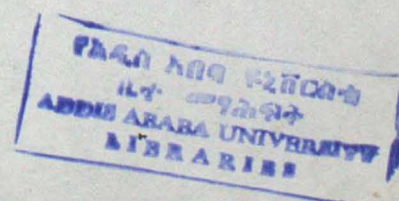
That means language planning, in a multi lingual country must balance the use of mother tongue national (official) language even a language of wider communication choosing which roles each language should play in the society.

Other opponents of mother tongue education, as one of its draw backs, assert that “children learning in them mother tongue are not cognitive flexible and are not able to analyze linguistic meaning than are monolingual children (Cummins, 1979 b); Albert and (Obler, 1978) cited in Thonis (1981:162).

This has been shared by Vigotskii (1962) and Tucker (1972) who critiqued mother tongue as a medium of instruction by arguing that it could inhibit children not to express the same thought in different languages and not to see their language as one particular system among many.

In addition this, mother tongue education is opposed for reasons such as:

- The learner will be restricted to his own immediate language community.
- Lack of adequately trained teachers and trainers
- The learner may not expect what other communities offer such as job opportunities
- The costs of developing every language in their respective nationalities is exorbitant
- Contextualizing the curriculum to fit the different cultures, history etc of the diverse language communities is time consuming.
- Switching from mother tongue medium to another medium of instruction at a higher level may create problem to children.
- Learning a language of wider communication is important for life in the 20th century.
- Newly developed languages are inadequate for science and technology of today's world



- There is more than one right way to talk and that different languages forms are appropriate in different contexts
- The learner will not have too much of the worlds' knowledge

2.6 Mother Tongue Based Education in Africa

All African countries are of multilingual communities. In these diverse language communities in Africa, implementing the principle of mother tongue as a language of learning has long been a major challenge to some, particularly due to the language of the colonizers that dominates the system of education during the pre-colonial period.

After these countries have gained their independence, they preferred to retain the language they have inherited due to several reasons. For instance due to the fact that the recognition of one over the other of the languages may lead to a series of demands from advocates of other languages which they can ill afford (Whitley, 1970; in Fishman, 1974:178). Others demand the retention of the colonial language in the belief that it would be impossible to raise the local languages to being the sole vehicle of instruction after almost a complete neglect of their languages for a number of years while under the colonial rule (Altoma, 1969; cited in Fishman, 1974:288).

Contrary to these assumptions, countries like Tanzania who had languished under the colonial rule and where the colonial language, English, was formerly used for all purposes and at all stages, was perfectly replaced by an African language for the purposes English had previously served.

In addition to the effort made by Tanzania to give new dignity to the indigenous language, Swahali, so as to serve for almost all purposes and at all stages, the following African countries, the effort they have exerted, their determination and the sacrifice they have paid in trying to implement their local language as a medium of instruction is to be appreciated. The following few paragraphs are devoted to experiences of the African countries in utilizing the indigenous language as a medium of instruction.

2.6.1 Algeria

Of all the north African Countries which had suffered most in its quest to make Arabic as a medium of instruction was Algeria, for it was under French rule for no less than 132 years (1830-1962) (Fishman, 1974:289).

By the year 1962, after 132 years under French rule, "it was almost impossible even for most members of Algerian constituents to express themselves in their own national language, Arabic." The most serious problems were the obstacle laid before the government in introducing Arabic in to the educational system so as to be used as a medium of instruction.

Fishman (1974:289) described the language status of Arabic in Algeria (after in dependence) as follows:

By 1962 the year of independence, it was not surprising to see most members of the Algerian Constituent Assembly in capable of expressing themselves in their national language, Arabic, nor was it unexpected for Algeria to face unprecedented obstacles in its drive for Arabizing in schools.

During French Dominated Educational System, the time allotted for instruction in Arabic language in Algeria was quite minimal, often two hours a week; and even the private traditional Arabic institutions were not allowed to develop (Gordon 1964:39; in Fishman, 1974:289).

Regarding the serious language problems the country was facing after independence, the then president of Algeria, Ben Bella, stated it bitterly in the following terms:

There has been a contradiction [in Algeria] and these will be one for a long time to come: one feels in Arabic, one thinks in Arabic but often one expresses oneself and cultivates one self in French. The danger is that the personality suffers from disequilibrium which to one extent or another ...we [Algerians] need to enter into possession of our language in order to develop ourselves, to raise our selves" (Fishman, 1974:289).

In spite of the problems facing Algeria to raise Arabic as a medium of instruction, within one year (1962-1963), the number of hours to teaching Arabic received a considerable share of the time devoted to the general curriculum in both primary and secondary schools with the gradual increase in the subsequent years (UNESCO, 1964:3, 1965:4; in Fishman, 1974:289).

However, the program towards using Arabic as a medium of instruction was hampered due to shortage of qualified teachers who teach in the nationality language, which enforced the country to call upon for help for material resources including teachers from other Arab countries and to resort to massive recruitment of teachers some of whom had only primary school diplomas.

Moreover, in order to limit the lowering of educational standards, the non qualified teachers were made to receive special training over a period of six years. Training of new teachers and preparation of teaching and learning materials were among the other measures taken for effective use of Arabic as a medium of instruction.

As a result of such effort, the problems associated with teachers and preparing adequate materials in Arabic was resolved. In 1965, the use of Arabic as the language of instruction was applied to pupils enrolled in grade one and continued a policy of rapid Arabization in other grades as well (UNESCO, 1965:11).

2.6.2 Morocco

Before Morocco gained its independence from France in 1956, it was French that dominated the educational system of that country; where as Arabic, the indigenous language was accorded a low status, treated as a foreign language in its own territory.

However, after independence, it was a felt need by the people of Morocco to give new dignity to their own indigenous language, to serve as a language of learning by replacing the French oriented educational system (Altoma, 1957) in (Fishman, 1974:286). The plan, however, had not proceeded without facing two opposing trends. The opposition was

based on nationalism and religion on one side, and of pedagogical considerations on the other.

Those who were strongly associated with nationalism and Islam favored an immediate and maximum Arabizing; whereas others, though, accepting the importance of Arabization, preferred their pupils to be provided with basic education in French and to maintain an effective educational system than to proceed with Arabic language.

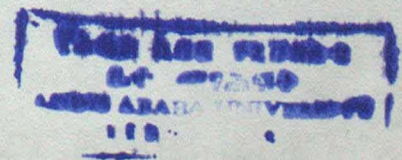
An editorial published in "Al-Istiglal" in October 16, 1956 reflected the dimension of this problem by saying:

If we are happy to see our languages finally given the importance it deserves, we are no less eager that our children go to school. If the number of teachers capable of teaching in Arabic is sufficient, we would peer see our children learn French rather than leaving them in the streets. Zartman (1964:158-159) cited in Fishman (1974:286).

Morocco's people skepticism for transition from French to Arabic language stem from the belief that Arabic may not be utilized as efficiently as French language as a medium of instruction for Arabic language by then might have lost sight of facts,

Finally, a consensus was reached for Arabic to serve as an official educational language. As per the Ministry of National Educational Plan of 1956-1957, Arabic was used as a medium of instruction for the first time in grade 1 and instruction in the remaining 4 grades was made to be equally divided between French and Arabic (Altoma, 1957) in (Fishman 1974:287). Nevertheless, by the end of 1958, due to shortage of qualified teachers and inadequate planning, the effort to Arabize primary schools resulted in lowering in the quality of education (Al-toma, 1956) writing for (UNESCO, 1961; in Fishman, 1974:287).

In order to overcome the shortage of qualified teachers and other pedagogical materials, the country has to turn to other Arab countries for guidance and assistance. This gave rise to the formation of Arab conference on Arabization held in Rabat in 1961. The conference studied all the problems that faced Morocco. It made all the necessary



preparations, trained teachers and prepared pedagogical materials in Arabic in different subjects. This laid the foundation for continuous progress to be made in Arabizing Morocco's educational system.

UNESCO's year book for 1965 states that by October 1964, primary education in Morocco was entirely Arabized as language of instruction (Fishman, 1974:287).

2.6.3 Tunisia

Among those few North African countries that had exerted a tremendous effort to make Arabic as a medium of instruction, at least at lower primary level was Tunisia.

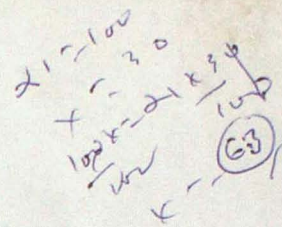
Despite such a strenuous effort made by the Tunisian government to use Arabic as a sole medium of instruction, the drive for immediate Arabization was not destined to prevail (Lelong, 1956:415-422; Gordon, 1964:74 cited in Fishman, 1974:288). A desperate shortage of qualified teachers and the absence of adequate instructional materials almost forbade Tunisia for such action as much as it had been desired. Arab Information Center (1966; 247-248 in Fishman 1974:288).

However, because of Tunisian government and other progressive educationalists firm determination and effort, the program was able to make well-timed progress. Hence, during the first two years of independence (1956-1958), education in the first and second grade had been Arabized, but bilingual instruction (in French and Arabic) was proposed in the remaining grades. Contrasting this view however, an official document maintains that the majority of subjects were taught in Arabic during the last four years of primary school (Arab Information Center 1966:248; in Fishman, 1974:288).

As have been shown in the chapter that preceded, the experiences of those three north African countries, particularly Algeria with diverse language communities, might give a lesson to other African countries who even consider, the use of a single language within a linguistically diverse communities, is a challenge to utilize for educational, administrative and other purpose which these countries have otherwise proved possible.

CHAPTER THREE

Research Design and Methodology



3.1 Method of the Study

The objective of this study was to investigate into the opportunities and challenges of teaching and learning in Sidamigna as a medium of instruction in the first cycle primary schools of some randomly selected Weredas of Sidama zone and one purposely selected Kifle Ketema Administrative town. The study was intended to forward possible solutions to the problems identified while implementing the mother tongue program into practice. To achieve this end, a descriptive survey method was employed.

3.2 Sources of Data

The data sources for the study were:

1. First cycle primary school Sidama language subject teachers, students and principals
2. First cycle primary school students' parents
3. Zonal, Wereda and Kifle Ketema Education bureau officials of the sample schools.

3.3 Population Samples and Sampling Techniques

Sidama zone consists of greater homogeneous social group. Being homogeneous in many respects and particularly with regard to language in education at first cycle primary school level, selection of a few representative samples is believed to throw light upon the whole population. This was supported by Aggarwal (1991:218).

In the study, simple random sampling, purposive and availability sampling techniques were employed. Hence, out of a total of 21 Weredas in Sidama zone, two Weredas were selected by applying simple random selection technique. These Weredas were: Shebedino Wereda and Wondogenet Wereda. From each Wereda, one school was selected using

simple random sampling technique. These schools were: Leku Primary School from Shebedino Wereda and Baja Primary School from Wondogenet Wereda.

In addition to the randomly selected two Weredas in Sidama zone, Tulla Kifle Ketema, under Awassa Administrative town comprising of 11 primary schools which also employs Sidamigna as a medium of instruction, was selected using purposive sampling technique to understand the characteristics of urban schools with regard to language in education. Hence, out of total of 11 schools from Tulla Kifle Ketema administrative town, Bushullo Primary School was selected by applying simple random sampling technique.

In case of the selection of student respondents, from the sample population, 40 students of grade 4 from each school i.e. a total of 120 students were selected using simple random sampling technique out of which 106 questionnaires were filled and returned. As has been mentioned earlier, only grade 4 students from the sample schools were selected in the study with the belief that they are matured enough to provide the information needed to the questionnaires and focus group discussions and to have at least stayed in the school (highest level) for more than three years learning through their mother tongue (Sidamigna).

To represent samples for teachers, all those teachers who teach the subjects that are given in Sidamigna were selected by applying availability sampling technique. That means, a total of nine teachers, three from each school were subjects of the study. One teacher, the tenth one, didn't return the questionnaire.

Since the study mainly focused on the issue of mother tongue, those teachers who teach in Amharic and English were excluded from the study. Moreover, to obtain data pertaining to conditions at a higher level whose role type and responsibility is to see to it that mother tongue education is effectively implemented, three directors, one from each sample schools were selected using availability sampling technique. Moreover, four education bureau officials: two from Weredas one from Zonal and one from Kefle Ketema were selected using purposive sampling technique.

Implementing a policy of mother tongue as a medium of instruction calls for parents to understand the benefits it offers to their children (Gudmand, 2003:90). With this in mind, 21 parents of students from the sampled Weredas in their respective schools were selected for the study using simple random method of selection with the belief that they could provide valid and reliable information needed for the study.

3.4 Data Gathering Instruments

The main data gathering instruments employed in the study were questionnaires, interviews and focus group discussions.

Data excepting that of open ended questionnaires were collected using statements of Likert type (**each with five choices**) so that students, teachers and principals would give their responses by selecting either **strongly agree, agree, undecided, disagree or strongly disagree**.

Based on these, three types of questionnaires were prepared to collect-data from teachers, students and directors. The questionnaire for teachers consists of six main parts in which teachers were asked to give answers regarding their own general background information, their feelings towards mother tongue education, the quality and condition of training, availability of curriculum materials, the appropriacy of the language for instructional purposes as well as an assessment of the Sidama language skills of both the teachers themselves and that of their students.

- The questionnaire for students consists of four main parts which seeks information from the respondents about their own background information, their reaction towards learning in their mother tongue, language choice, subject preference, the level of their language proficiency as well as the adequacy of instructional materials.

Another set of questionnaire was developed to be filled by directors which demands the informants' background information, availability of teaching and learning materials as well as items which seeks the respondents to indicate the student-textbook ratio for those subjects considered in the questionnaire. Moreover, closed and open - ended questions

were also forwarded demanding the respondents to write possible suggestions which they think should be included.

Interview guides were also used to secure both first hand and additional information from EBOs, students, teachers, parents and principals. The interview was considered as main data collection instruments for it gives the researcher ample opportunities for clarification and to ask questions appropriate to the knowledge of the researcher and to adapt techniques to the circumstances.

Focus group discussion guides were also prepared to enrich the information gathered through questionnaires for both the teachers and students. The focus group discussions with teachers and students was employed because group interview is believed to help raise learning difficulties in which respondents could raise, extend and challenge each other's ideas (Cohen, 1994:287).

3.5 Procedures of Data Collection

Prior to the administration of the instruments to the sample population, two facilitators (assistant data collectors) were employed for their Sidama language skills, academic qualifications and familiarity to the area. Then the questionnaires which were prepared first in English were translated into Amharic and Sidamigna for teachers and students respectively on the prior approval of my advisor and the educational experts in the Zone. To ensure the validity, reliability and practical value of the instruments, a pilot test was conducted in one randomly selected primary school, Btekihnet Primary School, which uses mother tongue as a medium of instruction. After the practical values and aims of the study was outlined and cleared to the respondents, the instruments were pre-tested with 11 students of grade 4; 5 teachers and a director. Through the pilot test, problems were screened and ineffective test items were cut out. *(cancelled)*

Finally, when the instruments were ready in their final shape after the necessary modifications were made based on the feedback obtained from the respondents, they were dispatched to the respondents to be answered. During the data administration process, all

Dawo 2008
2 16

the necessary clarifications were being given by the researcher and his assistant researcher in both Amharic and Sidamigna for questions raised from the individual respondents.

3.6 Data Analysis

The data gathered through questionnaires, interviews and focus group discussions were analyzed using both quantitative and qualitative methods. The data gathered through questionnaires were analyzed quantitatively using frequency counts and percentages. Where as, the data gathered through interview and focus group discussions were analyzed qualitatively using descriptive statements and explanations.

Exception to this was the data for the principals questionnaire which were analyzed qualitatively. Since the number of the respondents was so small (three in number) it was unnecessary to analyze the data in percentages.

CHAPTER FOUR

Presentation, Analysis and Interpretation of the Data

In the chapter that follows, the data that had been gathered through questionnaires interviews, focus group discussions will be presented, analyzed and interpreted both qualitatively and quantitatively.

4.1 Background Information of the Respondents

Items related to age, sex, qualification, service year and mother tongue of those teachers, students, parents, principals and educational bureau officials who responded to the questionnaires and interviews is presented in table 4.1 below.

