Exploring Language Uses and Policy Processes in Karat Town of Konso Woreda, Ethiopia

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Abstract

The thesis explores language uses and the implementation of language policy processes in a Konso ethnolinguistic community in Ethiopia. Federal education policy recognises the right of every ethnic group to use their language in primary education. However, this policy has been inconsistently implemented, and many minority languages are devalued in the teaching-learning process. Specifically, the study investigates the language uses of a Konso Karat community and the students and teachers in their school, the practices and planning of language-in-education policy in this community and the relationship between language and ethnic identity.

I carried out six months ethnographic fieldwork in Karat town and interviewed officials at the Federal, Regional and Zonal levels of education system. This enabled me to explore language-in-education policy decisions on and practices of language uses in primary education and critically interrogate language policy implementation and planning in Konso 'Woreda'/District. The study revealed that in Karat town individuals and families predominantly used Amharic or Affa Konso or both due to their different attitudes and values attached to these languages in and outside Konso Woreda. However, in this Orthodox religion, Amharic was dominantly used in the religious preaching and ceremonies. Regarding views on identity and language, findings revealed that ethnic identity and its relationship with language were largely essentialised due to a belief embedded in the Konso socio-cultural system and Ethiopian ethnolinguistic ideology.

The study also showed that the primary school official policy ignored Affa Konso and its speakers and prioritized Amharic as the language of opportunity and power. However, there were some Affa Konso speaking teachers and students who valued the minority language and translated the official policy in their own ways. This experience in the teaching-learning process - along with a view that promotion of mother tongue education could enhance students' learning - led to a Konso local language policy initiative. This policy aimed to promote Affa Konso for official uses including education but this decision was made by officials on behalf of the community.

Acknowledgements

Acronyms

ABE: Alternative Basic Education

AD: Anno Domino (After the Christ's Birth)

CSA: Central Statistics Agency

E.C: Ethiopian Calendar

EECMY: Ethiopian Evangelical Church 'Mekana' 'Yesus'

EPRDF: Ethiopian People Revolutionary Democratic Front

ESDP: Education Sector Development Programme

ETB: Ethiopian Birr (Currency)

FDRE: Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia

FDREPCC: Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia Population Census Commission

FGD: Focus Group Discussions

FM: Frequency Modulation

FMOE: Federal Ministry of Education

ICT: Information and Communication Technology

INGOs: International Non-governmental Organizations

KLDSP: Konso Language Development Strategic Plan

KMs: Kilometres

MA: Master of Arts

MOCT: Ministry of Culture and Tourism

MOE: Ministry of Education

NGO: Non-governmental Organization

REB: Regional Education Bureau

SNNPRS: Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples' Regional State

TVET: Technical and Vocational Education and Training

UK: United Kingdom

UNESCO: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

WEO: Woreda Education Office

ZED: Zone Education Department

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Chapter One: Introduction

1.1.   The Emergence of My Research

My research interest emerged from my observation and experience of Ethiopia's current education system and from working with local communities across Ethiopia. For over fifteen years, as a part of my roles as a teacher, head teacher and education programme manager and coordinator of INGOs and UNESCO in Ethiopia, I have had the opportunity to visit the rural areas of most Ethiopian regions (e.g. in SNNP, Afar, Amhara, Benishangul-Gumuz and Oromia regions). My role in these visits was to oversee, assess, understand and provide technical and other supports (e.g. financial assistance on project basis) to the education programme in general and the teaching-learning process in particular. This experience enabled me to closely observe and learn how the education system functions and how children learn and interact in the classrooms, schools and communities. It also provided me with ground level experiences in discussing various educational issues with children, teachers, head teachers, communities' members and different levels government officials. These issues have included: mother tongue education, language of teaching, quality and relevance of curriculum, teaching approaches, teachers' training, pastoralists' education, non-formal alternative basic education and girls' education. As a staff member of INGOs (International Non-governmental Organizations) and UNESCO, while working in partnership with the Ministry of Education in Ethiopia, I also participated in policy-related discussions and tasks, for instance, as a National Committee member of the development of Early Childhood Care and Education Policy Framework (2008-2010) and Strategy of Alternative Basic Education Programme (2009).

In such processes, I became curious about language-in-education policy and practice and began questioning the way that different language background students interacted in classrooms in the framework of the official language policy. I was also drawn by the way that students learned in familiar and unfamiliar languages in primary schools and by the educational inequalities prevalent to the system, and the implications for language choice and use, academic progress and identity. Through observing current Ethiopian ethnolinguistic politics, I have become aware of how language is essentialised and how ethnic identity influences language choice, use and attitudes. This is a perceived indication of people's confinement towards their ethnic languages and boundaries. Moreover, my postgraduate MA at the University of London, Goldsmiths College

(2011) was directly related to education, culture, language and identity and enabled me to see this research problem with a theoretical lens and further develop it into an initial research proposal for my PhD. Indeed, all my experiences whether in the field as a practitioner or in policy-related activities or in my academic life, have encouraged me to focus on research questions pertaining to language uses and implementation of language policy processes in the context of a minority language and ethnic group in Ethiopia.

1.2.   The Background of the Study

My research is broadly situated in education, language and identity. However, it specifically explores: the language uses of members of a specific community in different domains, including students in primary school; the views, practices and planning of language-in-education policy in the school and community and the relationship of language and ethnic identity.

In this section, I present a historical account of language and ethnicity or ethnolinguistic matters in relation to the current Ethiopian political setting and education system. I have decided this in view of providing the background for my study as well as relating the history of language and ethnicity with my research questions. History shows that the issues of language and ethnic inequalities have been a national question in Ethiopia for over half a century (Zewde, 1991) when the Ethiopian student movement in 1960 (during the reign of emperor Haile Selassie I, 1930-1974) was a culmination of political dissatisfaction with the emperor's autocratic rule (Pankhurst, 1998). As Zewde (1991, 201) describes, this period was characterised by "…the apogee of absolutism in Ethiopia…The power of the state reached a limit unprecedented in Ethiopian history" where opposition to the system reached its highest level. Among these discontents, the Ethiopian student movement represented the 'most implacable opposition' to the regime (Zewde, 1991, 220), demanding 'social justice and equitable development' for Ethiopian people (Zewde, 2014).

This political movement contributed significantly to the downfall of the emperor Haile Selassie's I government in 1974 (Pankhurst, 1998, 275; Zewde, 2014). It was also considered as a conclusion to over a century of monarchic power in Ethiopia. This student movement led to the outbreak of the Ethiopian revolution (1974); however, unfortunately this revolution was hijacked by the military group, 'the Derg' (James, 2002, ix). Those who were the initiators and activists in the revolutionary process were pushed aside and put in difficult circumstances. The military coup was

followed by unprecedented and disastrous bloodshed among various political party members in the country (e.g. conflict among the Derg, Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Party (EPRP) and All-Ethiopian Socialist Movement (AESM)), particularly in the early years of the Derg period. The Derg government, characterised as a socialist regime with a Marxist-Leninist ideology, ruled the country for seventeen years (1974-1991); nevertheless, it is remembered more for its nationalist flagship ('Ethiopia Tikidem' (Ethiopia First)) and military dictatorship.

As Gudina (2003, in Debelo, 2012, 522) states, "The pre-revolution [1974] political, economic, and social realities of the country became strong driving forces for the relevance of carrying ethnic banners for …struggle"[1]. This experience of taking ethnicity as a centre of Ethiopian politics was also sustained after the revolution. One of the major effects of the 1974 revolution was the 'emergence of a number of ethnically based parties or movements' in the country (Pankhurst, 1998, 275). Those political parties (which mainly included university students and youth) who held different ideological point of views from that of the Derg and believed that the questions of language and ethnicity had not been addressed, continued their struggle. These ethnically charged movements became strongholds of armed struggle against the Derg regime, particularly in the northern part of Ethiopia. Finally, the resistance groups (e.g. mainly the Ethiopian People Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) together with the Eritrean People Liberation Front (EPLF)) succeeded in defeating the Derg, and the EPRDF came to power in Ethiopia in 1991. This historical episode paved the way for ethnically organized groups and parties (e.g. the Tigray People Liberation Front (TPLF), Oromo Liberation Front (OLF) and others) to exercise their vision (to address the question of language and ethnic inequality). This "victory opened a new chapter in Ethiopian's age old history" (Pankhurst, 1998, 277) based on 'the question of nationalities' (ethnic groups) as the basis for 'the political ideology and configuration of post-1991 Ethiopia' (Zewde, 2014, 178). It was a point of departure that redefined and restructured Ethiopia and its political system in ways that differed significantly from its predecessors.

Since that time (1991), Ethiopia has experienced a political transformation from a unitary state arrangement (until 1991) to an ethnolinguistic federal government system (Debelo, 2012). Within two decades (1974 to 1991), Ethiopia has shifted from being a monarchy to having a socialist

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[1] Donham, D. (2002, 2). From the end of the nineteenth century until the revolution of 1974, the superiority of core cultural values was little questioned, and forms of collective local identity were little developed in the peripheries.

government to becoming an ethnolinguistic federal state. The current government (the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE) (1991 to present) decided on an ethnolinguistic-based federalism as a liberating political model for suppressed and minority ethnic groups along with language and cultural expressions (Abbink, 2011). Indeed, the issues of language and ethnicity that were raised by the Ethiopian students in the 1960s came into practice and reshaped Ethiopia and its politics. The present government has promoted the idea that local people have the right to administer themselves as far as "they constituted an 'ethnic group' associated with an appropriately defined territory" (Donham, 2002, 6) and language (FDRE Constitution, 1995).

Accordingly, within the Federal government structure that includes more than 80 ethnic groups and languages (CSA, 2007), Ethiopia has been reshaped into nine regional states (Amhara, Oromia, Tigray, Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples, Benishangul-Gumuz, Gambela, Afar, Somali and Harari) and two city administrations (Addis Ababa and Dire Dawa). They are demarcated and structured solely along ethnolinguistic lines, yet each regional state has diverse ethnic groups and languages within its territories. The debate about ethnolinguistic federalism continues to this day among politicians, scholars and other Ethiopians. At the heart of the debate is whether ethnolinguistic federalism maintains the country's unity in diversity or initiates conflict among ethnic groups and creates a 'fragile' state. Currently, incidents of ethnic based conflicts in different parts of the country (triggered by ethnic extremists) are responsible for the loss of many lives and displacement of people because of their ethnic backgrounds (e.g. in Oromia and Ethiopian Somali regions as Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation (EBC) and Voice of America Amharic (VOA) programme broadcasted in September 2017). This conflict has resulted in the displacement of more than 500,000 people from their homes because of their ethnic origins (ibid.).

Additionally, the constitutional rights that allow self-governance and democracy to minority ethnic groups (FDRE, 1995), along with the feasibility of ethnolinguistic political arrangements, now seems questionable in Ethiopia. As a result, there have been successive protests in different parts of the country, including my research area, Konso, particularly since 2016 (see details in Chapter 2) and political instability across the country. In relation to the ethnolinguistic federalism of Ethiopia, Clapham (2002, 27) states that "Ethiopia has thus gone far further than any other African state (and almost any state worldwide) in reconstructing itself in ethnic terms", which makes Ethiopia 'relatively unique in Africa' in taking ethnicity as the major element for nation building

(Abbink, 2011, 597). However, such a political system has remained controversial for many Ethiopians and has not resolved inequalities among different ethnic groups in the country.

Moreover, the issues of language and ethnicity that have reframed Ethiopia along with its politics has also shaped language uses (e.g. some local languages became the official working languages and languages of teaching and media) and the education system and language-in-education policy of the country. Along with the shift in the political system, the government has made radical changes in its constitution, policies, strategies, structures and development plans. Among these changes, in 1994, the government launched the Education and Training Policy, which is very different from the prior language-in-education policies, curricula, education structures, education administrations and other aspects (FDRE, 1994) (see Chapter 2).

The education policy recognises "the rights of nationalities to promote the use of their languages, primary education will be given in nationality (ethnic group) languages" (FDRE, 1994, 24). It has also devolved to the regions educational management and responsibility for each region's education system and budget except universities (which are managed by the federal government) (ibid.). The policy is also informed by a multilingual ideology that acknowledges the use of diverse languages in the education system, in contrast to the previous monolingual ideology (one-language-one country, where Amharic was privileged as a unifying language). The current education policy recognises at least two additional languages (Amharic and English) to be learned in primary school besides students' ethnic languages or mother tongue (ibid). This suggests the policy's potential to facilitate interactions between individuals, groups and societies and to promote multilingualism and multiple identities. However, in practice, the policy has been implemented differently in different government structures and by different regions and ethnic groups. The way that language-in-education policy is inconsistently implemented is among the issues that motivated me to undertake this research.

1.3. Statement of the Research Problem

In this thesis, I explore community and school language uses and the implementation of language policy processes in the context of a minority language speaking Konso ethnic group. As a rationale for my research problem, I provide previous research findings on the status and practice of the current language-in-education policy in Ethiopia. Yigezu (2010, 28) states that the Ethiopian

education policy can be considered as a "'pluralist' or maintenance/heritage bilingual education, which claims to satisfy the demands of self-expression for Ethiopian's various ethnic groups and is intended to produce equity in terms of basic education". This statement suggests that the what, why and how of the language-in-education policy aims to resolve basic education disparities among various ethnic groups of the country through introducing mother tongue and additional languages in primary education. Heugh (2011, 394) also emphasises that "what is important for the international community … is evidence that it is possible to implement a linguistically diverse education system, even in a poorly resourced country like Ethiopia". This idea underlines the possibility of using various minority languages for education purposes in contexts of limited resources and in a multilingual environment. Based on the work of Heugh et al. (2007), McCarty and Nicholas (2012, 152) also assert that "the Ethiopian data reinforce research from many parts of the world [which claims that]: for children from minority home language backgrounds, providing six to eight years of mother tongue schooling yields the greatest academic benefits". Their assertion supports the notion of mother tongue education provision as a key educational input to enhance children's learning. This aligns with what the Ethiopian education policy (FDRE, 1994) states about the academic value of mother tongue education. Hence, the above research findings (Yigezu, 2010; Heugh, 2011; McCarty and Nicholas, 2012) commend the multilingual aspect of the current Ethiopian education policy and use of minority students' mother tongues at primary education, with its pedagogic benefits, as a success of the education system.

In contrast, other research findings reveal that current education policy is inconsistently implemented and differently translated across the country. For instance, the "pressure to introduce English as the [medium of instruction] in earlier grades" (Heugh et al, 2007 in McCarty and Nicholas, 2012, 152), was cited as a drawback of the policy. This shows the influence and use of dominant languages such as English in education system against the official policy's intention that aims to allow children to learn in their mother tongue in the early grades. This experience is evident particularly in preschools and can be taken as an example of a *de facto* policy that influences people's practice and behaviour without having official policy support (Johnson, 2013). Moreover, Woldemariam and Lanza (2014, 80) say that "…certain ideologies of linguistic hegemony from the past are often perceived to prevail through the apparent dominance and influence of Amharic in various domains, including the linguistic landscape of the two regions [Oromia and Tigray] in

question". This reveals that the official policy provision alone does not guarantee the promotion of any particular language for public domains in a multilingual setting. The high status language (s) has the potential to push aside the minority languages' official role due to historical reason and power relations. Thus, although official policy documents legitimise the use of ethnic language in official domains including education, policy makers implement the federal policy differently. I consider this in my research to explore how policy makers at different levels of the education system translate the federal language-in-education policy and the reasons behind such policy practices.

Moreover, my review of official documents (MOE, 2016; SNNPR EB, 2016) reveals that there are four different approaches to the practice of language-in-education policy in the primary school system in Ethiopia's framework of federal education policy. These are:

1) The use of mother tongue as the medium of instruction in primary education (grades 1-8) (e.g. Oromia, Tigray and Amhara regions use their languages in primary education for all subjects except English up to grade 8);

2) The use of mother tongue as the medium of instruction in the first cycle of primary education (grades 1-4, ages 7-10) and use of English as the medium of instruction in the second cycle of primary education (grades 5-8, ages 11-14) (e.g. Wolayita, Sidama, Siltie ethnic groups in SNNPR use their languages for all subjects except English in the first cycle of primary education);

3) The use of Amharic, non-mother tongue as the medium of instruction in the first cycle of primary education and use of mother tongue as a single subject starting from grade 1 and use of English medium in the second cycle of primary (e.g. Halaba, Yem, Amaro ethnic groups in SNNPR use their languages as a subject and the remaining subjects are taught in Amharic except English in lower primary education); and

4) The use of Amharic, non-mother tongue in the first cycle of primary school and use of English in the second cycle of primary (e.g. Konso, Guraghe, Alie ethnic groups in SNNPR have not started to use their languages in primary education).

In fact, consistently in all approaches, English is provided as a subject from the start of primary education, grade 1 and onwards, in alignment with the 1994 Education and Training policy. The

above data indicates the various ways Ethiopia's education policy is implemented in different contexts and the policy makers' language ideologies that shape the policies at various levels. From the available official data, at the time of this research, more than half of the minority ethnic languages in the country were in accordance with the fourth approach above which limits these languages to home, personal and socio-cultural communications.

Through my experience in and observation of the Ethiopian education system, I witnessed that many children of minority ethnic groups learn in an unfamiliar language, non-mother tongue (e.g. about 31 ethnic groups in SNNPR, according to REB (2016)). I felt that this experience devalues the use of minority languages in primary school and might affect children's academic progress. The choice and use of multiple mediums of instruction in primary education (e.g. mother tongue or Amharic (for those children for whom Amharic is not their mother tongue) and English) in the context of inadequate teachers' preparation and training and other educational inputs (e.g. reference and supplementary reading books) could also adversely impact students' learning outcomes and quality of education as well. Additionally, the education system's failure to provide the required languages of nation-wide and international communications (Amharic and English respectively, as stated in Ethiopia's education policy (FDRE, 1994)) for students might have an adverse effect on students when competing for federal level jobs and inter-ethnic group communication. Moreover, beyond policy provision, different government level's unequal and inadequate support provided to reinforce, promote and revitalize the languages of minority groups in public domains affect the ways in which minority ethnic groups use their languages in education. Only those ethnic groups that have the resources use their languages in education whereas others tend to lag behind and seem to be at the mercy of national or international development partners to support their education (e.g. As part of my previous job responsibilities in NGOs, I participated in supporting the preparation and printing of the Alternative Basic Education (ABE) curriculum materials in minority languages).

Furthermore, I witnessed the tension between the promotion of essentialising language and ethnic identity and the practice of multilingual policy in the country, in which language tends to be seen through the lens of ethnic identity, potentially deterring individual students from developing, choosing and using different languages and affecting a multilingual policy practice. There were also other factors such as attitude to languages, history and politics that could influence

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individuals' language choice, use and development. As Jaffe (2011, 205) argues, the education system "is clearly seen as a necessary but not sufficient tool for attaining a societal bilingualism". There is also a tension between Amharic's dominant status due to historical and political reasons and its associated value in the country and in the practice of current constitutional rights to promote minority languages in public domains. This might also affect the language choice and use of minority ethnic groups in their education systems and other domains. When framing my research questions, I took into account the above research findings (e.g. Yigezu, 2010; Heugh, 2011; McCarty and Nicholas, 2012; Woldemariam and Lanza, 2014), my own observations and experiences and historical and political accounts on language and ethnic identity. I decided to focus on language use, language-in-education policy processes, students' language interactions in school and the relationship of language with ethnic identity in a minority ethnolinguistic context.

1.4. My Research Focus and Research Questions

My research aims to develop an understanding of language uses and implementation of language policy processes of primary education in the context of a minority language and ethnic group in Ethiopia. Specifically, I examine language uses in a Konso community and primary school in which language policy processes take place. Besides language uses, I explore the practice of the current language-in-education policy of primary education and planning of a local language policy initiative in Konso. I also look at the relationship of language with ethnic identity within a minority language speaking community, and how this relates to language policy processes. In doing so, I consider what Ricento (2006) advises about the interconnection of language policy, language use and context. He says that a language policy researcher has to explore and understand the role of languages in social life, as people choose and use language within and in relation to a social context. For instance, students' language choice and use are shaped by institutional contexts such as school and socio-cultural settings, along with the role of their agency in responding to different situations. Similarly, Jaffe (2011) advises that language policy researchers need to explore basic beliefs and attitudes to languages and personal and group identities and their relationships and how they are instituted in language-in-education policy and practised in an educational setting.

Moreover, I draw on historical and political accounts of language and ethnic identity, as their importance and influence continues in Ethiopia, in its education system and language policy and in people's everyday life. This enables me to explore people's beliefs in and perspectives on

language and ethnic identity in relation to language use and language policy processes within Ethiopia's ethnolinguistic political system. Thus, an inclusion of this aspect of language and ethnic identity relationship provides an understanding about how they influence and are influenced by language policy processes. May (2006, 264) states that "all language(s) embody and accomplish both identity and instrumental functions for those who speak them". Considering this, I explore how members of the community view language in relation to their ethnic identity. Indeed, to develop an in-depth understanding of language uses and language policy processes, I also explore the community's language landscape, language choice, language values and language attitudes and language in relation to identities, as well as examining the nature of language interactions in classroom and other school settings. The study addresses the following research questions:

- ❖ My Overarching Research Question is: How are languages used and language policy processes of primary education implemented in the context of a minority language and ethnic group in Ethiopia?

  - ➢ Sub-Research Question 1: How do members of a minority ethnic community use different languages in multiple domains?
  - ➢ Sub-Research Question 2: How do members of the community view language in relation to ethnic identity?
  - ➢ Sub-Research Question 3: How do primary school students use different languages in classrooms and other school settings?
  - ➢ Sub-Research Question 4: How are language policies viewed, practised and planned in the classroom, school and community?

To explore my research questions, I conceptualise language use as a social process and communication among individuals and groups through which people do what they want to achieve in their societal life (Blommaert, 2005). Taking Blommaert's (2005) idea, I see particular languages as having different functions in different contexts; understanding the specific context helps to develop insight into how language operates and for which purposes and under which circumstances it is used. I also understand and use a concept of language policy that goes beyond a particular policy text to include both processes and product. As Taylor et.al. (1997 in Rizvi and

Lingard, 2010) note, I see policy process as a continual course of action that involves policy creation, the policy document itself with its revision, implementation and evaluation.

Specific to language policy, I understand it as a social and dynamic process that involves official and unofficial policy documents and practice. It also has an influence on both language's form and societal dimensions of language use, acquisition, value and status in relation to multiple domains, including schooling (Johnson, 2013); however, I also consider the active role of agents in policy processes. Moreover, I see identities as multiple, transformational and socially constructed rather than static, with individuals shaping them through interaction in the social system (Hall, 1996; Woodward, 2004).

1.5.   Karat Town, Konso Woreda

Using an ethnographic approach, my research focuses on the Konso ethnic group. The Konso are among 56 ethnic groups that live in the Segen Area Peoples zonal administration of Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples' Region (SNNPR) in Ethiopia. According to the Central Statistics Agency (CSA) (2008) census, the population of Konso was about 234,987. The majority of the Konso people live in the Konso Woreda/District which is the lower administration structure next to 'Kebele'/Village in the Ethiopian context. They live in the South Western part of Ethiopia. The Konso people "traditionally lived in stone walled settlements on hillsides for defense from wild animals and human enemies" (Capurro and Fantana, 2012, 9). The Konso Woreda includes 41 villages and Karat and Gumayide towns (SNNPR, Finance and Economic Development Bureau, 2016).

Karat town is the capital of the Konso Woreda where my study was conducted. Karat town was established in 1943 E.C (1951) and it has a population of 5,787 people (the Konso Woreda Administration Amharic News Paper, 2014). It is located about 595 kms from Addis Ababa, federal city, about 365 kms from Hawassa, SNNP regional city and about 65 kms from Gumayide, Segen Area Peoples zonal town. Karat is a small town with telephone, sub post office, petrol station, hotels, primary schools, secondary school, private clinic and government health centres, hospital, cultural centre and other facilities.

To explore my research questions about language uses and implementation of language policy processes of primary education and relationship of language and identity, I adopted an ethnographic methodology. I also conducted qualitative interviews in Segen Areas Peoples Zone education department, Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples' Region education bureau and Federal Ministry of Education to support the policy-related grassroots ethnographic data and findings in school and the Konso community I chose. Konso as the context for my research and the methodological approach adopted will be discussed in detail in Chapter 2 and Chapter 3 respectively.

Figure 1: Karat Town, Konso Woreda Capital

With regard to my biographic information, I am an Ethiopian with multiple ethnic identities, including that of the majority ethnic groups. I was born, grew up and had my primary and secondary education in Bale administrative zone of Oromia region. I speak Amharic and Oromo languages and understand some Tigrigna. I am an educationalist by profession with a BA in Educational Administration and MA in Curriculum and Instruction from Addis Ababa University and MA in Education: Culture, Language and Identity from the University of London, Goldsmiths College. I worked in the government education system as a teacher and as a head teacher of primary and secondary schools in Bale (Oromia), West Gojam (Amhara) and Guraghe (SNNPR). I also worked with different NGOs (Save the Children Norway, Concern Worldwide, Christians Children Fund, GOAL and Forum on Street Children) and UNESCO in Ethiopia as an education programme

manager and coordinator. My diverse field of studies in education and professional experiences in the education system and local communities provided me with a good foundation for my PhD study. Although I travelled to different parts of the country, I had never been in Konso, my research setting, before conducting this research. But I had worked in the SNNP region and frequently travelled for the fieldwork in Wolayita zone which is not far from Konso Woreda. This and other rural experiences provided me with some understanding about the rural communities including Konso in SNNPR. I had some ideas about the Konso people, particularly about their hardworking behaviour and unique terracing experience and protection of soil and water on hilly topography because of my geography lessons in secondary education and through the media.

1.6.   Exploring and Defining Key Terms

I will briefly present my understanding of the key terms that I use throughout my thesis, and how they are used in my research and in the Ethiopian context.

Ethnic Group: Ethnic group has been "Traditionally [seen] as internally consistent with clearly defined boundaries delineated by language, culture, heredity and other attributes" (Lytra, 2016, 133). Similarly, in the Ethiopian context, the SNNPR official document defines ethnic group as "a group of persons bounded together by a common language, norms, beliefs, identities, and geographical surroundings" (SNNPR Bureau of Finance and Economic Development, 2016, 29). This definition of ethnic group also has constitutional support in Ethiopia, as The Revised Constitution of the Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples' Reginal State, Article 39 (2001, P. 144-145) states that "nation, nationality (ethnic group) or people" shall mean a group of people who have a large measure of common culture of similar customs, mutual intelligibility of language, beliefs in common or related identities and who predominantly inhabit a continuous territory. As stated in the official documents and the Ethiopian context, I take the Konso people as an ethnic group whilst also keeping in mind that ethnic boundaries are "…constructed and negotiated by individuals and groups" rather than static (Lytra, 2016, 134).

Dominant or Majority Languages: Dominant languages are described as languages that "…have official status and recognition, are used in the media, and are imparted in education" (Montrul, 2013, 169). May (2012, 135) also states that majority languages are "Lauded for their 'instrumental' value…Learning a majority language will thus provide individuals with greater

economic and social mobility". Dominant languages have high status in public domains and influence people's language choice and use as a result of their social, economic and academic rewards and official uses. The Draft Ethiopian Language Policy states that a working language is "a language selected by a government or other administrative body for use in government functions in its respective domain" (MOCT, 2016, 14). In the Ethiopian context, Amharic is the dominant language since it is the working language of the Federal Government of Ethiopia (FDRE, 1995), Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples' Region (SNNPR) (SNNPR, 2001) and Konso Woreda/district and other regions like Amhara, Benishangul-Gumuz and Gambela. It also serves as the language of instruction in primary education in many Woredas in Ethiopia, including Konso. Besides Amharic, there are other dominant languages at regional level that function as the official working language and language of instruction in primary education (e.g. the Oromo language in Oromia region, the Tigray language in Tigray region, the Somali language in Ethiopian Somali region).