Table 4.1 Background of the Respondents

No	Items	Respondents									
		Teachers		Students		Principals		EBOs*		Parents	
		No=9	%	No 106	%	No 3	%	No=4	%	No 21	%
1	Sex: A. Male	5	55.56	65	61.32	3	-	4	100	14	66.67
	B. Female	4	44.44	41	38.68	-	-	-	-	7	33.33
	Total		100	106	100	3	-	4	100	21	100
2	Age: A. 10-12	-	-	65	61.32						
	B. 13-15	-	-	33	31.13						
	C. 16-19	-	-	8	7.55						
	D. 20-24	9	22.22	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	E. 25-29	2	11.11	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	F. 30-34	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	4.76
	G. 35-39	-	22.22	-	-	1	-	1	25	5	23.81
	H. 40-41	2	11.11	-	-	1	-	-	-	4	19.05
	I. 45-49	1	22.22	-	-	-	-	3	75	4	19.05
	J. >50	2	11.11	-	-	-	-	-	-	7	33.33
	Total	9	99.99			3	-	4	100	21	100
3	Educational level										
	A. Certificate	9	100			-	-	-	-	-	-
	B. Diploma	-	-			3	-	2	50	-	-
	C. First degree	-	-			-	-	2	50	-	-
Total	9	100			-	-	4	100	-	-	
4	Service in year										
	A. 1-5	3	33.33			1	-	-	-	-	-
	B. 6-11	-	-			-	-	-	-	-	-
	C. 12-15	3	33.33			1	-	-	-	-	-
	D. 16-20	-	-			1	-	2	50	-	-
	E. 21-25	2	22.22			-	-	2	50	-	-
	F. 26-30	1	11.11			-	-	-	-	-	-
	G. >30	-	-			-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	9	99.99			3	-	4	100	-	-	
5	Language										
	A. Sidamigna	7	77.78	89	83.96	2	66.67	4	100	15	71.43
	B. Non Sidamas	2	22.22	17	16.04	1	33.33	-	-	6	28.57
Total	9	100	106	100	3	100	4	100	21	100	

N.B:- A - Sidamigna = Native Speakers of Sidamigna B – Non Sidamas = (Teachers, Students and Principals)

- Teachers and Principals – bilinguals who speak the students' mother tongue
- Students - who can speak Sidamigna among themselves and to address the teacher in the classroom (in the teaching learning process)

As indicated in table 4.1 (55.56%) and (44.44%) of the teachers who filled in the questionnaires were males and females respectively. What this result seems to suggest is that since there is almost a balance in gender between male and female teachers, females are competing with their counterpart males in joining the teaching profession. Moreover, from among the respondents of 106 students, 65 (61.32%) are males and 41 (38.68%) are female students which shows that there is a ratio of imbalance between the two groups. In addition to this, regarding gender, all education bureau officials, and school principals are males, 100% in each case. Whereas, the percentage of male parents exceeds the female respondents by 50% i.e. 14 (66.67%) males and 7(33.33%) females respectively. This shows that the participation of females in the educational leadership in the zone is very low. The office work is mainly dominated by males by virtual of their training and access to special areas of knowledge and skill. This in turn will have influence on female education as lack of role model. Even male parents seem to have much greater role to play in making decisions publicly concerning the school affairs of their children

With respect to age, more than 55% of the teachers. 66.67% of the principals, 25% of education bureau officials and 28.57% of the parents fall within the age range of 20-39 years, where as the remaining, 44.4% of the teachers, 75% of education bureau officials and 71.43% of the parents are within the age range of 40-50 years. This implies that both the young and experienced teachers are involved in teaching the young generation in the zone where there is a possibility of sharing experiences in areas of inadequacies and deficiencies with respect to knowledge and skill. Moreover, as the data reveals, 75% of education bureau officials are within the age range of 40-50 years. Hence, the presence of more matured education bureau officials makes the response (they give) to be more reliable.

With regard to students' age, the majority, 61.32% of the students, fall within the age range of 10-12 years; where as 31.13 and 7.55% of them are within the age range of 13-15 and 16-19 years respectively. This implies that the introduction of mother tongue education system has provided opportunities not only for school age children, but also to

those past school-age groups to participate fully in the program. The participation/presence of matured children in turn makes the response they give to the questionnaire and focus group discussions more valid and reliable.

With regard to the educational level of the teachers and school principals (in the same table), all teachers and school principals, 100% in each case, are certificate and diploma holders respectively which is believed to have fulfilled the criteria set by the ministry of education to smoothly run their day-to-day activities in their respective positions. Whereas, out of the total number of 4 education bureau officials, 2 (50%) of them are degree holders and the remaining 2 (50%) are diploma holders which they believed could qualify them to manage or smoothly run the mother tongue education at Zonal, Wereda and Kifle Ketema level in the respective positions they are entitled to. Since all EBOs have a longer work experience, they are believed to be capable of shouldering the responsibilities in managing the educational affairs in their respective positions.

With regard to year of experience, the majority, 6 (66%) of the teachers and 2 school principals have already served between 1-15 years, out of which, 3 (50%) of the teachers and one of the principals have a service year of 1-5 years, and the other 3 teachers and 1 principal have served between 12-15 years. Moreover, the same data reveals that, the rest, 3 (33%) of the teachers and 1 school principal have a service year of 21-30 years and 16-20 years respectively. On the other hand, out of the total of 4 EBOs, 2 (50%) of them and the other 2 (50%) have a service year of 21-25 years and 16-20 years respectively. This shows that teachers, principals and EBOs are matured enough to effectively manage and respond to situations with matured judgment.

Concerning language (mother tongue), table 4.1 also shows that a large proportion of the respondents, more than 77 % of the teachers, more than 83% of the students, 2 of the school principals and 71% of the parents speak Sidamigna as their mother tongue, whereas 2 (22.2%) of the teachers 17% of the students, 3 of school principals and 28.57% of the parents are non native speakers of Sidamigna. As the data reveals, all the respondents to

the questionnaires and interviews are speakers of Sidamigna which is believed to make the study more valid and reliable.

4.2 The Reaction of Students, Teachers, Parents and Principals Towards the use of Sidamigna as a medium of Instruction

The effectiveness of language policy in education is determined by the feelings teachers, students' parents, the community, etc have towards its use for instructional purposes and on the purposes and benefits it offers to the participating groups.

Hence, a clear understanding on the benefits and purposes of using mother tongue as a medium of instruction by those beneficiaries is something that has to be under lined. Following are the responses of students, teachers, parents and principals on the use of Sidamigna as a medium of instruction.

4.2.1 Students' Response towards Using Sidamigna as a Medium of Instruction

In tables 4.2a-(page 41) the responses obtained from students regarding their reaction towards their own language (Sidamigna) as a medium of instruction is presented.

Table 4.2a: Students' Opinion towards Learning in their own Mother Tongue (Sidamigna)

No	Items	SA		A		UD		DA		SD		TOTAL	
		No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
7	I am happy to learn in Sidama language	67	63.21	13	12.26	8	7.55	8	7.55	10	9.43	-	-
10	My learning in Sidama language has helped me to actively participate in the classroom through asking and answering questions	76	71.70	18	16.98	2	1.89	4	3.77	6	5.66	-	-
15	Learning in my mother tongue has helped me to feel proud and have confidence in my self	44	41.50	25	23.6	13	12.3	17	16.0	7	6.6	-	-
21	I would be happy if I continue learning all subjects in Sidamigna beyond grade 4	34	32.08	10	9.43	11	10.38	24	22.64	27	25.47	-	-

Keys SA = Strongly Agree A = Agree UD = Un Decided D = Disagree SD = Strongly Disagree

As the data in item 7 of (table 4.2a) shows, out of the total of 106 students, 80 (75.47%) of them had optimistic view towards learning in their own mother tongue. Out of this, 67(63.21%) of them showed their strong agreement and 13(12.26%) of them with agreement. To the contrary, a small number of respondents, 18 (16.98%) of were pessimistic towards learning in their mother tongue showing by 10(9.43%) strong disagreement and 8(7.55%) disagreement. The remaining 8(7.55%) of them took neutral positions. Over all, more than 75% of the students were evaluated significantly in favour of learning in their mother tongue (Sidamigna), a fact that encourages the further implementation of mother tongue education at the level it is being given now.

On the other hand, those students who had pessimistic view towards learning in there mother tongue were given the opportunities to state their reasons through taped focus group discussions. They forwarded the following points as their major reasons:

- Our learning in Sidamigna does not have continuity in the subsequent grade levels. It terminates at grade 4 level. There after, the medium of instruction will be in English.
- Sidama language is our own, we already know it, from the time we were born. We and our parents can speak and use it fluently. We want to learn in either Amharic or English which are languages of wider communication.
- Our parents are not happy in our learning in our mother tongue. They would rather prefer our learning in English.
- Job opportunities elsewhere are available for those who speak Amharic and English in our own country itself.
- We don't get much knowledge through learning in our own language alone.

One very interesting point forwarded by the majority of the respondents during the group interview was quite illuminating. In their statement they said "We are happy for our language is used as a language for education on equal footings with those of other

languages even equal to those ones dominant in the country. Using our own language, we are also able to follow our lessons without difficulty. This gives us to have the moral and confidence in our own language.” This shows that the students appreciate and approve learning in their mother tongue but lack the commitment and interest to practically use it for instructional purpose. They prefer to learn in either Amharic or English. In line with this, the students choice of Amharic and English seems to go in line with what Gefeller (1998:193) has also stated, “Amharic and English are relevant language to enable geographical, social, and intellectual mobility on national and international level”.

Concerning item 10, the vast majority of the students, 94(88.68%) of them agreed that their learning in Sidamigna has helped them to actively participate in the classroom through asking and answering questions. This received support by 76(71.70%) strong agreement and 18(16.98%) agreement. On the other hand, only 10(9.93%) of them showed their disagreement by 4(3.77%) disagreement and 6(5.66%) strong disagreement. The rest, only 2(1.89%) of item gave neutral ratings. As the data reveals, the majority of the students asserted that their learning in their own language has helped them to actively participate in the classroom without being hindered by lack of language. It has helped them express their ideas/thoughts without difficulty. As Gefeller also states “Learning in their mother tongue, enhances understanding and frees the thinking of the child. It helps to express their ideas with ease and confidence” (1999:9, 19).

In line with this, Hoben (1994:167) also states that students achieve better academically because the medium of instruction is in their mother tongue which can reduce difficulties learning through in a second or foreign language.

In response to the question of whether their (the students’) learning in their mother tongue has helped them to feel proud and have confidence in themselves, the great majority, 69(67.86%) of them showed their agreement that it had helped them to feel proud and develop confidence in themselves in which case, 44(41.50%) with strong agreement and 25 (21.70%) with agreement. On the other hand, 24(22.6%) of them i.e. 17 (16%) and 7 (6.6%) of them expressed their strong disagreement and disagreement respectively that it

(their learning in mother tongue) didn't help them to feel proud and have confidence in themselves. The remaining 13 (12.13%) of them were indifferent. That means the students learning in their mother tongue was a great opportunity for them to feel proud and develop confidence in themselves and in that of their own language as equally useful as language for learning and for developing into a writing system. However, those 24 (22.6%) of the students who were against is something that should not be over looked. The taped focus group discussion with parents in one of the sample schools reveals that most of the parents consider their children's learning in the mother tongue as an imposition against their will.

The data which received support by the majority 69(67.86%) of the respondents above is also in line with what scholars have stated in that "Children's learning in their mother tongue gives them pride in their own language and culture" (Wolfson, 1985:392); and "Children whose language has been introduced into the school system develop a sense of ownership and self confidence in their own capacity to learn" (Gfeller, 1999:8).

As item 21 indicates, students were asked if they favor the extension of using Sidamigna as a medium of instruction beyond grade 4. For this, the majority, 51 (48.11%) of the students rejected the extension, and 44(41.51%) favored the extension above grade 4, and 11 (10.38%) had reservations. Those students who rejected the extension were approached through focus group interview and open ended questions to briefly state their reasons. The students who misclaimed the extensions gave the following as the major reasons.

- We don't start our education from kindergarten
- Learning through Sidamigna will take us no where;
- The desperate shortage of textbook that prevailed at present at grade 4 level will no doubt be more serious as we go further in the subsequent grade levels.
- More jobs are available through mastery of either Amharic or English;

- Advanced education in Ethiopia is available in English not in Sidamigna.

This shows that the existing desperate shortage of educational materials in their own language and the role English and Amharic play as languages of wider communication which facilitate geographical social and intellectual mobility seems to discourage them from learning in their mother tongue. Moreover, the use of the mother tongue is restricted to only at grade 4 level; this put suspicion on the students not to continue learning in their mother tongue.

Table 4.2b: The Opinion of Students towards Learning in Sidamigna vis-a-vis in Amharic and English

No	Items	SA		A		UD		DA		SD		TOTAL	
		No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
8	Learning in Sidama language is wasting my time that I can use for learning in Amharic or English	20	18.87	21	19.81	19	17.93	33	31.13	13	12.26	-	-
11	Since I already know Sidama language, I prefer to learn in Amharic or English which are the official or international languages respectively	51	48.11	31	29.25	9	8.49	5	4.72	10	9.43	-	-
12	I can easily understand the subjects that are taught in Amharic or English better than in Sidama language	46	43.40	29	27.36	17	16.04	8	7.54	6	5.66	-	-

Keys SA = Strongly Agree A = Agree UD = Un Decided D = Disagree SD = Strongly Disagree

Regarding item 8, students were asked to respond whether or not the time they spend learning through the medium of their own language is a waste of time for learning in either Amharic or English. 46(43.39%) of the students expressed their disagreement that the time they spend learning in this own language is not time wasted for learning in either Amharic or English. This received favour by 13(12.26%) strong agreement and 33(31.13%) disagreement. To the contrary, 41(38.68%) of them showed their agreement that their learning in Sidamigna is wasting their time which they could have used for

their views that they have easy access to their lessons using Sidamigna as a medium of instruction. The remaining, 17(16.04%) of them were in between the two extremes.

Relating these findings, (items 11 and 12), to those in items 7, 10, and 15 in table 4.2a, one possible interpretation of these findings is that there seems to be conflicting emotions among the students in the use of Sidamigna (as compared to Amharic and English) as a medium of instruction. Their feelings are complex. They seem to have taken active interest and committed to learn in their own mother tongue, Sidamigna. They believe that they are happy to learn in their mother tongue (item 7), they also confirmed that their learning in Sidamigna has helped them to actively participate in the classroom, to follow their lessons without difficulty (item 10) and even to feel proud and to have confidence in themselves (item 15). But they took a firm stand towards using Amharic and English as a medium of instruction at the expense of all the opportunities they confirmed their learning in their mother tongue has provided them. This is a clear indication of the fact that students display a sort of love-hate complex associated with the motivation to learn and decision to make regarding their own language as useful for educational purpose. As the responses considered so far indicate, it can be concluded that the majority of the students do not prefer to learn in their mother tongue. Although the students enjoy and approve instruction in the mother tongue, the fact that the official language, Amharic and the international language, English as a language of wider communication seems to affect the teaching and learning in Sidamigna in the zone to be acceptable.

This analysis receives support form Fishman (1974:53) who briefly stats that "Not all languages are equally competent to fulfill a particular individual needs at any time when several languages are available". He further states that a person may be willing to accept one language for some purpose, for some purposes, he may find it suitable; in other circumstances, he may have a firm negative attitude towards it. Conflict can occur in the same person between his individual needs and capacities, and on the other, the demands of the group to which he is affiliated" (Fishman, 1974:55).

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Table 4.2c: Students' Response on the Opinion of Parents and the Community

No	Items	SA		A		UD		DA		SD		TOTAL	
		No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
9	My parents do not support my learning in Sidama language	39	36.8	21	19.81	13	12.26	12	11.32	21	19.81	-	-
16	The language community do not support the teaching and learning in Sidama language	39	36.79	23	21.70	8	7.55	15	14.15	21	19.81	-	-
18	My parents have understood the purposes and the benefits of learning in Sidama language	55	51.89	18	16.98	11	10.37	13	12.26	9	8.49	-	-

As the data in item 9 (table 4.2c) indicates, the vast majority, 60(56.61%) of the students reported that their parents do not support their learning in Sidamigna out of which, 39(36.8%) with strong agreement and 21(19.81%) of them with agreement. For the same question, 33(31.13%) of the students responded favorably that their parents support their learning in their mother tongue out of which 12(11.32%) and 21(19.81%) with disagreement and strong disagreement respectively, where as a small percentage of students, 13 (12.26%) of them gave neutral ratings.

Similarly, to the question of whether or not the language community favor the teaching and learning in Sidamigna, (see item 16, table 4.2c) the majority of the students 62(58.49%) also responded that the community do not favor of the teaching and learning in Sidamigna. This was specifically confirmed by 23(21.70%) agreement and 39(36.79%) strong agreement. Only a significant number of students 8 (7.55%) do not have a say in this.

The results in the two data is a clear indicator of the fact that the purposes and benefits of teaching and learning in the mother tongue has not much deeply penetrated into the minds of both the parents and the community. This was further confirmed through focus group discussions with teachers and principals who also stated that "Some parents and the community are not yet well aware of the purposes and benefits it offers to their children as well as to the parents and the community themselves." The teachers' response indicates that there seems to be lack of face-to-face contact with both stakeholders prior to and post

implementation of the mother tongue program. This in term calls for EBOs and other concerned bodies to go up to the community with initiatives of the involvement of both parents and the community. It rather seems that EBOs and concerned bodies never initiate the community's involvement in the education of their children using their mother tongue. The respondents further confirmed that "Even those who initiate parents and the community to send their children to learn in their mother tongue send their own children to schools which does not employ their mother tongue as a medium of instruction." The remark given by teachers respondents is also inline with what Alemu (1999:12) has written saying: "በገጠርም ሆነ በከተማ ያሉ የሲዳማ ተወላጆች የራሳቸውን ቋንቋ በመናቅ ልጆቻቸውን በአማርኛ ወደሚያስተምሩ ትምህርት ቤቶች ወስደው ስለሚያስተምሩና በሲዳምኛ መናገር የበታችነት ስለሚመስላቸው አማርኛን ያዘወትራሉ ባለቤቱ የናቀውን አሞሌ ባለአዳው ያቀለዋል"

Students benefit when parents understand the advantages of their children's learning in their mother tongue and when they are involved and support their schooling (Gudmund, 2003.90). In line with this, students were asked their opinion whether or not their parents have understood the purposes and benefits of their learning in their mother tongue. For this, (item 18), the majority 73(68.87%) of them believe that their parents have understood the aims and purposes of learning in their (Students) mother tongue. This was specifically supported by 55 (51.89%) strong agreement and 18 (16.98%) agreement as opposed to 22 (20.75%) disagreement out of which 13 (12.26%) and 9 (8.49%) by strong disagreement and disagreement respectively. The other, 11(10.38%) of them didn't have a say in this. Relating this data with the data in item 18, though the majority of the students, 73(68.87% of them confirmed that their parents have understood the aims and benefits of learning in their mother tongue, the parents seem to have taken a firm stand towards their children's learning in their mother tongue. The focus group discussion with students brought the same results. They stated that their parents are not in support of their learning in their mother tongue. The focus group interview with parents which reveals their preference to Amharic or English, the majority of whom preferred English rather than

Sidamigna as a medium of instruction, shows that the parents are not in support of their children's learning in their mother tongue.

Table 4.2d: Students' Opinion on Teachers' Competency and Consistent Use of the Language in the Classroom

No	Items	SA		A		UD		DA		SD		TOTAL	
		No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
17	I can easily understand when the teacher teaches Sidama language subjects in Sidamigna	55	51.9	33	31.13	7	6.60	7	6.60	4	3.77	-	-
19	Our teachers have adequate knowledge in teaching in Sidama language	75	70.75	17	16.04	11	10.38	-	-	3	2.83	-	-
20	Our teachers teach us all Sidama language subjects only in Sidamigna	23	21.70	16	15.09	15	14.15	38	35.85	14	13.21	-	-

As the data in item 17 indicates, the vast majority, 88(83.02%) of students have no difficulty understanding their teacher when he teaches Sidama language subjects in Sidamigna. Only 11(10.37%) of them face difficulty understating their teacher. 7 (6.60%) of them didn't have a say in this. That means the majority of the students can effectively communicate with their teacher in the classroom in the teaching-learning process; and this in turn shows that the teacher has both the skill of teaching and knowledge of the subject matter.

Regarding item 19, 92 (86.59%) of the students expressed their agreement that their teachers have adequate knowledge in teaching the subjects they learn in Sidamigna; where as, only 3 students (2.83%) of them expressed their disagreement; and the rest 11 (10.38%) of them have reservations on the teachers efficiency in teaching in Sidamigna. As the data indicates, much greater percentage of the students i.e. 92 (86.76%) of them approved the teachers skill and knowledge in Sidamigna. That means their teachers can

effectively impart their knowledge to their students using Sidamigna as a medium of instruction.

The data in item 20 also indicates that 52 (49.06%) of the students showed their disagreement that their teachers use only Sidamigna while teaching Sidama language subjects; and only 39 (36.79%) of them showed their agreement that their teachers are not consistent in using Sidamigna in the teaching learning process, and 15 (14.15%) of them gave neutral ratings. As the data shows, teachers are not consistently using Sidamigna in the teaching learning process. That means, they sometimes code switch or translate from Sidamigna to English or Amharic and the vice-versa. This again tests the teachers knowledge of English/Amharic who might not have adequate knowledge in either of the two languages. Though translation is possible for words that do not exist in the target language, and to which the language is short of new terminologies. Too much emphasis on translation may put the impression in the minds of the children that Sidamigna is not adequate enough for instructional purposes.

4.2.2 Teachers' Response towards the Use of Mother Tongue (Sidamigna) as a Medium of Instruction

Regarding the opinions teachers have towards using Sidamigna as a medium of instruction in the first cycle primary schools, teachers respondents were asked to rate pertinent items as: strongly agree, agree, undecided, disagree and strongly disagree. The results of the findings are summarized in table 4.3a next.

Table 4.3a: Teacher' Opinion towards Teaching in Mother Tongue (Sidamigna)

No	Item	SA		A		UD		D		SD		TOTAL	
		No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
1	Sidama language is difficult to teach	-	-	2	22.22	-	-	5	55.56	2	22.22	9	100
3	I prefer to teach in Amharic or English rather than in Sidamigna	2	22.22	2	22.22	-	-	3	33.33	2	22.22	9	100
6	The time spent for teaching children in their mother tongue (Sidamina) is time wasted for teaching in Amharic or English	-	-	-	-	-	-	8	88.89	1	11.11	9	100
14	I support teaching and learning in Sidamigna if extended beyond grade 4	5	55.56	2	22.22	-	-	2	22.2	-	-	9	100

As can be seen in item 1 of table 4.3a teachers were asked if Sidama language is difficult to teach. According to the data gathered, the majority, 77.78% of the teachers didn't believe that the language is difficult to teach with 55.56% disagreement and 22.22% with a strong disagreement. Only (22.22%) of them agreed that the language is difficult to teach. One possible interpretation of this data is that although the teachers who teach in the language for the subject they are trained to, belong to the language community who share the same language and culture with the participating students, the inadequacy of the duration of the training program they have undergone through which lasts for a maximum of 10 months, a few weeks and in some cases a month old training duration is believed to be the cause. This has been confirmed through taped focus group interview held with the teachers themselves all of whom (100%) of them stated that the training program was insufficient demanding additional training offerings.

As shown in item 3 of table 4.3a, more than 55% of the respondents don't prefer to teach in either Amharic or English with 33.33% of disagreement and 22.22% strong disagreement. To the contrary, 44.44% of the respondents would prefer to teach in either

Amharic or English rather than in Sidamigna with 22.22% agreement and disagreement in each case. This question was treated in focus group interview with teachers to give opportunities to those who showed preference to Amharic or English rather than Sidamigna. They gave the following reasons for their preference.

- The students low motivation and absence of interest to learn in their own language has discouraged us to teach in Sidamigna
- There is no opportunities as career incentives if we continued teaching in the children's mother tongue.
- There are no opportunities provided for us for further education in the field of teaching in Sidamigna.
- We don't get much knowledge through teaching only in Sidamigna.

The result of the study pointed out that if teachers lack interest and motivation to teach in the children's mother tongue, the interest and motivation of the students to learn in their own language will also be low. This creates suspicious in the minds of the children that their learning in their own language will take them no where and a waste of time. Even then, as Gudmund (2003:196) states, "Teachers of mother tongue need to be tolerant of diversity and employ their programs explicitly as designed without any prejudices." He further states that "Teachers are considered capable of changing the social relations of the classroom to better meet the goals of teaching the mother tongue and [even] change the attitudes of their students so as to learn in their mother tongue. They must act favorably to the philosophy behind what is developed." Contrary to the first response, however, students showed their motivation and interest to learn in their mother tongue.

For the statement "The time spent for teaching children in their mother tongue is time wasted for teaching them in Amharic/English" was unanimously rejected by all the respondents. More than 88% of them expressed their disagreement and 11.11% with a strong disagreement. The analysis indicates that most of the teachers know quite well that the use of the mother tongue is the most effective linguistic medium for children than the

use of another an unfamiliar language which goes to show that they have the interest, commitment and enjoy teaching in the mother tongue.

The last item, required the teachers' response whether or not they favor the extension of teaching in Sidamigna as a medium of instruction beyond grade 4. As the data reveals, the majority of the teachers confirmed their favorable attitude by 55.56% strong agreement and 22.22% of agreement. Over all, 78% of the respondents gave the higher ratings. Only 22.2% of them fail to agree on the same question. It is also important to observe that there is a remarkable diversity of opinion between the teachers and the students exposed to the same question; which are in opposite direction i.e. 55.55% strong agreement and 22.22% disagreement (for teachers) and 48.11% strong disagreement and 41.57% agreement (for students).

In spite of the teachers' interest and preparedness to serve/help the children and the community through teaching in the mother tongue, the children seem to be uncertain about the long term effect that their learning in their own mother tongue would have in their future life. They seem to have taken firm determination to learn in the official language, Amharic or the international language, English.

Table 4.3b: Teachers' Opinion on the Moral Characters of their Students in Learning in their Mother Tongue and its Contribution to the Language

No	Item	SA		A		UD		D		SD		TOTAL	
		No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
2	Using their mother tongue, children participate actively and enthusiastically in the classroom through asking and answering questions	4	44.44	5	55.56	-	-	-	-	-	-	9	100
7	Children's learning in their mother tongue has helped them to follow their lessons without difficulty	4	44.44	5	55.56	-	-	-	-	-	-	9	100
8	Children's learning in their mother tongue has helped them to feel proud in their own language and develop confidence in themselves	6	66.67	2	22.2	-	-	-	-	-	-	8	88.89
10	Children's learning in their mother tongue helps the language to survive and develop	6	66.67	3	33.33	-	-	-	-	-	-	9	100

In item 2, for the statement "Children participate in the classroom actively and enthusiastically using their mother tongue" has been supported by all the respondents. (100%) of them expressed their agreement and strong agreement by 55.56% and 44.44% respectively. The response obtained from teachers which received unanimous support is also in line with the response obtained from the students for the same question in item 4 of table 4.2a in the students questionnaire. As Wolfson (1985:289) states, students who learn in their mother tongue are likely to form concepts much faster than when they use any kind of second language.

In item 10 and 7 of table 4.3b above, the statements "Children's learning in their mother tongue helps the language to survive" and "helps the children to follow their lessons in the classroom without difficulty" respectively had received unanimous support from all the respondents; 100% in each case with strong agreement and an agreement of 66.6% and 33.3% respectively for (item 10), and with 44.44% and 55.56% of strong agreement and agreement respectively, for item 7. In support of this Collins (1996:54) states that "Educating the child in his mother tongue is vital for the survival of the language among the language communities, unless the minority languages are protected through educating the child in the mother tongue, the chances of the long term survival of the language in modern society is severely diminished. Hence, for such languages to survive in their respective communities, education must be given in the mother tongue." Collins further contends that "The child's learning in his/her mother tongue [creates a comfortable situation] in which he/she can participate actively and confidently in classroom situation (1996:241)."

Concerning item 8, teachers were also enquired if children's learning in their mother tongue has helped them to feel proud and have confidence in themselves. Almost all the respondents (88.89%) asserted that it did help them feel proud and develop confidence in themselves by 22.22% agreement and 66.66% strong agreement. Only (11.11%) didn't respond to this questionnaire.

Table 4.3c: Teachers' Response on the Views of Parents and the Community

No	Item	SA		A		UD		D		SD		TOTAL	
		No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
4	There is active support and encouragement from the community in the teaching and learning in the mother tongue (Sidamigna)	5	55.56	3	33.33	1	11.11	-	-	-	-	9	100
9	Parents are happy in their children's learning in their mother tongue	3	33.3	2	22.2	1	11.11	2	22.22	-	-	8	88.89
13	Parents and the language community know the aims and benefits of learning in Sidamigna	4	44.44	2	22.22	3	33.33	-	-	-	-	9	100

As the data in item 4 indicates, the community's support and encouragement to the philosophy behind the teaching and learning in the mother tongue (Sidamigna) received support by the majority of the respondents out of which, 55.56% with strong agreement and 33.33% of agreement and with a neutral rating of (11.11%). The result obtained from the teachers is contrary to the response obtained from the students for the same question which received the minority's support of 33.96% unfavorable response.

Similarly, teachers were also asked more or less a similar question what the reaction of the parents would be towards their children's learning in Sidamigna. For this, over 55% of the teachers replied that the parents are supportive of their children's learning in Sidamigna with 22.22% agreement and 33.33% strong agreement and with a disagreement of only 22.2%. This indicates that both the language community and the parents of the participating children are in support of the teaching and learning in Sidamigna (when assessed from the point of view of the teachers who are the active implementers of the mother tongue education). Relating this analysis with the analysis made on the data gathered from the students for the same questionnaire (item 9), it is the direct opposite which receives support by the minority of the student respondents by 31.13% agreement and with 56.61% disagreement. This shows that there is a

communication gap between parents and teachers in understanding the problems regarding the teaching and learning in Sidamigna. There is no close contact or meetings to discuss problems related to mother education between parents and the school community. Some teachers seem to be filled with impressions only that parents are supportive of their children's learning in their mother tongue.

As indicated in item 13, teachers were also asked to forward their opinions on whether or not parents and the community know the aims and benefits of teaching and learning in Sidama language. For this, the majority, 66.66% of them had the impression that both parents and the community have understood the benefits and aims of teaching and learning in Sidamigna with more than 22% and 44% agreement and strong agreement respectively and with a 33.3% liberal attitude. This analysis receives support from scholars like Gudmund (2003:90) who put it explicitly saying "A policy of mother tongue as a medium of instruction [calls] for parents to understand the advantages of their children's learning in their mother tongue for students benefit when the parents are involved and support their schooling." Thonis (1981:164) also asserts that "The interests, values and motives of students and their families depends on how well they are informed about the program of mother tongue education."

Table 4.3d: Teachers' Opinion on the Interest of the Children Learning in Sidamigna vis-à-vis Other Languages (Amharic or English)

No	Item	SA		A		UD		D		SD		TOTAL	
		No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
5	The children are not happy to learn in their mother tongue	-	-	-	-	1	11.11	4	44.44	4	44.44	9	100
12	Children's learning in their mother tongue doesn't offer them job opportunities in other language speaking communities	3	33.3	2	22.2	3	33.33	-	-	1	11.11	9	100
11	Since children already know their own language, they prefer to learn in the language of wider communication such as English or Amharic	1	11.11	2	22.22	1	11.11	4	44.44	1	11.11	9	100

The teachers' opinion towards their children's learning in their own language was favorable. Over 88% of the teachers gave the higher ratings with 44.44% agreement and strong agreement in each case. Only a significant number of the teachers (11.11%) gave neutral ratings. That means teachers are of the opinion that their students are happy to learn in their own language. This was in harmony with the response obtained from the students (for the same question) who showed favorable attitude towards learning in their own language.

Scholars have confirmed that children who are educated [only] in their mother tongue will be isolated or restricted to their immediate local community; they cannot interact with the wider community; they will not have the right to expect what other communities offer such as job opportunities (Gfeller, 1998:41). From this stand point, teachers were also asked if they also have the same opinion. According to the response obtained, 33.33% of them expressed their strong agreement and 22.22% with an agreement and with an 11.11% of strong disagreement and only (33.33%) of them with a neutral rating. That means the majority of the teachers, more than 55% of them, believe that learning through one's own mother tongue will deprive the learner of job opportunities in other language speaking communities. The results could be probably due to the fact that since Ethiopia is a mix of culture with a heterogeneous society, differences in attitudes between those who belong to the dominant language community and those subject groups (from different linguistic background) is believed to have brought the result.

The data in item 12 of table 4.3d reveals that over 55% of the teachers disagreed that because children already know their own language, they would prefer to learn in Amharic or English which are the official and international languages respectively. This was shown by 44.44% disagreement and 11.11% strong disagreement). To the contrary, 33.33% of them replied that they don't by 22.22% and 11.11% agreement and strong agreement respectively that because they (students) already know their own language, they prefer to learn in another language i.e. English or Amharic.

Relating this data with the data obtained from the students response for the same question (table 4.2b item 11), the result is a direct opposite which received support by the majority of the students by more than 77% (with agreement and strong agreement) (see item 11 table 4.2b of students' questionnaire) relative to more than 55% which received the majority's support from the teachers with disagreement and strong disagreement in total. In order to find out how such disparity in attitude prevailed between the students on one side and that of the teachers themselves on the other, teachers were exposed to taped focus group interview. The view they put forward was almost similar to the response obtained from the students during the focus group interview. (See the analysis given for item 7 of table 4.2a).

The reason they (teachers) gave was:

- the negative attitude some parents have towards their children's learning in their own language has lead them to be eager to learn in either Amharic or English.
- Since soon after grade 4, the children have to transfer to English medium, they prefer them learn in either Amharic or English.
- Inadequacy of textbook, complete absence of additional reading materials and dictionaries written in Sidamigna are what the teachers believe to be the major factors that tempt the students to resort to learning in either Amharic or English.

On the other hand, because the students' participation in the classroom through asking and answering questions as well as their performance in their class work and homework is so high, they were able to conclude that their students would prefer to learn in their own language rather than in Amharic or English.

4.2.3 The Reactions and/or Aspirations of Parents towards the Use of Sidamigna as a Medium of Instruction

In order to find out the attitude and aspiration of parents towards the use of Sidama languages a medium of instruction, 21 parents from the sample schools each represented

by one student were invited for a focus group interview and this had been tape recorded and transcribed. The questions put forward to the parents during the interview were: whether or not they were aware of the purposes and benefits of teaching and learning in the mother tongue; if the parents themselves and the language community support the teaching and learning in Sidama language; what language(s) they would prefer for their children to learn in as a medium of instruction; whether or not they had attended meetings with any concerned body to discuss matters related to the teaching and learning in Sidama language. Finally, the parents were also asked what improvements they would suggest if teaching and learning in Sidama language is to gain ground.

To the question of whether or not the parents have understood the aims and purposes of teaching and learning in the mother tongue, almost all parents invariably replied that they know the aims and purposes of teaching and learning in mother tongue. They stated that it would help the language to develop in its literary form and as a manifestation of the right given to them to use their own language for educational purposes.