Minority Language: A minority language is defined as "the language of groups who are in the ethnolinguistic minority. Their language and culture may be a demographic minority or may be numerically significant in a population but still be considered a minority by virtue of low social, cultural, and political status" (Montrul, 2013, 169). In the Ethiopian context, a minority language is defined as "a language which, within a multilingual country, has a small number of speakers in comparison with the number of speakers of other languages" (The Draft Language Policy of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, MOCT, 2016, 18). Currently Ethiopia has a population of about 94 million (CSA, 2017); there are languages that have many speakers such as Amharic (more than half of the population due to its dominant status in the past and large population of native speakers) and Oromo language, which more than 35 percent of the total population speak in Ethiopia (FDREPCC, 2008). In terms of number of speakers, the Konso language, Affa Konso can be taken as a minority language compared with those national languages that have a huge percentage of speakers in the country.

However, beyond a numerical indicator, minority languages can be perceived and "accorded 'sentimental' value, but are broadly constructed as obstacles to social mobility and progress" (May, 2012, 135). The Konso language, Affa Konso, is mainly an oral language that has not been used for education or official public domains (except in some cases for Biblical translation and a few

books written in Affa Konso using Sabean script, KLDSP, 2016). For my research, I combine the above concepts (Montrul, 2013, May, 2012 and the Draft Ethiopian Language Policy, 2016) and use the idea of minority language as a language that has low status in the education system and other public purposes (e.g. official use in workplace) and a small number of speakers compared with other languages in the same region, SNNPR and Ethiopia. However, recently there has been an initiative to develop the Konso language and promote it for education and other official uses (see details in Chapter 8).

1.7.   The Structure of the Thesis

Chapter 1: Introduction: This chapter provides the background and rationale for my research, questions, the focus and significance of the research.

Chapter 2: Introducing Konso and Language-in-Education Polices: This chapter describes the Konso socio-cultural system, social changes, the status of social services including education and people's interactions. The chapter also provides a brief history of Ethiopia's education system, along with its language policies and ideologies. This helps to understand current multilingual policy in relation to past monolingual policies. It also describes the current Konso political movement as the context in which my data gathering took place, to illustrate how the Konso people are claiming the right to self-administration using their socio-cultural system.

Chapter 3: Research Design and Methodology: This chapter presents why and how ethnography helped me to explore language uses, language policy processes and language in relation to identity. It also analyses how and why I employed diverse methods and the kind of data required and obtained at different levels from primary school to the Federal Ministry of Education to explore my research questions. Moreover, it critically examines the methodological, ethical dilemmas and reflections, and the challenges experienced during my fieldwork and throughout the research process.

Chapter 4: Theoretical Framework: Considering my research questions that focus on language uses, language policy processes and language and identities, I adopt the poststructuralists' ideas of language and identities, underlining their multiplicity and transformation across time and space rather than seeing them as fixed. The chapter also discusses the theoretical lenses I have found

useful in exploring my research questions, the ideas of Johnson (2013) and Ricento (2006) on language policy, Woolard (1998) and Blommaert (2006) on language ideologies and Hall (1996) on identities.

Chapter 5: Affa Konso: 'A Language That Can Help to Cross a River': This chapter examines the community's language use, values and attitudes to different languages. It addresses the sub-research question 1: how do members of a minority ethnic community use different languages in multiple domains? This gives an understanding about the language landscape in a specific Konso community and how power relations work between minority and dominant language speakers. The chapter also helps to frame the subsequent chapters that focus on language and identities, language use in primary school, language-in-education policy implementation and local language policy initiatives in Konso.

Chapter 6: Being a Konso, Becoming a Konso and Identity Tensions: This chapter presents the different respondents' perspectives on ethnic identity as fixed and changing from one ethnic identity to the other and how the notion of socially constructed ethnic identity other than family blood ties was challenged in my research area. The chapter examines sub-research question 2: how do members of the community view language in relation to ethnic identity? This chapter also helps to explore how language and identity issues are reflected and embedded in school's language interactions and implementation of the current language-in-education policy in school (Chapter 7) and local language policy planning in Konso (Chapter 8).

Chapter 7: Language Interaction and Policy Enactment in the School Environment: The chapter addresses sub-research question 3: how do primary school students use different languages in classrooms and other school settings; and sub-research-question 4: how are language policies viewed, practised and planned in the classroom, school and community? It addresses both the first cycle of primary school (grades 1-4) and second cycle of primary school (grades 5-8) considering their different mediums of instruction and students' exposure to different languages and progress during their primary school years. This also helps to understand how and why teachers and students respond to classroom situations that legitimise the non-mother tongue mediums of instruction, Amharic and English.

Chapter 8: Promoting the Minority Language, Affa Konso, through a Local Language Policy Initiative in Konso: This chapter addresses the overarching research question: how languages are used and language policy processes are implemented and sub-research question 4: how language policies are viewed and practised in classroom, school and community. It describes and analyses the process of a Konso local language policy initiative that aims to promote a mainly oral minority language in education and in other public spheres. It also investigates people's perspectives on this new language policy initiative in relation to the existing one.

Chapter 9: Discussing Language Uses, Identities and Language Policy Processes: This chapter provides an in-depth analysis of my research questions and findings. It discusses emerging themes around language ideologies (beliefs in and attitudes towards language and its use and users, Woolard, 1998): language uses in multiple spaces; power relations between Amharic and Affa Konso and their users; the multilayer language policy processes along with their language ideologies and intentions; the role of individual agency in policy processes and local language policy planning; and language in relation to ethnic identity.

Chapter 10: Concluding My Research Journey: This chapter looks back at where I started my study, how my policy and identity related conceptual perspectives and methodological approaches have changed through the research process and where my research ends. In doing so, it revisits the complexities of language use, identity and language policy processes and highlights policy implications and the contribution of this thesis.

1.8. Conclusion

My study aims to develop insights into: the language uses of a minority language speaking community and students in primary school; the views, practices and planning of language-in-education policies in the classroom, school and community; and the relationship of language with ethnic identity. I have framed this study based on previous research findings on policy, my experience and observation of the education system and local communities, and the historical and political significance of language and ethnic identity in Ethiopia. Through employing an ethnographic research methodology in the Karat community in Konso Woreda and conducting interviews with officials and experts at different levels of the education system, I intend to inform decision-makers, language policy and education planners of my research context to consider

minority languages in policy planning and practice, towards creating a multilingual primary education system that enhances students' language repertoires.

Chapter Two: Introducing Konso and Language-in-Education Policies

This chapter consists of two major sections that provide a historical and socio-cultural overview of the Konso people, my example research ethnic group, and a brief account of Ethiopian language-in-education policies. I have decided to provide this overview because of its importance for understanding my research context. It also helped me to analyse the research questions that deal with language uses, language-in-education policy processes and language in relation to ethnic identity. I also undertook a historical and theoretical analysis of Ethiopia's education system in relation to language policy and ideology since the start of state-run education in 1908. Since my research focuses on language use and the implementation of language policy processes, this historical account helps to understand the continuum of past-present language policies in Ethiopia's education system and provide a context for my research focus. Finally, I mention some of the local politics current at the time of my fieldwork, in particular, the Konso people's movement, as it relates to rights, identities and aspirations.

2.1. Ethiopia

Ethiopia is a multicultural and multilingual country with about 94,352,000 people (Central Statistics Agency, 2017), and the second most populous country in Africa, after Nigeria. As Zewde (1991, 5) states, "like many other African countries, Ethiopia is a mosaic of nationalities (ethnic groups) speaking a multiplicity of languages". In this regard, the 2007 census reported more than eighty ethnic groups speaking indigenous languages in the country. Among these, Oromo is the largest ethnic group (34.5%), followed by Amhara (26.9%), Somali (Ethiopian Somali) (6.2 %) and Tigray (6.1 %), with remaining ethnic groups constituting about 26.3% of the total population (FDREPCC, 2008). As a result of long periods of assimilation to the mainstream and dominant culture and language, the majority of Ethiopians speak Amharic as the second language. Amharic has legal recognition as the working language of the federal government (FDRE, 1995, 132, Article 5). It is known as 'the ['national language'] …and a linguafranca' (Heugh and Skutnabb-Kangas, 2010, 40). However, since 1995, Amharic has not been given the status of official national language in Ethiopia but rather, each regional state is mandated to determine its own official language. For instance, Afan Oromo and Tigrigna are the official languages of Oromia and Tigray regions respectively. But, Amharic is the working language of Amhara region and the Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples' Region (SNNPR) (my research setting region) that consists of about 56 ethnic groups and languages.

Concerning its political structure, since 1991, Ethiopia has had a federal government system that consists of nine ethnolinguistic regional states and two city administrations (see Chapter 1). The Ethiopian Constitution (FDRE, 1995, 168, Article 46) states that "The Federal Democratic Republic shall comprise of States (Regions). State shall be delimited on the basis of the settlement patterns, language, identity and consent of the people concerned". This legal assertion shows the way in which Ethiopia is structured on the basis of language and ethnic identity. Since 1994, a decentralised education policy has also been implemented, within which each regional state is mandated to manage its education system under the general framework of the Federal Ministry of Education (FDRE, 1994). In terms of curriculum, the regional education bureau has the right to develop the primary education curriculum under the syllabus developed at the Federal Ministry of Education. This provides some leeway for the regional education bureaus to adapt contents and learning experiences that respond to their local contexts. However, the secondary education curriculum is centrally developed at the federal level and implemented across the country. General education (primary and secondary education in the Ethiopian context) consists of 4 years of the first cycle of primary, 4 years of the second cycle of primary, two years of the general secondary education and 2 years of the upper secondary or preparatory education. Thus, the government at the time of this research followed an ethnolinguistic federalism that placed language and ethnicity at the centre of its political system, education policy and management.

Figure 2: Map of Ethiopia, adopted from ontheworldmap.com

(SNNPR, example region where the Konso Woreda is found)

2.2. Introducing Konso

I undertook my research on the Konso ethnic group in Konso Woreda. The Konso are among the Cushitic[2]-speaking people in the southern part of Ethiopia (Marcus, 1994, Vii), one of the "oldest inhabitants of the region, practice, in common with other Cushitic groups, an intensive agriculture unmatched in the continent" (Castelli, 2012, X). As Oda (2013, 1), native Konso scholar explains, in their language, the Konso people call their people 'Xonsitta' (Konsita), their territory 'Xonso'[3] (Konso) and their language 'Afaa Xonso' (Affa Konso). The Konso people live in the Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples' Region (SNNPR) and Segen Area Peoples Zone administration and Konso Woreda. The boundaries of this area are, Derashe and Amaro Woredas/Districts in the North, Burji Woreda and Oromia Region in the East, South Omo Zone in the South and West

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[2] Cushitic languages are a branch of the Afroasiatic language family. They are spoken primarily in the Horn of Africa, as well as the Nile Valley, and parts of the African Great Lakes region (Cushitic Languages, Wikipedia, 2017).

[3] Xonso (Konso) means in Konso vernacular: Any area of fertile, breezy land is close to a settlement-typical, this is, of the settled Highlands, and is the opposite of Komayta, the hot, dry and inhospitable lowlands (Gara, p.21 in Hallpike, 1999, 3).

(Gara, 2006) (see map below). It covers about 2,354.3 Kilometres square (Abdulah, 2014) on the Southern verge of the Ethiopian Plateau. The Konso Woreda locates between 560 and 2100 meters above sea level; 70 percent of the Woreda is rocky hills with hot temperature (Qolla) and limited rainfall, while 30 percent is moderate (Weina-dega) (Gara, 2006). The arid and hilly topography presents a challenging environment but the Konso communities have adapted to the area and survived through hard work and through applying their indigenous knowledge of terracing, agriculture, irrigation, soil and environmental protection. This extraordinary effort received global recognition in 2011, when UNESCO inscribed and declared the Konso cultural landscape as a World Heritage site. Konso livelihoods rely mainly on agricultural activities and accounts for 80 percent of their income, the remaining 20 percent depending on trades and handcrafts (Gara, 2006).

Figure 3: Map of Konso Woreda including its villages and towns, adapted from, Konso tourism document and Internet source.

2.2.1. A Brief Historical Account of Konso

Here, I briefly discuss the history of the Konso ethnic group, in order to interconnect their socio-cultural and political history with the present. The Konso people were an autonomous people until the 1890s when they became part of the centralized state of Ethiopia. The creation of modern Ethiopia that had been begun in mid-nineteenth century was realised by the Emperor Menilek II [4]

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[4] Zewde (2014, 188). Emperor Menilek (r. 1889-1913) is rightly credited with the creation of modern Ethiopia, a process that he had begun years before he was crowned emperor.

who consolidated the Ethiopian territory in 1898[5] (Zewde, 1991, 111). Continuing the territorial expansion that was begun by his predecessors, Menilek II, King of Ethiopia, in 1898 resulted more or less in the territory that is now Ethiopia (Zewde, 2014, 188). The Konso people and their territory, until that point ruled by their own chiefs or clan leaders in line with their own socio-cultural system, were part of this expansion plan. Conquered in 1897 and absorbed into the Ethiopian state, they became under the domination of the central government, and the Konso "until very recently [have] been dominated by the [central government], at whose head was the Emperor himself" (Hallpike, 1999, 5). Before this conquest and in spite of its isolation, Konso was an important cultural centre in the area, particularly known for its cloth, coffee, tobacco, and grain (ibid.). Previously, the south part of Ethiopia was the source of 'valued goods' like gold, ivory, slaves, civet and later coffee (Watson, 1989, 114). With taxation being introduced for the first time in Konso, administered by non-native local governors, products were now being shared with the central government (Hallpike, 1999). During that time, like the other conquered southern people, the Konso people had to deliver the *'gabar'* (traditional taxing) services for their governors, but they resisted such a domination (ibid.). In relation to power relations, native Konso scholar, Otto (2004, 160) describes how, in affiliation with the then governors, the Orthodox Christian Church "grabbed a significant proportion of land and developed a land-and-tenant relationship with the native people".

In the broader Ethiopia context, the Konso people had only slightly more than a century's history in which the societal change had occurred. The incorporation of Konso into Ethiopian central government in 1890s meant that the Konso community experienced different political, social and administration affairs. Among others, Christianity and 'Western' education significantly influenced Konso culture, outlook and identities (Watson, 1989) (to be discussed later in this chapter). Indeed, the last decade of the nineteenth century was the beginning of a long period of marginalisation for the Konso people, accompanied by strong resistance to the domination of central government. In the next section, I discuss the Konso socio-cultural system in the context of these multifaceted influences.

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[5] Donham, D. (2002, 1). For Ethiopia- unlike most of the rest of Africa – that context was provided by the re-construction and expansion of an indigenous empire. From the mid-ninetieth century until the revolution of 1974, the Ethiopian state was dominated by and associated with a cultural core – Orthodox Christian and Amharic-or Tigrinya-speaking.

2.2.2. The Konso Socio-cultural System

As part of the Konso socio-cultural system, I discuss the Konso clans, marriage, settlement pattern, 'Mora', religion and language. This helps to understand the socio-cultural structure and the Konso people's way of life upon which my research has partly depended.

The Konso Clans: The Konso people have a system of nine clans: Keertita, Arkaamayta, Sawdatta, Paasanta, Tookmaleeta, Eelayta, Ifalayta, Tikissayta and Mahalayta (Oda, 2013) and each clan has its own chief ('Poqualla' in Affa Konso). In Konso, clans and lineages are key social institutions. The clan chief is considered as "the bringer of life as sacrifice, and the bringer of peace as mediator, and as a man of wealth is regarded as the material sustainer of his kin" (Hallpike, 1999, 57). They also had leadership, political and religious roles in the Konso community as a whole and in their particular clan (Watson, 1989). Moreover, the clan leadership is hereditary and transfers from father to the elder son. The elder son inherits the majority of the family property and takes responsibility to care his family when the parents pass away. In relation to this, Gara (2006, 29) says that "…the elder son of the direct step line is allowed to have an iron ring on his right wrist and to be considered Poqualla (chief) which means the direct representative of ancestors". The Konso share the same clan system with other neighboring ethnic groups like Borena (Oromo), Derashe and Ale (Gara, 2006). Understanding how the hereditary Konso clan system works has been important in exploring how different forms of identities (e.g. ethnic and language) might be perceived, influenced and shaped in the context of the Konso socio-cultural structure.

Marriage: The Konso have their own marriage system. Members of the same Konso clan in all places are always expected to behave in a brotherly and sisterly manner and marriage between the same clan is not allowed (Gara, 2006). For instance, a Keertitta man was not allowed to marry a woman from his own (Keertitta) clan (Oda, 2013). Exceptionally, the clan leader has to marry a wife not only outside his clan lineage but also outside the land he administers (ibid.). But, the sons or daughters of further descendants of brothers and sisters can marry as long as their fathers' clan lines are not the same (Gara, 2006). Importantly, before marriage, one has to make sure about the clan background of the person he/she wants to marry because marriage between same clan members is not only unacceptable but also consequential in Konso tradition (this is applicable in a Konso community still now). In this regard, the school official explained that:

One of the decisive factors to establish a family or request somebody for a marriage is being from different Konso clans. Getting married between the same clan members is considered as a bad and socially unaccepted behaviour. It is not only undesirable by the community but the couple who violate the norm are also not allowed to live in the community. They are socially excluded. They must leave the area and live in other places outside the Konso Woreda. For the Konso, this is an uncompromised and highly respected cultural norm. Because, traditionally, the Konso people believe that these persons who violate the cultural norms are cursed and their children will not be healthy. (The school official).

Community members explained that marrying outside the Konso ethnic group (e.g. marrying an Oromo, Amharic or Derashe) was more acceptable than a marriage between same clan members and carried no social sanctions. However, the children of a Konso father take their father's clan and ethnic identity in the Konso socio-cultural system while the clan of the mother is not inherited by the children. Understanding how Konso families are constituted and the role of traditional norms in marriage and its relationship with children ethnic identity formation are important points for my study (see Chapter 6). It also helps to see how the Konso socio-cultural system operates within the current 'globalised' context. In this regards, the clan and cultural leaders expressed their concern about the survival of Konso culture, language and identity, with one clan leader stating, 'I want to establish a cultural college to teach the young generation about and maintain the Konso culture, language and identity'.

Settlement Pattern: The Konso people are almost unique in that they live mainly in densely populated walled villages ('paleta' in Affa Konso) of up to 1500 inhabitants (Hallpike, 1999). The Konso developed this kind of enclosed settlement system for strategic and defensive purposes and sites tended to be mainly on the flat side of the hill (ibid.). There are about 40 stone-walled villages in Konso (Abdulah, 2014) and three towns, Karat, Gumayide and Fasha (semi-town). As Capurro and Fontana (2012, 10) describe:

The walls are made by stratification of irregular basalt stones without any mortar: a structure considered one of the most ancient typologies, known as *pelagic* or *cyclopic*. The inner walls, which are the oldest and often the tallest, reach a height of 4 metres and a width of 2.5 metres. (Capurro and Fontana, 2012, 10).

As the population increased in the original walled villages, newly established families had to move and build their homesteads outside the original walls encircling the old ones.

The Konso settlement was an overwhelmingly impressive scenery for the outsiders (Hallpike, 1999). The village had two or more entrances. The main gates to the villages were designed for security, protecting the village from 'outsiders'. In the village, an internal narrow network of walkways enclosed with stone or wood allows people and animals to walk to and from home and outside the village (Abdulah, 2014, 46, my translation from Amharic). Thus, the majority of the Konso people live in the protected and confined villages and this experience, along with agricultural practices such as terracing has allowed them relatively to sustain their culture and language. It is this cultural landscape, "a living tradition of unique dry stone terrace agriculture, walled town settlement and traditional soil and water conservation knowledge and technique…" (Assoma, 2010, 11) that has earned this geographical area the title of World Heritage site.

Figure 4: Enclosed Stone Walled Konso Lower 'Dhokotu' Village.   Figure 5: Enclosed footway in Konso 'Gomele' Village.

Although Karat town, my research site, was not part of the enclosed walled system, students came from these surrounding villages to attend Karat primary school. Additionally, one of the stone-walled villages, Durayite was in Karat town, though it had its own administration (see Chapter 5). Although this research focuses on interaction and language use, I argue that the physical and cultural context in which this takes place, in the case of the Konso, in confined, protected and densely populated settlements, shapes students' language choice and use (see Chapter 5).

Mora: Mora is a public space that exists in each Konso traditional village. It has many functions: people meet to pass the time of day as well as to discuss social, cultural, political and other issues. It is also an informal learning space where children learn indigenous knowledge and skills from adults and elders. In relation to this, Hallpike (1999, 48) describes the Mora as:

Often floored with grass, and encircled with low stone platforms on which numerous trees have been planted for shade. Here the men sit gossiping and spinning their cotton; the whole effect is often strikingly beautiful. They are used for assemblies as well as dances, and lawsuits and religious ceremonies, as well as more practical purposes like drying blankets and hides, or laying out the parts of a new house…House and dancing floor are collectively referred to as [Mora]. (Hallpike (1999, 48).

Mora is a significant part of the Konso socio-cultural system, bringing all groups and all generations together to perform a variety of daily activities, to engage in indigenous skills like the spinning of cotton or to participate in special activities such as rituals and dances, playing traditional games ('Gebeta'), enacting traditional law, passing resolutions and transmitting traditions to the new generation. Hallpike describes the importance of the Mora as follows: "the Konso, being a gregarious people, are much given to holding ceremonies, most of which take place in the [Mora]" (ibid., 48). This also provides a practical space for children to learn and develop the Konso culture and language through informal learning and learning by doing and is the only organised informal learning centre available for children in the rural villages. Thus, in relation to my research, the Mora will have a significant influence on children's language development and experience in the community. Later, I analyse how these learning experiences are reflected in the education system and language policy processes.

Figure 6: Traditional 'Gebeta' game in Mora.

Language: The Konso language is called Afaa Xonso (Affa Konso), is an East Cushitic language and has four dialects, Faafe (Fasha), Karatte, Tuuro and Xolme (Kolme) (Oda, 2013). The Affa Konso only acquired a standard alphabet in April 2012, when the decision was made to adapt the Latin script and use the language for written purposes (ibid.) (see Chapter 8).Until that point, it had been mainly an oral language, except for some published materials (e.g. the Bible, religious

stories and arithmetic booklets) written in Affa Konso using Sabean Script by the Evangelical Church of Mekane Yesus. Two storybooks were also published by Kora Garra in Latin script (Oda, 2013). In terms of language distribution, Affa Konso is the major language of the Konso Woreda, followed by Amharic and Afan Oromo (Abdulah, 2014). In relation to education, the language of instruction in the first cycle of primary education (grades 1-4) is Amharic and that of the second cycle of primary education (grades 5-8) and secondary education (grades 9-12) is English. However, at the time of my fieldwork, the Konso language development policy had been initiated to promote the Konso language in the education system and for other official uses (see Chapter 8).

Religion: Before being incorporated into the Ethiopian state in the 1890s, the Konso had their own traditional religion (Otto, 2004). However, as part of the social change brought about by Emperor Menelik II's armies in the 1890s and Protestant in 1950s two major religious movements developed in Konso: the Orthodox Christian Church and the Protestant Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekana Yesus (Watson, 1998).

As stated earlier, for the first time, Christianity was introduced to Konso with the coming of the Emperor Menelik II's armies in 1890s (Otto, 2004). During that time, the Konso people resisted the cultural adaptation and Orthodox Christianity (Hallpike, 1999). Otto (2004) also states that previously the Orthodox Church was unwilling to disseminate its Christianity to the Konso people. Changing its policy, after 1942 the [Orthodox] Church invited local people to convert into Christianity (ibid.). Some people such as administrators, clerks, court officials, police, soldiers and their families and traders who settled in Konso were converted to the Orthodox Christian (Watson, 1998). Otto (2004) explains that even the Orthodox Church education provision was resisted by the local people as they considered it an 'enslavement of their children'. The 'forced baptism to assist the process of assimilation' was also not successful. As a result, at that time, only a few Konso people accepted Christianity and were able to read and write both Amharic and Ge'ez' (the oldest Ethiopian language and still currently used for liturgical purposes in the Orthodox Christian Church) (ibid, 160).

As the second social and religious movement in Konso, a Protestant mission came to Konso in 1954, the 'Norwegian Lutheran Mission' (Hallpike, 1972, 6). The failure of the Orthodox Christian Church to establish a good relationship with the indigenous people enabled the Protestant mission to become an influential force, although both the Orthodox and Protestant churches were viewed

as 'culturally anti-Konso' (Otto, 2004, 161). In relation to this, Hallpike (1999, 19) states that, there was a conflict between Konso culture and principles of Christianity. And "there were a few violent incidents between their converts and the people … never heard reporting that they [the Konso] wanted to become Christian because the [traditional] Konso religion was bad" (Hallpike, 1972, in Otto, 2004, 163). This idea was acknowledged by the clan leader, who told me, "the traditional religion was considered as a 'bad sprit' and numerous precious and unreplaceable cultural artifacts were destroyed as a result of Protestant Christianity in the past". Nonetheless, according to Hallpike (1999, 20), the mission brought to Konso three key social services: a health centre/clinic, literacy in Amharic and the dissemination of Christianity. The missionaries opened a small clinic and a primary school in the 1950s; and these facilities were used to attract potential converts. The protestant mission also provided employment opportunities for a limited number of local people, though payment was minimal (Otto, 2004). Thus, Christianity influenced and changed the Konso socio-cultural system along with people's beliefs and outlooks (Watson, 1998). It exposed the Konso people to different ideas which entailed a negotiation of their way of life and identities. The next section provides an overview of education and language policy in Ethiopia.

2.3. A Historical Overview of Language-in-Education Policies in Ethiopia

This section gives a brief historical account of the Ethiopia language policies that, since state-run education began in 1908, have been implemented in education system and the ideologies that informed them. Relating past language policies with the current education system in Konso and beyond, helps to contextualise and analyse language uses and language policy processes.

In Ethiopia, so-called 'traditional education' (as commonly stated in the official documents in Ethiopia) started in the early centuries of the first millennium (330 AD) by different religious, linguistic and cultural communities (Wagaw, 1979) but is predominantly associated with the coming of Christianity to Ethiopia in the fourth century in the northern part of Ethiopia (Wagaw, 1979; Zewde, 1991). Before state-run education started in the early 20th century, the Orthodox Church was the only provider of education, which, aside from religious education, also served the government administration (Wagaw, 1979). State-run education in Ethiopia was associated with an important historical event, which was the battle of Adwa in 1896, when Ethiopia overthrew the Italian colonizers (Pankhurst, 1998). Following this, the Ethiopian diplomatic relations with the European countries intensified, which also challenged and questioned the traditional education

system to adequately respond to the demand of new government's vision and expanded state apparatus (Wagaw, 1979). It was, therefore, rethinking about the purpose and kind of education provision in light of the order of the day became imperative (Zewde, 1991).

The introduction of state-run education in Ethiopia (the first government school was established by Emperor Menelik II in 1908 in Addis Ababa) was a turning point with the transfer of responsibility for education provision shifting from church to government (Wagaw, 1979; Zewde, 1991; Pankhurst, 1998). French was the first medium of instruction in schools for religious reasons and Ethiopian diplomatic relations with the government of France (Wagaw, 1979; Zewde, 1991). Other than French, the education policy at that time (1908-1936) accepted other international languages like English and Italian, and national languages such as Amharic, Afan Oromo and Tigrigna (Yigezu, 2010).

During the Italian occupation from 1936 to 1941, the education system, still in its infancy, was decimated. As Pankhurst (1998, 241) points out, "Social and welfare services were directed mainly to the Italian population. …Several pre-war Ethiopian schools were reopened for the instruction of Italian children. Education of 'native' youth was, however, strictly controlled, with the avowed aim of preventing the emergence of a 'native intelligentsia". During that time (Italian occupation), Italian language was predominantly used as the medium of instruction, rooted in colonial ideology which avoided the previous language policy that accepted multiple languages (Pankhurst, 1989; Yigezu, 2010).

The reconstruction and rehabilitation of state-run education in Ethiopia took place from 1941 to 1974 (Zewde, 1991). However, as Wagaw (1979, 71) stresses, "the content of Ethiopian education arise out of the culture of a people, out of their ideals and aspirations, their social and individual values, and their problems that cry for solution". With the consent of the ruling power (monarchy) and with no consideration for the cultures and languages of Ethiopia, the curriculum was imported from abroad (ibid). Due to close diplomatic relations with Great Britain and the growing global importance of English and widespread international use, English became the medium of instruction and Amharic language given as a subject (Yigezu, 2010). Eventually, in 1962, Amharic was granted the status of medium of instruction in primary education (Wagaw, 1979). With regard to language policy, the monarchy's ideology can be framed under the one language (Amharic)-one country monolingual ideology (Yigezu, 2010).

In 1974, the monarchy was overthrown by the socialist 'Derg' military government that ruled the country until 1991. Informed by the Marxist-Leninist ideology, under the Derg government (1974-1991), all the policies of the country, including education, were redrawn (Yigezu, 2010). In addition, a crucial change was made with regards to language in non-formal education: "The language policy was introduced, involving the recognition of the need to develop other languages, other than Amharic, in the area of literacy and to some extent in the mass media" (ibid. 36). The government set up literacy programmes in fifteen indigenous languages[6]. However, Amharic language continued be the official language of the country and the language of instruction at primary education (ibid.). In this respect, Yigezu (2010) argues that like its predecessor, the Derg wanted to build a unified Ethiopia through introducing Amharic as the only medium of instruction in the primary education system and as a national language.

In the current education system (1991 to present), the Ethiopian government states in its Education and Training policy, its aim is to address "…complex problems of relevance, quality, accessibility and equity" which resulted from the previous education systems (FDRE, 1994, 4). This policy adopts a multilingual approach that recognises the use of different languages in primary education: mother tongue, Amharic as a language of nation-wide communication and English as a language of global communication and science and technology. It also enshrines the right of all ethnic groups to use their languages in primary education (see my brief analysis of this policy in the statement of the research problem in Chapter 1). This policy is referred to throughout my thesis as it is central to my research, language use and implementation of language policy processes in the Konso community.

Thus, a traditional education system with a predominantly religious purpose which served state bureaucracy over centuries was replaced by a secular, state-run education system in 1908. Within slightly more than a century, Ethiopia's education system was faced many challenges, with language playing a part in all of them: the use of a language of instruction largely unfamiliar to the majority of students at its inception; the fluctuating use of foreign languages of education (French,

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[6] Fifteen languages were used for nonformal education program during the Derg regime: Amharic, Oromo, Wolayitta, Somali, Tigrigna, Hadiyya, Tigre, Kunama, Gedeo, Kambatta, Sidamo, Afar, Silt'i, Saho, and Kefa-Mocha) were used in the teaching and learning of literacy until its overthrew, in 1991 (Yigezu, 2010).

Italian and English); the exclusion of national languages except Amharic; the use of an imported curriculum and Italian colonial ambitions which had a devastating effect on the provision of education in Ethiopia. Explicit language ideologies and policies frequently and inevitably shifted with successive governments. Thus, non-monolingual tolerance ideology (1908-1936) was replaced by an approach dictated by colonial ideology (1936-1941), to be in turn replaced by a monolingual ideology (1941-1974 and 1974-1994) and finally, the multilingual ideology that has driven language policy in education since 1994. This history of events, ideologies and rulers has shaped language choice, use, education provisions and identities in Ethiopia and continues to influence Ethiopia today (e.g. the hegemony of Amharic in public domains and different values attached to it and other minority languages), including my research area, Konso.

2.4. A Brief History of Education in Konso

Drawing on past education systems and language-in-education policies of the country, this section focuses on education in Konso. Formal education can be said to have started in Konso in the 1950s. Until then, the Orthodox Church in the area provided some albeit limited education (Hallpike, 1999). The primary school opened by the missionaries enrolled between 130 and 149 children in the early years and went up to grade six, although the majority of students attended only up to grade two (ibid.). Getting students to complete grade two was driven by the need for evangelists who were paid less than 5 Birr (Ethiopian currency) a month (Gara, 2006). Sometime later, a government school was also set up and by 1966, rivalled the missionary school in terms of student numbers (Hallpike, 1999). In fact, according to Konso elders I interviewed, four government schools were established in the 1970s in Karat, Fasha, Turo and Gumayde during the regime of Haile Selassie I. During the Derg administration (1974-1991), more schools were opened though their enrollments were insignificant compared with the number of school aged children (Hallpike, 1999).

Nonetheless, the education system in Konso remained underdeveloped. Referring to the period between 1954 and 1987, Messeret (1990, cited in Hallpike 1999, 395) found out that there were only:

> …in the last 34 years (1954-87) only 9 basic schools offering 4 years of education, 9 elementary schools offering 6 years schooling, and 1 junior school offering 8 years of schooling have been established by governments and peasant associations.

The total enrollment in all of these schools in 1987 was only 3, 025 (82.5%) were boys and 334 (17.5%) were girls. (Messeret, 1990, cited in Hallpike 1999, 395)

The above data indicated that until 1987, the Konso had only one junior secondary school and did not have a single secondary school. The number of primary schools for the Konso Woreda's school aged children was inadequate with low students' enrollment in 1987. Students also did not have access to secondary education until the primary school was upgraded to a secondary school in 1983 E.C (1991)[7] in Karat town. Students had to travel to other Woredas or areas to continue their education after completing junior secondary school (the then education structure, grades 7-8). As one of my interviewees, Karafo explained, most of the Konso students joined the nearby secondary schools in Gidole and Arba Minch towns. This entailed travelling long distances on foot through a dense forest, which was scary due to hostile animals and human threats (e.g. robbery). At that time, this was the experience of most of the Konso students who managed to attend secondary education before the opening of the secondary school in Konso Woreda.

As the above discussion makes clear, access to education in Konso, particularly beyond primary education, was extremely limited. The available data also indicates that until 1987, few Konso attended university or received a post-secondary diploma. Some 12 people graduated with degrees in medicine, in natural sciences, languages, and geography, 28 persons graduated with a Diploma (two years post-secondary training in the then education system) as administrators, teachers, nurses, and agriculturalists and the majority of them were no longer living in Konso (Hallpike, 1999, 395). Since that time, access to primary and secondary school in Konso has improved significantly. Currently, the Konso Woreda has 90 primary schools (30 first cycle and 60 second cycle) with 51,266 children (26,937 boys and 24,329 girls) enrolled, and five secondary schools (two grades 9-10 and three grades 11-12) with 3,658 students (2,408 boys and 1,250 girls) and one Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) College (Konso Woreda Education Office Report, 2007 E.C (2015). Thus, the history of education in Konso is partly a history of marginalisation through lack of access to basic social services, including education. Having provided a brief account of the Konso education system, I will now discuss my example school, Karat primary school, where I conducted my research.

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[7] Note: the Ethiopian Calendar (E.C) is eight years behind the Gregorian Calendar (G.C).

2.5. My Example School, Karat Primary School

Karat Primary school exists in Karat town, the capital of the Konso Woreda/District (see Chapter 1), a town that is 95 Kms south on the Arba Minch-Jinka asphalt highway from Arba Minch to Konso. Upon entering the town, on the left hand side of the road junction (at the intersection with the main asphalt road, at the gate of Karat town), there were different billboards (e.g. Commercial Bank of Ethiopia, AMREF (NGO), Konso Cultural Centre, and Government Offices) that showed the address or the destination of various offices. Walking along this rough road, my eyes were first drawn to the beautiful Konso Cultural Centre surrounded by greenery (e.g. banana, mango, sugarcane plants) and examples of terracing, soil and water conservation and traditional huts. I found a cluster of Government offices on both sides of the street, including the Woreda Education office and Administrative Council office.

Figure 7: The Konso Cultural Centre cultural centre

Figure 8: A Model of Konso Traditional House in the Konso

Five minutes' walk from the Konso cultural centre is a green and wooden fenced compound. A rectangular metallic signboard over the main gate (with a picture indicating the symbol (candle at the centre) of education and the name of the school written in English, 'Karat Whole Primary

School' and Amharic, 'Karat Mulu Andegna Dereja Timhirtbet', tells me that I have reached my destination.

Figure 9: The Gate of Karat Primary School   Figure 10: The Karat Primary School

The school was established in 1989 E.C (1997), covers an area of about 38,061 meter square and is about 0.5 Km from the town centre (school record[8]). As the Woreda officials and teachers explained, the school was opened because the first government primary school in Karat town was upgraded to secondary education level, thus increasing the student population and requiring to separate the two education levels. Karat primary school is the biggest in the Woreda in terms of student population. In 2015/16, the school had about 1,484 students (715 boys and 769 girls), 62 teachers (36 male and 26 female), 1 head teacher (male) and 1 vice head teacher (male), and 5 administrative and support staff (2 male and 3 female) (see the six years students' educational statistics below).

Table 1: Six Years Students Population (2003-2008 E.C) (2010/2011-2015/16)[9]

Years	Grade level (1-8) Enrolment			Dropout	Fail	Remark
	Male	Female	Total			
2003 (2010/11)	1534	1171 (43.3%)	2705	198 (7.3 %)	I	I: Incomplete
2004 (2011/12)	1301	1045 (44.5%)	2346	182 (7.8%)	482 (20.5%)	
2005 (2012/13)	1114	1006 (47.5%)	2120	90 (4.2%)	473 (22.3%)	
2006 (2013/14)	914	838 (47.8%)	1752	73 (4.1%)	423 (24.1%)	
2007 (2014/15)	738	813 (52.7%)	1551	83 (5.4%)	390 (25.1%)	
2008 (2015/16)	715	769 (51.8%)	1484	N/A	N/A	Not applicable

Source: Karat primary school record office

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[8] These data were taken from the school record (2016).

[9] The Karat primary school record office (2016). Five Years Students Population (2003-2008 E.C) (2010/2011-2015/16).

Table 1 shows that in six years, student enrollment has been decreasing but then so have high dropout and fail rates. Woreda education officials, head teacher and teachers explained that primary schools have been opened in the adjacent villages/Kebeles of Karat town, which means that more children have access to a local school and this is why enrolment in the Karat primary school has decreased. However, many children from other surrounding rural villages, (e.g. lower 'Dhokotu', 'Gersale', 'Durayirte') attend the Karat primary school. The above Table shows an increase in the rate of failure, from 20 % over four successive years. This quantitative data suggests that the educational provision does not support students in gaining the necessary knowledge and skills to successfully pass to the next level.

However, my observations and discussions with Woreda officials, head teacher, teachers, students and others, revealed a range of obstacles that exist behind this low success rate: students (mainly girls) are expected to help with family chores, leading to low academic performance and attendance rates; lack of school facilities like reference books, student text books; language barriers in relation to the language of instruction in the first cycle of primary school (Amharic); students' low language proficiency in the medium of instruction in the second cycle of primary school (English). Teachers told me that the low progression rates were due to teaching in Amharic (and Affa Konso) but then examining the students in English (see Chapter 7), particularly in grade 8, when the regional and primary education leaving examination takes place. Table 1 also shows that for the last two academic years (2014/15 and 2015/16), girls outnumbered boys, which surprised me, particularly as this is a rural primary school. However, teachers explained that this gender disparity (an increasing trend of low enrolment of boys) at Karat primary school was partly due to improved community awareness regarding the importance of educating girls and partly because the boys often dropped out and they were engaged in different income gaining activities in Karat town (e.g. shoe shining, petty trade) to support themselves and their families.

With regard to educational facilities, the school has 22 classrooms, 1 pedagogical centre, 1 library, 1 small laboratory, 2 vice and head teachers' offices and 2 administrative offices, 1 store, 1 staffroom, 1 science and technology room, 2 special needs education rooms, 1 block pre-school classes, 2 separate toilets for boys and girls, 2 playgrounds (football and volleyball) and concrete water collecting tanks (from the roofs of classrooms during rainy season to be used for sanitation

and hygiene when dry season comes or shortage of water occurs)[10]. All blocks in the school are constructed with bricks with cemented walls and floors, except one block that is constructed with wood and mud walls, with a cemented floor. Each classroom has about 20 combined desks and at the time of my fieldwork, there were about 60 children in each classroom. Opposite the administration and head teachers' offices, there is a relatively big open space for the flag ceremony and where children play during their break and free time. At the back of the classroom blocks are the football and volleyball playgrounds where physical education takes place and where students play a variety of games during their free time. The Karat school compound is green and covered with fruit plants like banana, mango, papaya and different cash crops and trees like the Moringa, indigenous plants like corn, maize, bean, cassava, etc. Next to the playground, where the land rises towards more hilly terrain, there is a school plantation area covered with dense plants. The school compound is situated at the foot of this hillside that stretches up into the alpine slopes of lower Dhokotu village.

2.6. The Current Local Politics in Konso

The other important contextual factor in my research was the political situation in Konso during the period when I was collecting my data. The beginnings of the political activism at that time date back to 1991, when the government in power promised all ethnic groups the right to self-determination and self-governance and the promise became enshrined in the constitution (the Ethiopian Constitution, 1995). However, the Konso were still struggling to assert their rights and achieve their aspirations, 'to have their own zonal administration and be governed by themselves' within the SNNPR regional and Ethiopia federal system. In relation to this and as one of the emerging issues of my fieldwork in Konso, I give a brief account of the political movement in the area, particularly Konso's socio-cultural system and how it played its part in struggling for self-administration (establish their own Zone administration). I illustrate the way that the Konso 'traditional law', as a socio-cultural element, was effectively employed to challenge the government's influence in the Woreda.

During my field work, a wave of political tensions and unrest resulted in the arrest of a number of activists, the closure of schools for about a week, suspension of some government services and

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[10] These data were taken from the school record (2016).

some local people even lost their lives. The Konso people and the government had very different explanations for the unrest. In informal discussions with a number of Konso community, I was told the cause was "the absence of good governance, lack of self-administration, the need for exclusion from the Segen Area Peoples zonal government structure, underdevelopment of the Woreda in general and economic deterioration compared to the past when it had 'special Woreda' status. Underdevelopment was accompanied by a lack of employment opportunities and unfair treatment in the competition for jobs in the zonal capital." These issues had been raised and formally put to the SNNPR government through the community's representatives comprising 12 people from Konso elites, clan leaders, businessmen and youth.

Meanwhile, according to the local (Konso), zonal (Segen Area Peoples), regional (SNNPR) and federal governments, such claims were unfounded, a message that the regional media (Regional FM Radio and Regional TV programme) broadcasted throughout my fieldwork and that some of the Woreda government officials informally explained to me. Their view was that the Konso political movement was not representative of or working in the interests of the majority of Konso people. Instead, a handful of people who stood to gain personally were blamed for initiating such a political movement. The government also accused the internal and external Ethiopian opposition parties for initiating, provoking the tensions and pushing the mass protest, as the government media put it in November 2016, of 'fanning the flames' of the movement in the Woreda.

My intention here is not to discuss the politics of the area in favor of one or the other side but rather, to explain how the Konso cultural identities worked in a time of high political tension in the Woreda, the backdrop to my research. Although it was difficult to formally discuss political issues during my fieldwork, as I had been living within the community, I was very aware of the situation, not least because of the on-going security implications.

I learned that these two divergent political discourses created a chasm between members of a Konso community who protested against government and the government (and tensions continued during the writing up of this research, here in the UK). The local, zonal, regional and federal governments mobilised every means at their disposal to bring an end to the unrest in the Woreda. Meetings with the community were set up, though most of them were unsuccessful due to lack of attendees. Security forces in the area were mobilised. Meanwhile, the government refused to recognise the legitimacy of the political movement or recognise its leaders as elected

representatives of the community, arguing instead that the committee did not represent the community. In terms of my interest in the sociocultural system of the Konso and its relationship with identity, there is no doubt that the socio-cultural system played a crucial role in mobilising the Konso ethnic community to resist the government's influence. This was what I was deeply impressed by their cultural system that not only succeeded in bringing its community together but also functioned as a powerful alternative system (traditional system) to that of the government (e.g. the way information was disseminated to the community members and loyalty to the cultural decisions rather than that of the government's formal directives to attend a meeting were so impressive).

Accordingly, members of the Konso community used the system to mobilise their people and to challenge and resist the government. They designed strategies that would champion their aspirations, to establish their own zonal administration with the forerunner of the 'selected committee'. Using its socio-cultural structure, the community conducted a series of meetings in their convenient places, mainly in the rural villages. As explained by the members of the community, they carefully discussed the issues among themselves, despite security concerns and the fear that information would be leaked to officials. With the involvement of clan and cultural leaders and elders, the decisions passed by the community were to be respected and anyone who acted against this consensus would have to face a social punishment through the traditional law. Some of the major informal decisions made and regulated through this process were:

1. It is forbidden for any member of the Konso people to attend a meeting convened by the government and give any comment that goes against the community's interest;
2. Young people are advised not to initiate any sort of conflict or respond to the government security forces with an 'offensive act' in the town or elsewhere;
3. Information must not be passed onto any government officials against the interest of the community;
4. Individuals who are Konso but who stand alongside the government and work against the community's interests should be ignored.

These statements reflect a kind of peaceful resistance, an intricate part of and supported by - the Konso socio-cultural system. Throughout my fieldwork, on a day-to-day basis, I observed the

implementation of these informal decisions within the political, social and economic life of the community. The community's 'traditional law' was a fully functional regulatory tool for the implementation of the community's informal resolutions. As I understood from the community members, this informal regulatory body was not only activated in these particular circumstances but monitored any action considered to be against the interest of the community. For instance, I witnessed the meetings being convened by the government being concealed from members, following the decision members should not attend or make any comments that could be construed as against the community's interest. Indeed, one well-known Konso business man who attended one such meeting and made comments that did not support the community's interests, was socially and economically ostracized (members of the community were told not to use his business and services). This illustrates the power of the Konso socio-cultural system in mobilising its members and used to defend their needs, aspirations and rights. The particular characteristics of the political movement gave me an opportunity to pay more attention to a Konso socio-cultural system and explore its relationship with language uses and policy processes.

2.7. Conclusion

In this chapter, I have introduced the context of my research, focusing mainly on the Konso socio-cultural system and language-in-education policies and the political situation at the time of my fieldwork. As I have described, the majority of the population in the Woreda lives in walled rural villages except for a few towns and semi-towns. I have emphasised the enclosed settlement patterns and clan system, its marriage practices and language that shape ethnic identities in the Woreda. I have also described the significance of the Mora as an interactional space for different social, cultural, religious and educational purposes. These have been important contextual elements in the process of data collection and analysis. I also suggested that religion (mainly Christianity) has had considerable influence on the Konso community's culture, outlook and identities. I also link the history of the religion with changing power relations and language use in the religious domain (e.g. language use in Orthodox Epiphany religious event, see Chapter 5) Moreover, I have given a historical overview of Ethiopia's education system, along with its language-in-education policies and language ideologies. Through looking at past language policies, language uses in education and language ideologies, I have been able to make better sense of language uses and implementation of language policy processes in the present.

I have introduced the Konso people, a minority ethnic group that has experienced different forms of political and social marginalisation and undergone social changes of various kinds since the last decade of the nineteenth century. History shows the Konso to be a proud people, consistently resisting social and political oppression from consecutive central governments (Hallpike, 1999). Before the incorporation of the Konso into the Ethiopian centralized state, the Konso were self-administrating, led by clan chiefs and without any external influence. I have explained how the current Ethiopian Constitution (FDRE, 1995) states the right of all ethnic groups to self-determination, and how the Konso people's struggle to achieve this in practice, is still a central issue, but one which lies beyond the scope of this thesis. However, for the purposes of this research, the Konso socio-cultural system with its practical traditional laws and ethnic language and the ways in which it mobilises the community's members and is the locus for political discussions, was central to the process of collecting data and the process of meaning-making (see Chapter 5). The recent recognition of the Konso Cultural Landscape by UNESCO in 2011 as a World Heritage site can also be seen as a great achievement of the Konso people. Hence, all the aspects of the context and my example ethnic group contributed to the insights that have been generated in this research: the historical and socio-cultural context of Konso; its past and current language-in-education policies; the specific aspects of the Konso Woreda education system; my example primary school; and the political situation at the time I was conducting my research. The background presented in this chapter also helps to frame the rest of my thesis, in terms of my methodology and data, my analysis and findings.

Chapter Three: Research Design and Methodology

In this chapter, I present my research approach and the process that I went through in undertaking my study. I decided to adopt an ethnographic approach to explore how languages are used and language policies processes are implemented in the context of a Konso minority language and ethnic group in Ethiopia. Through this approach, my intention was to investigate: the language uses of the Karat community; the language uses of students and teachers in the school; the views, practices and planning of language-in-education policy in the classroom, school and community; and the relationship between language and ethnic identity. In this chapter, I also describe my research journey prior to and during field work from school to community, through to my research at the Ministry of Education and post fieldwork processes.

3.1. Why an Ethnographic Approach?

My decision to adopt an ethnographic approach was guided by the kind of qualitative, interpretive and in-depth data required to explore my research questions around language uses, language-in-education policy processes and language in relation to ethnic identities. Through ethnographic methodology, I was able to closely observe and engage with local social processes in order to understand the language interactions of students and the community. This enabled me to learn how people interacted in multiple spaces, why they used different languages and how the power structure worked in the community. This assisted me in gaining in-depth and extensive "accounts of different social phenomenon (actions, behaviour, interactions, beliefs)" (Reeves et al., 2013, e1365) and attitudes towards different languages in multiple domains (e.g. classroom, school, family, open air market, religious and political affairs). As Canagarajah (2006, 156) notes, ethnography helps to "enter into the flow of life of the community and experience how language relationships are lived out by the members…[and] gain insights from the inside – which are richer and deeper".

In relation to language policy, ethnography enabled me to intimately observe, thoroughly discuss and develop an understanding of the grassroots policy practices in the classroom, school and community. More specifically, through classroom observation, I discovered how students and teachers responded to local circumstances in classroom and school using different "strategies of negotiation, resistance, and reconfiguration" (Canagarajah, 2006, 161) in the framework of official

language policy. Building upon such understandings, I was able to explore multilayered language policies at different levels and make interconnections with ground level data (school and community). In support of this, Hornberger and Johnson (2007) argue that "ethnography of language policy can illuminate the links across the multiple LPP (language planning and policy) layers, from the macro to the micro, from policy to practice" (in Johnson, 2013, 44). Ethnography also assists in critically exploring different agents' roles in policy processes and in considering the power relations that underpin society, practitioners and policy documents and their discourses (ibid.). In doing so, I learned how teachers translated the official policy in their classrooms and how different discourses around mother tongue education influenced the planning and implementation of language-in-education policies in my research area.

Moreover, in terms of exploring language in relation to ethnic identities, ethnography was helpful in understanding people's perceptions about their ethnic identities and the way they linked identities with language. Since the notion of identities is a social construct (Hall, 1996), developing an understanding on how people perceived and shaped their identities required 'immersion' and engaging in local social processes. It necessitated my participation in the social dynamics and observation of people's behaviour and in-depth discussion with a range of respondents. Thus, pertinent to my research questions, ethnography was significant in exploring and understanding language uses, language policy processes and identities and their interrelationships (McCarty, 2011). It also helped me to develop holistic insights into my overall research focus (Sherman and Webb, 2005), language uses and implementation of language policy processes.

3.2. Conceptualizing My Fieldwork

My research explores the language uses and the implementation of language policy processes in a Konso community. In terms of the research design, I decided that in order to address the research questions related to language policy processes, I needed to collect data in multiple sites. This would enable me to interconnect, interrogate and support my grassroots' data and insights with that of the multileveled government structures. In this regard, I decided to conduct fieldwork in a Konso community (Woreda/District), Segen Area Peoples Zone, SNNPR Region and Federal levels. The major part of my fieldwork was conducted in the school, community and Konso Woreda/District offices. But to enrich my data and analysis, particularly in relation to language policies, the language ideologies and intentions that inform them, and how they connect with local practices, I

required to talk to different policy makers, officials and experts. Below, I discuss the selection process of my research sites and why I chose them.

3.2.1. Selection of Research Settings: Region, Ethnic Group or Woreda and School

Once I had defined the research problem and the methodological approach, 'the next task [was] to determine a research setting' (Sherman and Webb, 2005, 83). Accordingly, I purposefully selected my example region, Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples' Region (SNNPR), due to it being the most linguistically and ethnically diverse region in Ethiopia, as more than half of Ethiopia's languages and ethnic groups (about 56) exist in this region. These complex ethno-linguistic landscapes provided me with many possibilities when choosing my example minority ethnic group. My selection of SNNPR was also based on previous working experience in the region as the head teacher of secondary school and NGOs development worker and on having some familiarity with the education system of the rural primary schools and communities (e.g. I got a chance to technically and financially support some of the rural schools as part of my past duties), as well as familiarity with the wider context. Having selected the region, I continued the process of analysing the situation to decide on an example ethnic group that fitted my study. To do that, I decided to gain a general understanding before choosing my ethnographic research site (Sherman and Webb, 2005). As part of the process, I took enough time (about two weeks) to discuss with MOE and REB officials and experts to have a better ground for the selection of an example ethnic group.

Accordingly, in mid-October 2015, I contacted the MOE to briefly introduce myself and my study and to obtain some background information and documents. Through my social network (my previous UNESCO-Ethiopia staff), I was able to access relevant people in the Ministry and through them, to obtain the information I required. At this point, my purpose for contacting the MOE was not to begin formal data collection, such as interviewing the officials, but to get an overview of the educational status of my example region (SNNPR) and get some relevant policy documents that I could use and refer to throughout the process of my study. I managed to talk to the Curriculum Development and Implementation Directorate and English and Mother Tongue Education Directorate officials and two language experts, who briefed me about language-in-education policy and the status of mother tongue education in the country and specifically in

SNNPR. These discussions were helpful in equipping me with some background information about the region and having an informed discussion with the region's officials and experts.

At the end of October 2015, I traveled to the capital city of SNNPR, Hawassa (about 271 KMs away from Addis Ababa to the south) and contacted the regional education bureau officials. Using my social network again, I accessed the REB and talked to two higher officials and two curriculum experts. In order to choose an appropriate research site that suited the purposes of my study, I developed the selection criteria of the example ethnic group in advance. These were: (1) fitting the definition of a minority ethnic group in the Ethiopian context; (2) using non-mother tongue medium of instruction at primary education to explore language diversity and how the official medium shapes students' language choice and use; and (3) accessibility and security. Considering these selection criteria as a framework, I talked to the REB official and two experts in their office. In our discussion, the following major issues were raised and informed my choice of example ethnic group:

1. In the SNNPR, of its 56 ethnic groups, about 25 had already started to learn in their mother tongue at primary school, while 31 ethnic groups had not begun mother tongue education. Instead, these groups used Amharic (non-mother tongue) as the medium of instruction in the first cycle of primary education. Among these, about 16 minority ethnic groups lived in the South 'Omo' Zone and 5 minority ethnic groups were found in the Segen Areas Peoples Zone and 10 others existed in different zones of the region. These were my potential minority ethnic groups in line with my selection criteria, the provision of primary education in non-mother tongue medium of instruction.