To the question of whether or not they themselves, other parents and the community support the teaching and learning in Sidamigna as a medium of instruction, a remarkable diversity of views was put forward. Some parents said: "There are some parents and the community alike who are supportive of the teaching and learning in Sidamigna; on the other hand, there are still others who have not yet understood its benefits, and who as a result send their children in schools which uses English as a medium of instruction." Others pin pointed out that "some parents are emotional, they send their children to learn in their mother tongue, Sidamigna, without understanding the benefits it offers to the children." The response obtained during the focus group discussion held with teachers and principals on this same question of what the opinion of parents and the community is towards the language used as a medium of instruction was not different. Most of them replied that they don't believe that most parents have thoroughly understood its purpose and benefits and recommended the need for the involvement of parents in the education of their children.

Principals with no exception also stressed that some parents and the community send their children saying, "Since it is the time that brought in its wheel the idea of mother tongue education, we will accept it with grace."

Parents were also asked what language they would prefer for their children to learn in as a medium of instruction. Among the respondents, almost all the parents preferred either Amharic or English to be the medium of instruction. Of these two languages, the majority of them would rather prefer English. The view one parent gave during the interview was quite fascinating. What he said was: "I know that educating children in their mother tongue is beneficial to the learner and the community, but I myself have sent my children in English medium school in the near by towns." The reason he gave was; "in whatever language one learns, be it in Sidamigna or other wise, he would eventually end up working using either the official language, Amharic, or the international language, English, that is why I chose English to be the language medium for my children."

Other parents gave the following reasons for choosing English as a medium of instruction:

- We would feel happy to see our children speaking, reading and writing in Amharic and English fluently;
- Better jobs are secured through mastery of English language;
- Experienced teachers are concentrated in schools in urban areas and these schools use English as a medium of instruction;
- Being literate in Amharic or English would enable our children to acquire new knowledge through reading books in these two languages;
- English is a compulsory language medium after grade 4, and Sidamigna does not seem to show progress after grade 4 as a sole medium of instruction. So learning in English is more economical of time and effort in their future learning in the higher grades.

This shows that parents seem to be more concerned to short term benefits their children could secure such as job opportunities rather than the pedagogical benefits their children's could gain through learning in their own language but then, without ignoring they other factors they had forwarded also. The parents attitude towards their children's learning languages other than their own seems to be in harmony with what Gideon, C. (2000:183) has stated: "Both urban and rural population are not only concerned with pedagogical considerations that arise from the use of a particular language. Their attitude is also shaped in response to the wider benefits that they hope will accrue from the use of a particular language."

To the question of whether or not they had attended meetings with any concerned body to discuss matters related to the teaching and learning in Sidamigna, all but one of the parents replied that they had not been invited at all related to the use of the language as a medium of instruction.

Regarding what improvements should be made to increase the value of teaching and learning in Sidamigna as a medium of instruction, the parents put forward the following considerations.

- Facilities such as books, reading materials and libraries have to be fulfilled;
- Qualified teachers have to be assigned;
- Additional schools have to be built;
- Electric facilities have to be fulfilled.

As the response obtained from parents reveal, they (the parents) appreciate the use of Sidamigna as a medium of instruction. They are happy that their language is treated and represented in the curriculum as a language medium equal with all other languages, but not because of the language knowledge but from their own personal goals and that of their children. This stems from lack of frequent face-to-face contact through meetings to make them aware on the benefits it offers to their children and the community at large. Parents

are not invited to discuss issues related to the use of the language as a medium of instruction (as the response from the interview reveals).

This makes the program of mother tongue education as Thonis (1981:165) states “Mother tongue program is considered [as if] it is tolerated at token level to meet minimum requirement stated by law.” On the other hand, regarding what the attitude of parents ought to be in relation to the education of children, Susan (1996:196) states that “When parents are supportive of the school goal and communicate this support to their children, the kids will have a much better chance of succeeding in school than kinds whose parents are unsupportive.”

4.3 Teachers’ Quality of Training and the Adequacy of Trained Manpower

Teachers’ competency in the subject they teach is a determining factor and has a strong effect on children’s success in their educational system. To this end, training of teachers and strengthening their capacity as a pedagogical tool to creatively face problems pertinent to mother tongue education is of prime importance. In the following tables, the responses obtained from teachers on the conditions of the training and the adequacy of the training program they had undergone through in the use of Sidamigna as a medium of instruction will be summarized.

Table 4.4: Training of Teachers

No	Items	Responses	
		No	%
1	Have you taken training on how to teach Sidamigna as a medium of instruction?		
	A. Yes	9	100
	B. No	-	-
	Total	9	100
2	If your answer to the above question is “yes” what was the duration of the training program?		
	A. One year	7	77.78
	B. One month	1	11.11
	C. One week	1	11.11
	Total	9	100

As item 1 of table 4.4 indicates, all the teachers, (100%) in the sample schools have received training on how to teach Sidamigna as a medium of instruction. Out of the total number of 9 teachers, 77.78% of them have received one year training, the remaining 22.22% of them have received only a short-term training of only one month and one-week by either of the two.

According to the policy of mother tongue education in primary schools in the zone, teachers have to be trained for at least a year (10 months) at certificate level to qualify them to teach in the 1st cycle primary school. As the data indicates, there are some teachers who teach without receiving the required training duration. Those teachers who have received a short term training could be inferred as not equipped with the necessary skills in the language. It is only those who have received a one year training (77.78%) of them who can be said can accomplish their task of teaching effectively.

Those teachers with short term training duration were given the chance to state briefly through open-ended questions and taped focus interview why they have not taken the full training courses offered during the regular training program which lasts for a year. The reason they gave was that "Those of us who have been trained prior to the mother tongue education was lunched in 1994, we are offered only a short term training of a few weeks and a month old training. It is only after 1994 (E.C) that a one year training program was put into effect." "This short term duration," they said,

"...has not much affected our teaching in Sidama language. The fact that we are native speakers, we can some how manage the task of teaching assisted by the training offered to us for few weeks and a month old training to practice the Latin script and the language in instruction. Even then, we still lack the skill and knowledge. More than that, we are not given the opportunities to participate in workshops and in service programs to up grade our skills. If we were given such opportunities, we would be more effective in teaching in Sidamigna."

Nevertheless, as Fishman states, "The belief that a native speaker of a language is automatically qualified to teach in the language including its grammar, pronunciation,

reading and writing is a [misconception] (1974:196). Fishman further asserts that "Teachers are effective if they have been taught from the beginning in their own grammatical concepts of their mother tongue which may [otherwise] complicate and obscure the structure of their own language with that of the language they themselves have been educated." This indicates that being a native speaker of a language does not qualify a teacher to be effective and efficient in teaching in the language.

In order to obtain more valid and reliable information regarding the condition of training, the Zone and Wereda Education Bureau officials were consulted. The information obtained was similar to the information obtained from teachers.

The education Bureau officials reported that those teachers who are trained before 1994, are given only short term training courses. "This," they said, "is common to all schools in the zone. And we cannot dare say that this short term training offered to those teachers formerly trained in Amharic and English medium is sufficient. But, since they are native speakers of the language, we believe that they can teach in the language with out much difficulty." However, this response is contrary to what Fishman (1974) advocates that being native speaker cannot guarantee to teach in the language including the grammar, the pronunciation, reading and writing in the language. The education Bureau officials were also asked if such teachers are in the process of upgrading their skills through workshops, in-service programs, seminars and the like. The answer they gave was that, teachers' upgrade their skills by participating in training institutes through self-sponsorships to keep them fit. And in few cases, workshops are given to some teachers to upgrade their skill and knowledge.

As the data indicates, there are some teachers who have not received the appropriate training and lack the necessary qualifications. And even the training program they have undergone through is short and intensive. That means, the type of training offered to these groups of teachers is different. Some have received long term training and others short term intensive courses.

In order to see whether these two different training conditions have equally equipped them with the needed skill and knowledge to teach in Sidamigna, teachers were asked questions regarding: the duration of the training program, the main focus of the training program, the instructional medium employed during the training program and the effectiveness of the trainers. In the table that follows, the quality of the training and its adequacy in the use of Sidamigna will be presented.

Table 4.5: Quality of Training and Adequacy of Trained Manpower

No	Item	SA		A		UD		D		SD		Total	
		No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
1	The duration of the training program was sufficient	4	44.4	2	22.22	-	-	2	22.22	1	11.11	9	99.99
2	The training program has equipped me with the necessary Sidama language skills and knowledge	5	55.56	2	22.22	-	-	1	11.11	1	11.11	9	100
3	The training was offered by trainers skilled in training teachers in mother tongue.	6	66.67	3	33.33	-	-	-	-	-	-	9	100
4	The practice of reading and writing skills in Sidamigna was part of the training program	5	55.56	2	22.22	1	11.11	1	11.11	-	-	9	100
5	The training program mainly focuses on methods of teaching	4	44.44	1	11.11	1	11.11	2	22.22	1	11.11	9	99.99
6	The shortage of the training program has affected my teaching the subject in the mother tongue	1	11.11	1	11.11	-	-	6	66.67	1	11.11	9	100
7	Because the duration of the training program I participated was not enough, I need additional training	3	33.33	1	11.11	1	11.11	4	44.44	-	-	9	99.99
8	The training program does not go with my teaching in the mother tongue	2	22.22	7	77.78	-	-	-	-	-	-	9	100

As item 1 of table 4.5 indicates, (66.67%) of the teachers showed their agreement that the duration of the training program was adequate; where as, 33.33% of them showed their disagreement that they were not appropriately trained. The data clearly reveals that the majority of the respondents (66.67%) believe that the length of the raining program was

sufficient. That means, these groups of teachers (66.67%) who are satisfied with the training program are those who have acquired the necessary skills and knowledge during the training period who in turn are assumed to accomplish their task of teaching in Sidamigna effectively and efficiently. The rest, 33.33% of the them who expressed their disagreement on the adequacy of the training program are those who lack the necessary skills and knowledge to qualify them to teach in the target language who also need additional training to be effective and efficient.

Concerning item 2, a total of 77.78% of the teachers agreed that the training program has equipped them with the necessary Sidama language skills and knowledge. Out of these, 55.56% of them with strong agreement and 22.22 % with an agreement. To the contrary, 11.11% of them expressed their strong disagreement that it didn't equip them with the skills needed to teach in the target language. That means the majority of the teachers have acquired the necessary skills and knowledge, they are believed to accomplish their task of teaching in the language efficiently.

The statement "the training was offered by trainers skilled in training teachers in mother tongue" received favorable response by all the respondents (100%), out of which 66.67% strong agreement and 33.33% of agreement. This shows that the trainers have prior experience in training teachers in nationality languages so that student teachers would be made skillful in the methods, technique of teaching children in the target language.

As item 4 indicates, teachers were also asked if the practice of reading and writing was also part of the training program. The majority of the respondents, 77.78% of them, showed their agreement, out of which 55.56% by strong agreement and 22.22% of them by an agreement. Only a small proportion of the teachers, (11.11%) of them fail to agree on this and the remaining, 11.11% of them gave neutral rating to the same question. As the data reveals emphasis was also given on the use of the language in its system of reading and writing the language (in its correct Latin script). This implies that the teachers could easily transfer the skill they have acquired to the students effectively and efficiently.

Regarding the focus of attention given during the training program, the majority, more than 55% of the teachers responded that the training program mainly focuses on methods of teaching. The other 33.33% of them disagreed that the focus of the training program was on the method of teaching. The rest (11.11%) of them remained indifferent. According to the responses obtained from the teachers, if the training program mainly focuses on the methodological component of the curriculum (skill of instruction), it can safely be concluded that there was no opportunity for the teachers to practice on the reading and writing skills in Sidamigna. This is because if the teachers lack the proficiencies in these two skills, they may not do their level best in imparting their knowledge to their students in these two major skills. In training teachers, attention must be paid more on the use of the language in its reading and writing skills for it is in these two skills that the teacher spends most of the time communicating with his students through the activities in the textbook during the teaching learning process.

Teachers were also asked if the shortage of the training program (for those with short term intensive program) has affected their teaching the subject in Sidamigna language. 22.22% of them replied that it had affected their teaching in the mother tongue and 77.78% of them confirmed that it didn't. As the data reveals, it is not difficult to assume that those 22.22% of the respondents are the ones with short term training duration (with only basic training) that has affected the quality of their teaching in the mother tongue.

Regarding the need for additional training, 44.44% of the teachers agreed that they need further training, out of which 33.33 of them with strong agreement and 11.11% of them with agreement. Similarly, the other 44.44% of them expressed their disagreement that they need additional training. The remaining 11.11% of them didn't reply to this question. What these results seem to suggest is that those who misclaim additional training (44.44%) are the ones who have participated in a-one year training program and who felt that they are appropriately trained and equipped with the skills and knowledge needed to do their task of teaching effectively in the subject they are assigned to."

As the data in item 8 reveals, all the respondents, (100%) of them replied that training they have received does not go with their teaching in the mother tongue. The data clearly indicates that there is a mismatch between the training program and the knowledge they have gained from the training as supported by 77.78 % agreement and 22.22% strong agreement. Relating these findings with those in items 1, 2, 4, 6 and 7, of the same table, there is inconsistency in the teachers' response. What is more surprising is that even those teachers who gave high ratings to these items above showed their disagreement for item 8. The response obtained during the focus group interview with teachers, confirmed that their inconsistency in their responses stem not from their own weakness but from that of the inefficiencies they observed in other teachers. Some teachers put forward the following views on the inefficiency in teachers.

- Some of the teachers who graduate from private institute for mother tongue education show poor performance in teaching in mother tongue.
- Some of the trainers themselves in private institutions need training on how to prepare teachers for mother tongue education. They lack the skill and knowledge.
- The view one teacher gave was quite illuminating. He said "It is a pity to see the program of mother tongue education to be sold to merchants who turn out teachers poorly equipped in teaching in areas of mother tongue education.

One of the education bureau officials with no exception bitterly expressed his grave concern on the poor performance of those teachers who graduate from different institutes. He added saying "The problem we face at present is to see those teachers who apply for employments with only low skill level whom we often prove during interviews and other screening processes."

The education bureau officials were further interviewed if there is a need for an evaluation in order to know the knowledge gained by trainees at training institutes and how appropriate the training had been. The response they gave was that, "since most of the responsibility of training teachers of mother tongue is shifted to private institutes, we only hire those who graduate from the institutes (that are available in the market) through

our own method of screening process. The one who passes the process will be employed; the better does the work.”

4.4 Teachers’ Students’ and Principals’ Responses on the Availability of Teaching-Learning Materials

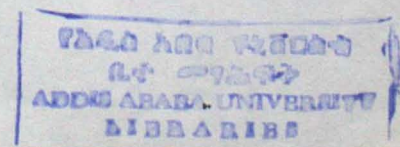
The provision of instructional materials, text books, extra readers and teachers’ guides are of prime importance for effective teaching learning process. In view of this, teachers students and school principals were asked to rate the adequacy of instructional and other support material resources. The results obtained are summarized as follows.

4.4.1 Teachers’ Response on the Availability of Learning Materials

Concerning the adequacy of education materials as an aid for the effective implementation of Sidama language as a medium of instruction, the responses obtained from teachers is presented in table 4.6 below.

Table 4.6: Teachers Response on Adequacy of Teaching and Learning Materials

No	Item	SA		A		UD		D		SD		TOTAL	
		No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
1	There are sufficient textbooks for students in Sidama language subjects	-	-	1	11.11	1	11.11	6	66.67	1	11.11	9	100
2	There are adequate/sufficient additional reading materials in Sidama language for the students to practice/improve their language skills	-	-	-	-	1	11.11	5	55.56	3	33.33	9	100
3	Students textbooks for Sidama language subjects are prepared using examples from local resources available and by contextualizing the culture and language of the community	3	33.33	4	44.44	-	-	2	22.22	-	-	9	99.8
4	There is lack of reference materials such as dictionary in Sidama language for both the teacher and students	6	66.66	-	-	1	11.11	2	22.22	-	-	9	100
5	There is no sufficient teachers’ guide for the teacher	5	55.56	1	11.11	2	22.22	1	11.11	1	-	-	-
6	The meanings for words alien to Sidama language are given in students’ textbooks	5	55.56	3	33.33	1	11.11	-	-	-	-	9	100



In item 1, teachers were asked if there are sufficient textbooks for students in Sidama language subjects. Most of the respondents, 7(77.78%) of them disagreed that students' textbooks are available, out of which, 6 (66.67%) of them with disagreement and 1(11.11%) with strong disagreement. Only 1(11.11%) agreed that text books for students for Sidama language subjects are available. The other, 1(11.11%) remained neutral.

Similarly, 8(88%) of the teachers responded that there are no adequate additional reading materials in Sidama language subjects for the students to practice and improve their language skills. This was confirmed by 5(55.56%) disagreement and 3(33.33 %) strong disagreement. Only 1(11.11%) remained indifferent.

Moreover, as the data in item 4 indicates, absence of reference materials such as dictionaries in Sidama language subjects received the majority's support, 66.67% of them strongly agreed that there is lack of reference materials such as dictionaries in their schools. Where as only (22.22%) of them asserted that reference materials are adequate. Only one 1(11.11) remained neutral. In order to find out whether or not textbooks supplementary readers and reference materials are scarce, the Zonal and Wereda educational bureau officials were consulted to brief the situation. The Zonal Education Bureau official denied the assertion. He only knows that books are distributed in each school equally according to the number of students except in very remote areas such as Bensa Wereda. The zone education bureau official further confirmed that he himself has gone to different Weredas and schools and has proved the fact that the supply text materials were adequate enough which was quite contrary to the response obtained from teachers and students.