2. After a thorough discussion with REB's official and experts on some of the proposed ethnic groups ('Wolayita', 'Hadya', 'Guraghe', 'Halaba', 'Hamer' and others in South 'Omo' zone and Konso), we narrowed the possibilities down to two: the first was to choose some of the ethnic groups in South Omo (which were about 16 ethnic groups) or take the Konso ethnic group. All these ethnic groups fulfilled my selection criteria; however, I decided to choose the Konso ethnic group due to its accessibility, transportation, better social services, relative closeness -595 kms - to Addis Ababa (my home) and security issues. After a week in Hawassa,

I went back to Addis Ababa for further fieldwork preparation, and my attention then turned to the Konso people.

As stated above, I set a selection criteria including identifying an ethnic group whose mother tongue was not formally used in primary education and was a minority language in the Ethiopian context. However, the regions in the first language setting (e.g. Amhara, Oromia, Tigray) had already used their languages as the medium of instruction in primary education (grades 1-8) in line with the federal language-in-education policy (see four language settings in primary education in Ethiopia on page 16). Their languages are not only dominant at the regional and federal (Amharic) levels but they are also among the majority ethnic groups in Ethiopia. The ethnic groups that I stated in the second language setting in primary education had also already introduced mother tongue as the medium of instruction in the first cycle of primary education. According to my definition of a minority language as a language that is not used in high public domains including education (see pages 22-24), this group also did not fit my research purpose. I decided not to take these two language settings because they could limit my exploration of language diversity in school and the influence of dominant languages on children's language uses and identities (as they are dominant languages).

The third language-in-education policy approach involves mother tongue as a single subject, Amharic as a medium of instruction for other subjects in the first cycle of primary education. Although these language groups can be taken as a minority languages in terms of the small number of speakers compared to others in SNNPR and Ethiopia, their languages have already been formally taught in primary school as a subject. These ethnic groups have decided to officially use their language in school and reduce the role of Amharic in the first cycle of primary education and its influence on children's language uses. This language setting would have been an interesting research topic in terms of exploring the emerging role of mother tongue (as a subject and moving towards a medium) and its challenges within the non-mother tongue medium of instruction - but did not fit my research focus and aim.

Hence, considering the above points, I chose Konso where the first language is not formally used in schools. I decided to take Konso as it provided me with an opportunity to explore the use of diverse languages (Affa Konso, Amharic and English), the power relations among speakers of

minority languages (e.g. Affa Konso) and mediums of instruction (Amharic and English) and their speakers since this minority language was not formally valued and taught in the education system. It also enabled me to explore the use of dominant languages in school and their influence on children's identity, and language uses in their community and how members viewed their language in relation to dominant languages.

With regard to my specific ethnographic research area/site and primary school within the Konso Woreda, I chose Karat town in consultation with the WEO officials because of the diversity of languages spoken, accessibility, security, and student population. At that time, the selection of Karat town was appropriate because conducting research in the rural Konso villages was difficult due to the political movement in the area (see Chapter 2). Regarding the selection of a school in Karat town, Karat primary school was also chosen in discussion with the WEO officials. I chose it among three primary schools, the other two being 'Mermere' primary school and Mission primary school. I chose Karat primary school because of the high number of children in the school, the language diversity of students and teachers (Konso, Amharic, English, some Afan Oromo and other neighboring ethnic languages like Derashigna) and the grade levels (grades 1-8). The other two primary schools only offer the first cycle (grades 1-4) and have small numbers of children, which would have provided a limited picture of primary education. Therefore, my research sites, as stated previously, included: Ministry of Education, SNNPR, Segen Area Peoples zone (where the Konso Woreda is found), Konso ethnic group or Woreda, Karat town and Karat primary school. In order to access these research sites, letters of introduction from UEA, SNNPR REB, Segen Area Peoples ZED and Konso WEO played an important role in introducing me as a researcher and in building trust and positive relationships with the various institutions, respondents and participants.

3.3. Fieldwork Approaches and Methods

Since my research questions required different sorts of methods to acquire the necessary ethnographic information and yield productive analysis (Murchison, 2010), I engaged in participant observation, conducted interviews and focus groups and analysed documentary data for a period of ten months, from October 2015 to July 2016. I also had informal and formal discussions with a number of research participants from school to FMOE. After arriving in the Konso community, I began exploring my research questions about language use, views, practice and planning of language-in-education policy and language in relation to identities. Having prepared my data collection plan, I started the process in Karat primary school. However, in

practice, my plans were inevitably subjected to frequent revisions due to the situation on the ground. Indeed, the data and emerging issues themselves guided my research process, where and what to focus on, what supplementary data were required and whom to contact. Through this process, I was able to develop holistic insights into my initial research questions and into emerging issues. Below, I discuss each research method I employed, along with their processes.

3.3.1. Participant Observation

Participant observation is one of the key methods of an ethnographic approach because of its significant role in exploring the social processes and interactions of people and their behaviour in 'natural' settings. I stayed in Konso Woreda from November 5, 2015 to April 27, 2016, with two short trips to Addis Ababa. During this period, I observed different 'moments' of daily life: the teaching-learning process in classrooms; the school environment and language uses; the daily life of the community – day-to-day interaction in routine activities (e.g. greetings and informal conversation). I paid special attention to language interactions in different settings: open-air market, shops, local hotels, streets, traditional coffee houses ('Buna tetu betoch'), families, social gatherings, religious events (e.g. Ethiopian Epiphany), educational institutions (e.g. school and WEO), Woreda court process, socio-cultural institutions (e.g. Konso Cultural Museum, 'Mora', Konso cultural villages ('Dhokotu', 'Gumele'), the Konso political movement, etc. I categorise my participant observation into two major components: participant observation in school and outside school, including community and government institutions. However, this does not mean that my observation was fragmented, since the activities, actions and behaviour observed in school were intricately interconnected with that of the community. Through paying attention to both, I was able to build a holistic understanding of language use, language policy processes and language in relation to identities.

3.3.1.1. Participant Observation in the Karat Primary School

I began fieldwork in my example school, Karat primary school, not only because it constituted the heart of my research (e.g. students' language use and where language-in-education policy was practised) but also because it was through the school that, as an 'outsider', I was able to make friends with teachers and get crucial advice on the local culture and circumstances. I also used the school as an entry point to access to the community and other research respondents, since the school can represent a community through its children. I spent the first week acquainting myself

with the school community and support staff (the head teacher arranged a brief meeting and introduced me to the teachers in the staffroom and with students at the flag ceremony of both shifts (morning and afternoon) separately). During that time, I learned about the school environment, rules and regulations, planned my work and discussed my research focus, my methods and research plan (e.g. about classroom observation and selection of grade levels, teachers and subjects to be observed) with school officials. I also arranged to rented accommodation for the duration of my fieldwork. The teachers and head teacher helped me to find a room, and I settled in Karat town. In this way, as ethnographer, I took time to 'understand and study the possible contexts' in which the research would take place (Blommaert and Jie, 2010, 19).

As I used to be a teacher and a head teacher and shared the same professional background as the teachers, integrating myself in the school system did not take me long. Within a week, in the staffroom and elsewhere in the school compound, and sometimes outside the school, teachers had begun openly chatting to/talking with me on different social, cultural, educational and political issues. However, this experience was not always helpful in terms of building a straightforward and friendly relationship between the teachers and myself. Being perceived as an 'outsider' and my relatively high academic and professional profile, particularly in the field of education (their profession) created imbalanced power relations in some aspects. I witnessed this when I planned to visit a particular classroom that some teachers felt uncomfortable about it (e.g. a teacher who changed my classroom observation schedule of his class more than twice while he was on teaching duty). To minimize such tensions, in addition to the information sheet about my research that I provided to teachers in advance, I took time and explained again what I was interested in, which was to see the language interactions in classroom, not to judge the teachers' performance for administrative purposes. More importantly, having informal discussions or talking with teachers before classroom observations helped to put teachers at their ease so that they were more able to teach as they would have not being observed. The good working relationships I established with the teachers, head teacher, vice head teacher and others in the school community, improved and strengthened throughout my fieldwork. I also found the students friendly, happy to informally and formally talk with me and respond to questions in relation to my study in the school. They often greeted me when we met in school and out of school, on the street, calling me 'teacher or Demelash 'selem new' in Amharic or 'negeyita teacher' in Affa Konso.

Once I had established a relationship with the school community, in the second week of my fieldwork, I started classroom observation. I, together with the head teacher and teachers, prepared a schedule and agreed to visit the classroom teaching-learning process (see Appendix II). Accordingly, I conducted classroom observations to understand language use, student-to-student interactions, student-to-teacher interactions, language-in-education policy practices and the role of teachers' and students' agency in policy implementation. For this purpose, I selected different subjects: Amharic, English and Environmental Science/Social Science, as I thought that the nature of the subjects would provide maximum opportunities to investigate students' language interactions and classroom participation. To understand how children's language interactions changed as they moved through primary school, I also selected different grade levels: from the first cycle (grades 1 and 2) to see students' language use at the beginning of primary to the end of the first cycle of primary education where Amharic is the medium of instruction (grade 4); from the beginning of the second cycle of primary education when English as medium of instruction is introduced (grade 5) to the upper grades of primary education (grades 7 and 8). I also deliberately selected these grade levels to see how students' proficiency in the different languages progressed, and to get a comprehensive understanding of language use and language policy implementation through 2 complete cycles of primary education (grades 1-8).

As scheduled, I undertook 16 classroom observations of different subjects and grade levels (see appendix II), with some flexibility so that last minute changes could be made (e.g. teachers' absenteeism for personal and social reasons). I prepared an observation checklist (see Appendix III) that mainly focuses on: children's language use, and the teacher's interaction with the students; patterns of student participation in relation to language background; which language/s students use in group work and discussions or side talk; and how teachers and students implement the language-in-education policy in the classroom. However, I did not strictly follow this checklist and my observation was not limited to such issues. I took notes (bullet points) on what was happening in the classroom (on the spot and after my visit) in relation to my research. In such a context, sometimes there was a tension between my previous experiences of classroom observation when my role was to assess the classroom teaching-learning process as part of the teachers' performance appraisal scheme (as evaluator or supervisor) and my current role as a researcher, which entailed a very different focus and purpose in the classroom. For instance, in my previous role, I would rate

the teachers' exclusive use of the official language in their teaching as high and considered it as a characteristics of the 'best' teachers. By contrast, in my current role, what was more important was to identify how teachers translated the official language policy in the classroom. My prior awareness of such conflicts of identities helped me to reduce – though not eliminate - subjectivity and focus on what people did and what happened on the ground, since it was "impossible to eliminate the effect of [subjectivity], and indeed that they may facilitate insight as well as leading to error" (Hammersley, 2013, 13).

With permission from the teachers, sometimes I would also go around the classroom to closely observe children's language interactions during discussions and group work. This helped me to understand how students used their home languages in group discussions and alerted me to how they would code-switch when addressing the whole class, in the official language or medium of instruction. I observed how they negotiated their home language while at the same time, challenging the official languages of teaching. Sometimes my presence would silence a group of students engaged in their discussion or they would hastily change their language of discussion from Affa Konso to the official language (Amharic) (perceiving me as an 'official'/person who regulates their language use and use of official school language). In such cases, I would move away from them so that they would feel free to continue their discussion.

Moreover, I engaged in participant observation of children's play, chatting, action and behaviour in the playground and school compound. My observations outside the classroom but in the school, particularly during break times, was helpful in that students felt free to use different languages outside of formal lessons. I sometimes sat on the bench on the staffroom verandah, which was a suitable place to capture children's interactions, and then follow up and document what children had been doing and saying. Sometimes students themselves initiated conversations with me and asked me questions (e.g. about my laptop when I processed some words) and I continued chatting with them about their education, marks, villages, etc. Some teachers also participated in such informal talks. I also went around in the school compound during regular school break time and observed and informally chatted with children to understand their language interactions, which group used which languages (urban and rural backgrounds, or boys and girls). Mostly children played in the open space in front of the administrative office (see Chapter 7), so my movement and informal conversations with the children were visible to students and teachers (for ethical

reasons). After a while, I would stop to record (fieldnotes by hand) the process and content. I began to undertake this kind of activity two months into my fieldwork when students already recognised me as a familiar person in the school. I also sometimes attended the regular school flag ceremony (in the morning at 8:00 am and late afternoon at 5:00 pm) to participate in, listen and observe the singing of the Ethiopian national anthem (e.g. how students participate in the process). I also took note of school announcements and what languages the vice head teacher and head teacher, unit leaders and school club leaders used to pass messages onto students, in the context of power relations.

The staffroom was another important participant observation site where I obtained data. I participated in and observed the interactions in the staffroom that included teachers, head teachers and sometimes students. The staffroom served as a lounge or café where staff drank coffee or tea and ate snacks such as fruits (banana, papaya, mango, and guava), local bread, biscuits, roasted grains ('Qollo'). Students were also allowed to help themselves but were not allowed to sit and eat in the staffroom. The staff room was where teachers could prepare for lessons but also where they could engage in social chat, which tended to be mainly about politics. During the local political unrest in the area, I took great care to be even-handed in my contributions and ensure that comments I made were not both pro and against the government and Konso local politics, as not to do so could have damaged my relationship with teachers, officials and the community as well. Other popular topics of conversation in the staff room were sport (mostly English Premier League) and academic and social issues. In such discussions, I was not required to reserve myself to actively participate. Thus, these interactions provided me with a good opportunity to understand how and why teachers used different languages, to observe ethnic and language in-group and out-group interactions between teachers and sometimes, with students and students' parents.

3.3.1.2. Participant Observation out of School, in the Community.

As I had been living with the community, I engaged in and observed the community's day-to-day life and language interactions. For instance, on the way to taking my daily meals in the local hotels, I often observed how people interacted with each other and how they used different languages. I made notes using both Amharic and English at home, because making notes while I was in the local hotel seemed inappropriate as an 'outsider' and could imply I was spying on people. The local hotel became an important place, in providing me with an opportunity to have informal

conversations with people I met there and to understand their language attitudes and values (e.g. a waitress who explained me that she did not want to learn Affa Konso because of the low value that she attached to it. See details in Chapter 5). During the first week of my fieldwork in Konso, in that local hotel, I was mistaken for a government official by the person who shared the same table with me. He explained to me about the Konso political movement and complained about the government for its wrong doings (e.g. the town was overrun by security forces, severely impacting upon its usually peaceful atmosphere). Once he realised that I was a newcomer to the area, he said, 'I am talking about the truth, I do not care about whether you are a government official or not'. However, I took this as an opportunity to explain about myself as a researcher and possibly he could tell the information to others. During the political unrest in the area (see Chapter 2), my 'external' identity as an outsider in relation to the Konso community was questioned not only by the community members but also by government personnel (in this regard, one time, two members of the government's security force accosted me with questions about my identity, which I responded to politely).

While living in the community, most of my observation was unstructured. I sometimes focused on some specific issues that interested me and were directly related to my research questions (e.g. the use of Affa Konso for political discussion in a cultural coffee house that I describe in Chapter 5). Moreover, I undertook planned observations, like an occasional visit to the Monday and Thursday Karat open air market (sometimes with a translator) to see how people used different languages for business and social interactions. I also planned, and requested for permission to observe the Woreda court process to see the exceptional use of Affa Konso in a formal public domain. Additionally, I carried out focused observations on special religious occasions (e.g. Ethiopian Epiphany, on January 21 and 22, 2016) to understand how people used language for religious purposes and the power relations between Affa Konso and Amharic and their speakers. I participated in and observed language interactions in families, shops, streets, the bus station, etc. to understand language use, language values, attitudes, and why people used Affa Konso or Amharic during ethnic in-group and out-group or mixed group communications.

3.3.2. Interviews

While participant observation can be seen as central to an ethnographic approach (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007, in Hammersley, 2013), ethnographers can utilize a variety of methods.

Through conducting interviews, I was able to discover information that could not be captured by other means. It also helped me to supplement and complement the data acquired from other sources. Additionally, I used interviews, which were often in-depth discussions - to track and explore further some of the key issues and questions that emerged during participant observation (e.g. why students and teachers used Affa Konso or an ethnic language during in-group chats and discussions in school). Conversely, issues would be raised or would emerge during interview sessions, opening up new insights or throwing up new questions which required further examination using participant observation and document analysis (e.g. questions about language barriers and how rural students establish friendships and chat with other students in their early primary grades could be followed up through observing children's activities in the playground). In short, "What people say in interview can lead us to see things differently in observation" (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007, 103) and vice versa. As Heller (2011) also notes, much ethnographic work utilizes the combination of participant observation and interview to explore language and identities.

As stated earlier, my research design involved multiple-site fieldwork, requiring me to interview people from school, the Konso community, Konso Woreda sector offices, Segen Area Peoples Zone education department, SNNPR education bureau and Federal Ministry of Education. Because of the wide range of respondents, I prepared and used different interview protocols from semi-structured (see Appendixes IV-IX) to unstructured. I began by interviewing primary school students as they were one of the major focal points of my research. I undertook detailed discussions with 15 students, spending about 15 to 30 minutes with each student. Although I developed a semi structured interview guide (see Appendix IV) to maintain my focus, my discussions with the children were unstructured and interactive. The main questions I explored with them included: language use in the classroom and in other school settings; which language/s children used with their friends and at home and why; how they perceived language/s and related them with their culture and identities; their views on mother tongue education and reflections on the current Amharic and English mediums of instruction; which was the students' preferred language of instruction and which language they wanted to improve further and why.

I also conducted interviews with school teachers and a school official. I managed to interview all the teachers (14 teachers, 3 female and 11 male) whose classrooms I had visited. I deliberately did

this so that I could discuss the issues that I had observed in their classrooms and gain a better understanding about language use and implementation of language-in-education policy. I combined these different sources of data 'to ensure the integrity of the data' (Fetterman, 2010, 34) through interrogating and triangulating the data and findings. There were four major discussion points: which languages teachers and students used in the teaching-learning process and why; which languages teachers used in other school settings (e.g. staffroom, staff meetings) and other domains (e.g. in home and with the community); how they perceived language and related with their identities; and their views on the current-language-in-education policy and local language policy initiatives, including mother tongue education, and their challenges (see Appendix V). I also purposefully included the head teacher due to his position, knowledge and experience of the school. I raised detailed questions (about language use, language value, attitudes, views, practice and planning of language policy, culture, identities) (see Appendix VI) and discussed them with him.

I also interviewed about 15 students' parents to obtain their views on language use in different contexts, language attitudes, values and language-in-education policy, etc. I framed my interview approach so as to give me a full picture of children's, families' and the community's' language use at school, at home and in the community. For example, I interviewed some of the students' parents together with their children separately, the aim being to interconnect parents' and children's views on language use and language in relation to identities (see family cases in Chapters 5 and 6). I thought that understanding language use at the family level could be a springboard to develop further insights on the wider community's language use and relate this with the implementation of language policy processes in school. I included families from different socio-economic backgrounds (e.g. 'educated', business persons, peasants) and geographical settings (Karat town, 'Durayite' walled village and rural background). I also included other members of the community such as cultural leaders, clan leaders, religious leaders, members of the parent-teacher-association and the education and training board chair. For instance, I traveled to the rural 'Gumele' village and the residence of the clan leader (about 5 kms outside Karat town) and lower 'Dhokotu' village (about 3 kms from Karat town) to interview other cultural leaders (during these times, I was accompanied and assisted by the teacher who belonged to the Konso ethnic group, to facilitate the collaboration of my research participants).The main discussion points included language uses with children and other members of the family in the home, neighborhoods

and in other domains, the value they attached to different languages and why, and the Konso culture, traditions and identities (see Appendix VII).

Moreover, I conducted interviews with officials from different levels and sectors, particularly on issues related to language policy processes. At Konso Woreda's education office, I interviewed four education officials and experts from Management, Curriculum, Supervision and Teacher Training departments. The discussions focused on the Woreda education system, mainly in relation to language and education, views and practices of the current language-in-education policy, mother tongue education and the local language policy initiative (see Appendix VIII). I also interviewed two Woreda Culture and Tourism office experts for data in relation to the Konso culture, language and identities. One of them was pivotal to coordinating the 'Konso Language Development Plan', so I was able to have a detailed discussion with him on the Konso local language policy initiative. The result of this interview was the emergence of the local language policy initiative as one of the key issues of the study (in fact, the issue was raised by other respondents too). Before fieldwork, I had no idea about this local policy, but the issue had attracted my attention enough to wish to explore further and in-depth and eventually became one of the chapters of this thesis (Chapter 8). These discussions also alerted me to the complexities of language planning, specifically, transforming a mainly oral language, Konso, into a language that could be used in the public domain, and drew my attention to the details of the language planning process. This is an example of how, through adopting the ethnographic approach, new issues emerged in the field and further insights developed, shaping the data and subsequently, the sections of this thesis.

Other officials interviewed were the Women and Children Affairs official, with whom I discussed mainly language, culture and education with respect to gender and the Konso Woreda court official, with respect to the use of Affa Konso in a high public domain, and how and why Affa Konso was used in the court process, in a context in which Amharic had official working language status.

Beyond the Konso Woreda level, I contacted the Segen Area Peoples Zone education department at Gumayde town, zonal town, and interviewed the official and the Teaching-Learning Process expert. I wanted to ask them for an overview of the education system at zonal level and ask them about their views about, and implementation of, language-in-education policy, mother tongue

education and issues related to language and identities. I then contacted the SNNPR education bureau in Hawassa town and interviewed key bureau officials. Our discussions were very helpful in getting their perspectives on higher level language-in-education policy and the related ideologies and mother tongue discourses. I also interviewed four experts from the Curriculum, Teacher Training and Gender Mainstreaming departments. Finally, I contacted the Federal Ministry of Education after finalizing the different levels of data collection, from school to regional education bureau. I interviewed two high level officials on Curriculum and Mother Tongue education and two experts from the Teacher Training and Gender and Research directorates. I discussed with these policy makers and experts broader issues pertaining to language-in-education, including mother tongue education, the ideology and discourses driving the current language-in-education policy, its opportunities and challenges, and the participation of regions and ethnic groups in developing the primary school curriculum and its challenges (see Appendix IX). I paid heed to Willis's advice (1977 in Canagarajah, 2006, 164) to "…move beyond listening to the local informant and conduct a reflexive rethinking of their own and the informant's positions". In the process of interviewing, I also realised that the interviews were becoming increasingly formal according to the status of my interviewees, from the school (students, teachers, head teacher), community, Woreda, Zone, Regional and Federal levels officials. For instance, the need to make appointments within officials' tight schedules, the kind of responses given and the way in which officials seemed to take great care of the words they used and the information they provided on sensitive issues like language, identities and policy in the Ethiopian context.

3.3.3. Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)

I also used focus group discussions with primary school students of different grade levels to collect data, in a more interactive and freer environment. I found FGD useful in getting different perspectives, capturing consensual ideas on the issues under discussion (e.g. language uses¸ views on the teaching-learning process and language in relation to their identities), understanding interactions within the group, in an open and relaxed situation and capturing how they reflected on their language repertoires, particularly girls and children in the first cycle of primary school (as unlike in individual interviews, they were not shy to discuss these issues in a group). With the advice and support of classroom teachers and the head teacher, I selected five children (2/3 female or 3/2 male) for the group discussion, which lasted about an average of 30 minutes. These children

were selected randomly but at the same time, I accepted teachers' and head teacher's recommendations based on ability to express their ideas. I also purposefully included some children whom I had observed in the classroom due to their active classroom participation. Thus, I conducted 2 FGDs from each selected grade levels (grade**s** 1, 2, 4, 5, 7 and 8) which were 12 groups, 60 children in total. During the FGD, I raised questions about: the language/s they used in the classroom; whether they used their home language or not and/or Amharic and why; which language they used in group discussion, with friends in and out of school and why; the main language spoken at home, neighborhoods; what was their mother tongue if different from that of their ethnic language.

I conducted most of the FGDs by myself without any formal translation but when necessary I was able to avail myself of informal translation. When participants of the FGD were unable to express their ideas in Amharic, particularly students from grades 1, 2 and 4, I was assisted by children from the group to mediate the communication between these children and me. I also arranged two special focus group discussions that solely comprised beginner students from grade 1 who had no or limited Amharic. In this case, the head teacher assisted me in communicating with the children by translating Affa Konso into Amharic and vice versa. Given the nature of my research questions, it was essential to get the perspectives of those children who did not understand the language of teaching, Amharic, and therefore would struggle to understand the content of the lesson, and how different language background teachers assisted them in the classroom, how they coped with the challenge, and their views on whether they would prefer to learn in their mother tongue or continue as it was.

The other important advantage that I draw from FGD was the opportunity it gave me to choose children from the FGD for follow up interviews. Thus, I learned that as well as generating data, the FGD was a useful forum for identifying participants for more in-depth data collection. In this regard, all the one-to-one interview participants (15 children) were selected through this process. For these in-depth one-to-one interviews, I only considered students from the upper grade levels or second cycle of primary education (e.g. grades 5, 7 and 8), with their and their parents' informed consent, because of their relative maturity (i.e. age 12-15 and beyond) linked to their ability to discuss issues in a one-to-one interview.

All of my focus group discussions and interviews with students and teachers, and indeed most interviews with parents, were conducted in the school compound, in the shade of a big tree in front of the administration office. It provided a cool and private space for my discussions with respondents, visible to (but not overheard by) the school community. I had to compete for this resource (shady tree) with teachers and students alike, since most people in the school including the head teacher, liked to sit there and chat with friends, particularly in the afternoon (due to the hot temperature). But the school community had already accepted it as my (temporary) 'open space working area/office' and gave me priority when I needed to conduct an interview (see Figure 11 below).

Figure 11: A shady tree where I conducted most of my interviews & FGDs in Karat Primary School

3.3.4. Documentary Analysis

I employed documentary analysis to gain a comprehensive understanding of the issues but also to collect specific data on policy related issues. I started collecting and analysing documents at the outset of my research process and continued to do so throughout my study. I accessed official documents from organizations' official websites, upon request of the concerned individuals (e.g. officials and experts) and libraries (e.g. FMOE). Access to some documents was difficult, particularly those pertaining to sensitive issues like language and ethnicity in the Ethiopian context (see Introduction Chapter 1). For example, getting the Draft Language Policy of Ethiopia (2016) from the Ministry of Culture and Tourism was difficult (although I tried through my social network who worked with this Ministry) because of the sensitivity and currency of the issue (the document was still waiting at the time for approval from the Federal Parliament). After countless visits to the

Ministry, I finally managed to get hold of it – largely because one of the officials who had refused to collaborate transferred from his previous position.

Documents included the Education and Training Policy (FDRE, 1994) and other official documents in relation to the current language-in-education policy intention, ideologies and practices. I also consulted the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia Constitution (1995) and the SNNPR Constitution (2001) to analyse how the idea of ethnicity or ethnic identities are conceptualised and legitimised in the Ethiopian context. I also analysed the draft Ethiopian Language Policy (2016) to see how language is conceptualised (e.g. as essentialised or a resource) and minority language is defined in the Ethiopian context. Moreover, at grassroots level, I was given access to official documents, strategic planning and minutes of the Konso Language Development committee, the Woreda and school educational statistics, reports and other publications that relate to the Konso education system and local language policy initiative. In terms of confidentiality of these official documents, particularly the committee meeting minutes and draft language policy of Ethiopia, I have used the data only for research purposes.

3.4. Data Recording and Analysis

During classroom observation, I made bullet points to remind me what had been said and what I had observed but the major part of my fieldnotes (e.g. points grasped through observation and informal discussion) were recorded later at home and elsewhere, when convenient to do so. I did this so as not to disrupt my participation and concentration in the process or events. Regarding the interview, I used a digital audio recorder in all cases (except once, during my interview with an NGO manager, when the battery died and so I reverted to taking detailed notes instead). All my participants had no objections to being recorded except for one student's parent who was unwilling to give a written consent or recorded verbal consent during the political unrest in the area, due to the assumption that I worked for the government. However, I realised that some people (mainly officials) were more formal when the interview was being recorded, choosing their words carefully, probably so as to avoid undermining their remits and responsibilities.

I conducted most of the interviews in Amharic and also took my notes in Amharic with sporadic use of some English words, phrases and sentences. Some of the interviews were conducted in Affa Konso using a language translator (three children's parents from a rural background and two focus

group discussions with children). In this respect, sometimes my data involved three languages or two levels of translations, from Affa Konso into Amharic and from Amharic into English (my translation). As part of my research process, I also regularly transcribed my interview and FGD data that were recorded in Amharic (with mix of English) into English (I listened to the Amharic audio recorded discussion and directly translated it into English).

With regard to data analysis, I carried out different levels and types of data analysis during and post-fieldwork. I agree with Hammersley and Atkinson (2007, 158) that "in ethnography the analysis of data is not a distinct stage of the research", and it can be done by both informal and formal approaches throughout the research. I began preliminary reflections and informal data analysis at the outset of the data collection process. I reflected on my data as it evolved, on a daily, weekly and monthly basis with varied degrees of intensity, making sense of my data, coming up with preliminary insights and making plans for further and in-depth data gathering. Additionally, I produced summary notes on particular speech events, e.g. language interactions in open-air market and religious events; classroom observations and students' and teachers' language interaction in classrooms; the Konso political movement, etc. I regularly shared some of them with my supervisors for guidance and feedback, so as to refresh my memory and record the key issues and impressions resulting from my fieldwork. I found this experience helpful in making sense of the emerging data, keeping on assessing the research situation, issues and tensions (e.g. the interview schedule with parents was amended during the political unrest in the area). These supervisions gave me the opportunity to carefully plan or revise my plans for the next step of the inquiry. I found that this practice had an additional benefit: "Ethnographers who maintain their conceptual memos on a regular basis find that when they plan their final written report, chapter topics fall into place through a phrase or word search of conceptual memos" (Heath and Street, 2008, 77).

As noted above, I used my field summary notes to organize my data and develop the themes and sections of the empirical chapters (e.g. traditional proverbs in a minority language, 'a language that cannot help to cross a river and a mule's story in chapters 5 and 6 respectively) and the methodological chapter (e.g. describing the research process). Analysing the web of data and concepts emerging in the field, helped me to "go beyond individual cases and to define patterns" (Charmaz, 1996, 43). Hence, I carried out both informal and formal analysis simultaneously in the

data collection process. This is because, as Blommaert and Jie (2010, 63-64) put it, "the analysis of [ethnographic] data is interpretive, the boundary between 'during' and 'after' fieldwork is blurred: a lot of interpretation … has already been done in the field, on an everyday basis, while [I am] trying to make sense of the data". Moreover, in the post-fieldwork period, I coded and organized my data using a thematic approach and did a preliminary analysis over a period of two months (mid-July to mid-September 2016) while I was in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia (I produced about 250 single spaced pages of preliminary analysis that I used for further in-depth analysis and writing up of my thesis once I returned to the UK).

3.5. My Reflections on Fieldwork

Here, I reflect on some of the major conceptual and methodological issues I encountered in the research process. One of the key issues that occupied most of my thinking and time was the complexity of the concept of identity. I found it to be more complex than I had ever thought before entering the field. In this regard, I agree with the idea that "Identity and identification are certainly more complex conceptually than had been reflected in … literature" (Omoniyi, 2006, 30). I was required to 'immerse' and engage in the process of multiple interactions with children in classroom, school, out of school in different domains to understand how identities were perceived and related to language. In addition, although in the Ethiopian context the issue of language and ethnic identity is raised in official documents (e.g. Constitutions) and promoted in government media, still it is a sensitive issue and discussing it with respondents proved to be difficult.

The other factor that influenced the research was that the time of my fieldwork coincided with the Konso political movement in the area (the Konso people's request for their rights and self-administration, see details in Chapter 2). I took this experience as both an opportunity and a challenge. In this regard, I was compelled to document, understand and explore the Konso cultural system in terms of how it was being used to mobilise the members and resist the government's political influence raised my curiosity too. Although the issue of culture was in my previous plan, I paid it more attention and considered key persons like the clan leader, cultural leader, elders and the Woreda Culture office (two experts) as indispensable respondents to understand more about the Konso culture in relation to language and identities. I also included additional questions about culture and identities in most of my discussions with the other respondents.

Thus, I responded to the realities of fieldwork by amending the data collection plans that I had included in my research proposal. I had planned to collect ethnographic data in the Konso community in two phases. In the first phase, I had thought to begin my data collection from the bottom-up, staying in my chosen community for about 4 months and then leaving the site and collecting data from federal, regional and zonal levels for three months. In the second phase, I envisaged returning to the Konso community for further data collection. This back and forth data collection strategy was designed to generate fresh insights from the community and then raise some of the emerging issues with officials at higher levels, and then returning to the community. Of course, before starting my formal data collection in Konso, I had already established contact with the MOE, REB and ZED for necessary briefings and permission to conduct my research. However, I did not follow through with my two phased approach due to the tense political situation in Konso. Instead, I decided to extend my fieldwork there and intensively work on my data collection and evaluate the adequacy of my field data before leaving the site. Thus, I completed my data collection in Konso on April 27, 2016 and then moved to the next step, which was to interview ZED, REB and MOE officals respectively.

3.6. Some Disadvantages and Problems in Ethnography

Ethnography can present the researcher with several important and difficult issues; among these, Hammersley has noted a tension "between what we might call participant and analytic perspectives" in ethnographic work (Hammersley, 2006, 4). That means, ethnographers are required to understand the research participants' perspectives and their actions and to describe and explain them accurately. At the same time, they are required to develop an "analytical understanding of perspectives, activities and actions, one that is likely to be different from, perhaps even in conflict with, how the people themselves see the world" (ibid.). An awareness and a recognition of this potential tension of ethnography enabled me to exert my time and energy and design strategies to explore and gain insiders' perspectives and further develop a critical analysis. However, I realised that this was not an easy task as a researcher. In my research context, for example, my intention to understand language uses in classroom and to analyse the data beyond the surface using language policy concepts and my experience in this specific issue being a head teacher and how far do I distance myself from the data in this process sometimes produced tensions. For example, I found that teachers had space in the classroom to translate policy in their

own ways but the head teacher did not accept that the teachers adapted the policy as they saw fit to their classroom language situations. To reduce this tension, I conducted repeated observations of students' and teachers' activities and behaviours and discussed with them and gained their diverse perspectives and practices on my research issues (even when that was in conflict with my own ideas, e.g. how language-in-education policy is practised in classroom, how identity is perceived and formed). I was also required to critically analyse my observations and discussions with respondents about language use and identity. In doing so, I developed such perspectives using theories (e.g. the role of agency in responding to official language policy in classroom) to test my assumptions. This helped me to make a critical analysis based on an understanding of participants' perspectives. For example, when the idea of school and Woreda officials that teachers should implement the language policy in classroom and my view of teachers' agency in responding to the classroom situations in their own ways were in conflict; I analysed this using language policy theories (e.g. Johnson, 2013).

Another challenge in ethnography noted by Hammersley is that ethnographers "sometimes tend to treat people as if their behaviour in the situations [they] study is entirely a product of those situations, rather than of who they are and what they do elsewhere/simply because [they] do not have observational data about their rest of their lives" (Hammersley, 2006, 5). In my research context, understanding whether students' behaviours and actions in school were shaped by a particular situation (e.g. school and official language policy) or not was an important question. For instance, the tendency to assume what I observe students' behaviour in the school as if it would always appear the same in and out of school could lead to misinterpretation of my data. But as Hammersley (2006, 5) says, "What goes on in any situation changes over time" and place. In order to understand the relationship of students' behaviours across different situations and build a holistic insight into students' language use and policy practice, I closely observed and traced their activities and language interactions in multiple contexts - in the classroom, school and community with peers, teachers, parents and others. This helped me to explore how individuals responded differently to the same and different contexts across times. For example, I followed the language uses of some students (e.g. Dawit and Tamene) in the classroom, school and home in which they used Affa Konso (school and home), Amharic (classroom, school and home) and English (classroom) differently.

The way an ethnographic work is viewed towards contributing to policy making is another concern (Hammersley, 1992). The lengthy and thick description of ethnography and the tendency of policy makers to look for precise and statistical interpretations of wider coverage and the type of questions that policy makers wanted researchers to address are among difficulties around the translation of ethnographic findings into policy (Robinson-Pant, 2008). So, how my ethnographic research findings can be helpful to language policy makers in my research context is a practical question. To address this concern, my findings such as the diverse views of stakeholders (e.g. parents, teachers and students) on mother tongue education and the need to engage them in the local policy planning processes and incorporate their voices in the policy are contribution for policy making. In relation to the contribution of my findings to practice and policy and as one of the strategies, I also take Stephens' (2007, 74) advice: to have "…a more concerted commitment to the local publication of [my] research that is carried out in the field" and make it available to officials and local community. In order to take forward my research findings into the policy arena, I will contact the Institute of Education Research (IER) in Addis Ababa University and SNNPR education bureau and share specific sections of this thesis. Moreover, I plan to synthesise my findings and develop policy briefing both in English and Amharic to share with officials. I will also contact local, regional and federal government and other organisations (e.g. NGOs, UN Agencies) to initiate policy debates on identities and language-in-education policy at different levels, schools to federal ministry of education through meetings and conferences. The results of these debates can also help to engage officials in exploring new directions for language policy.

3.7. Ethical Considerations

As an ethnographic researcher, I lived with the Konso community for about 6 months, and for about 4 months, I conducted interviews with different people in multiple sites outside the Konso Woreda. Thus, I conducted my research in the 'natural' settings that also involved close contact with research participants through engaging in the process, interviewing people and observing their lives. These features required me to carefully consider the ethical implications of this kind of research process (Hammersley and Trainou, 2012). As part of the research ethics protocol, I secured informed written consent from all research participants, providing them with a full explanation of the purpose and scope of my study. In my thesis, I also kept the names of all research participants anonymised and their responses were used only for my research. Regarding children's participation in my research, I sought informed consent from both the parents and children

themselves. I also asked teachers' permission to contact their students. However, in some cases, I found that securing written or recorded oral consent was challenging, particularly during the period of political tension in the area. Indeed, I changed some of my respondents in order to overcome this. Having described how I fulfilled the basic ethical requirements in my research process, in the next section I describe some of the ethical challenges that I encountered.

A major ethical challenge that I had to address in my research was the need to use language translators. Although the majority of the data was gathered by myself, I used translators on some occasions to interpret Amharic into Affa Konso and vice versa. However, rather than using a formal assistant throughout all my field work, I used teachers, a vice head teacher and head teacher to assist me in translating and explaining in my interactions with students, when students were interacting with one another in their mother tongue, during break time for example, and also students' conversations with teachers. I also established friendships with teachers and when I was with them in town, they would often translate from Affa Konso into Amharic. For example, I attended a religious event and they translated the content of an Affa Konso song, and in general they would translate people's conversations in the coffee house, hotel, shop, street, etc. As Affa Konso shares vocabulary with the Oromo language, which I am familiar with, I was also often able to pick up some points of Affa Konso's conversations.

Although I mostly visited the open air market alone, sometimes I required a language translator to communicate with rural people, so as to get a more in-depth understanding of their language uses. In these instances, I was assisted by the son of the head teacher (a well-mannered young man from the Konso ethnic group who had completed his secondary education). In using a language translator, I was aware that the information being shared with me was also being heard by a third person and that I had an obligation to protect the participants' rights of anonymity and confidentiality. Because of this, I selected those individuals who assisted me very carefully. The head teacher (and his son) and teachers who were already part of my research, had some research background and knew about ethical issues. Thus, as much as I could, I considered the research ethics protocols, protected the right of the people participating in my research, ensuring that positive relationships with research participants were maintained and further study made possible without affecting their privacy and rights (Fetterman, 2010).

3.8. Conclusion

In this chapter, I have analysed my research approach and the process that I employed in my research. As the nature of my research questions required me to explore policy processes and people's views at different levels, I chose to collect data in multiple sites, from an individual school and its community to higher government structures, ministry and policy makers, using diverse sources of data and methods. One of the interesting aspects of my research was making links between the detailed ethnographic research at the level of the school and community with data from macro and middle-level government structures. Within such an approach, I started from the grassroots level, which enabled me to look at the issues at that level from a perspective that was free from the ideas and agendas of the different levels of government bureaucracy. Moreover, the use of diverse methods, the participation of a wide range of respondents and engagement with multiple views and voices on language use, language policy processes and ethnic identity in relation to language, enabled me to intertwine different ideas and perspectives and develop unique insights into my research questions. Indeed, the use of diverse data sources helped me to "cross-check, compare, and triangulate information before it [became] a foundation on which to build knowledge base" (Fetterman, 2010, 9).

Moreover, I found that fieldwork itself was both a challenging process and a rich learning experience. It was challenging to find myself surrounded by an ocean of data, struggling to decide which data was relevant to my research, particularly at the beginning of my ethnographic fieldwork. I echo Fetterman's statement (2010, xi) that it was "an ambitious journey through the complex world of social interaction" and a remarkable learning process. Through an ethnographic approach, I was in close proximity to my data and respondents. I gained first hand, diverse and rich insights from the respondents, and was able to engage in ongoing and reflecting and questioning, guided by the emerging issues rather than my preconceptions. This allowed me to engage critically with well-established concepts (e.g. people's views on identities) and exposed me to indigenous knowledges (e.g. traditional sayings, a minority language: 'a language that cannot help to cross a river' and 'a mule's story' that capture the concept of language attitudes and identity) and alerted me to different processes of knowledge construction. Importantly, applying ethnography in my research provided me with a methodological trajectory that was a significant departure from my previous academic and professional research experiences, which tended to be about confirming existing theories through the use of conventional quantitative and mixed research

methods. Moreover, through closely engaging in observation and discussions with people, ethnography helped me to understand the complexities of multilevel language policies and practices and to challenge the concept of policy as limited to texts, to the exclusion of practice. As an ethnographic researcher, I was challenged to negotiate my own multiple identities and previous perspectives on policy and instead, to hear and engage with the multiple views of diverse participants at school and community levels.

Chapter Four: Theoretical Framework

I explore language uses and the implementation of language policy processes in the context of a minority language and ethnic group in Ethiopia. As a means to explore this, I examine the following research questions: how do members of a minority ethnic community use different languages in multiple domains? How do members of the community view language in relation to ethnic identity? How do primary school students use different languages in classrooms and other school settings? And how are language policies viewed, practised and planned in the classroom, school and community? To frame and explore my research questions, I outline my theoretical framework around the poststructuralist stance that sees language, identity and language policy as social processes that are 'changing across time and place' (Pierce, 1995, 18). Taking into account the idea of language ideology as having a relationship with various aspects of societal life such as language uses, language policy processes and identities (Woolard, 1998), I start the chapter by discussing language ideology, along with key related concepts, namely discourse and power relations. I then discuss language policy and processes and identities in terms of their significance to my overall research questions.

4.1. Language Ideologies

Language ideologies are defined as "sets of beliefs about language articulated by users as a rationalization or justification of perceived language structure and uses" (Silverstein, 1979, 193). Heath (1977, 53, cited in Woolard and Schieffelin, 1994, 57) suggests a definition of language ideology that places greater emphasis on the social dimension: "Self-evident ideas and objectives a group holds concerning roles of language in social expression of the group". Language ideologies are understood as 'normal' and self-explanatory ideas that individuals and groups hold about language, its uses and its roles in social life. Drawing on this broad concept, Woolard (1998) asserts that language ideology is beyond language itself; it is about the interconnection of language in various ways with all human beings' social practices and processes such as identity, socialization and schooling. This conceptualization is central to this thesis, which seeks to understand language uses in multiple domains and explore how students and adults use language in various personal and social engagements in day-to-day routines, family and community affairs, socio-cultural interactions, classroom, school and policy processes.

Building upon Woolard's conceptualization, Gal (1998: 319) points out that language ideology is about how people perceive language 'in the form of ideas [and] beliefs' and their understanding about language's relationship with individuals and people in societal life. This idea is also helpful to understand and analyse people's embedded perceptions about and attitudes towards different languages (e.g. mother tongue, minority language and dominant language) and their uses and users. I apply this concept of language ideology particularly in Chapter 5 to examine how and why people choose, use and value different languages in diverse informal and formal domains, as a result of their beliefs and attitudes to languages.

Moreover, Blommaert, (2006, 241-242) notes that:

> Language users have conceptions of language and language use: conceptions of "quality," value, status, norms, functions, ownership, and so forth. These conceptions guide the communicative behaviour of language users; they use language on the basis of the conceptions they have and so reproduce these conceptions. These are ideological constructs, and they are sites of power and authority. (Blommaert, 2006, 241-242).

The above quotation suggests that people hold different ideas about language, its use and speakers, and that these conceptions are shaped by ideologies. Based on their beliefs and attitudes, language users place languages in different positions, assign different values and purposes to different languages and have different kinds of attachments to particular languages (e.g. mother tongue and second language).The other key idea emphasised in the above quote is the role of language ideology in influencing people's interaction and behaviour and sustaining dominant ideas and power in society. Adding to the concepts of language ideology given by Woolard (1998) and Gal (1998) above, I use Blommaert's (2006) idea of language ideology to understand and analyse how students and the community use languages, assign value and status to different languages in the classroom, in and out of the school and in the community (Chapter 5), and the power relations in language-in-education policy planning and implementation (Chapter 7 and Chapter 8). Because language ideologies are embedded and reflected in people's collective practices, such as in the family, school and socio-cultural systems (Kroskrity 2010, cited in Razfar 2012), they also "[inform] practical language regimes in education and other crucial spheres of public life" (Blommaert, 2006, 244).

However, Gal (1998) argues that, though ideologies are shared and usually related with a particular group, all members of the community do not uniformly use and value languages in the same ways.

The language choice, use and value will vary depending upon language users' beliefs in particular languages and positions in society. For instance, teachers may hold different language ideologies and shape their classroom teaching-learning approaches accordingly. I apply this concept to explore the nature of language ideologies, values, status and attitudes that members of the community and teachers possess in the process of interaction and classroom language policy implementation. Additionally, language choice and use can be associated to "an individual's history of language learning and to his or her language competencies, as well as local interactional contexts (e.g. bilinguals using the preferred language of their speech partners), in addition to the relative power of the speaker's social group" (Volk and Angelova, 2007, 179). In relation to my study, I examine how students', teachers' and head teachers' language choice and use relate to their home language background and the official school languages or mediums of instruction in a multilingual school setting.

Moreover, Kiss (2011, 232) argues that though all members of a community may not have a uniform language ideology, the community members may "share a set of beliefs about appropriate language practices, they assign prestige to various aspects of language, and their assumptions may even designate a kind of consensual ideology". These community beliefs and experiences within which certain values are assigned to certain languages, inform decisions about which languages to use in high status public domains, including education (Blommaert, 2006). I use this idea to explore whether this trend is applicable to my research area or not in the local language policy planning, in relation to how decisions are made on the language to be used in primary education and how the voices of the local community are taken as a policy input. However, the value assigned to a certain language does not necessarily link to official status or hold a legislative provision (ibid.), but can be the result of socio-cultural, economic, religious, etc. factors. I use this idea to see how people assign different values and statuses to different languages and contexts (e.g. Affa Konso in the marketplace, Amharic in religious events).

Woolard (1992) also asserts that language ideology involves cultural conceptions about different languages and dialects and that these socio-culturally agreed group norms can influence language use, interaction and behaviour (cited in Johnson, 2013). This suggests how socio-culturally established beliefs about language shape language choice, use and interaction, which also reflects members' behaviour. I found this idea useful in analysing language uses and behaviours in relation

to different social groups (e.g. children, peers, rural, urban, officials in Chapter 5 and Chapter 7) in a Konso socio-cultural context. Woolard (1998: 3) further argues that in societal life and social institutions, language ideology takes "implicit or explicit representations of the intersection of language and human beings". These kinds of language ideologies can appear on the surface during people's interaction or texts or can be hidden behind observable behaviour or content, which requires more in-depth exploration to uncover it. I link this to the need for the more in-depth enquiry that an ethnographic approach provides, generating more hidden insights about how and why community members, including students and teachers, choose and use a particular language in the classroom and other school settings, for in-group and out-group communications, and in policy implementation.

The concept of language ideology is therefore central to my theoretical framework, enabling me to explore language uses, language policy processes and identities. In doing so, I adopt Woolard's (1998) notion of language ideology as including the interrelationship of language with individual and group action and behaviour in a social system (e.g. social life, workplace, education, policy processes and identity). I also understand language ideology as people's beliefs in and attitudes towards language, its use, users and cultural conceptions about language and its effect on people's communication, behaviour and policy processes. It also influences language uses, value, status, attitudes, policy processes and identities. I specifically analyse how language ideologies work in language policy processes, as discussed in the policy section in this chapter. I briefly discuss the concepts of discourse, language and power, which are closely related to language ideology in my research.

4.2. Discourse as a Signifying Social Practice

Discourse is understood as a "language in use, as a process which is socially situated" (Johnson, 2013, 152) and "a way of signifying a particular domain of social practice from a particular perspective" (Fairclough, 1995, cited in Wodak, 2006, 175). Discourse is a socially constructed idea or social practice that emerges from a particular point of view and influences people's social actions in an intended direction (Blommaert, 2005). It is 'the favored vehicle of ideology' since discourse assists in persuading people and get a desired outcome through discursive practice rather than using force (Fairclough, 2001, 8). A discourse that loses its power and influence over people's behaviour and practice is likely to lose its dominant position and be replaced by an emerging new one. So, taking discourse as an ideologically driven social construct, I use it to explore how

different levels and sites of discursive practices in the community, school and government institutions, shape language uses, policy processes and identities. I use the concept of discourse to analyse the dominant mother tongue discourse in the local language policy planning in Konso (Chapter 8).

Ideology, discourse and power are interconnected (Cooke and Simpson, 2012). In society and social organizations, ideology frames discourse in the way that discourse sustains power relations. However, different ideologies can generate multiple discourses in society and through power, are legitimised; people then take them for granted and behave accordingly (Fairclough, 2001). Those who have power construct discourse that supports their ideology and impose it on or use it to influence individuals or groups who are not in a position of power, using multiple strategies. Being shaped by ideology, discourse has the potential to signify individuals' and group's language uses, language policy, identities and behaviours towards a particular social change and purpose. An example in the Ethiopian context is the government's ethnolinguistic ideology that supports mother tongue education discourse as a means to maintain and promote language, identities and the rights of ethnic groups, which has helped to shape people's attitudes, language uses and policy. I take the above concept of discourse to specifically analyse my data in relation to minority and dominant language uses, language policy implementation and initiative and the ways in which people see language in relation to their ethnic identities.

As Wodak (2006) argues, discourse is instituted by and reflected in people's informal and formal language interactions and behaviours. This idea is useful in the analysis of my data on students' and the community's language uses in different domains. Blommaert (2005) asserts that discourse is created from a particular point of view and position and unequally shared by all members of a society. This is a space where power relations in the society exist; those individuals who generate, structure and impose a certain discourse upon others, have as their purpose to sustain power and marginalise others. This illustrates that individual and group behaviours and interactions in society depend upon power relations.

4.3. Language and Power Relations

Here, I conceptualise language beyond its instrumental role and in relation to its power, and how language uses among different social groupings bring about social inequalities. This is because

language is not only a means of communication but also constructs inequality in society through imbalanced power relations (Habermas, 1998, cited in Cao, 2011, xvi). As Harmon and Wilson (2006, 8) argue, language and power are intimately connected; language does not independently exist 'apart from society or culture but an integral part of it'. Rather, language is a means of 'negotiation, empowerment, resistance' and identity formation (Makoe, 2014, 654) and power as well. Power relations always exist among various social divisions, ethnic backgrounds, institutions, gender, age groups, etc. but are not limited to specific groups or institutions and 'are always relations of struggle' among different social groups who hold varied interests (Fairclough, 2001, 28). Similarly, Bourdieu (1991) argues that language is a means of power: the type of language individuals speak, the ways they speak and communicate messages to others, and the right to be heard or not, reflect ones' social positions in society. I take this idea to explore how the dynamics of language and power operate in a community, classroom and school, not discounting the role of human agency (which will be discussed in the section on language policy).

Moreover, as cited in Garcia, et.al. (2006, 36), "linguistic practices are symbolic capital that is distributed unequally in the linguistic community" (Bourdieu, 1991) and those who have dominant languages enjoy 'economic and social rewards' (Fishman, 1990). In contrast, those who lack access to dominant languages can be excluded from such benefits. This is a result of asymmetric power relations, which also characterises language as majority (dominant) or minority (Montrul, 2013). The dominant or majority languages are described as the languages that "…have official status and recognition, are used in the media, and are imparted in education" (ibid., 169). Whereas, a minority language is "the language of groups who are in the ethnolinguistic minority. Their language and culture may be a demographic minority or may be numerically significant in a population but still be considered a minority by virtue of low social, cultural, and political status" (Montrul, 2013, 169). Since I use the terms dominant and minority languages throughout my thesis, they are discussed more fully in Chapter 1.

As Hamel states, "the establishment of majority-minority language hierarchies is neither a natural process nor primarily even a linguist one. Rather, it is a historically, socially, and politically constructed process" (Hamel, 1997a, cited in May, 2006, 259-260). In other words, the status attached to dominant languages and the stigma attached to minority languages are a social construct, due to external factors rather than inherent to the language. Moreover, the distinction of

majority and minority languages does not consistently work in all places. The same language may be regarded as both a majority and a minority language, depending on the context (Montrul, 2013). This idea applies to the Ethiopian context in that regional official languages such as Afan Oromo, Tigrigna and Somaligna, which are dominant in their respective region, can be considered as minority languages in the federal city, Addis Ababa, since these languages do not have federal official status. I use the above ideas about dominant and minority languages and power relations to analyse why the Konso minority language has not been used in official domains and the rationale behind the local language policy initiative in the area (Chapter 8). In doing so, I also take into account the advice provided by scholars such as Fairclough (1995) and Woolard (1998) who say that educational policy research should consider the interconnections among language, ideology and power in order to alter the circumstances through empowering minority groups and addressing inequality (cited in Johnson, 2013).

4.4. Language Policy

As the main focus of my research is on language uses and the implementation of language policy processes, I conceptualise and discuss language policy to provide me with an analytical lens to explore my data. I specifically focus on the concept of language policy, and then analyse the policy intentions, processes, its influence on people's language use and the role of agency in policy processes. I explore these points in relation to interpreting and analysing my data and research questions as shown below.