On the other hand, 2 Wereda education bureau officials didn't hide the truth. They said, "We don't dare say that text books are available. They are in short supply but faced with shortage of textbooks in Sidama language subjects, we reported the case to zonal authorities; but we have not received any reply so far."

Regarding the availability of reference materials, such as dictionaries written in Sidamigna (item 4), all education bureau official used a common language saying, "There is no dictionary at all written in Sidamigna which they believed is one of the serious problems in the zone. Regarding the adequacy of textbooks, supplementary reading materials and reference books, the focus group discussion with teachers and students also confirmed that there is a shortage of textbooks for students. "Textbooks," they said, "are distributed mostly in the ratio of 1:3, and sometimes in some subjects, books are distributed in the ratio of 1:4. In two of the sample schools, the idea of library is unknown let alone supplementary reading materials in Sidamigna." Principals with no exception also stressed the need for more textbooks and a good supply of reading materials which they are badly in need of. From the data discussed so far, it can be concluded that educational materials in the sample schools are in short supply, and teachers work with inadequate pedagogical support. And this scarcity of educational materials contribute to loss of interest for the teachers to teach and the students to learn. It is even a hindrance for the progress and effective implementation of the mother tongue in the zone. As Tracy (1981:119) states "If the quantity of reading materials is scarce, children resort to learning the language with rich and adequate resource materials. The influence exerted by the predominance of other reading materials in other languages [in turn] lowers the accessibility of the learners' exposure to his/her own language." Reference books such as dictionaries in the children first language are also important for the students to be consistent in writing in the correct spelling.

It is said that the structure of a curriculum is community based. The environment in which the community lives, the history, the culture, the utilization of skilled persons in the community for the quality of education should be emphasized, (UNESCO, 1981:80). In line with this, (item 3), teachers were asked if "textbooks prepared in Sidama language subjects contextualize the local resources available. This received favor by 77.78% of total agreement out of which, 44.44% of them with agreement and 33.33% of strong agreement. The rest, 22.22% of the respondents disagreed that they don't contextualize.

As the data reveals, the contents of the textbooks and the examples employed is by considering the resources available in the immediate environment. If textbooks contextualize the culture, life style, history and the language of the child and his community, the child will not find it difficult to understand ideas and concepts which in turn helps him to succeed in his educational system. It is said that children who get education based on their own cultural values help them to be critical thinkers and problem solving citizens (Amare, 1989 in Solomon Belay, 2004).

As item 5 reveals, a great majority of the teachers, 66.67% of them replied that there is a shortage of teachers' guide. Only 11.11% of them asserted that they are sufficient and 22.22% of them didn't respond. However, during the focus group interview with teachers, there is a desperate shortage of teachers' guide. In two of the sample schools, teachers confirmed that they don't have any teachers' guide at all.

In item 6 of table 4.6, almost all the respondents, except (11.11%) with neutral rating, showed their strong agreement and agreement by 55.56% and 33.33% respectively that the textbook for students have meanings for difficult words that do not exist in Sidamigna. Overall, a total of 88.88% of the respondents agreed that words that do not exist in Sidamigna have their meanings explained in the textbooks. But the taped focus group interview with teachers and students in two sample schools proved the contrary. Some of these teachers during the interview confirmed that they could only try to contextualize the meanings of some alien words to the language by being guided by the sense of the sentences in the textbooks, and at times what they think could be the possible meaning equivalent to the words in question.

Table 4.7: Teachers' Opinion on the Adequacy of the Language for Use as a Medium of Instruction

No	Item	SA		A		U		D		SD		TOTAL	
		No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
7	Problems encountered in recognizing single and double vowels and consonants to represent length of sound and to differentiate meanings	2	22.22	1	11.11	1	11.11	2	22.22	3	33.33	9	100
8	Inadequacy of the language for scientific and technological terms (eg. in science subjects)	2	22.22	-	-	2	22.22	2	22.22	3	33.33	9	100
9	The same letters in Sidamigna and English competing for different sounds	4	44.44	3	33.33	1	11.11	-	-	1	11.11	9	100
10	Translations out of Sidamigna and into Amharic or English	1	11.11	3	33.33	2	22.22	1	11.11	2	22.22	9	100

Key: SA = Strongly Agree A= Agree U = Undecided
 D = Disagree SD = Strongly Disagree

As the data in item 7 indicates, more than 55% of the teachers disagreed that they have encountered problems in writing words which require the use of single or double vowels and consonants which otherwise reflects a difference in meaning and pronunciation. To the contrary, no less than 33% of the teachers agreed that they face problems in writing words in their correct spelling in Sidamigna using either single or double vowels or consonants. Such teachers seem not to have clear ideas of when to use a single or double vowel or consonant during writing. Since teachers are models to their students, if teachers lack consistency in writing words in their correct spelling, students won't also be consistent in reading and writing (in) the language. More serious is the problem during independent reading and writing time. This in turn creates a problem in understanding concepts of what they are reading.

In item 8, the inadequacy of the language for scientific and technological terms was agreed upon by only 22% of the respondents. On the other hand, the majority, more than

55% of the respondents expressed their disagreement i.e., 22% with disagreement and 33% of them with strong disagreement that the language doesn't fail to translate scientific and technological terms. The remaining 22% remained neutral. As to the 55% of the teachers who agreed that the language is adequate enough to translate scientific terminologies is something that should not be over looked. This is because the language had been oral language for a quite number of years. It developed into writing system only recently. It is unlikely that the language can fully be utilized for scientific terminologies. However, it was found that as per the response of the teachers, the language is adequate enough to explain scientific terminologies.

As item 9 indicates, teachers were also asked if the letters (consonants) of the Latin script in Sidama language compete for different sounds with their counter part English letters (consonants) of the same letter. For this, over 77.78% of the respondents agreed that there are inconsistency in the sound system in both languages for the same letters. Only (11.11%) disagreed that such inconsistency in the sound system in the two languages is non-existent. For the same question, (11.11%) of them remained in difference which was quite insignificant. This indicates that if the Latin letters in Sidama language contain consonants which represent a different sound for the some letters in English consonants, the students can easily get confused in trying to establish a clear sound relationships between the letters in the two languages. The problem would be more serious in a one-room one-teacher (self contained classroom) situation where the same teacher teaches both English and other subjects which employees Sidamigna as a medium of instruction. The students often hear from the same teacher different sounds in different context for the same letters. This puts the impression in the minds of the students that Sidama language is difficult to teach and learn.

The use of translation out of Sidamigna and into English or Amharic by the teachers themselves received support by over 44% agreement, out of which, (11.11%) strong agreement and 33.33% by an agreement. To the contrary, 33.33% of them replied that they don't, out of which 11.11% with disagreement and 22.22% with strong

disagreement. The remaining 22.22% of the respondents do not have a say for this same question. As the data reveals and as confirmed through focus group discussions with students, teachers tend to pay emphasis on translations out of Sidamigna and into English to find meaning for concept alien in Sidamigna. This in turn testes the teachers internalized knowledge in both the languages. Though translation is possible to facilitate learning, too much translation hinders the development of the ability of the learner to think directly in his own language and reduces the amount of effort to be given for inferences.

Table 4.8: Students Response on Adequacy of Learning Materials

No	Item	SA		A		UD		D		SD		Total	
		No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
1	Text books for Sidama language subjects are inadequate	44	41.51	22	20.76	16	15.09	8	7.55	16	15.09	106	100
2	There is shortage of additional reading materials in Sidamigna to practice and improve our reading skills	36	33.96	28	26.42	13	12.26	12	11.32	17	16.04	106	100
3	The textbooks prepared for Sidama language subjects are in line with our age and ability	58	54.72	21	19.81	17	16.04	3	2.83	7	6.60	106	100
4	There are sufficient reference materials such as dictionaries in Sidama language	18	16.98	10	9.43	19	17.92	34	32.08	25	23.59	106	100
5	Textbooks prepared for Sidama language subjects has used examples and contextualizes the local resources, the culture, literature and language of the community.	65	61.33	20	18.82	13	12.26	4	3.77	4	3.77	106	100

As the data in item 1 reveals, the inadequacy of textbooks (for students) in Sidama language subjects has received the students majority support by an overall percentage of 66 (62.27%), out of which 22 (20.76%) of them approved the inadequacy by agreement and the remaining 44(41.51%) of them by strong agreement. To the contrary, 16(15.09%) and 8(7.55%) expressed their disagreement and strong disagreement respectively that textbooks are not in short supply. The rest, 16(15.09%) of them stated that (students') textbooks are neither adequate nor inadequate. The data clearly indicates that there is scarcity of textbooks. If text books are scarce, it is unlikely that students would make progress using their own language through reading and writing. More than that, student-centered method of teaching would suffer, and their commitment to learn in their own language would also be low.

Students were also asked if there is shortage of additional reading materials in Sidamigna (item 2, table 4.8) to help them practice and improve their reading skills. The majority of the respondents, 64(60.38%) of them agreed that there is shortage of supplementary reading materials out of which, 36(33.96%) and 28(26.42%) of them showed strong agreement and agreement respectively. To the contrary, 12(11.32%) disagreement and 17(16.04%) strong disagreement i.e. a total of 29(27.36%) of the students stated that extra reading materials are not scarce. The rest, 13(12.26%) of them neither agreed nor disagreed. It is obvious that students need to be provided with extra reading materials not only to help them practice and improve their language skills, but also to help them develop the habit of being responsible and independent learners by linking the ideas in the prescribed textbooks with an appropriate extra reading materials outside the classroom. In line with this, Thonis (1981: 176) states that "The school must seriously consider the addition of native language books and other materials to supplement the classroom instruction and to extend opportunities for growth in reading and thinking skills." The finding, however, is against the literature in that there is lack of additional reading and reference materials in the language. This takes away the faith students have towards learning in their own mother tongue.

In preparing textbooks, due consideration is to be given so that they are in line with the age and ability of the students. As item 3 indicates, a great majority of the students; i.e., 79(74.52%) of them responded that their textbooks are prepared in line with their age and ability. Out of this, 54.72% of them evaluated their textbooks as relevant to their age and ability with strong agreement, and 19.81% of them with an agreement. On the other hand, a small percentage of the respondents, 3(2.83%) and 7(6.60%) of them showed their disagreement and strong disagreement respectively that the textbooks are not relevant to their age and ability. The remaining, 17(16.04%) of them neither expressed their agreement nor disagreement. From the results of this findings, it is not difficult to assume that students won't face difficulty understanding concepts from their textbooks and put those concepts into practical activities as they are relevant to their ages and ability. Moreover, the participation of the students in the classroom through asking and answering questions can be achieved at maximum level.

Regarding the adequacy of reference materials such as dictionaries in Sidama language, the majority of the respondents, 59 (57.47%) of them replied that reference materials are not available. More specifically 25 (23.59%) and 34 (32.08%) of the students expressed their disagreement and strong disagreement respectively that reference materials such as dictionaries are available. On the contrary, 28 (26.4%) of them agreed that reference materials including dictionaries are available. The rest, 19 (17.92%) of them neither agreed nor disagreed. As confirmed from all the 4 education bureau officials, the principals of the sample schools and teachers through interview and focus group discussions, not even a single dictionary written in Sidamigna can be found in any of the schools.

As the data in the last item indicates, the great majority of the students, 85 (80.2%) of them agreed that the textbooks for the most part, contextualize the local resources available in the area. Out of these, 65 (61.33%) of them with strong agreement; and 20(18.87%) with agreement where as, 4 (3.77%) and the other 4 (3.77%) disagreed that they don't. The remaining 13 (12.26%) of the students did not have a say in this.

4.4.2 Principals Response on the Availability of Learning Materials

Principals were asked if textbooks, supplementary reading materials, references and teachers' guides were adequate enough to smoothly run the mother tongue education in their respective schools.

Regarding the adequacy students' textbooks, two of the principals replied that textbooks for students are in short supply. Only one of the principals stated that textbooks for students are adequate.

Concerning the adequacy of additional reading materials, all the three principals stated that there is shortage of additional reading materials written in Sidamigna. Regarding the adequacy of additional reading materials written in Sidamigna, the response obtained not only from principals but also from students and teacher respondents through focus group discussion confirms that there is no additional reading materials written in Sidamigna for the students to help them improve their reading and writing skills. As the teachers in one sample school have remarked, "Let alone additional reading materials in Sidamigna, we don't even have a library. The only source of knowledge for the students is the textbook itself." However, textbooks alone do not provide the students all the knowledge and information needed. Moreover, complete dependency on textbooks alone will not help them improve the students' language skill and knowledge.

The principals were also asked if there were sufficient teachers' guides for teachers. For this, all the three principals responded that teachers' guides are insufficient. In the absence of teacher's guides, it is unlikely that teachers can have a clear direction to effectively carry on the mother tongue instructional process. The focus group discussion with teachers in two of the sample schools also proved complete absence of teachers' guides.

Regarding the adequacy of reference materials such as dictionaries in Sidamigna, 2 of the principals replied that there are no reference materials such as dictionaries in the language. Only one stated that these materials are not inadequate. In most cases, the

complete absence of dictionary in Sidama language has been repeatedly confirmed by respondents from teachers and zonal and woreda education bureau officials during taped focus group discussion. Dictionaries in the children's mother tongue help them to be consistent in writing the words in their correct spelling. Absence of consistencies in spelling affects the seriously reading and writing in the language. Thonis (1981:103) states that "a good supply of attractive reference books and dictionaries in primary language appropriate to the classroom level of students is essential" which in fact is totally absent in the cases under consideration.

4.5 Distribution of Sidama Language Textbooks among Students

In order to smoothly run any educational program, facilities such as textbooks, supplementary readers, teachers' guides etc have to be fulfilled. These instructional materials integratedly help both the teacher and students to carry on the instructional process effectively and efficiently. Out of these, textbooks are of prime importance for it is through the use of textbooks that both the teacher and students spend most of their time, for most of the activities, in the teaching learning process.

In order to find out if a balance is struck in the distribution of textbooks, data on student-textbook ratio was gathered from the sample schools. The data obtained is presented in table 4.9 below.

Table 4.9: The Ratio of Students-to-Textbooks for the Three Subjects Considered in the Sample Schools

School	Subjects		
	Mother Tongue	Environmental Sc.	Maths
	Ratio	Ratio	Ratio
Baja Primary School	1:1	1:1	1:2
Leku Primary School	1:3	1:11	1:11
Bushullo Primary School	1:3	1:3	1:3

Source: Principals' Office of the Sample Schools and Teachers

As can be seen in table 4.9 above, there is uneven distribution of textbooks in all the sample schools. If we take Baja Primary Schools, the textbooks for mother tongue education and environmental science is evenly distributed in the ratio of 1:1. On the other hand, when we compare the distribution of mother tongue and environmental science textbooks with textbooks distributed for mathematics, the ratio for maths subject is 1:2: as compared to 1:1 for mother tongue and environmental science.

If we compare this ratio of distribution to the distribution in Leku primary school, books distributed for the same subjects is quite different. The distribution of textbooks for mother tongue subject is in the ratio of 1:3. Worse still is the distribution of environmental science and mathematics textbooks which is in the ratio of 1:11 for both the subjects. This clearly shows that the books distributed in these two schools for environmental science and mathematics shows great discrepancy. Students in Baja primary school have better access to these two textbooks which could help them learn in a comfortable situation. On the other hand, students in Leku Primary School are at a disadvantage who are subjected to learn under difficult circumstances due to a desperate shortage of textbooks. The interview held with Shebedino Wereda Education Bureau Official statements confirms that they have informed the situation time and again for which they have not received any reply from the authorities concerned. As has been mentioned earlier, the Zone education bureau official denied the assertion; and he only knows that books are dispatched to all schools except in some remote areas like Bensa Woreda according to the number of students in their respective subjects so that students could have access to all books in the ratio of 1:1. Moreover, if we take Bushullo Primary School, we see the distribution of textbooks much better than Leku Primary School for the two subjects of environmental science and mathematics which is in the ratio of 1:3 both for environmental science and mathematics as compared to 1:11 for both these two subjects in Leku Primary School.

If he compare the distribution of textbooks for the three subjects in Baja Primary School and Bushullo Primary School, we can still see some discrepancy in the distribution. The

ratio of mother tongue textbook for students in Baja primary School is 1:1 where as the student textbook ratio for the same subject in Bushullo Primary School is 1:3. Again, the student-textbook ratio for environmental science and Maths in Baja primary school is 1:1 and 1:2 respectively as compared to the ratio of 1:3 in Bushullo primary school for the same subjects.

The data in table 4.9 is a clear indication of the fact that textbooks in the sample schools is distributed not according to the number of students in each school but on quota bases in which books seem to be dispatched equally in schools irrespective of the number of the students. The teachers' response during focus group interview regarding the distribution of textbooks even raised the ratio from 1:2 and 1:3 to 1:4 for those considered subjects.

4.6 Students' Level of Proficiency in the Major Skills in Sidamia Language to the Knowledge of their Teachers

Regarding the students knowledge and ability in the major skills in Sidamigna, teachers were asked to rate the level of their students' language competency*in the language of instruction. The results obtained is presented in table 4.10 as follows.