4.4.1. Understanding Language Policy

As Rizvi and Lingard, (2010) state, a government uses policy to reform its system and attain aspired change; however, a policy does not show an inherent complexity of implementation and uncertainty of the future and guarantee realisation of its original intentions. Traditionally, when people think of the term 'policy', they relate it to government legislation or an official document or pronouncement that emanates from the government system (Johnson, 2013). However, as Schiffman and Spolsky argue, "Language policies exist across many different layers or levels, from official governmental law to the language practices of a family ..." (cited in Johnson, 2013, 7). Such an understanding of policy is useful not only to frame my research question in perceiving policy beyond its official features, but also to interrogate different views on policy in my research context. As stated above, policy is sometimes considered by teachers, officials and others, merely as government regulations and official documents in the Ethiopian context (e.g. a commonly stated

assertion by officials: 'We have a good policy but its implementation is not as good as the policy', which separates policy from practice).

Indeed, such a narrowly perceived notion of policy and experience does not help to frame the questions and analyse the data in this research. Rather, I take policy as "much more than a specific policy document ... policy is both process and product. … Policy involves the production of the text, the text itself, ongoing modifications to the text and processes of implementation into practice" (Taylor et.al., 1997 cited in Rizvi and Lingard, 2010, 5). This more complex notion of policy conceptualises the dynamic feature of policy, which involves planning, implementation, revisions and update based on new developments, and encounters during implementation and evaluation (ibid.). More importantly, I am guided by a comprehensive account of language policy provided by Johnson (2013) in consolidating the concepts of scholars in the field of language policy. He explains language policy as:

> Official regulations – often enacted in the form of written documents, intended to effect some change in the form, function, use or acquisition of language – which can influence economic, political, and educational opportunity; unofficial, covert, de facto, and implicit mechanisms, connected to language beliefs and practices, that have regulating power over language use and interaction within communities, workplaces, and schools; not just products but processes – "policy" as a verb, not a noun – that are derived by a diversity of language policy agents across multiple layers of policy creation, interpretation, appropriation, and instantiation; and policy texts and discourses across multiple contexts and layers of policy activity, which are influenced by the ideologies and discourses unique to that context. (Johnson, 2013, 9).

Language policy as defined above considers its dynamic feature (as a verb), and underlines the goals that policy envisages and its potential influence on both the structure of languages and their social dimensions and use, value and status, through suggesting and regulating which language is to be used in public domains, including schooling. Johnson also emphasises the context and purpose, the particular kind of ideology and discourses, within which language policy is shaped, and the active roles of multilevel policy agents who take part in policy processes. Johnson's conceptualization (2013) has helped to analyse my research questions in relation to language policy processes. I use it in particular in Chapter 7, which focuses on language policy and practice in the classroom and Chapter 8, which focuses on a local language policy initiative in Konso

Woreda. Drawing on his comprehensive account of language policy, I discuss language policy processes in the next section.

4.4.2. Language Policy Processes

Policy processes refer to the "…policy agenda [setting], the construction of policy text, its implementation and sometimes evaluation" (Rizvi and Lingard, 2010, 14). Drawing on this idea, language policy processes in my research focus on the views and decisions made on local language policy planning along with the setting of goals, the creation of the policy document and the implementation of the language-in-education policy in primary school. In such policy processes, language policy involves the creation and enacting of policy that intends "to prescribe, or influence, the language(s)…that will be used and the purposes for which they will be used" (Wiley, 1996, 107-108). This shows the decision on and formulation of language policy to ascribe the official use of language(s) for public domains. In public spheres, language policy can be made and implemented at different levels (Ricento, 2006). For instance, various domains such as home, workplace, community and education, "all are sites where language policies determine or influence what language(s) we will speak, whether our language is "good/acceptable" or 'bad/unacceptable" for particular purposes, including careers, marriage, social advancement, and so on" (ibid, 21). However, the decision on which language to use in official domains, including education, reflects the power relations among different language, social, political and economic backgrounds (Hornberger, 2006).

Language policy and planning can take place "at all levels of decision making about languages …, as small as individuals and families, making decisions about the language to be used by individuals, at home, in public spaces, as well as in larger entities, such as schools…" (Shohamy, 2006, 48). My research looks at language policy at school level and in the community (Woreda) and its interconnections with multilayer policies at zonal, regional and federal levels. In relation to multilayered policies, Ricento and Hornberger (1996, 409) suggest that:

> In language planning and policy, at the outer layers of the onion are the broad language policy objectives articulated in legislation or high court rulings at the national level, which may then be operationalized in regulations and guidelines; these guidelines are then interpreted and implemented in institutional settings, which are composed of diverse, situated contexts (e.g., schools, businesses, government offices); in each of these contexts, individuals from diverse

backgrounds, experiences, and communities interact. (Ricento and Hornberger 1996, 409).

In my research too, there is an interrelationship between local language policy planning and practice and middle and higher level language policies. I use this conceptualization to analyse the federal level language policy (Federal Education and Training Policy) and legislation (Federal Constitution) that state the right of ethnic groups to learn in their languages at primary school. I look at and how this assertion is interpreted and implemented in various ways at different levels, regional education bureau, zonal education department, Woreda education office and school (see Chapter 7 and Chapter 8).

Moreover, policy decisions and planning can be undertaken through top-down or bottom-up approaches (Johnson, 2013b). However, "the terms top-down and bottom-up are relative, depending on who is doing the creating and who is doing the interpreting and appropriating" (ibid., 10). For instance, in relation to my research context, the Woreda/district level policy planning can be both top-down and bottom-up, depending upon our reference; it is a bottom-up approach in the framework of the regional and federal government systems but top-down in relation to the school (ibid.). Such policy decision-making and planning approaches also imply an imposition of policy from above or the centre, in contrast to an approach that involves the wider engagement of policy stakeholders, including local community. Using this framework, I explore the decision-making and planning of the local language policy initiative in Konso Woreda (see Chapter 8).

4.4.3. Language Policy Intentions

Here, I introduce three approaches to policy planning: status planning and corpus planning (Wiley, 1996, 108), and acquisition planning as (Cooper 1989, cited in Johnson and Ricento, 2013), differentiated by their aims/intentions. Status planning is about the uses of language; corpus planning is about the language itself and acquisition planning considers the users of a language (Ricento and Hornberger 1996, 403). Regarding the aims of these approaches, status planning deals with "…the official recognition which governments attach to various languages, especially in the case of minority languages, and to authoritative attempts to extend or restrict language use in various contexts" (Wiley, 1996). It is about facilitating a change in the status and use of a language for different purposes rather than changes to the form of a language. For instance, the decision to use a language as the medium of instruction or a language as a subject in education

(ibid.). I apply this concept to explore how and why the local language policy initiative aims to promote the status of the Konso language, Affa Konso, mainly used as an oral language, as a minority language for use in education system. This initiative has required choosing a script and developing an orthography for Affa Konso and so experts in this area have been brought in.

By contrast, corpus planning concerns the "selection and codification, as in the writing of grammars and standardized of spelling" (Bright, 1992 cited in Wiley, 1996, 108). It involves "the creation of new forms, the modification of old ones, or the selection from alternative forms in a spoken or written code" (Cooper, 1989, 31). This policy planning approach is about changing linguistic forms to make language appropriate for the purposes of writing, developing new scripts, word formation and enrichment, the teaching-learning process, and curriculum development. The process and dynamics of corpus planning has been central to the Konso language policy initiative as it has involved the codification of an oral language for official use, including education (see Chapter 8).

The third approach to language policy planning is acquisition planning, which deals with "issues in language education (which languages are taught, curricula, assessment, teacher training, etc.)" (Brown, 2015, 172). Its aim is to design a language (s) for educational purposes to increase the users or uses of that language (Johnson and Ricento, 2013) and to devise methods that will help to impart a certain language(s) in school (e.g. how to teach Amharic or English as a second language). While corpus planning is about making and standardizing a language's form to be used for education and other official purposes, acquisition planning is about the actual process of how to acquire the language in an educational setting and working on related materials like training and curriculum that will facilitate language development. Hence, where there is a need to adopt all these policy approaches, the process is complex and requires experts from multiple fields. I apply these three language policy planning components to analyse the local language policy initiative in Konso Woreda. I consider how decisions were made and by whom and who participated through the policy planning processes.

I also take Ruiz's (1984) taxonomy of attitudes towards language in policy-making contexts: language-as-problem, language-as-right and language-as-resource (cited in Ricento, 2013) to analyse the attitudes of the policy makers involved in this initiative. As explained by Ruiz (1984,

in Ricento and Hornberger, 1996, 404), these attitudes comprise "language and its role, and [toward] languages and their role in society". A language-as-a problem orientation perceives minority languages as problems as they are perceived as obstacles to educational achievement and therefore social mobility (ibid.). This idea is useful in analysing how people view minority and dominant languages in education system as mediums of instruction (see Chapter 8). A language-as-a right orientation takes the minority language as a "basic human and civil right for their speakers" (ibid.). This orientation is being promoted in Ethiopia through its education policy, other legal frameworks (e.g. federal and regional constitutions) and the media. I use this concept to discuss how this right is being realised in a minority language context in Konso and how it draws on the local language policy initiative in promoting the Konso language for official uses. The language-as-a resource orientation sees minority languages "as resources not for their speakers, but for society as a whole…" (ibid.). This concept has a direct influence on the promotion of minority languages and on the way tensions between majority and minority communities are addressed and resolved through 'cooperative language planning' (Ruiz, 1984, cited in Ricento, 2013, 531) among diverse language background individuals and groups. I apply this idea to my research to explore how minority and dominant languages are viewed in the Konso community and promoted in local and multilayered policy planning (Chapter 8) and practised in the school and the classroom (Chapter 7).

4.4.4. Ideology and Power in Language Policy Processes

Language policy planning involves not only technical decisions but is also politically and ideologically driven. In this regard, Ricento (2007b, 7) argues that "language policies can never be properly understood or analysed as free-standing document or practice" unless the role of ideology in language policy is critically examined (cited in Johnson and Ricento, 2013). Language ideology determines 'what is and is not possible' in language policy (Ricento, 2006, 8). For instance, a standard language ideology informs policy about which language is "…more "correct," "logical" and "efficient" in communicative terms than other varieties" (Ricento, 2013, 530). Language ideologies do not only frame, are embedded in and underpin language policy, but also shape the implementation of policy, based on the kind of language ideologies the practitioners hold (Johnson, 2013). I use this idea to explore the nature of teachers' language ideologies that have shaped the language-in-education policy implementation in classrooms. I investigate which language ideologies have assisted in the planning of the local language policy in Konso Woreda

and multilayered policies. Analysing the ideology that is embedded in the language policy in my research context also gives me insights into the power relations in the community and beyond, in the language uses and in how language policy has served as a means of gaining or sustaining or challenging power. I also link my earlier discussion about language ideology to its relationship with language use and education (Woolard, 1998) to analyse policy-related research data and questions.

With regard to the power of language policies, Tollefson, (1991, cited by Johnson, 2013, 6) points out that "Language policy is one mechanism by which dominant groups establish hegemony in language use". Language policy plays its part in suppressing the interest of the minority groups and favoring that of the dominant ones through being ideologically regulated and instituted in the policy (Ricento, 2006). Planning for one language in a multilingual environment influences the others, particularly minority groups (Hornberger, 2006). I relate this notion to how the current language-in education policy along with its dominant languages (Amharic and English) has influenced the minority language, Affa Konso speakers.

The school system also plays a role in establishing a consensus on the status and value of a language (Wiley, 1996) and "…the educational choices we make can have a direct impact on the opportunities, participation, and potential contributions of language and minority learners" (Hornberger, 1996, 461). Language choices can never be 'free' (McCarty, 2011, 9) since individuals have limitations in which language(s) they would like to learn, due to different social and economic factors (Ricento, 2013). The language used in school can determine not only the active participation of learners in the teaching-learning process but also their learning outcomes and contribution to their own individual and societal development as well. However, education does not have a linear function in sustaining the interest of dominant groups. As Tollefson (2006, 43-44) argues, it is "the processes by which social inequality is produced and sustained, and the struggle to reduce inequality to bring about greater forms of social justice". I take into account the concept of power relations in the education system by examining the diverse roles played by the school in sustaining and challenging the official language-in-education policy. This also helps in understanding the power relations among different language background students in the classroom and school (Chapter 7). As Ricento (2013) argues, individuals who speak nonstandard language

varieties are considered to be less able, achieve less academically and eventually are less successful in their life.

Johnson (2013) has stated that when language policy is planned to support minority and indigenous languages, it can have a productive impact in promoting them. I found this argument illuminating for understanding and analysing the different roles of education and language policy in Konso society. However, language policy can have both constructive and adverse effects, promoting as well as downgrading the minority language. Among its constructive roles, a language policy can be an essential mechanism for 'the promotion, maintenance, and revitalization of minority and indigenous languages' (Johnson, 2013, 8). In this case, it is essential to be aware of the various agents and the different language ideologies engaged in policy processes at different levels (Johnson, 2013b, 53).

4.4.5. Agency in Language Policy Processes

In the language policy process, multiple agents can play significant roles at different levels, from policy creation through to implementation and evaluation. For instance, at grassroots level, schools are a space of "language policy creation, interpretation, appropriation, and instantiation" (Johnson, 2013b, 53). Consequently, practitioners can be considered as "policy makers or potential makers of policy of schooling system, policy is also mediated by the leadership practices within the school, as well as by the ways teachers interpret that policy and translate it into practice" (Bell and Stevenson, 2006, cited in Rizvi and Lingard, 2010, 5-6). Here, the different actors in school, i.e. the teachers, head teachers, students and others, have their own voices and strategies in policy enactment, with both convergences and variations in their strategies. In addressing my research questions, I consider the diverse responses these different agents had to the language-in-education policy planning and implementation at school and community levels.

Moreover, Hornberger (2002, cited in Johnson, 2010) argues that in the implementation of multilingual education policy, educational practitioners can take advantage of the local policy space. It is a space that provides practitioners an opportunity to understand the official language policy and implement it in the local context of their educational practices and classrooms (Johnson 2010). Even though institutional structures constrain practitioners' agency (Horner and Bellamy, 2016, 322), teachers take their positions to put the official language policy into practice in their own strategies. Teachers are "the 'final arbiters' in shaping how language policies get appropriated

in classrooms" (Menken, 2008, cited in Stephens and Johnson, 2015, 41), and are placed at "the heart of language policy (at the centre of the onion)" (Ricento and Hornberger, 1996, 417). Moreover, teachers are "not uncritical bystanders passively acquiescent of the state practice; in their own ways, they resist and contest the state policy…" (Johnson, 2013, 99). This suggests that the practitioners (e.g. teachers or other professionals) are not simply passive channel of watered-down policies from the higher level policy makers, but have the potential and the opportunity to play their part in the process of policy formation, negotiation and implementation. I apply this idea of teachers and students having agency in terms of their response to the policy process, to analyse how they interact in the teaching-learning process of the classroom and how the official language policy is sustained, mediated, complemented, interpreted and challenged in the classroom, school and community.

4.4.6. Some International Experiences on Languages Policy and Uses in School in South Africa, Nigeria and Kenya

In this section, I discuss the language policy and use in schools of the broader region, particularly in South Africa, Nigeria and Kenya where there is a relatively similar sociolinguistic environment (e.g. ethnic and language diversities) to Ethiopia. I relate this international experience with the context of Ethiopia language policy and language uses in school settings. I look at how colonialism continued to influence the language policy and use of African countries and the complexity of using mother tongue education in these multilingual countries. As Bamgbose (1991, 1) argues, the question of language in Africa "arises from the fact that not only are most of the countries multilingual, [but] the colonial experience has led to the importation of foreign official languages which have taken on the roles of national communication, administration and medium of education". Indeed, without considering the colonial experience, understanding the current language policies and language uses in the education system of African countries seems difficult.

Exploring colonial influence on language uses: Although Ethiopia had no direct colonial experience, its diplomatic relationship with the British government in 1940s and the global power of English influenced the country to use English as the medium of instruction in its education system (since 1941 at different levels of education system, see Chapter 2). I explore here how colonialism influenced the language uses in South Africa, Nigeria and Kenya in relation to Ethiopia. As Hickling-Hudson, et.al (2004, 2) states, the "philosophical, political, economic and

sociocultural consequences" of colonialism have continued to influence the language use of colonised countries even today. At that time, the language policies determined "a) the level of entrenchment of the colonial language and, b) the extent to which indigenous languages were tolerated and promoted in the education system" (Orekan, 2010, 19). After independence (mainly in 1950s and 1960s), some endeavours were undertaken in Africa in moving "the direction of extending the use of indigenous languages as media of instruction beyond the third year of primary schooling" (Bamgbose, 1991, 84). However, in most cases, the colonial languages were "positioned as the languages of economic success and high levels of education" (Simpson, 2008, 3). For instance, English was considered as an 'ethnically neutral language' to take the position of official language and lingua franca and remained as the major language of communication (Orekan, 2010, 25). Similarly, in Ethiopia English is the language of power and opportunity and given a due consideration in the federal education policy as the language of global communication, science and technology (FDRE, 1994). In SNNPR, though it is not related to colonialism, Amharic (which is not the language of any ethnic group in SNNPR) was taken as an official language due to its dominant status and the challenge of choosing one or more languages among 56 ethnic languages of the region.

Although English takes a dominant position as an official language in South Africa, Nigeria and Kenya, there are African indigenous languages such as Kiswahili in Kenya and Hausa, Igbo, Yoruba in Nigeria and IsiNdebele, IsiXhosa, IsiZulu and siSwati, Sesotho, Sepedi, Setswana, Tshivenda, Xitsonga in South Africa that are used as major and official languages. By contrast, in the Ethiopia context, no foreign language has an official status and there is no single legitimised national official language(s) that is used across the country; rather Amharic is the working language at federal government and each region has the right to decide their regional official languages (e.g. Tigrigna in Tigray, Afan Oromo in Oromia and Somaligna in Ethiopian Somali) within their geographic scope. These colonised countries are similar in using a colonial language as the official language with other dominant indigenous languages which also negatively influence the use of minority languages in public domains.

Language-in-education policy: With regard to language-in-education policy, the South Africa and Kenya policies recognise the use of mother tongue as the medium of instruction in the first three years of primary education and transfer to English medium at grade 4 which is a common

characteristic of South Africa and Kenya. By contrast, the Nigerian language-in-education policy acknowledges that the mother tongue should be used as the medium of instruction at primary level and English is to be used in secondary education. This policy, to some extent, aligns with the Ethiopian education and training policy (FDRE, 1994) that recognises the use of mother tongue as the medium of primary education (grades 1-8) and transfer to English medium at grade 9 (a start of secondary education). However, what is common to South Africa, Nigeria, Kenya and Ethiopia is that their language-in-education policies have not been implemented as the policy documents intended. These countries including Ethiopia (though Ethiopia had no colonial history) also provided a significant position for English in their education system. This experience shows that the language choice for education does not necessarily relate with the colonial experience, but the high value and power of English as an international language can influence the language policy and use in schools. The power of English not only influences the use of minority languages in school and other public domains but also the use of dominant indigenous languages such as Kiswahili and Amharic.

The complexities of mother tongue education: The other important point is around mother tongue education as a complex and a contested issue in multilingual countries. For instance, although the South Africa language-in-education policy promoted multilingualism (e.g. mother tongue and a second language), this policy provision had been surrounded by many uncertainties and challenges, such as the lack of a developed academic literature in indigenous languages (Mesthrie, 2006). Similarly, in Nigeria most of the indigenous languages have no "orthography, and consequently, no written literature" (Adegbija, 2004, 190). This experience also applies to the Ethiopian context where most of the minority languages are oral languages and have no written materials. In relation to acquiring the language of power and succeeding in their livelihood and education, the majority of South African children require to learn in English and want to be fluent in either English or Afrikaans (the second dominant language in South Africa) (Taylor and Fintel, 2016). This experience was also common in Nigeria, Kenya and Ethiopia where students wanted to learn English for success and global communication. In Kenya, the government's minimal commitment and support to mother tongue education (e.g. setting examination in mother tongue and following up its practice) and attitudes of parents and teachers to indigenous languages are among the major challenges to use indigenous languages in education system (Mose, 2017); which is also shared by South Africa, Nigeria and Ethiopia. Hence, viewing minority languages as a

problem for individuals' social and economic mobility in the above African countries and the power of English make the implementation of mother tongue education more complex.

4.5. Conceptualizing of Identity

In this section, I discuss the concept of identity, since one of my research questions asks how members of the community view language in relation to ethnic identities. As stated in the introduction of this chapter, I take a poststructuralist approach to both languages and identities, as multiple and social processes. Adopting this approach provides an analytical tool with which to conceptualise the relationship of language and identity (Baxter, 2016) and language policy. It also gives an insight "about how identities are conceived, constructed and enacted in the modern world" (Lyotard, 1984, cited in Baxter 2016, 34) and helps to explore how identities are related with language and language policy. However, there are multiple and opposing views on identity and the link between 'language, meaning and identity' (Baxter, 2016, 34). These various perceptions significantly affect how identity is defined and addressed by researchers (Risager and Darvin, 2015). Considering the importance of understanding conceptual variations, I use different ideas about identities to link and discuss people's views on identities and their interrelationships with languages and language policy processes.

Taking a poststructuralist perspective, Hall (1996, 3) argues that identity "does not signal that stable core of the self, unfolding from beginning to end through all the vicissitudes of history without change; the bit of the self which remains always-already 'the same', identical to itself across time" but rather, "identities are never unified and, in late modern times, increasingly fragmented and fractured; never singular but multiply constructed across different, often intersecting and antagonistic discourses, practices and positions" (ibid., 4). For him, identities do not remain the same from moment to moment and throughout our life. Instead, identities are constructed and deconstructed according to context and time, along with the possibility of overlapping and contradiction among the multiplicity of identities. His view also contests the essentialists' stance who perceives identity as "rigidly fixed and exist[ing] outside of action: product rather than process" (Omoniyi and White, 2006, 17) and disregards dynamic individuals and societal processes and changes. I adopt Hall's (1996) notion of identities as multiple, changing and continually constructed as a useful analytic approach to understanding and examining my sub-research question 2 that explores how members of the community view language in relation to

ethnic identities. However, the changing aspect of identity does not suggest or is synonymous to identity as a baseless wish that someone unreasonably claims it. But it is about how we ascribe identity to ourselves and are also ascribed by others (Omoniyi, 2006).

Building upon Hall's (1996) notion of identity and through robustly critiquing the essentialist stance on identity, Omoniyi (2006) summarises how identity is understood and works in the ever-changing social world. He asserts that "[Essentialists] are incapable of adequately accommodating the creativity that may mark the reality of the moment of identification in the future…; they do not often recognise identity as constructed and co-constructed; …identity is other-ascribed, ascribed to a group/community…" (Omoniyi, 2006, 17). His account emphasises the tension and incompatibility of the static aspect of identity with current and future social worlds that are characterised by uncertainty and transformation. This idea also disregards the thinking of identity as immune to change and external influence, organic and singular. Rather, identity is taken "as fluid and that the individual is able to move in and out of identity categories by varying their acts in response to demands and needs within particular moments of identification" (ibid, 18). Omoniyi's idea of plural identities accommodates social realities on the ground such as social mobility, interactions, intercultural and multilingual features of local, national and global settings. It also recognises, "multiple positioning, multiple selves and challenges binary identity oppositions…" (Omoniyi, 2006, 18). This is because individuals "change constantly in the course of their lives, be it physically, psychologically or socially" (Wodak et. al., 2009, 11). Although my theoretical stance is poststructuralist, I also see the essentialist concept of identity reflected in people's views about the permanency of language and identity in my research context. For instance, I show how students, teachers, parents and others perceive ethnic identities and relate their ethnicity and second languages with their identities (see Chapter 6). Having explored the idea of identities in this section, I now discuss the concept of ethnic identities in relation to language and its importance in my theoretical framework.

4.5.1. Understanding Ethnic Identities

Drawing on the poststructuralist and essentialist perspectives of identities, I now turn to ethnic identities, central to understanding and analysing sub-research question 2, how members of the community view language in relation to their ethnic identities. Although my theoretical stance aligns with the poststructuralist notion of identity, in that I see it as multiple and changing, I found the essentialist perspective of identity helpful in making sense of my data. Ethnic identity is

considered as an important part of social identity, reflecting how people express themselves with reference to ethnicity (Phinney, 1990, cited in Feitosa, 2017, 1129). Ethnic identity as a form of social identity, is explained as "*Part* of an individual's self-concept, which derives from his [or her] knowledge of his [or her] membership of a social group (or groups) together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership" (Tajfel, 1981, 255). Here, as part of a social identity, ethnic identity involves relatively common strands that are shared by group members, and an emotional attachment that connects their relationships.

In line with an essentialist view, ethnic identities are described as 'biologically and culturally stable identities' (Spencer, 2006, 46), and "developed from certain 'givens' of social existence, including blood and kin connections, religion, language (even dialect) and custom" (Geertz, 1973, cited in Spencer, 2006, 77). Ethnic identity is not believed to be constructed through the course of an individuals' life but is pre-established at birth (Berghe, 1978 cited in Song, 2003). This essentialised idea of ethnic identity affords its permanence and predetermination, defining a confined boundary that individuals and groups belong to without choice (Lytra, 2016). I use this concept to examine how members of the community perceive their ethnic identity as fixed (in Chapter 6). This also helps me to relate this notion of ethnic identity with the relationship between language and ethnic identity, my sub-research question 2. For instance, I discuss how members of the Konso community see their ethnic languages and second languages in relation to their identity.

In contrast to this perspective, poststructuralists conceive of ethnic identities as socially constructed rather than a predetermined trait. From this perspective, ethnic identities although presented as natural, they are "social constructs, relational and negotiable…Ethnic identity [is] recognised as historically, contextually [and] socially constructed in discourse" (Lytra, 2016, 133). How people construct their ethnic identity through social processes and discourses depends upon time and space rather than a 'naturally' endowed characteristics. The idea of identities "… constructed within, not outside, discourse… produced in specific discursive formations and practices, by specific enunciative strategies" (Hall, 1996, 4) can be applied to ethnic identity. Ethnic identity is not something that exists out there, that individuals inherit without actively participating in the process of shaping it. As Woodward (2004) argues, individuals take different identities through engaging in different processes in the social world.

Just as time and place in which individuals operate are essential for identity modification and construction, the environment in which people reside, the interaction with themselves and others, the external influence like social, cultural, economic and educational factors influence identity negotiation and formation. Similarly, children construct their ethnic identity through interaction in the social system. Moreover, individuals and groups negotiate and shape their ethnic identity within a social context shaped by specific economic and political circumstances (Song, 2003, 31). In this sense, Song sees them as having agency: "By emphasizing the negotiation and assertion of ethnic identity… ethnic minority people are active agents who participate in the shaping of their ethnic identities" (ibid, 19). In the Ethiopian context, Wondwosen and Mulugata (2014, 267) in their study of the ethnic groups, Kussume and Mashile, found that people were initially members of the Konso ethnic group but who then migrated from Konso Woreda/district to adjacent areas and formed their own ethnic identities. This suggests that ethnic identity and boundaries are constructed "not only by a once-and-for-all recruitment but continual expression and validation" (Barth, 1969, 15) through time and place. It is also unlikely that the ethnic identity of a particular ethnic group remains the same through the generations. In this research, following the poststructuralist perspective, I take ethnic identity as a social construct and shaped through social processes and practices rather than static to explore how ethnic identity is viewed and shaped by members of the community and explore its relationship with language.

4.5.2. The Relationship of Language and Ethnic Identities

As Wodak (2012, 216) asserts, "languages and using language manifest 'who we are', and we define reality … through our language and linguistic behaviour". Language expresses individual identity and the communicative behaviour, and the meaning and interpretation that others draw from individuals' utterances and characteristics, indicate their identity (Joseph, 2016). However, the direct link of a certain language with a particular ethnic identity has been contested by many scholars. For instance, May (2012, 135) argues that "language may not be intrinsically valuable in itself – it is clearly not primordial– but it does still have strong and felt associations with ethnic and national identity". This assertion suggests the non-hereditary aspect of language as well as its absence of inherent value. It is people who attach value to language and use it for different purposes. May (2012, 134) further says that "Language may be a salient marker of ethnic identity in one instance but not in another. While a specific language may well be identified as a significant cultural marker of a particular ethnic group, there is no inevitable correspondence between

language and ethnicity". Language can be taken as one of the important markers of ethnic identity; however, the one-to-one equation of language and ethnic identity or ethnicity does not consistently work. Furthermore, a specific language is not automatically linked with a certain ethnic identity at individual or group levels. This is because different ethnic groups can use the same language as their main language, without affecting their discrete ethnic identities (ibid) since language is not 'a marker of inherited ethnic identity' (Lytra, 2016, 133). There are also individuals and communities who are bilinguals. These assertions challenge the essentialist notion of language and ethnic identity as "fixed and bounded categories [pre-imposed] on individuals and groups in a given interaction" (ibid., 133), emphasizing the relationship between ethnicity and language as a social process. How members of the Konso community understood language and related it to ethnic identity (see Chapter 6) was examined through this theoretical lens.

Even when the use of language is limited, it also carries symbolic meaning, as an identity marker, as Edwards argues: "a language that has lost most or all of its communicative value because of language shift can nevertheless retain something of its value for a long time. … it is the symbolic charge that language carries that makes it such an important component in individual and group identity" (Edwards, 2009, 3-4). This suggests that a language can have symbolic value regardless of its current use, functional value and prestige in society. So where individuals or groups no longer use their own languages for communicative purposes due to social or political reasons, its symbolic value can remain intact and still reflect an individual or group's identity. Although this seems to be underpinned by an essentialist view, it is relevant to my field data and the perspectives of my research participants in terms of the link between language and ethnic identity (in Chapter 6). A highly essentialised notion of language and ethnic identity is also apparent in official documents (e.g. federal and regional constitutions), and generally in political and educational discourses, and in the media. In all these, individuals and groups are encouraged to frame a one-to-one equation between language and ethnic identity.

In contrast, Lytra (2016, 134) suggests that instead of taking language as an essence of ethnic identity, it can be used to 'distinguish and signal ethnic affiliation' although as Rampton (1990 cited in Chowdhury, 2016, 479) points out, "we cannot assume that just because a language is inherited that there is a strong affiliation to it…language affiliation is influenced by social contexts and by societal and governmental discourses about heritage languages" and other languages as

well. According to Rampton, a speaker's attachment to different languages varies depending upon which language(s) they prefer and use as a result of external influences (cited in Chowdhury, 2016). People can also have multiple affiliations to languages in relation to their ethnic group, wider communication, education, profession, economic activities, religion, family, etc. I use this concept to explore how members of the Konso community relate to and value the languages they speak.

4.6. Conclusion

I have presented a theoretical framework that enables me to explore language uses and language policy processes and identities in relation to language. My overall theoretical stance aligns with a poststructuralist approach that sees language, identities and language policy as constructed in and through social processes rather than static and inherited. Viewing language use as a fluid and social process, identities as plural, constructed and shaped through the active engagement of individuals and language policy as a process has enabled me to understand and explore my research questions. My framework also provides an epistemological account through which to perceive and understand the social world in relation to multiple social realities and people's perspectives. In this account, knowledge is subjective and is contextually and continually constructed (Baxter, 2016). I also use the concept of language ideology as an analytical tool to explore language uses (including language choice, value, status and attitude) and how language uses are embedded in and influenced by ideologies. Similarly, the ideological dimensions of language underpin my analysis of the implementation of language policy processes and identities. Additionally, I see discourse and power relations as closely related with ideology and as useful concepts with which to analyse how language uses, language policy and identities are influenced by them. I apply these concepts to explore how diverse discourses and power relations operate among different social groups, between individuals with different language backgrounds and the nature of their agency. I use the concept of agency to understand and analyse how teachers and students translated the official language policy in the classroom and in school, and how others (e.g. officials) responded to policy planning at different levels. These concepts (language ideology, discourse, power and agency) also help to elucidate the dynamics behind changing language policy processes.

Moreover, I consider language policy as a text, a multilevel process and practice that influences the 'structure, function, use, or acquisition of language' (Johnson, 2013, 9). I apply this concept to explore the dynamic aspect of language policy planning and implementation at school and

community levels, along with how they intersect with zonal, regional and federal level policies. Building upon this, I have discussed how language policy approaches (status planning, corpus planning and acquisition planning) helped to explore local language policy processes. Using a poststructuralist perspective of identity as multiple and transforming in time and place (Hall, 1996), I explore how ethnic identity was viewed and related with different languages (e.g. ethnic language and second languages). This helped me to understand the way that ethnic identity has been historically and politically defined in Ethiopia and continues to structure and shape language choice and value and language policy processes.

Chapter Five: 'Affa Konso: A Language That Can Help to Cross a River'

The purpose of this chapter is to explore a Karat, Konso community's language uses in different domains and for multiple purposes, including their attitudes and related value assignments to languages. I have placed this chapter at the beginning of my empirical data analysis due to its wide-ranging and critical exploration of this community's language uses in diverse contexts such as families and workplace, and economic, religious and political environments. Thus chapter 5 provides an analytic foundation upon which I build the discussion and arguments about language and identities (Chapter 6), language uses and language policies processes in school (Chapter 7) and language planning in the community (Chapter 8).

This chapter addresses sub-research question 1: how do members of a minority ethnic community use different languages in multiple domains? In order to address this question, I investigate, how and why language uses, values and attitudes differ in different contexts in this specific Konso community, Karat town. I use a traditional proverb that frames minority languages as languages that 'Cannot Help to Cross a River' as my starting point to discuss the views of students, students' parents, teachers, officials and others, on language uses, values and attitudes. I focus on two cases because of their contrasting use of language in the family: Case 1: Mahider and her family predominantly use Amharic in the home while in Case 2: Dawit and his family use Affa Konso and some Amharic. The data I collected from them is supplemented by other research participants' views and my observation.

5.1. Does Affa Konso Help to Cross a River?

The proverb, 'A minority language: A language that cannot help to cross a river' was used by a Karat school official to explain the use, attitude and value of dominant and minority languages. In fact, many other respondents used this proverb to justify their arguments about the scope of, value, status and attitude to language. Here, the term 'river' refers to the boundary of a certain language speech community (e.g. the Affa Konso speaking community) and the phrase 'crossing a river' shows the potential to move beyond such a boundary. The proverb is based on the perceived low status minority languages have and their limited role outside their speakers' communities and localities. The school official explained that Affa Konso was rarely used outside the Konso Woreda except among members of the in-language group (members of the Konso ethnic group who speak Affa Konso).

I refer to this proverb to capture the different respondents' views on Affa Konso. Although the proverb, 'Minority language: A language that cannot help to cross a river' has negative connotations in its literal meaning, by suggesting the limits of minority languages, my aim is not to compare and judge the Konso language in terms of its relevance and value compared to other languages. Rather, I use it to probe the different values assigned to it by different members of the community. Moreover, in analysing the value of Affa Konso within its geographic scope or speech community, I extend the metaphor of the river to the idea of there being more than one river and different ways to cross a river (at least there are two possibilities to cross a river, depending upon where you are). Within every community, different languages may help to cross different rivers - or boundaries. I wanted to identify the specific 'rivers' in the Konso community that Affa Konso can help to cross and see the proverb in a positive sense. Through an analysis of the two family cases, I look at the meaning of the proverb in its different dimensions, beyond its geographic scope.

Case 1: Mahider and her family: Mahider is a 14 year girl and attends grade 8 in Karat primary school. Her family live in Karat town around 'Kebele' 02, the so-called 'Millennium' area[11]. Her father is a health professional whose family own a small private clinic and local guesthouse. Her mother attended primary education up to grade 5 but dropped out because of early marriage about twenty years ago. Both Mahider's parents belong to the Konso ethnic group and come from a rural background. However, they have now settled in Karat town and earn their living and own a business in the town. I interviewed both Mahider and her mother, Almaz, at Karat primary school.

Case 2: Dawit and his family: Dawit is a 16 year boy who is also in grade 8 in the same school as Mahider. His family live in Karat town around the open air market area. They are a large family, 8 members. His father, Karafo is a retired civil servant and his mother is a housewife who is also engaged in a local business. I asked them about their views on language, its use, value, language-in-education policy and identities. I also got the chance to visit the family as I interviewed the father in their home, and observed their language use in a family setting. These two cases were chosen not only because they provide differing language experiences and perspectives on language, but because of their representativeness of the different groups of families and students in my example school as Affa Konso and Amharic speaker students, and Amharic speaker

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[11] Note: In my empirical chapters, I use the present tense to take the reader into my ethnographic fieldwork unless reference is being made to periods before my field.

students. I also refer back to these cases in later chapters to discuss identities and language uses and policy processes where appropriate.

In relation to its original meaning of the proverb, Mahider (case 1) explained that:

> Language helps for communication, to express ideas, clarify and transmit our ideas for others. It is also important for learning and running education…I speak mainly Amharic and some English as part of my schooling and listen to a little Konsigna (Affa Konso)…Konsigna is used only in the Konso Woreda. If children only speak Konsigna, they will have a problem of communicating with other community members out of the Konso Woreda. It will affect their lives when they grow up (Mahider, grade 8 student).

Mahider's views about Affa Konso aligns with the literal concept of 'minority language: a language that cannot help to cross a river', as it suggests the limited scope a minority language offers to its speakers. In this view, minority language speakers are confined by the minority language, both geographically and in terms of children's future mobility and livelihoods. Mahider also alludes to the value of the dominant languages, Amharic and English, for academic purposes, given that in her eyes, Affa Konso has no official status in the education system. Thus learning in a minority language such as Affa Konso, for Mahider was a problem rather than a resource for students, due to what she believed to be its narrow scope. Her attitude towards Affa Konso had not helped her to acquire the language of the Konso ethnic group as her mother tongue or second language. Rather, she developed Amharic as her mother tongue, and I will discuss this in-depth later in relation to families' language uses. Similarly, Simegne (a teacher) explained that, "The Konso language does not follow the Konso people or they rarely use it when travelling outside the Konso Woreda; for example, to the regional city, 'Hawassa' or Addis Ababa". This belief reflects the low value assigned to, and narrow scope of, a minority language, which is assumed to serve only the ethnic community in its specific locality. It also excludes the potential for a minority language to function for official purposes.

A local hotel waitress who had lived more than a year in Karat town, echoed this perspective:

> I will not use Affa Konso when I leave the Konso Woreda. If I go to
> the next big town, 'Arba Minch' [95 KMs away from Konso], I will
> use Amharic to communicate with people, get job in hotel and doing
> some individual business'. (Belaynesh, a waitress in local hotel).

According to Belaynesh, the Konso language could not help her to communicate with people or open up employment opportunities in the informal economic sector, such as in local hotels, shops

or domestic work, outside the Konso Woreda. As Mahider, she attached limited value to Affa Konso and therefore was not motivated to put any effort into learning and developing the language while she was there. Hence, Mahider's (a student), Semegne's (a teacher) and Belaynesh's attitudes to Affa Konso suggest that Affa Konso does not 'help to cross a river' due to its low value outside the Konso community.

Dawit (case 2) offers a different perspective:

> All languages are equal that one is not superior or inferior to the other. The speakers of different languages should respect each other. But, language differs in use and value. Affa Konso is the language of communication for the Konso community. Amharic is the working language of the Woreda, but Affa Konso is used to translate Amharic for the rural community to understand the message whenever they face a language barrier in government offices (e.g. in clinic), etc. (Dawit, grade 8 student).

While recognizing that languages have different values and uses, Dawit believes that all languages are equal. In other words, the different values that people assign to different languages is not a reflection on one being intrinsically superior or inferior to the other. Dawit also emphasised the value of Affa Konso for the Konso people's day-to-day life and its importance for employment opportunities in the Woreda. Although Amharic is the official working language of the Woreda, Dawit believes that Affa Konso is still indispensable for securing government employment in Konso, particularly when related to the rural community. His views concur with my observations in that most of the government offices used Affa Konso informally at their offices. For instance, despite having no official status, Affa Konso was used in the Woreda court and in the Woreda education office, presumably because otherwise the clients would have been unable to understand.

In Karat town, both Affa Konso and Amharic were used for personal and social communications whereas the majority of the rural Konso population used Affa Konso and government employees like teachers, development agents, health extension workers, used mainly Affa Konso to carry out their official duties. Thus, within a context in which Amharic was the official working language Affa Konso was the unofficial working language in rural areas, used to communicate and to conduct social and formal government meetings within the rural Konso community. Moreover, government employees such as development agents and primary school teachers were recruited from the Konso ethnic group, taking into account the language context of the rural areas. In this regard, the Konso Woreda official told me that about 500 unqualified individuals were recruited

and assigned to the first cycle of primary education in rural schools (e.g. secondary education completers and preschool teachers) for the last three years (2014-2016) based upon their language, Affa Konso. Thus in the above narrative Affa Konso 'helped to cross a river' with regards to employment opportunities in the Woreda.

Affa Konso also determined job security in the Woreda. As Dawit said, For instance:

> If someone works in a health centre and is unable to communicate with the rural community in the language that they understand well and requires a translator or creates a communication gap, the rural people may complain for not getting the required services in their language. (Dawit).

This affected the employment status of the individual in that they might be transferred to other areas where they can communicate and work better or even be forced to leave the job. This was Etefa's experience, a young man I contacted during my stay in Karat town. He had been working in the local NGO as a development officer and his duty station was in the rural town, 'Fasha' (rural village). He was from a non-Konso ethnic group. His main work was empowering the rural community with financial and technical support but as Etefa was unable to communicate directly with the rural people, as the majority of the community did not speak Amharic or Oromigna (his mother tongue), he had been using a translator. The project administrator complained about him, arguing that he could not adequately serve the rural community since he did not speak Affa Konso. As a consequence, Etefa requested to be transferred to an area outside the Konso Woreda. In this context, Affa Konso was essential not only as an implicit requirement for getting employment but also to work effectively within and serve the wider rural Konso community. Amharic and Oromigna, despite being dominant languages in Ethiopia, did not help him to cross the river.

Furthermore, high status jobs in the Woreda Council, head of all Woreda offices, regional council and federal parliament required fluency in the Konso language in addition to other requirements (e.g. being a member of the Konso ethnic group). Here, Affa Konso helped to cross a big river, giving access to high status and secure positions in the Woreda, among which the job of representing the community at zonal, regional and federal levels. Dawit was clearly aware of the importance of Affa Konso both in terms of employment for himself and his contribution to his community: 'Even I may not get an employment opportunity in the Woreda unless otherwise I speak the Konso language. It will be difficult for me to work in the Konso Woreda and support my

rural community more unless I speak the language'. Konso students who are unable to speak Affa Konso will face practical challenges in accessing employment opportunities in the Woreda and are well-aware of the relevance of Affa Konso, as are their parents, if they wish to stay in the Woreda. Additionally, as teachers told me, speaking the ethnic language helped to solicit support and collaboration from members of the rural community because they were happy when someone spoke to them in their language. It also helped to create a sense of trust and belongingness, thereby helping to cross another river. On a visit to the Konso village of Gumele with a teacher who is a member of the Konso ethnic and language group, I observed how through speaking Affa Konso, we were able to secure the cooperation of the village gatekeepers.

As discussed above, therefore, Affa Konso serves multiple purposes in the community and though its geographic scope outside the Konso Woreda seems to be limited to its speech community, it has great value in helping to cross many rivers. It helps to secure jobs, from development workers to high status roles in Woreda sector offices and the administrative council, as well as community representative roles at regional and federal levels. The above discussion also illustrates the two dimensions of the proverb: the confinement of a minority language to its locality on the one hand and its role in achieving diverse purposes and assisting people across different boundaries, in and towards the community, on the other. Having provided some background on language uses and people's attitudes towards Affa Konso, I now focus my discussion on how and why families use different languages in the home, extending my two cases to include other people's views and by referring to my observations in Karat town, Konso.

5.2. Families' Language Use in Home

In terms of language use within the family home, Dawit explained that:

> My father speaks different languages: Affa Konso, Amharic, Oromigna [Oromo language], 'Derashigna' [Derashe language] and English, and my mother speaks Affa Konso and Amharic. Affa Konso is my mother tongue and acquired it at home from family. At home, we mostly use Affa Konso but sometimes use Amharic with family members. At my early childhood, I began to speak Amharic in my neighborhood and sometimes at home. However, I developed it more at school. I also acquired some English from school. (Dawit, grade 8 student).

The above extract reveals how the value assigned to Affa Konso in home communication has shaped Dawit's language development. As Dawit said, he developed Affa Konso as his mother

tongue due to its dominant use in his home. However, sometimes the family spoke Amharic and other languages like Oromigna and even English with guests, for example when tourists and researchers had visited their home to study the preparation of a local drink, 'Cheqa'. Dawit also got the chance to use Amharic at home and developed it further in his neighborhood and school, since it was the language of teaching in his primary school. On market days (Mondays and Thursdays) the family also brewed Cheqa, which brought many rural community members to their stall. This provided a good opportunity for Dawit to improve his Affa Konso, in addition to using it for day-to-day household routines. I came to see that this kind of language situation which brought together different language speakers and where interactions took place in multiple languages (e.g. Affa Konso, Amharic and Afan Oromo) was not necessarily available to other students in Karat town, of which Mahider's family is one example.

On one occasion, when I was visiting Dawit and his family for the purposes of interviewing his father, they had two local guests. Although the family used mainly Affa Konso among themselves, they also used some Amharic. For instance, Dawit's father used Amharic when telling me about his qualification and work experience in government offices and NGOs, as did Dawit's mother when reminding him of some of the key tasks that he had missed out (e.g. his work assignment in Harrar (Eastern Ethiopia) as a Relief and Rehabilitation worker). However, when talking about personal issues, and especially when chatting to their two guests enjoying their local drink, the family members switched to Affa Konso. When talking with his son, Dawit's father used both Affa Konso and Amharic (e.g. about his education and why he did not go to school on that day, forgetting that day was a weekend). Thus, in this family, while the dominant language was Affa Konso, a good deal of code-switching occurred too (Amharic) during my visit.

During an interview with Dawit's father in the open space under the shade of the tree behind the main house, three young girls (primary school age) ran towards us and greeted their grandfather ('Negeyita abba'…) and exchanged some family news in Affa Konso. Dawit's father then related the brief conversation with his grandchildren to our discussion about language and its uses:

> I think now you have understood the practical language practice between our family members. We directly go to the main language (Affa Konso) while communicating with each other and with my grandchildren, 'Wode wanaw quanqua hedin' in Amharic. [I said yes…and laughed…]. (Karafo, Dawit's father).

This exchange was particularly interesting as even I had not realised the relevance of this conversation to my research, as I was so focused on my interview with Karafo. Thus, in Dawit's family, Affa Konso was the dominant language used in the home, whether with family, guests or Cheqa customers in this very multipurpose house (home and local bar). In this language environment, Dawit was able to pick up Affa Konso as his main language, his mother tongue, and develop it further, developing a positive attitude towards it as a minority language. At the same time, he was sometimes exposed to other languages like Amharic, Oromigna and some English, depending upon the language backgrounds and purpose of the people visiting the family. This practice also helped Dawit to develop and improve Amharic as his second language and to see language as a resource. This home language environment, in which Affa Konso is used as the dominant language but with various degrees of code switching to Amharic, was not unique but applied to other Konso students in Karat town.

In my previous section's case 1, although Affa Konso is the language of Mahider's ethnic group, Amharic is the dominant language in the home and Mahider considers it her mother tongue. She does not see Affa Konso as a resource, rather, seeing its scope as limited to its speech community and locality. Mahider describes her family's language use as follows:

> My father speaks Konsigna (Affa Konso), Amharic, English and some Oromigna. My mother speaks Konsigna and Amharic and also some Oromigna. My family usually uses Amharic at home with us (children), but when my father and mother are together, they sometimes use Konsigna. But they do not speak Konsigna with us. In my residence area, Amharic is mostly used but next to our neighbor or a few meters from our home, Konsigna is widely spoken. Amharic is my mother tongue that I acquired it from home, neighborhood and school. I could listen only some words of Konsigna but I could not speak and understand it. My siblings also cannot not speak Konsigna and even they could not listen to some. (Mahider, grade 8 student).

Thus, in contrast to Dawit's family, it is Amharic that Mahider's family value and widely use at home, even though both parents' mother tongue is Affa Konso (Konsigna) and they are members of the Konso ethnic group. The parents do not use Affa Konso at home with their children and only use it to talk to one another about personal issues (perhaps secret or complex issues). As a result, Mahider and her siblings have acquired the high status language, Amharic, as their mother tongue. Mahider's home environment and her parents' attitude towards Affa Konso has meant her acquisition and development of Affa Konso is limited both as a mother tongue and second

language. Additionally, the absence of Affa Konso use in her immediate neighborhood, and the use of Amharic among her peers, including close school friends and the use of Amharic as the language of instruction, has affected Mahider's attitude towards and use of Affa Konso. In a further discussion, Mahider's mother told me:

> We [she and her husband] were born and grew up in a rural area where Affa Konso was dominantly spoken. But, now we are living in town in which Amharic is widely used. Due to this, we tend to use Amharic at home. We adopt and continue what has been practised in the town like others, follow what others do. And, here we changed our language of communication. We sometimes use Affa Konso between ourselves, but our children cannot not understand it. They are inclined to use Amharic. (Mahider's Mother, Almaz)

As Almaz succinctly explains, the language situation in Karat town and attitudes towards Amharic, have influenced the family in their use of the high status language, Amharic, in the family home. The family had not realised that their children did not learn Affa Konso and they would not be able to communicate with their rural community, including relatives. Mahider told me she required a translator to communicate with her grandparents when she visited them in the rural area. For such a family, their language choice and use is determined to some extent by their socio-economic background: they have accepted and follow the language practices of the 'educated', 'well to do' and 'business people' of Karat town, which means using Amharic. Similarly, families who moved from the village of Durayite (only 10 minutes' walk from the Karat town centre but enclosed by basaltic stones) to the centre of Karat town, changed their language of home communication. For instance, Meaza (a students' mother) explained that 'Three of my children who were born in Durayite picked up Affa Konso as their mother tongue and two of my younger children who were born in Karat town (centre of the town) developed Amharic as their mother tongue and they did not understand Affa Konso". While interviewing her, I observed that her children were playing using Amharic in the house's compound. Although the wider language contexts of these two different social settings (walled village and Karat town) were not monolingual, the different language environments shaped the language choices and use of all the family members.

Thus, in Mahider's and Meaza's families, the language situation of Karat town and attitudes towards Amharic discouraged them to use Affa Konso with their children at home, preferring their children to develop the high status and aspirational languages, Amharic and English. For them, Amharic was seen as the 'language that can help to cross a river' and given priority due to its roles

in Karat town, outside the Konso Woreda and in school as well. The home language use pattern in Mahider's and Meaza's families can be applied to many other students' families in the same ethnic group in Karat town.

One clan leader, observing how members of the young generation were growing up not speaking Affa Konso either as a mother tongue or a second language, saw this trend as highly problematic to cultural continuity in Konso Woreda:

> The Konso families who live in the Karat town do not teach their children the Konso language and culture and the absence of Mora in the Karat town also contributes for children's unaware of their language and culture. (The clan leader).

The clan leader also perceived technology as threatening the Konso language, culture and identity, expressing his concern that unless children were taught about their language and culture, the Konso language and culture would not have a future.

In this section, I have analysed how families of the same ethnic group use and value different languages in the home and how such practices and behaviours are shaped by the attitudes they hold towards different languages. The way that parents attached value to minority and majority languages and the kind of language parents aspired for their children have influenced their interactional behaviours in the home. Parental attitudes towards individual languages also contributes to the way their children in turn, perceive those languages. This can be seen in the contrast between Dawit and Mahider's attitudes towards Konso and whether or not they view it as enabling them to cross a river. In order to provide wider insights into language use in a Konso community, in the next section, I move beyond the household level and analyse language interactions in different socio-cultural settings.

5.3. Language Use in Socio-cultural Environments

This section looks at how members of the community uses different languages while interacting in open air spaces such as the marketplace and at religious event. I have chosen Karat's open air market because of its large size and because it is the site for interactions across different ethnicities and languages. In terms of religious events, I have chosen the Orthodox Christian Epiphany, a colourful annual religious festival which is also a national holiday. These two events offer the opportunity to explore interactions which have social, cultural, commercial and religious purposes.

5.3.1. Language Use in the Open Air Market

Karat market is held twice a week, on Mondays and Thursdays, in an open space at the centre of the town (about 3 minutes' walk from the town square). In size, it is slightly bigger than a standard football field and it is surrounded by local houses, shops and drink houses. In the drink houses, people gather mainly to drink Cheqa, the local mild alcoholic drink made with maize or sorghum, Areke, a strong spirit and Tej, an alcoholic drink made with honey. In the market, different products have their own permanent sites that make them easily identifiable and accessible for people who want to buy or sell items. As is common in the rural markets in Ethiopia, beyond their economic value as a source of daily subsistence, the Karat market has cultural and social values for the different ethnic groups (e.g. Konso, Amhara, Derashe, Gamo, Wolayita, Oromo, etc.) who come together to exchange not only goods, but information and their experiences, cultures and languages.

Figure 12: Open air market at Karat town, Konso, grain site at front view   Figure 13: Animal fodder site at front view

While living in the community, I visited the market at least once a fortnight to purchase food (e.g. fruits) and other subsistence items (e.g. some home materials/utensils like water glass, plate, fork, spoon, plastic jug, hand battery torch, special and durable mobile). These visits provided me the opportunity to participate in and observe the various interactions that took place in the market. Sometimes, I visited the market specifically for research purposes, in the company of a language translator. I was able to categorise four kinds of language interactions in the market: business deals and interactions at the fruit stall using Amharic with individuals from the town; use of Amharic with rural people at the vegetable stall; use of Affa Konso with rural people who trade in firewood,

animal fodder and handcrafts; and use of Afan Oromo (the Oromo language) with rural person at the livestock site (e.g. cattle, sheep, goats). Although each business site tended to be dominated by one language, there was much code switching, with a mix of Affa Konso, Amharic, Oromigna, Gamogna, depending upon the language background of the individuals interacting.

For example, at the fruit stall, I met three female teachers together whom I knew as they taught in my example school. The teachers were interacting with different retailers using a mix of Amharic and Affa Konso. They used their limited Affa Konso while they were negotiating the price of fruit (banana and mango) with the rural traders. One of these teachers whom I later interviewed, Adanech, explained that:

> I understand and use some business Affa Konso like 'Meqa' (how much), numbers and for negotiating the price using simple language. (Adanech, a grade 5 teacher).