Table 4.10 Students' Language Competency in the four Language Skills

No	Item	VH		H		M		L		VL		Total	
		No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
1	Listening to Sidamigna correctly	4	44.4	4	44.44	1	11.11	-	-	-	-	9	99.99
2	Speaking in Sidamigna correctly	2	22.22	3	33.33	3	33.33	1	11.11	-	-	9	99.99
3	Reading Sidama language correctly	3	33.33	4	44.44	1	11.11	-	-	1	11.11	9	99.99
4	Writing in Sidamigna correctly	1	11.11	2	22.22	3	33.33	2	22.22	1	11.11	9	99.99
5	Understanding concepts and ideas from text materials written in Sidamigna	2	22.22	2	22.22	3	33.33	1	11.11	1	11.11	9	99.99

Key: VH = Very High H = High M = Medium L = Low VL = Very Low

It is only when the students listen to the medium of instruction, that both the teacher and the students can communicate using the language common to both for activities in the teaching learning process. As item 1 indicates, 44.44% of the teachers confirmed that their students have a very high level of competency in their skill of listening, and the other 44.44% of the respondents rated their students as having high listening skill. Only (11.11%) teacher rated the students with medium skill in their skill of listening. Over all, the majority of the teachers, (88.89%) of them evaluated their students as having no problems in their listening skills. As to the 11.11% of the students rated as medium listening ability it is obvious that such students can exist in the classroom with a different linguistic background who lack the competency as to the required level.

Concerning the students' skill of speaking in Sidamigna, 22.22% of the teachers responded that their students are very highly fluent in their speaking skill, and 33.33% of them rated their students as only highly fluent and 33.33% of them as having medium language competency in their speaking skill. 1(11.11%) of the teachers replied that the students have low level language fluency.

Regarding the students reading skill in Sidamigna, 33.33% and 44.44% of them rated their students as very highly and highly skilled readers in Sidamigna respectively. On the other hand, 11.11% of the teachers gave medium ratings and the other (11.11%) the least ratings. In total, more than 77.78% of the teachers regarded their students as having no difficulty reading what is written in Sidamigna. The data indicates that since most of the school work is acquired from books, using this important skill, students can read and understand concepts easily from the activities in the textbook. The majority of the students rated by their teachers as high readers in the language is also in harmony with the result obtained through the classroom assessment as confirmed by 65% as high readers.

The students writing skill (in item 4) is the more critical of the other three skills discussed in the same table earlier. As the data reveals, only 11.11% of the teachers evaluated the students significantly as very highly competent in the written skill, and 22.22% of them as highly competent. The rest, (66.67%) of them i.e. 33.33%, 22.22% and 11.11% of the

teachers gave medium, low and very low ratings respectively. The fact that the majority of the teachers, more than 66% of them rating their students skill of writing within the range of medium to very low indicates that many of the students badly lack the skill of writing in Sidamigna. From this data, it is not difficult to assume that many students also fail to communicate with their teachers through writing. This eventually results in misunderstanding in written communication between the teacher and students. Since many aspects of the language is practiced in writing and for the most part expressed in written code. The speaking and listening skill are the ones rated the highest and which the students are "born with" as the students themselves expressed it through focus group discussion.

The last item, "understanding concepts and ideas from text materials written in Sidamigna" got support from 22.22% of the teachers with very high ratings and another 22.22% with high ratings. For the same question, 33.33% of the teachers gave medium ratings and 11.11% of the teachers gave low and very low ratings in each case. Here again, the percentage of teachers who rated their students with the ability to understand concepts and ideas from written materials in Sidamigna is less, (44.44%) as compared to the percentage of students who rated their students within the range of medium to very low level language skill which is more than 55% in total. Those teachers who rated their students within 55% skill in the language are those students who cannot easily read and understand the content of the textbook. They face difficulty understanding concepts from their text materials, as a result they cannot make inferences.

4.7 Teachers' Knowledge and Ability in the Four Skills in Sidama Language

Much of the success of an educational program depends upon the teachers' competence. The following table shows how teachers in Sidamigna perceive their competence (level of proficiency) in the language used as a medium of instruction. The teachers were asked to

rate themselves regarding their ability in the four language skills, and this is presented in table 4.11 as follows:

Table 4.11: Teachers' Language Competency

No	Teachers' Language Skill	Very high		High		Medium		Low		Very Low		Total	
		No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
1	Listening to Sidamigna Correctly	7	77.78	2	22.22	-	-	-	-	-	-	9	100
2	Speaking in Sidamigna correctly	6	66.67	3	33.33	-	-	-	-	-	-	9	100
3	Reading Sidamigna correctly	7	77.78	2	22.22	-	-	-	-	-	-	9	100
4	Writing in Sidamigna correctly	7	77.78	2	22.22	-	-	-	-	-	-	9	100
5	Understanding concepts and ideas from text materials written in Sidama language	7	77.78	2	22.22	-	-	-	-	-	-	9	100

As shown in table 4.11 almost all the teachers in the sample schools rated themselves competent in the listening skill; 7(77.78%) of them very highly competent and 2(22.22%) highly competent. As the data reveals, there are two teachers with only high listening skill.

As item 2 indicates, 6(66.67%) and 3(33.33%) of the respondents rated themselves as very highly competent and highly competent respectively in speaking in Sidamigina. This shows that teachers in both the listening and speaking skills are competent enough to communicate with their students effectively and efficiently through asking and answering questions.

In items 3 and 4, teachers' rated themselves as having competency in both the reading and writing skills with 77.78% and 22.22% very high and high competency in each case. The data reveals that most of the teachers have a good command of the language in its reading and writing skill the most important aspect of the language skill. Since it is through these

two skills that both the teacher and the students spend most of the time communicating with one another in the teaching learning process, errors or mistakes students commit while reading and writing could be easily detected and corrected.

As the last item indicates, the majority, almost all the teachers 7(77.78%) and 2(22.22%) of them rated themselves as very highly and highly efficient in understanding concepts and ideas from text materials written in Sidamigna.

4.8 Students' Language Choice Proficiency Level and Subject Preference

Students were asked pertinent items regarding their choice of language (as a medium of instruction), the level of their language proficiency and subject preference. The responses obtained are presented in table 4.12 next page.

Table 4.12: Students language choice, proficiency level and subject preference

No	Item	Responses	
		No	%
1	Which skill do you find difficult in Sidamia language		
	A. Speaking in Sidama language	27	25.47
	B. Reading in Sidama language	17	16.04
	C. Writing in Sidamigna	14	13.24
	D. Understanding ideas and concepts	5	4.72
	E. Writing in correct spelling	43	40.56
	Total	106	100
2	In which language do you read well?		
	A. Amharic	34	32.08
	B. Sidamigna	47	44.34
	C. English	18	16.98
	D. No Answer	7	6.60
	Total	106	100
3	In which language do you write well?		
	A. English	16	15.09
	B. Sidamigna	58	54.72
	C. Amharic	32	30.19
	Total	106	100
4	Which language do you prefer to learn in?		%
	A. In English	37	34.91
	B. In Sidamigna	36	33.96
	C. In Amharic	26	24.53
	D. No Answer	7	6.60
	Total	106	100
5	In which one of the subjects do you often score high marks		%
	A. Subjects offered in English language	23	21.69
	B. Subjects offered in Sidamigna subject	49	46.23
	C. Subjects offered in Amharic language	34	32.08
	Total	106	100
6	Which books (reading materials) can you read without difficulty		%
	A. Books written in Amharic	29	27.36
	B. Books written in English	24	22.64
	C. Books written in Sidamigna	53	50.00
	Total	106	100

In item 1, students were asked which of the 4 skills in Sidama language is difficult for them to use in any practical situation. As the data indicates, the majority of the respondents, 43 (40.56%) of them replied that they lack the skill of writing in the language in its correct spelling. Moreover, 27 (25.47%) of the students stated that they have difficulty in expressing their ideas in its spoken form; and 17 (16.04%) of them responded that they have problems reading what is written in Sidamigna. Those students who have difficulty in writing in Sidamigna accounted to 14 (13.24%). The remaining 5(4.72%) of the students reported that they have difficulty understanding ideas and concepts from materials written in Sidamigna. As the data reveals, the majority of the students (40.56%) lack the knowledge of writing words and phrases, consistently in their correct spelling.

In connection to this, the students response to the questionnaire (in table 4.12 item 1) and the focus group discussions with the students themselves and the teachers as well as the results of the teachers rating their students in their 4 language skills (table 4.10) confirmed that students badly lack consistency in writing words in their correct spelling. Moreover, students assessment results in their spelling skill in a practical situation, in the classroom reveals that more than 90% of them made mistakes in spelling. The same data in item 1 of table 4.12 also revealed that a significant number of students, 31(29.25%) of them lack the skill of reading and writing in the language through which most of the school work is carried on. This was shown by 17(16.04%) for the reading skill and 14 (13.21%) for the writing skill.

Nevertheless, in item 2 of table 4.12 of the same table, students language proficiency in its reading skill is high. 47 (44.34%) of them rated themselves as high readers in Sidamigna as compared to their skill of reading in individual languages in Amharic and English which is 34 (32.08%) for Amharic, and 18(16.98%) for English. On the other hand, when their knowledge of reading in Sidama language skill, 47 (44.34%), is compared to their skill in Amharic and English, it is greater which accounted to 52 (49.1%). The data reveals that the majority of the students can read better in Amharic and

English than in Sidamaigna, 44.34% and 49.1% respectively. The results of students taped analysis on their reading skill on selected paragraph from the text book in mother tongue shows a remarkable difference 65% of the students could read well with ease and confidence. They were observed to have pronounced the words correctly including those words with letters pronounced differently from their counter part English of the same letters (e.g. C, Q, X & Ph). On the other hand, only 35% of the students had difficulty reading the paragraph. They could read only with too much effort and alertness, sometimes, making un necessary pauses as well as repetition of words, regressions and miss pronunciations of words were observed. In schools where text books are scarce, supplementary reading materials and other reference books such as dictionaries are absent, the students result in their skill of reading was quite encouraging indeed.

Students were also asked in which of the three languages they could write well. The majority, 58 (54.72%) of them replied that they are skillful in writing in Sidamigna. 32 (30.19%) of them perceived that they are proficient (skillful) in writing in Amharic language, and 16(15.09%) of them confirmed that they can write well in English. As the data indicates, the majority of the students don't seem to have difficulty in expressing their views through writing. But relating this data with the data in item 1, though the majority of the students, 58 (54.72) can write well in Sidamigna (item 3), in the same token, the majority of the students 43 (40.56%) can write but with spelling errors (in consistency) (see item 1). Hence, it is unlikely that students can be said to have a good grasp of the language in its writing skill (with out being consistent in writing in its correct spelling). They cannot convey a clear message to the receiver. In writing in Sidamigna, one is required to be consistent in writing words in their correct spelling where single/double vowels and consonants are to be used to avoid meaning differences.

Moreover, in item 3, 48 (45.28%) of the students had expressed their opinion that they can write well in Amharic and English than in Sidamigna which is quite a significant number. This was shown by 16 (15.09%) in English and 32 (30.19%) in Amharic. This



shows that a good number of students are still deficient in their skill of writing in Sidamigna, the most important skill in the language.

To the question of which language the students would prefer to learn in as a medium of instruction, the majority of them, 37 (34.91%) showed their preference for English language and 36 (33.96%) of them to Sidamigna. The other 26 (24.53%) of the students preferred Amharic, the rest, 7 (6.60% of them didn't respond to the questionnaire. As the data reveals, the great majority of the students don't prefer to learn in Sidamigna. This was shown by 63 (59.44%) who preferred to learn in Amharic and English i.e., 37 (34.912) and 26(24.53%) respectively rather than in Sidamigna, 36 (33.96%).

To get more valid and reliable information from the students as to why they chose Amharic or English as their medium of instruction, a sample of randomly selected 24 students from two sample schools were invited to a focus group discussions to state the reasons for the decisions they had taken. They put forward the following points as their major reasons.

- Our parents are more interested in our learning in either Amharic or English.
- Our parents are happy to see us speak in English fluently.
- We don't have access to library facilities;
- Text books are scarce
- We don't have additional reading materials written in Sidamigna to practice and improve our skills in the language
- There are no reference materials such as dictionaries written in Sidamigna.
- The medium of instruction in Sidaminga terminates at grade 4
- We already know our own language, our parents (fathers and mothers) know it too, it is always with us. We can speak fluently using our own language. We want to learn in a language of wider communication, Amharic or English.

- We can communicate with other people in other places using either Amharic or English.
- Learning in English prepares us to continue our education in colleges and universities
- Job opportunities are available to those who have competency in either Amharic or English skills.
- We don't get much knowledge from learning in our language alone.

As the above data indicates, there is no subject exclusively chosen as a medium of instruction. Although Sidamigna is chosen first, it has no monopoly over the other two languages (Amharic and English). This is contrary to what Cohen, G (2000:180) stated: "the homogeneous population of Sidama Zone in the small towns and rural areas are equally strongly in favour of the use of local languages".

From the responses obtained from the students, it is also assumed that since English is a compulsory language medium after the first 4 years of primary education, the scarcity of text books, the absence of extra reading materials, reference books such as dictionaries in their own language and library facilities as well as the dominance of Amharic and English with rich literary materials and their role for socio-economic mobility has led them to develop lack of confidence and the motivation to learn in their own language. They seem to look forward to learning in either Amharic or English soon after they complete grade 4. For Wolson and Manes (1985:350) such attitudes towards ones own language is described as "love-hate" complex associated with motivation and decisions regarding language use. Moreover, the students' preference to learn in either Amharic rather than their own language is also in line with what Joseph F. and Lind T. (2003:98) have stated: "Multilingual environments increase the options available for the child for new ways of thinking and learning." Moreover, as Fishman (1974:193) has also states "The motivation to learn in indigenous language is naturally low if one can expect that he will be able to use it for a few years."

Students were also asked in which one of the subjects they often score high marks during tests /exams/ assessment. For this, 49 (46.23%) of them replied that they score high marks in Sidama language subjects; 34(32.08%) of them stated that they score high marks in Amharic, the remaining 23(21.69%) of them responded that they score high marks in English. When we compare the number of students who felt that they score high marks in subjects offered in Sidamigna with those who evaluated themselves as high scorers in Amharic and English, the number of students who evaluated themselves as high scorers in Amharic and English is greater than those in Sidama language subjects which is 57 (53.77%) and 49 (46.23%) respectively. This exceeds by 7.54% for those in Amharic and English. This implies that students have more access to Amharic and English subjects than to subjects in Sidamigna.

As the last item indicates, students were also asked which books (reading materials) they can read without difficulty. Exactly 50% of them replied that they have no difficulty reading books written in Sidamigna. The rest, 50% of them can read books or other reading materials written in Amharic and English 29 (27.36%) and 24 (22.64%) respectively. As the data reveals, those who can read books written in Sidamigna without difficulty and those who can read books written in Amharic and English is on equal footing, 50% on either side. One possible interpretation of this data is that since the medium of instruction is in the students' mother tongue (Sidamigna), the percentage of those students who can read books or other reading materials without difficulty could have exceeded 50% than the data reveals.

CHAPTER FIVE

Summary Conclusion and Recommendations

This chapter of the study presents the summary of the major findings, the conclusions and the recommendations forwarded.

5.1 Summary

As it has been mentioned in the introductory section, the objective of this study is to identify the challenges and opportunities of teaching and learning in mother tongue as a medium of instruction in the first cycle primary schools of Sidama Zone and Awasa Kifle Ketema Administrative Town. To this effect, basic research questions were raised. In order to find answers to those basic questions, a descriptive survey method was employed. As for the sampling procedures, since the population for the study was homogenous in many respects and with regard to language in education, a sample of three schools from two Weredas and 1 Kifle Ketema i.e. 1 school from each Wereda and 1 from Kifle Ketema were randomly selected. The technique employed for the sampling procedures was simple random and purposive sampling technique for selection of Weredas and Kifle Ketema respectively.

The subjects of the study were 120 students of grade 4; 9 primary school teachers of grade 4 who teach in Sidamigna using available sampling techniques, 21 parents each represented by one student of the same grade level, 3 principals (one from each school using available sampling technique) and 4 education bureau officials, 2 from Wereda, one from zonal and one from Kifle Ketema.

The instruments used for collecting the data were questionnaires and focus group discussion for students, teachers and principals; interview guides were also used as a major tool for parents and educational bureau officials.

Finally, the data collected through questionnaires, focus-group discussions and interviews were carefully tabulated, analyzed and interpreted using frequency counts and their percentages on a five-point liker type scale.

Findings

With regard to the opinion of the respondents towards using Sidamigna as a medium of instruction, the findings of the study reveals that students, teachers, education bureau officials principals and parents are in favor of the use of Sidaigna as a medium of instruction. 75.5% of the students responded favorably to the questionnaire. Moreover, the focus group interview with teachers, education bureau officials, principals and parents ✓ received (100%) unanimous support for the use of Sidamigna as a medium of instruction in the zone.

Concerning the adequacy of teaching and learning materials, the data obtained through questionnaires, interviews and focus group discussions with students' teachers, principals and education bureau official indicate that there is shortage of textbooks and other resource materials. Almost all teacher respondents, 77.78% of them, 66.67% the principals, the majority of the students, (62.27% them), almost all interviewed education bureau officials) reported that textbooks are scarce. The ratio of the distribution of ✓ textbooks ranges between 1:1 to 1:11 for those considered subjects. Similarly, 88.89 % of the teachers, the majority of the students, (60.38% of them) 100% of the principals and those interviewed educational bureau officials responded that there are no additional reading materials for both the teachers and students. Moreover, 66.67% of the teachers, 100 % of the principals and the majority of the interviewed education bureau officials stated that there are no teachers' guides and reference materials such as dictionaries written in Sidamigna.

The response obtained from teachers towards teaching in the mother tongue was favorable. The majority, 55.5% of them, are interested to teach in Sidamigna. Where as 44.4% them would prefer to teach in English rather than in Sidamigna in the belief that

they don't get much knowledge through teaching in Sidamigna. They also asserted that there are no opportunities for them to learn in colleges or universities if they continued teaching only in Sidamigna. More than that, lack of interest, motivation and commitment by the students to learn in their own language has also discouraged them to teach in the language. During the focus group interview, the teachers stated that most of the students would rather prefer to learn in either Amharic or English to Sidamigna.

As the data reveals the views forwarded by most of the parents who were involved in the interview related to the choice of language (for their children) as a medium of instruction was not favourable. The majority of them chose Amharic and English the majority of whom chose English to be the medium of instruction for their children rather than Sidamigna.

Concerning the students' language choice as a medium of instruction the majority of them chose Amharic and English. This ranged between 59% - 77% of the total respondents (Table 4.12 item 4 and table 4.2b item 11). Out of these, 34.9% of them chose English and 24.53% of them chose Amharic. Only 33.96% of them chose Sidamigna (see table 4.6). For more or less a similar question, 77.36% of them also showed preference to both Amharic and English as compared to 14.15% to Sidamigna (see table 4.2b). Moreover, 70% of the students replied that they can understand those subjects that are taught in English or Amharic better than the subjects taught in Sidamigna (see table 4.12).

The opinion of the students related to the attitude of parents and the community towards teaching and learning in Sidamigna, was not favorable. The majority, 56.6% of the students, replied that their parents do not support their learning in their mother tongue, where as 31.13% of them responded that their parents support their learning in their mother tongue. Similarly, the majority, 58.49% the students, asserted that the community are not in favor of the use of Sidamigna as a medium of instruction and 33.56% of them confirmed that they are supportive of the mother tongue education. To the contrary, 100% of the teachers believe that parents support their children's learning in their mother tongue

Regarding the appropriacy and relevance of the textbooks, 80.15% of the students (Table 4.8 item 5) and 77.78% of the teachers (Table 4.6 item 3) responded that the textbooks prepared for Sidamigna language subject contextualize the available local resources such as the cultural, social and ethnic backgrounds of the students. Moreover, 74.52 % of the students and the majority of the interviewed teachers confirmed that the preparation of the text books is in line with the age and ability of the students.

As the findings of the study reveals, 66.67 % the teachers claimed that the duration of the training program is adequate 33.33% of them stated that the length of training program was inadequate. As the data analysis indicates, there are teachers, (22.2%) of them, who lack the necessary qualification but who still teach with only an initial training of one month and a week training duration. There is no further supplementary training program provided for them to upgrade their skill, and knowledge to be effective and efficient. They reported that they teach in the language not because they are adequately trained but because they speak the language.

The data analysis on the students' skill of reading and writing indicated that 54.72% of them could write well in Sidamigna; nevertheless the majority, 40.56% of them, confirmed that they badly lack consistency in writing words in their correct spelling where a single or double vowel and consonants is to be used. On the other hand, quite a significant number of students, 48.58% of them, asserted that they could only write well in Amharic and English rather than in Sidamigna. Similarly 44.34% of the students responded that they could read well in Sidamigna as compared to 16.98% in English and 32.08% in Amharic. But students' assessment in the class room in their reading skill exceeded 60%.

5.2 Conclusion

The majority of the students in the sample schools support and approve the use of Sidamigna as a medium of instruction. They also confirmed that their learning in their mother tongue has helped them to follow their lessons without difficulty and to actively participate in the classroom through asking and answering questions. In spite of all these

and other opportunities their learning in their mother tongue offers them, they are committed to learn in either Amharic or English. The students' choice of Amharic or English, the majority of whom chose English, was influenced by the consideration that English would be the medium of instruction beyond grade 4. Moreover, the scarcity of textbooks, absence of library facilities, reference books and other reading materials, the wish of their parents to learn in either English or Amharic, the belief that learning in English prepares them to continue their education in colleges or universities which in turn provides them with job opportunities in other language speaking communities, as well as for the purpose of wide communication and the acquisition of much knowledge which they believe could be acquired through these languages were some of the major reasons.

There is uncertainty on the part of the parents and the community as to the benefit of using Sidamigna as a medium of instruction. Most of the parents wish their children to be educated in their mother tongue but not as a means to an end. Almost all the parents in the sample schools want their children to be educated in either Amharic or English rather than in Sidamigna. Parents of the children seem to value the education of their children by its possibilities to secure short term benefits such as social and economic mobilities (job opportunities, etc). This stem from lack of effective motivation and involvement of the parents in the education of their children, and the community to lent its active support and encouragement for the language to be used as medium of instruction. Moreover, teaching in Sidamigan which does not show progress beyond grade 4 and scarcity of learning materials is thought to have lead both the students and parents to develop lack of interest motivation and commitment towards learning in Sidamigna.

As the data obtained from students, teachers principals and Wereda education-bureau officials show, textbooks are scarce. There are no supplementary reading materials for the students to practice and improve their reading skills. In the sample schools, teachers guides, and dictionaries (written in Sidamigna) and library facilities are absent.

As the data reveals and as confirmed through focus group discussion with the teachers themselves, there are a significant number of teachers who are not interested to teach in

the mother tongue. They pointed out that the students lack of interest, motivation and commitment to learn in their own language has discouraged them to teach in the mother tongue. They conformed that the students prefer to learn in either Amharic or English. They also believe that they don't get much knowledge through teaching only in the mother tongue and they also believe that there would not be further educational opportunities in the field of teaching in Sidamigna.

According to the policy of mother tongue education in the first cycle primary schools in Ethiopia, the majority of the teachers in the sample schools are TTI graduates who have participated in a one-year training program. Exception to this are those who were formerly trained for Amharic and English medium schools (before mother tongue education started in 1993) but whose mother tongue is either Sidamigna or can speak the language of the children which as a result were let to teach in the language. As the data indicates, those teachers who were trained prior to 1994 to teach in Amharic or English have received only short and intensive course of for 1 week and a maximum of 1 month. This alone does not qualify them to teach in the language. They didn't even participate in any supplementary training programs through in service (training), workshops or seminars. They lack the skill and knowledge to be effective and efficient though they claimed that this has not affected the subjects they teach due to the mere fact that they can speak the language. More than that, during the focus group interview with the teachers, let alone those teachers who have taken only short term training courses, even those who have participated in the full training program of one year disclosed that this (one year) period of training was insufficient demanding additional training to be effective and efficient.

5.3 Recommendations

Teachers work and students learn with little or no pedagogical support such as additional reading materials and reference books (such as dictionaries) in Sidamigna. Textbooks are even in short supply. The ratio of the distribution of text books ranges between 1:1 to 1:11 for those considered subjects. The only source of knowledge for both the students and the

teachers themselves is found to be the textbook. Worse still is the absence of library facilities and teachers' guides. This is believed to have resulted in the students to resort to languages such as English and Amharic as a medium of instruction where they could have access to textbooks, references and other reading materials. Students develop enthusiasm and get satisfaction from learning in their mother tongue if conditions such as the provision of learning materials and library facilities are fulfilled. Hence, it is suggested that the existing desperate need for supplementary educational materials should go hand in hand with the supply of books. To this end, the Zonal and Regional Bureau Officials should also work hand in hand to publish books, reading and other reference materials which these schools are badly in need of.

It seems that there are students, parents and the language community who have not yet understood the aims and benefits of teaching and learning in mother tongue. Because some parents and the community are not clear as to the aims and benefits of teaching and learning in the mother tongue, parents in particular wish their children to be educated in either Amharic or English. It also seems that absence of motivation and interest by the student themselves to learn in their own mother tongue. In spite of the opportunities they (student) confirmed that their learning in their own mother tongue provides them, they are committed to learn in either English or Amharic. If teaching and learning in the language is to gain ground, students, parents and the community should be informed on its purpose and benefits. They must be initiated to involve in the education of their children. Parents and the community are not invited to meetings to discuss on matters related to the teaching and learning in Sidamigna. Hence, schools, zonal and Wereda education bureau officials should engage in broad range of activities to encourage students, parents and the community to appreciate (support) the teaching and learning in the language. If there is to be a solution to common problems, there must be frequency of contact unless there is a common language there can not be united action.

All the teachers in the sample school asserted that there is a mismatch between the training program and the knowledge they have gained when applied in a practical

situation in the teaching learning process. "For a quality teacher education, a clear guideline of partnership between training institutes and schools (is) imperative (Dawit and Adane, 2001:330). Hence, monitoring of the training, evaluating and supervising of the activities during the training program for its relevance, appropriacy and effectiveness is needed.

There are teachers who lack the necessary qualifications but who teach in the mother tongue. The one-year training program was also found to be inadequate. Hence, it is recommended that those teachers who are let to teach with only basic training of one week to one month duration need to participate in some stimulating workshops, seminars or in service programs to be effective and efficient. Moreover, if quality education and effective implementation quality of the mother tongue program in the first cycle primary schools in the zone is to achieve its goal, recruiting of trainees for teaching in the language must be raised from 10+1 completion to 12+1 completion.

Students lack the competency in the reading and writing skills particularly in writing words in their correct spelling which requires the use of single or double vowels and consonants. Since it is through these three skills that most of the activities of the school work is carried on, more time has to be allotted to the teaching of the students in these three skills starting from grade 1. Moreover, the first cycle primary school curriculum must give more emphasis on the use of the language in its reading and writing skills.

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Appendix A
Addis Ababa University
College of Education
Department of Curriculum and
Teachers Professional Development Studies

A questionnaire to be filled in by students

The objective of this questionnaire is to get adequate first hand information regarding the opportunities and challenges in teaching and learning in mother tongue as a medium of instruction in the first cycle primary school of Sidama zone. The information you give will enable the researcher to identify the depth of the problems and provide recommendations that may help solve the problems. The information you give will be kept strictly confidential. Therefore, be frank and objective when you fill in the questionnaire.

Thank you in Advance

Direction:

1. You don't need to write your name in any of the pages.
2. Put a tick mark "✓" in the boxes for the correct answers.
3. In the space provided, give short answers.

Part I: Background of the students

1. Age: a. 10-12 b. 13-15 c. 16-19
2. Sex: a. Male b. Female
3. Grade _____
4. Wereda _____
5. School _____

6. Language: a. Mother Tongue _____
 b. Second language _____
 c. If other(s), specify _____

Part II: Attitude towards Teaching and Learning in Mother Tongue (Sidamigna)

Direction: In the table below, you are provided with statements that describe your opinion towards teaching and learning in mother tongue (Sidmigna). Please indicate your agreement or disagreement by putting this “✓” mark in the boxes under the scales: SA, A, U, D and SD

Note: SA = Strongly Agree A = Agree U = Disagree SD = Strongly Disagree

S. No	Statements of Opinion	SA	A	U	D	SD
7 ✓	I am happy to learn in Sidamigna					
8	Leaning in Sidama language is wasting my time that I can use for learning in Amharic or English					
9	My parents do not support my learning in Sidamigna					
10 ✓	My learning in my mother Sidamigna has helped me to actively participate in the classroom through asking and answering questions					
11	Since I already know Sidama language, I prefer to learn in Amharic or English which are the official or international languages respectively					
12	I can easily understand the subjects that are taught in Amharic or English better than in Sidamigna					
13	Learning in my mother tongue has helped me to feel proud and have confidence in my self					
14	The language community do not support the teaching and learning in Sidama language					
15	I can easily understand when the teacher teaches Sidama language subjects in Sidamigna					
16	My parents have understood the purposes and benefits of learning in Sidama language					
17 ✓	Our teachers have adequate knowledge in teaching in Sidma language					
18	Our teachers teach us all Sidama language subjects only in Sidamigna					
19	would be happy if I continue learning all subjects in Sidamigna beyond grade 4					

Part III: Students' Language Choice and Proficiency Level

Direction: For questions 1-6 Please show your agreement/disagreement by putting this "✓" mark in the box corresponding to the suggested answers given to each question.

1. Which skill do you find difficult while learning in Sidamigna

- a. Speaking in Sidamigna
- b. Reading what is written in Sidamigna
- c. Writing in Sidamigna
- d. Understanding concepts
- e. Writing in the correct spelling
- f. Other(s), please specify _____

2. In which language do you read well?

- a. in Amharic
- b. In Sidamigan
- c. In English
- d. If others, please specify _____

3. In which language do you write well?

- a. English
- b. Sidamigna
- c. Amharic
- d. Other(s), please write them down below _____

4. If you were given choice of language to learn in as a medium of instruction, which language do you prefer?

- a. Amharic
- b. English
- c. Sidamigna
- d. If other(s), please specify _____

5. In which one of the subjects do you often score high marks.

- a. In subjects offered in English language

b. In subjects offered in Sidamic language

c. In subjects offered in Amharic

d. If there are others, please specify _____

6. Which textbooks (reading materials) can you read without difficulty?

a. Textbooks written in Amharic

b. Textbooks written in English

c. Textbooks written in Sidamigna

d. If there are others, please specify _____

Part IV: Availability of learning materials

Direction: Please put a tick mark “✓” in the boxes given under the rating scales (SA, A, U, D or SD) to show your agreement or disagreement regarding the adequacy of textbooks and other educational materials.

Note: SA = Strongly Agree A = Agree U = Disagree D = Disagree

SD = Strongly Disagree

S. No	Statements of opinion	SA	A	U	D	SD
1	Textbooks for Sidamigna language subjects are in adequate					
2	There is shortage of additional reading materials in Sidamigan to practice and improve our reading skill, etc.					
3	Textbooks prepared for Sidama language subjects are in line with our age and ability					
4	There are sufficient reference materials such as dictionaries in Sidama language					
5	Textbooks prepared for Sidama language subjects have used examples and contextualizes the local resources, the culture, literature and the language of the community					

6. If you have any more points to add in connection to learning and other educational materials, please write them down below _____

7. What are the problems you encountered in learning in Sidamigan as a medium of instruction? _____

8. What do you expect/want from parents, the community, directors, teachers as well as zonal or Wereda Education Bureau Officials to do for you so that you can learn in Sidamigna with interest or without any problem?

Appendix B
Addis Ababa University
College of Education
Department of Curriculum and
Teachers Professional Development Studies

Questionnaire for Teachers

The purpose of this questionnaire is to collect data for the study that attempts to investigate the challenges and opportunities in teaching and learning in mother tongue as a medium of instruction there by recommend possible solutions to the challenges identified. The effectiveness of the study depends on your genuine response to each question. Moreover, your responses to the question including your identity would be kept strictly confidential. Therefore, be frank and objective when you respond to each item in the questionnaire.

Than You!

General Directions

1. You don't need to write your name in any page.
2. Put a tick Mark "✓" in the boxes given for the correct answers.
3. Give short answers in the space provided.

Part I Background of the Teachers

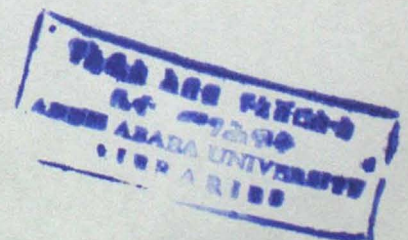
1. Age: a. 20-24 d. 35-39 g. 50 and above
 b. 25-29 e. 40-45
 c. 30-34 f. 45-49
2. Sex: Male
 Female

3. Qualification: a. Certificate c. First degree
 b. Diploma d. No training
4. Service year: a. 1-5 b. 6-10 c. 11-15
 d. 16-20 e. 21-25 f. 26-60
 g. 30 and above h. Other(s) if any _____
5. Language: a. Mother tongue b. Second language
 c. Other(s) if any _____
6. Wereda _____
7. School _____
8. Grade level you teach _____
9. Subject you teach _____
10. Number of Sections _____
11. Average number of students in section _____

Part II: Teachers' opinion towards mother tongue as a medium of instruction

Direction: In the table that follows you are provided with statements that describe your own opinion and the opinion you have of your students the parents and the language community towards the teaching and learning in the mother tongue (Sidamigna) as a medium of instruction. Please indicate your agreement or disagreement based on you experience by putting "✓" mark in the box under the scales: SA, A, UD, D or SD

Note: SA = Strongly Agree D = Disagree A = Agree
 SD = Strong Disagree UD = Undecided



Teachers' Opinion towards Teaching and Learning in Mother Tongue Sidamigna

S. No	Statements of Opinion	SA	A	U	D	SD
1	Sidamia language is difficult to teach					
2	Using their mother tongue, children participate actively and enthusiastically in the classroom through asking and answering questions					
3	I prefer to teach in Amharic or English rather than in Sidamigna					
4	There is active support and encouragement form the community in the teaching and learning in the mother tongue (Sidamigna)					
5	The children are not happy to learn in their mother tongue					
6	The time spent for teaching children in their mother tongue (Sidamigan) is time wasted for teaching in Amharic or English					
7	Children's learning in their mother tongue has helped them to follow their lessons without difficulty					
8	Children's learning in their mother tongue has helped them to feel proud in their own language and develop confidence in themselves					
9	Parents are happy in their children's learning in their mother tongue					
10	Children's learning in their mother tongue helps the language to survive and develop					
11	Since children already know their own language, they prefer to learn in the language of wider communication such as English or Amharic					
12	Children's learning in their mother tongue doesn't offer them job opportunities in other language speaking communities					
13	Parents and the (language) community know the aims and benefits of learning in Sidamigna					
14	I Support teaching and learning in Sidamigna if extended beyond grade 4					

Part III: Teachers' Quality of Training and Adequacy of Trained Manpower

Direction: In the table that follows, you are provided with statements/phrases related to the quality of the training program and the adequacy of trained manpower. Please choose the statements or phrases which you think are appropriate based on the experience you have accumulated during the training program and there after in the teaching and learning in the mother tongue. Then put a tick "✓" mark in the box under SA, A, U, D or SD to show your agreement or disagreement.

1. Have you taken training on how to teach Sidamigna as a medium of instruction?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. Other(s) if any _____

2. If your answer to the question above is "Yes," what was the duration of the training programs?
 - a. _____ year(s)
 - b. _____ month(s)
 - c. _____ week(s)
 - d. _____ days
 - e. _____ no training
 - f. Other(s) if any _____

If you have received training, please show your agreement or disagreement by putting this "✓" mark under the scores SA, A, U, DA or SD

Note: SA = Strongly Agree D = Disagree A = Agree
 SD = Strong Disagree UD = Undecided

No	Item	SA	A	UD	D	SD
1	The duration of the training program was sufficient					
2	The medium of instruction in TTI etc for the subjects I teach in Sidamigna was given in Sidama language					

No	Item	SA	A	UD	D	SD
3	The training program has equipped me with the necessary Sidama language skills and knowledge					
4	The training was offered by trainers skilled in training teachers in mother tongue.					
5	The practice of reading and writing skills in Sidamigna was part of the training program					
6	The training program mainly focuses on methods of teaching					
7	The shortage of the training program has affected my teaching the subject in the mother tongue					
8	Because the duration of the training program I participated was not enough, I need additional training					
9	The training program does not go with my teaching in the mother tongue					

10. If you have any other points to add in connection to the training program, please list them down below _____

11. Do you now teach the subject for which you are trained?

a. Yes b. No

c. Other(s) if any _____

12. If your answer to the question above is "No", how then did you manage to teach?

a. Because I can speak the language b. Because I was assigned to teach

c. Because of shortage of teachers

d. Other(s) if any _____

Part IV: Adequacy of Teaching and Learning Materials

Directions: Statements/phrases related to the adequacy of teaching and learning materials are given in the table below. Please choose the correct statement/phrase and put a tick “✓” mark in the box under the scales SA, A, U, DA and SD to show your agreement or disagreement.

No	Item	SA	A	UD	D	SD
1	There are sufficient textbooks for students in Sidama language subjects.					
2	There are adequate/sufficient additional reading materials in Sidama language for the students to practice/improve their language skills.					
3	Students textbooks for Sidama language subjects are prepared using examples from local resources available and by contextualizing the culture and language of the community.					
4	There is lack of reference materials such as dictionary in Sidama language for both the teacher and students.					
5	There is n sufficient teachers' guide for the teacher.					
6	The meanings for words alien to Sidama language are given in students' textbooks.					

7. If you have any more points to add in connection to the teaching and learning materials, please write them below. _____

Part V: Adequacy of Sidamigna for use as a Medium of instruction

Direction: The questionnaires that follow refer to the appropriacy of the language for use as a medium of instruction. Please select the appropriate answers and put a tick “✓” mark in the box corresponding to: VH, H, M, L and VL.

Note: VH = Very High H = High L = Low
 M = Medium VL = Very Low

No	Item	VH	H	M	L	VL
1	Problems encountered in recognizing single and double vowels and consonants to represent length of sound and to differentiate meanings					
2	In adequacy of the language for scientific and technological terms (eg. in science subjects)					
3	The same letters in Sidamigna and English competing for different sounds					
4	Translations out of Sidamigna and into Amharic or English					

5. If you have any more points to add in connection to the above, please list them down

Part VI: How do you rate yourself in each of the following Sidama language skills and understanding?

Put "✓" mark in the box under the scales: VH, H, M, L or VL

VH = Very High H = High M = Medium

L = Low VL = Very Low

No	Item	VH	H	M	L	VL
1	Listening to Sidamigna correctly					
2	Speaking in Sidamigna correctly					
3	Reading Sidama language correctly					
4	Writing in Sidamigna correctly					
5	Understanding concepts and ideas from text materials written in Sidama language					

Part VII: Please rate your students in each of the following language skills and understanding by putting “✓” mark in the box under the scales.

VH = Very High H = High M = Medium

L = Low VL = Very Low

No	Item	VH	H	M	L	VL
1	Listening to Sidamigna Correctly					
2	Speaking in Sidamigna correctly					
3	Reading Sidamigna correctly					
4	Writing in Sidamigna correctly					
5	Understanding concepts and ideas from text materials written in Sidama language					

6. If you have any more points to add, please write them in the space provided below _____

7. What do you think are the problems that can be encountered in teaching Sidamigna. _____

8. What improvement do you suggest so that it may help raise the status of using Sidamigna as a medium of instruction? _____

Part II: Availability of Teaching and Learning Materials

Directions: The following questionnaire refers to the presence of teaching-learning materials for students in grade 4. Please choose the correct statement/phrase and put “✓” mark under the scale: SA, A, U, D or SD.

Note: SA = Strongly Agree

A = Agree

UD = Undecided Disagree

D = Disagree

SD = Strongly Disagree

No	Item	SA	A	UD	D	SD	Total
1	Textbooks for students in Sidama language subjects are inadequate						
2	There is shortage of additional reading materials for students in Sidama language subjects						
3	There is sufficient teachers' guides for teachers						
4	There is inadequacy in reference materials such as dictionaries in Sidamigna for teachers and students						

Part III:

4. In the table below, please indicate the student-textbook ratio for each of the subjects in the boxes given below.

Grade	School						
	Subject	Mother tongue		Environmental science		Maths	
4		Ratio	-	Ratio	-	Ratio	-

5. Please list down other text materials that teachers use as a-supplement to the subscribed text materials. _____

Appendix D

Addis Ababa University

School of Graduate Studies

College of Education Department of

Curriculum and Teacher Professional Development Studies

Interview Guide to Students

Part I: Background of the Respondents

1. Age: _____

2. Sex: Male _____

Female _____

3. Grade _____

4. Language proficiency: 1. Mother tongue _____

2. Second language _____

3. Other(s) _____

5. Wereda _____

6. School _____

1. Have you attended K.G before you start learning in grade 1? If "No", what is/are your reasons?

2. Are you happy to learn in Sidamigna as a medium of instruction? If "Yes", what is/are the reason(s) why you learn in your mother tongue (Sidamigna)? If "No", what is/are your reasons for not learning in your mother tongue (Sidamigna)?

3. Are your parents (father/mother) happy because you are learning in your mother tongue? If "Yes", did they tell you why you are learning in your mother tongue? If "No", what is/are the reasons(s) why they don't support your learning in your mother tongue?
4. If you are happy to learn in your mother tongue (Sidamigna), do you want to continue learning in junior and secondary schools also?
If "No", what is/are your reason(s) not to continue learning in your mother tongue?
5. Do you want to learn in another language? If you say "Yes", why do you choose to learn in another language?
6. If you are given choices to learn in another/other language(s), which language(s) do you prefer to learn in?
a. Amharic b. English C. Sidama d. other(s) if any _____
If you choose Amharic or English, what is your reason for your choice?
7. Are there additional reading materials written in Sidama language for you to practice (improve) your reading skill? If you say "Yes", where do you find them? Do you read them by going to the library, at home? If "No", what is/are your reasons for not reading other reading materials in Sidama languages?
8. What are the problems you face while learning in Sidama language?
9. What do you want your teachers parents, directors, Wereda education bureau officials, etc. to do for you so that you can learn in your mother tongue without any problem?
10. Are you provided each with textbooks in Sidama language for all subjects?

Appendix E

Interviews to Teachers

1. Are you happy in teaching in Sidamigan? Why?
2. What do you think are the attitudes of parents and the community towards the use of Sidamigna as a medium of instruction? Why?
3. Have all teachers of grade 4 (in your school who teach in Sjdamigna) received training in TTI or other Training institutions?
4. Do you participate in in-service training workshops, etc, to upgrade your knowledge and skill to effectively accomplish your task of teaching?
5. If you have not participated, do you think that your not participating in in-service program, workshops has affected your teaching in the mother tongue?
6. Do parents know the reasons why their children learn in their mother tongue?
7. Have you attended meetings with other teachers in your school, directors, Wereda education bureau officials on matters related to the teaching and learning in Sidama language. What important issues were raised? What solutions did you find the problems raised (if any)?
8. What are the problems you faced so far while teaching the subject you are assigned to? What solutions do you suggest?
9. What improvements (revision) should be made to raise the status of teaching in Sidama language as a medium of instruction.
10. Do you agree if teaching in Sidama language is extended to junior and secondary level?
11. Which subject(s) is/are difficult to teach and for your students to learn? What is/are the reasons? _____

Please if you have anymore points to add _____

Appendix F

Interview to Directors

1. Have you participated in any training program on how to manage and direct teachers in the 1st cycle primary school level? If not, how do you come to be a director?
2. How much are you satisfied with the position you have now? Why?
3. Have all teachers who teach in Sidama language classes (grade 4) received training in TTI?
If your answer is "No," has it affected the teaching-learning process?
4. Do parents and the community support their children's learning in their mother tongue?
5. Do parents, and the community know the reason why their children are learning in their mother tongue?
6. Do teachers report problems related to the teaching and learning in mother tongue? If "Yes," what were their problems, and how did you solve them?
7. Do you sometimes hold meetings with parents, the community, Wereda and zonal education bureau officials to discuss on matters related to teaching and learning in Sidama language? What was/were the center of discussion for the meeting(s)?
8. What are the major challenges that teachers and students face in the teaching and learning in Sidama language?
9. What improvements do you suggest to increase the status of teaching and learning in Sidama language as a medium of instruction?
10. Do you have any thing more to say in connection to teaching and learning in Sidama language?

Appendix G
Addis Ababa University
College of Education
Department of Curriculum and
Teachers Professional Development Studies

Interview to Wereda Education Bureau Officials

The purpose of this interview is to collect data for the study that tries to investigate the challenges and opportunities in teaching and learning in mother tongue as a medium of instruction in the first cycle primary schools Sidama Zone, there by recommend possible solutions to the challenges identified the effectiveness of the study depends on your genuine response to each question. The information you give will only be used for academic purposes and your responses including your identity will be kept strictly confidential, therefore be frank and objective when your respond to the interview.

Thank you!

General Directions

Part I: Background of the respondents

1. Age: a. 20-24 d. 35-39 g. 50 and above
b. 25-29 e. 40-44
c. 30-34 f. 45-49
2. Sex: Male
Female
3. Qualification: a. Certificate c. 1st degree
b. diploma d. 2nd degree
e. Other(s) if any _____
4. Language: a. your mother tongue _____
b. Second language _____

5. Number of service year: _____

6. Wereda _____

1. Have you participated in any training program on how to manage and direct teachers who teach in mother tongue? If your answer is "No" does this not create problem on how to find solutions to matters related to the teaching and learning in mother tongue?
2. Have all first cycle primary school teachers (in your Wereda) received training in TTI before they start teaching in the mother tongue? If your answer is "No" what were the problems you have observed and the teachers have faced in the teaching-learning process?
3. What is the duration of the training program in TTI for mother tongue teachers? Do you believe that the length of the training program the teachers have undergone through is sufficient enough to equip them with the necessary knowledge and skills to teach the subject content in Sidamigna?
4. Did trainers in TTI who are supposed to teach in Sidamigna receive their training by trainers of Sidama language nationality?
5. Are all first cycle primary school teachers (in the Wereda) who teach subjects in Sidama language are of Sidama nationality? If your answer is "No" does this not affect the effective teaching-learning process?
6. Do teachers participate in in-serve training, program workshops, etc. to upgrade their knowledge and skill to effectively accomplished their task of teaching?
7. Are textbooks adequate enough for subjects in Sidama language?
8. Are there additional reading and reference materials written in Sidama language for teachers and children to practice their language skills? If your answer is "No" does it not affect children's learning progress in the use of their mother tongue?

9. Do you think that there is active support and encouragement from parents and the language community in the use of Sidama language as a medium instruction?
10. In your opinion, do teachers and students have the motivations and interest to teach and learn in Sidama language respectively?
11. Are parents supportive of their children's learning in their mother tongue? If your answer is "No" what do you think are the reasons behind?
12. Do you believe that the program of teaching and learning in mother tongue in the zone is progressing as per the desired language policy of the region?
13. Do you sometimes hold meetings with parents, the language community, teachers and students to discuss on matters related to the teaching and learning in Sidama language (as a medium of instruction)? If "Yes" is your answer, what were the issues raised at the meeting? And what were the consensus reached at? If "No" is that not important?
14. What problems have been reported to you so far from teachers, students, parents and the community in connection to the teaching and learning in Sidama language? How did you solve these problems?

- a. From children _____

- b. From teachers _____

- c. From students _____

d. From parents _____

e. From the community _____

15. What improvements, (revision) do you suggest so that it may help raise the status of using Sidama language as a medium of instruction?
16. Do you believe that there should be national examination at the end of grade 4 to motivate children to learn in their mother tongue?
17. Are parents aware of the benefits of their children's learning in their mother tongue.
18. Scholars believe that the use of different languages by different nationalities in one country results in ethnic conflict, regional or notional disintegration what is your opinion on this?

5. Number of service year _____
6. Have all first cycle primary school teachers received training in TTI, before they were assigned to teach in Sidama language classes? If "No", does it not affect the teaching and learning in mother tongue? If "Yes" how much does the training contributed to the teaching and learning of mother tongue?
7. Are all primary school teachers (who teach in Sidama language) are proficient in Sidamigna? If not what do you understand about their efficacy in teaching in Sidama language?
8. Is the training to teachers teaching in Sidama language given by Sidama language trainers at TTI? Do you have anything to add?
9. Do you think that the duration of the training program for teachers in who teach in Sidama language is sufficient enough to effectively accomplish their task of teaching?
10. Do teachers participate in workshops, in-service training, etc. to upgrade there knowledge and skill? Do you have any thing to add?
11. Are parents supportive of their children's learning in their mother tongue? If your answer is "No", what do you thing are the reasons?
12. Do your think that there are adequate textbooks and additional reading materials written in Sidama language for teachers and children to practice their language skills? If your answer is "No", does it not affect children's program n their mother tongue?
13. Do you think that there is active support and encouragement from parents and the language community in the use of mother tongue as a medium of instruction? _____

14. Do you sometimes hold meetings with parents, the language community, teachers, Wereda Ed. Bureau officials to discuss on matters related to the teaching and learning in Sidama language? What were the major problems raised at the meeting? What solutions did you finally come up with?
15. What problems have been reported so far from any where in connection to the teaching and learning in Sidama language?
16. What are the major challenges that prevail in the zone in implementing the use of Sidama language as a medium of instruction?
17. What improvements (revision) do you suggest which may help raise the status of Sidama language as a medium of instruction.
18. Do you think that there should be national exam at the end of grade 4 to motivate children to learn in their mother tongue?
19. Some scholars believe that teaching in nationality languages by different language communities results. How do you feel about this in relation to the use of Sidama language?
20. Do you believe that the program of teaching in mother tongue in the zone is progressing as per the designed language policy of the zone? If "No", what are the obstacles?
21. Any other suggestions/opinions you want to add?

Appendix I
Addis Ababa University
School of Graduate Studies
College of Education Curriculum and
Teachers' Professional Program Development

Interview to Parents

Part I: Background of the Respondents

1. Age _____
2. Sex: Male _____
Female _____
3. Marital status: Single _____
Married _____
Divorced _____
4. Wereda _____
5. School _____
6. Nationality _____
7. Occupation _____
8. Language:-
 1. Mother tongue _____
 2. Second language _____
 3. Others (if any) _____

9. Do you have a child/children who attend(s) schools where Sidamigna is used as a medium of instruction. If "Yes" how many? What grade level is/are he/she/they?
10. Do you know the purposes and benefits of teaching and learning in mother tongue?

11. Do you support the use of Sidamigan as a medium of instruction?
12. Is/are your child/children happy learning in Sidama language? If your answer is "No", what reason(s) does/do he/she/they give?
13. Do you have a child/children who attend(s) in 1st cycle primary schools in which the medium of instruction is in another language? Rather than Sidamigna? How do/does they/he/she feel/feels?
14. Do other parents also have a child/children who attend in first cycle primary school in which the medium of instruction is not in Sidama language? What complaints or praises do you hear from them?
15. Do you want your child/children to learn in another language? If "Yes" or "No" why?
16. How much are other parents happy with their children learning in another language? If "Yes" or "No" why?
17. If you are given a choice of language as a medium of instruction, which language do you choose for your child to learn in?
- a. Amharic b. English c. Sidamigna
- a. Other (if any) _____
- Why?
18. Have you attended meetings with teachers, directors, Wereda educational bureau officials and zonal educational bureau officials on matters related to the teaching and learning in Sidama language? If your answer is "Yes", how many times so far? What were the issues raised? What was the consensus reached at?
19. Do you support your child/children to continue learning in Sidamigna in junior and secondary schools? Why?
20. If you support your child's/children's learning in his/her/their mother tongue, what improvements do you suggest so as to increase the value of Sidamigna to serve as a medium of instruction?