The language experience of Adanech and her colleagues suggests that the Konso language, which has low status in the classroom, has high status in the marketplace, indeed is an essential part of obtaining everyday necessities from the market. This illustrates how the use and value of different languages differs depending on contexts and purposes.

After my encounter with the teachers at the market, I spent about an hour wandering through the market, observing and asking the price of different items, and then went back to the fruit stall. I wanted to buy some papayas and approached a girl of about 12 years old. She displayed three papayas for sale before her and reserved the remaining fruits at her right side, in a small light metallic container (an old empty oil, which can hold about 10 KGs roughly). I asked her the price of the papaya in Amharic by pointing at one.

> The girl responded: 'Pardon!' (Min in Amharic)
> I said again: 'What is the price of this papaya?' by picking it up. (Papaya sint new? in Amharic)
> She said: 'It is five birr' (Amist birr in Amharic)
> I asked her: 'What about the price of the two papayas?' (Huletu papayawoch and lay sint new? in Amharic).
> She replied: 'Ten birr' (With her limited Amharic and with the support of her fingers) (Asir birr in Amharic).

The above extract can be described as a business interaction between a girl selling fruits and a customer, myself. The girl explained to me that she was a grade 2 student and had learned Amharic

from school, which helped her to sell her products. Her language experiences (Affa Konso at home Amharic at school) were resources in conducting her small business. She did not require a language mediator to achieve her purpose, which in this context was selling fruit to Amharic and Affa Konso speaking customers. This example also illustrates how the home and school environments can help children to enrich their language repertoires and broaden their language choices and uses.

On another day at the market, I randomly met a boy who was about 16 years old. He stood by the vegetable stall holding a long stick in his hand and appeared to come from a rural area. He was selling onions, garlic and cardamom ('kororima' in Amharic) and grouped four or five pieces of root together as per the allocated price. I approached him and asked about the price of a bunch of onion and garlic in Amharic ('key ena nech shinkurt sint new').

> The boy replied: '5 birr (Amist Birr in Amharic, He spoke some Amharic.)
> I asked him: 'Where are you from? Are you from the rural area?' (keyet new yemetahew).
> The boy replied: 'Yes I am from the rural area, from Jarso Kawaito village' (Ke Jarso kebele new yemetahut).
> I asked him: 'How far is it from the town, Karat?' (Min yahil yirikal).
> The boy replied, 'It is about an hour on foot' (Be egir and seat).
> I asked him: 'Have you ever attended school?' (Timhirt temirehal).
> The boy replied: 'No, I did not' (Altemarkum).

The above extract shows that children can learn Amharic as a second language through informal learning, in this case, probably through interaction with people at the market and in Karat town, driven by the need to communicate with potential customers. The boy spoke with me slowly, using simple business and broken Amharic language. As he said, his interactions with town people had helped him to enrich his language repertoire, had facilitated his business, allowing him to interact using both Amharic and Affa Konso. This illustrates that it is not only school that influences the development of a second language: the marketplace can be seen as an informal setting for the development of additional languages.

Another conversation in the marketplace, this time with three school age girls (about 14/15 year old roughly), showed that not everyone has access to both Amharic and Affa Konso. On that day, I had brought with me a language translator to help me communicate with rural Affa Konso speakers. We approached the rural girls who were stood in front of their heavy bundles of firewood.

Since I could not communicate with them in Amharic, I asked the translator to speak to them in Affa Konso

> The girls told him: "We do not understand Amharic" (Eno Amarigna Ansahno in Affa Konso).
> The translator asked them in Affa Konso: ''How much is this firewood?" (Qorra Meqa?).
> The girls responded "Thirty six birr" (Kunda sessa leh).

In further conversation with them, it transpired that although these girls were school aged, they were not at school. There are many reasons why children do not attend school. There may be socio-cultural barriers, family problem or simply no school in their village. When comparing these girls with the child who, alongside selling her wares at the market, also attended grade 2, the latter has a wider language repertoire. However, as we have seen, school is not the only place where languages can be learnt. However, in this case, the girls have not learnt through informal means either. These three girls were restricted to using Affa Konso probably due to living in one of the enclosed rural villages and in a home language environment where the only language used is their ethnic language.

I also met three older women who were displaying their different sized pots ('Ensira' bigger pot and 'Masero; smaller pot in Amharic). They were from a rural background and communicated in Affa Konso with their customers. When I asked them about the price of the pots in Amharic, they kept quiet and looked at each other, smiling! They responded to me in Affa Konso, so I again asked my language translator to mediate our conversation:

> The woman said in Affa Konso, smiling: "What is this man talking about?" (Isha Maana kini kidenka kakosali? In Affa Konso).
> The translator asked them, "How much is this clay pot?" (Meqaa?').
> The women replied in Affa Konso, (after looking at each other and agreeing on the price): It is 30 birr (Kunda seesaw).

The above extract shows that some Affa Konso speakers require a mediator to communicate with non-Affa Konso speakers. This is an example of an interaction between rural adults at Karat open air market where limited exposure to languages other than Affa Konso led to difficulties in communicating with non-Affa Konso speakers. The enclosed stone walled settlement patterns of the rural Konso community (described in Chapter 2) appears to restrict opportunities to develop one's language repertoire. The majority of the Konso population live in such villages and

predominantly accommodate Konso ethnic group. In fact, traditionally, non-Konso ethnic members were not allowed to live in these villages unless they had a formal connection with someone in the community (e.g. adopted person from another ethnic group, guests, a Konso man's wife or a person accepted by the community there). As a result, children in these villages speak Affa Konso as their mother tongue and have minimum exposure to Amharic, as it is not commonly used in the villages. When children from these enclosed villages (including Durayite) come to school where Amharic is the medium of instruction (see details in Chapter 7), they are immediately disadvantaged. Thus socio-culturally structured settlements influence children's language use though there are opportunities to develop different languages through interaction with people in the different settings, home, school, marketplace and town.

I also became aware that the Oromo language (Afan Oromo) was also being used in the market place, mainly at the livestock stall. This is because there is an overlap between Konso and Borena Oromo both geographically borders and share cultures, and individuals often come from these border areas to sell their goat, sheep and cattle. Since I speak Afan Oromo, I was able to easily converse with others who spoke the language. For example, I spoke to a man who brought goats to the market and who spoke both Affa Konso and Afan Oromo.

> I said in Oromo language: Do you speak Oromo language? (Afan Oromo inbeektaa? in Afan Oromo).
> He said in Oromo language: Yes, I can speak (Affan Oromo endubedha).
> I asked again in Oromo language: How much is this goat? (Reanii Meqqa dhaa?).
> He said in Oromo language: It is 800 birr (Dhibaa sedeeti).
> I asked in Oromo language: Where did you learn the Oromo language? ('Afan Oromo Esaatini baratannii?').
> He said in Oromo language: We, Konso and Oromo community live together.
> (Nu, Konsofi Oromonnii ollaa dhaa, wollini jiraanaa).

The above example illustrates how Affa Oromo (Oromigna in Amharic) is used in Karat open air market, and how people with different language backgrounds make contact, interact and address their needs using multiple languages. The close business contact between the Konso and Oromo communities means that Afan Oromo is widely spoken in the Karat town, especially by business people. Many members of the Konso community speak Oromo language due to socio-cultural interactions, without any formal influence like schooling. In the open air market, I also witnessed the practice of 'cooperative language mediation' (my term) that bilingual/multilingual individual

(s) played, translating from Affa Konso into Amharic and vice versa and other languages as well. On one occasion, a boy from my example school who was there by chance helped me in mediating my communication with an Affa Konso speakers from whom I wanted to buy a torch.

Patterns of language in the market seemed to be linked to specific goods. For example, the rural community who mainly traded in small agricultural products (e.g. 'Haleko' (Moringa leaf), fruits, vegetables, etc.) and handcrafts (e.g. as the above three women who make and own clay pots) used Affa Konso. On the other hand, persons engaged in trading higher priced items (e.g. who sell a quintal of 'Teff' for about 2000 Birr) could speak at least Affa Konso and Amharic. Retailers of electronic materials spoke additional languages like Gamo and Oromigna alongside Affa Konso and Amharic. This was due to the nature of their business, mobility outside their locality and exposure to people with a range of different language backgrounds. Thus, their interactions with different people assisted them in enriching their language resources, in turn enabling them to engage in transactions in multiple languages.

The examples above show the use and value of different languages in business and social interactions and how the status of a specific language is contextual in a multilingual setting. Affa Konso was the most valuable language of all in the Karat open air market for buying and selling products and for engaging in social interaction with the majority of the marketers. Not being able to understand Affa Konso can affect one's ability to negotiate a good price with rural Affa Konso speakers or even make a purchase impossible unless mediated by others. The high value given to Amharic in school and in other official domains did not apply to the open air market, though Amharic was used by many people there. Instead, Karat market was a multilingual environment that accommodated Affa Konso, Amharic, Afan Oromo and Gamogna and others and in which code-switching was a common feature of interactions. Being multilingual was a huge asset in facilitating businesses and social interactions with individuals from diverse language backgrounds, with every language contributing to the linguistic resources.

5.3.2. Language Use in Religious Event

As part of the socio-cultural activities and religious events in Konso, the Epiphany ('Timket' in Amharic) is celebrated by Orthodox Christians in Konso and across Ethiopia on January 20th and 21st every year. This event involves both religious and cultural elements like praying, religious

and secular songs and dances performed by children, youth and adults. On these occasions, the majority of the attendees are from the Konso community, and the remaining are from Amhara, Gamo, Oromo and other ethnic backgrounds.

Figure 14: People celebrating Epiphany on January 20th, 2016 at Karat football field, Konso

Figure 15: Final Epiphany ceremony at the Orthodox Christian Church on January 21st, 2016, at Karat, Konso

I attended and participated in the ceremony on both days, not only for research purposes but also because it is one of the most beautiful religious and cultural performances in Ethiopia and I did not want to miss it. With regard to language interactions, most of the activities related to the event were undertaken in Amharic with some translation of Affa Konso. For example, most of the religious and secular songs were performed in Amharic. However, during the procession on the main street, groups of women and men sang praise songs in the Konso language (e.g. a song that praised the Lord, translated for me by a teacher who was also attending) alongside religious leaders holding a replica of Arc of Covenant ('Tabot') over their heads who were using Amharic.

As part of the ceremony, officials from Woreda Orthodox Church delivered sermon in Amharic, which was translated into Affa Konso for the crowd gathered in the Konso local stadium, where the main event was held. After about an hour of evangelization, the preacher asked followers to say the 'Abatachin hoy' (The Lord's Prayer) in Amharic. Thus, Amharic was the main language of this specific religious event, with some translation of a minority language, Affa Konso. Amharic was prioritized and valued since the ceremony was conducted in Amharic and the clergy used it to communicate with the followers. However, Affa Konso had the role of facilitating interactions between the clergy (who were non-Konso) and members of the rural Konso community.

Finally, in the closing speech of the first day, on January 20, 2016, a member of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, who had come from Addis Ababa as a special envoy, delivered the following address in Amharic:

> The Orthodox Church aims to train and produce religious persons from different ethnic groups/languages so that the Bible can be preached in different ethnic languages. For example, the Oromo and Konso languages can be used for evangelizing the Bible. I have brought you, the followers of the Orthodox faith, a religious newspaper [the Church newspaper written in Amharic]. (Member of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church).

The above extract indicates that Affa Konso has a limited use in terms of religious purpose, particularly in the Orthodox Church. Most top level clergy are from non-Konso backgrounds and use Amharic. In the social interactions that surround the festival, however, people use different languages with their friends, family members including children and others depending on which language the group/pair share or prefer. By contrast, in Karat's non-Orthodox churches like the Konso Evangelical Mekane Yesus church, both Amharic and Affa Konso are used for religious purposes. The above extract also illustrates that church officials realize the benefits of training religious leaders and evangelists from minority ethnic groups and language backgrounds. As some parents said, using the local language in church helps people to understand and internalize the religious contents in the language they know well. For instance, Kambiro (a cultural leader, elder and Konso resource person) said that "The major reason that the Konso Evangelical Christian belief has spread in the Konso Woreda more than the Orthodox Christian faith is because of the strategy that the Evangelical church use the local people (Konso) and language (Affa Konso) for preaching the Gospel". In this section, I demonstrate how members of the communities use

different languages (mainly Affa Konso, Amharic and Oromigna) in different settings (e.g. open-air market) and for different purposes (economic and religious). I now turn to language uses in local political affairs in Konso Woreda.

5.4. Affa Konso as a Strategic Language in Times of a Political Unrest

This section explores how and why Affa Konso was used strategically by the members of the Konso community to discuss political and secret matters during the political unrest in the area. To do this, I present two cases that illustrate the strategic use of Affa Konso in informal political discussions.

A Case in a Traditional Coffee House ('Buna Tetu Bet'), Karat-Konso

Among the many coffee houses in Karat ('Buna tetu betoch' in Amharic), I usually had coffee in Abaynesh coffee house. It is an entirely outdoor venue with benches, chairs, stools, on a smoothed stone floor. On January 10th, 2016, I visited this coffee house alone. After ordering a cup of coffee, I saw a Konso teacher I knew from my example school passing by the café. I called him to join me and he sat on a stool next to me. We had the following conversation:

> He said, 'I think by now you are well-accustomed to the situations in Karat town',
>
> I said, 'Yes, I have already become a resident of Karat town, Konso!'

He ordered tea and told me that he did not drink coffee because of stomach problems. We started talking about his mobile phone and he told me most people had mobiles now in Karat town. Sitting beside us was a small group of about five people who belonged to the Konso ethnic group. All of them knew the teacher well, and talked to him in both Amharic and Affa Konso, eventually joining in with our discussion about mobile phones. Some of them exchanged music via mobile Bluetooth (as I understood, they were sharing a protestant religious song that was popular in the area). Up till that point I had been fully included in the discussion, which was mainly conducted in Amharic with occasional code-switch to Affa Konso.

Slowly, the group besides us became larger and the topic changed too, to the hot issue of the moment: politics. Unknowingly and bit by bit, my companion (a teacher) moved his stool closer to the group (I knew that he was active in local politics) till eventually he became fully immersed in the group discussion. As the topic changed, so did the language: in the discussion of local politics. Even, he did not realize that I was with him and detached from the group. At that time,

Affa Konso became the dominant language interspersed with some Amharic and English words and phrases. Occasionally, my friend turned his head towards me to talk to me in Amharic. The points he chose to translate for me seemed to be had less politically sensitive (e.g. the revising of Woreda's annual budget as a result of the people's protest). The mix of Amharic and English words and phrases (and the inclusion of some Oromigna vocabulary in the Konso language) helped me to guess some parts of their discussion (e.g. about their (the Konso people) awareness of the Ethiopian Constitution and the fact that their demands were entirely in keeping with that constitution, whereas some of the government officials appeared to be ignorant about their rights, etc.). I could also tell by tone and gestures, that the discussion had become an emotional one with group expressing their disappointment about government actions in the area, particularly the large presence of armed security forces in the town and in Woreda. Hence, in this context, Affa Konso was strategically used to facilitate political and sensitive issues among an in-group, and exclude anyone not a member of the group.

A Case in 'Ediget' Hotel, Karat-Konso

On December 19th, 2015, I visited one of the biggest hotels in Karat, Konso, Ediget Hotel, to eat at about 5:00 pm. There were three large groups sitting in the shade of a big tree. I got a seat close to one of the groups engaged in a loud discussion (on a concrete seat that was attached to the circled external wall, not on a chair). I realised that some of the group members were government employees and Woreda officials. All the groups there were drinking beer, wine or soft drinks and some were eating. While the discussions were heated and emotionally charged, at the same time people seemed happy. I realised that all groups were discussing current political affairs in Konso Woreda. The discussion was complex, mainly in Konso language but with some code-switching to Amharic and English so I was only able to get some points of the discussion. Later I was told that there had been an official meeting in the town and that they were happy about the outcomes of this meeting. In retrospect I understood why some people were cheering and 'taking a high five'. Even, the group did not bother about my presence there (a meter away from them), because they knew that I could not share what they had been talking about whatever my political affiliation was.

The above two cases illustrate how Affa Konso was used strategically to communicate concerns and to find ways to resolve the different challenges that strained the community. It also served as an accommodating language that enabled the community to fully engage in political discussions

and address common goals. Moreover, Affa Konso helped members of the Konso ethnic community to express happiness and other emotions, to include the community in discussions about rights and discuss political and sensitive issues.

Moreover, in Karat town, a mobile phone has become part of youth culture, not only for communicating with others but also for listening to news and music and sending and receiving messages as well as using social media. As a medium of electronic message communication, youth and teachers used Amharic and some English to text messages as they were able to read and write with these languages. During a political movement in Konso, I observed that young people used mobile texts to organize a protest against the local government and used social media (e.g. Facebook) to send messages to friends and others and posted some pictures and messages to disseminate local news to national and international communities mostly in Amharic and English. As Affa Konso has not been formally taught in the school and not yet been used as a written language, it was not used in the social media (i.e. in written form). However, in the future when formally used in school as a subject and medium of instruction, the youth may use Affa Konso with Latin script in the social media as part of their culture.

Besides the use of language in social media for local politics, in Karat town, many youth are passionate about the English premier football league, and it has already become an essential part of youth culture as elsewhere in Ethiopia. The high coverage of this football news (mostly in Amharic) in the different national and regional media and FM Radios influenced young people's interest to watch and talk about different football teams, particularly, Arsenal, Manchester United and Chelsea are the most fanned, discussed and commented teams in Karat town. Very close to my rented room in Karat, there was a big hall where many youth watched the English premier league through the television. I often heard the shout of fans from my home, on the street and local hotels during my fieldwork. In terms of language use, most of the discussions, shouts and supports during and after the game were in Amharic (as the main language of the town) with some code-switching between Affa Konso and English. Similarly, such a discussion about football was common in the staff room and school mostly in Amharic among students and teachers in Karat primary school.

5.5. Conclusion

This chapter has explored how and why members of the community make certain language choices, and the different attitudes and values that I observed in different domains for different purposes. In terms of language attitude, some individuals believed in the literal meaning of the traditional proverb that considers a minority language, Affa Konso as 'A language that cannot help to cross a river'. They questioned Affa Konso's significance beyond its speech community and accepted the dominant language, Amhara, as a means to access opportunity and power. Despite ethnic minority language being at the centre of politics, recognition and rights for ethnic group being a priority on the political agenda and despite its widespread use in every day interactions, there were participants who attached low value to their ethnic language. This was due to individuals' beliefs in and attitudes to language and its uses (Woolard, 1998).

However, as Gal (1998) notes, not all members of the community use and value languages in the same ways. Accordingly, the two students and their families presented as case 1 and case 2, illustrated how different families of the same Konso ethnic group used and valued languages differently in their homes. In case 1, Mahider and her family perceived Affa Konso as a limiting language, ignored their ethnic language and decided to use a privileged language, Amharic, in the home. Their attitude towards Amharic has been influenced by external factors such as the use of Amharic in school, media and other official purposes in Konso Woreda and beyond. By contrast, in case 2, Dawit and his family attached high value to Affa Konso due to its importance to the Konso community, and dominantly used Affa Konso at home together with Amharic and other languages. Thus, the above two families' different conceptions of two languages (Affa Konso and Amharic) influenced their language choice, use and interactional behaviour in the home (Blommaert, 2006). The belief in Affa Konso's potential to cross a river (its speech community) or not, and related values assigned to it, may not be limited to individuals' and families' language choice and use in home. They are also reflected in the ways that language policy processes are implemented in school and in the community (which I will deal with in Chapters 7 and 8).

The chapter also concludes that language choice, use and value are unpredictable and contextual in a multilingual community setting. For instance, there were situations where a minority language, Affa Konso was highly valued in families, the market place, legal process (though it is not an official working language) and as a requirement for employment. In other situations, Affa Konso

is not valued in families, official work places and in Orthodox Christian ceremonies. As a heterogeneous community in the multilingual environment of Karat town, members of the Konso community use Affa Konso, Amharic, Afan Oromo and others, as well as code-switching between these languages with different people, in diverse domains and for multiple purposes. Diverse language ideologies, for example the perception of Affa Konso as a language that restricts their children's future to their locality, or as an indispensable language in the Konso community, or as a language that represents the Konso people, shape language choices and uses.

The different interactional contexts (e.g. family environment, stone walled settlement pattern/village, marketplace, religious event and political discussion) and the power relations between a minority language (e.g. Affa Konso) and dominant language (e.g. Amharic) and their speakers (e.g. socio-economic status in the marketplace) and their positions in the community (e.g. the Woreda Orthodox church leader and clergies who were Amharic speakers) have an influence on individuals' and families' language choice, use and interactional behaviour. Although Konso ethnic community members share a history and culture, they have different language ideologies that guide their language choices and uses in the home and in other contexts. Beyond language ideologies, the ways in which individuals understand an ethnic language, associate it with their ethnic identities and how this shapes language use and policy processes, are among the key issues that I will explore in the following chapters.

Chapter Six: Exploring Identity: Being a Konso, Becoming a Konso and Identity Tensions

The purpose of this chapter is to analyse respondents' perceptions about identities and language. Building upon the previous chapter that explored language uses, attitudes and values in diverse contexts of individuals, families and the community, in this chapter, I investigate the link between languages and identities in a Konso community. In doing so, I address sub-research question 2: how do members of the community view language in relation to ethnic identities? In order to critically explore this sub-research question, I raise the following key questions: how and why do respondents understand their ethnic identities and relate them with ethnic and other languages?; how and why do respondents make hierarchies of languages along with identities representation in different contexts and for different purposes? My starting point is a story used by an education official when explaining the notion of ethnic identity, about a mule and its identity in relation to its parents. Through this proverb, I discuss three different people's views on ethnic identities: being a Konso, becoming a Konso and identity tension (an individual caught between the hereditary aspect of ethnic identity, which constrains a person's decision about ethnic identity, and his/her wish to choose a non-hereditary ethnic identity).

6.1. A Mule's Identity

A Woreda Education official told me that ethnic identity was fixed and immutable and explained the following story to support his view:

> When a mule was asked to talk about its father's identity, it responded that 'my grandfather was a horse' ('Beklo abatish manew tebila sitteyek ayate feres new alech endemibalew' in Amharic). The mule did not want to take a donkey's identity (its father) and chose to take that of a horse (its mother or grandfather). But this is not possible (The Woreda Education official).

In its literal meaning of a mule's story above, the mule preferred to align itself with the identity of the horse than the donkey (his father) because among domesticated animals, the donkey has low status, is often mistreated and is less recognised in the Ethiopian context (despite its significant contribution to rural livelihoods); whereas the horse is a privileged high status animal. Transferred to the realm of humans, the story reflects the Konso tradition of ethnic identity being passed only through a father's lineage. Therefore the Woreda official used this parable to state that only the father's lineage determines an individual's ethnic identity. He further explained that the Konso clan system (see Chapter 2) operates on the father's side only. Through recounting the mule's

story, the official conveys that changing one's ethnic identity is unacceptable since it is an uncompromised notion. However, the story does also enshrine an idea of identity being negotiable since the mule chooses to align itself with the high status horse. At the same time, it illustrates the difficulties that members of the minority ethnic group have in freely choosing their identities in a social world where power relations are unequal.

The mule's story also illustrates that in this context, an essentialised view of identity is deeply embedded in the socio-cultural system. There is also a tension between the draw of the socially more privileged identity and what the community legitimises as a certain form of identity to members of the community. And, this was to be taken for granted. Additionally, the mule's story reinforces a negative attitude towards a particular identity by positioning individuals and groups in a specific kind of identity. In this regard, members of a minority ethnic group often change their ethnic related names to conceal their ethnicity and choose high status ones instead, particularly when leaving their localities. This was partly to make sure that they were not excluded from social services and other benefits. For example, a school official told me that while they were filling in the grade 8 regional examination registration form, some grade 8 students wanted to change their names (e.g. taking a perceived name for a town/city boy/girl). In another example, one of the participants in the Konso language development meeting (Amharic minutes, 25/09/2006 E.C (June 2, 2014), confessed that he had changed his full name (the typical Konso name) and taken on one that was privileged at the time (Amharic name). He said, 'It was because of the past ethnic discriminatory regime that I was obliged to change my identity' (ibid.).These two examples illustrate how members of minority ethnic groups negotiate their identities and take on socio-culturally privileged ones.

Three key notions of identities emerge in the above discussion and I use these to frame my discussion. In the first one, the notion of ethnic identity is a permanent one, given and agreed by members of the community (Being a Konso). The second one emphasises negotiation: a mule chooses to identify with the horse against what has been determined for it (Becoming a Konso). The third notion involves a tension between the two described above: one's desire to choose certain ethnic identities (e.g. Konso, Amhara or both) but not ascribed to that individual by himself/herself or others (Identity Tensions). In the following sections, I analyse these three views on ethnic

identity as they emerged in my discussions with students, teachers, parents and others: being a Konso, becoming a Konso and identity tensions.

6.1.1. Being a Konso

In relation to the earlier discussion, the Woreda official articulated that 'Ethnic identity is fixed unless it is taken in the same way as a citizenship which is decided by one country's law'. Accordingly, my respondent students such as Dawit, Mahider, Tamene, Misrak and many others expressed that, 'I am a Konso', adding 'because we are from the Konso families'. As the students' views reveal, their ethnic identity, being a Konso, was attributed to their Konso families' background, and was a given. I understood that, for these and other students, talking about their ethnic identity was very simple; the direct response, being a Konso, was at the tip of their fingers. The students accepted ethnic identity as simply passed on through family and blood relationships, unrelated with other factors or determined through any other process. The other important aspect of ethnic identity in Konso is that it is the father's lineage that determines children's ethnic identity. As respondents replied, this trend was uncompromised in the Konso socio-cultural system. For instance, the clan leader said, 'The nine Konso clans are organized by and passed to children through the father's line' (see Chapter 2 for the Konso clan system). Hence, moving from such a well-established tradition was unacceptable as in story of the mule. However, I did not see much contest among different ages and socio-economic groups in the Konso community about the idea of being a Konso.

This kind of essentialised view of ethnic identity is also considered desirable in current ethnolinguistic politics in Ethiopia. Indeed, the Ethiopian Constitution (FDRE, 1995) strongly links nationalities (ethnic groups) with a static notion of identity by emphasizing their common characteristics. For instance, the Constitution says that a nationality/ethnic group is "a group of people who have... belief in a common or related identities"[12]. Among other requirements, the need to have a belief in common identities is an important element for a group of people to hold the status of nationality (ethnic group) in Ethiopia. This suggests that the belief in being a Konso is a crucial precondition to gaining constitutional rights as an ethnic group. It is also necessary in order

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[12] The Constitution of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (1995), "A Nation, Nationality or "People" … is a group of people who have or share a large measure of a common culture or similar customs, mutual intelligibility of language, belief in a common or related identities, a common psychological make-up, and who inhabit an identifiable, predominantly contiguous territory, Article 39, No. 5. P. 161.

to be represented in different government structures such as the country's parliamentary system. The new recognition of a certain group of people as an ethnic group (there are still groups of people demanding recognition as an ethnic group from concerned government bodies, e.g. 'Kimant' people in the Amhara region) must pass through a scrutiny process based on the requirements set in the Constitution. As explained by teachers, there were also cases in SNNPR where a group of people had claimed ethnic group status but the government had not approved it (for such a decision, having their own distinct language is one of the key indicators). Hence, in the absence of common identities (e.g. cultural and language identities as included in the Constitution), a group of people were unlikely to gain recognition as an ethnic group and have representations at different levels of Ethiopia's administrative and parliamentary systems. Obtaining this recognition encourages individuals and groups of people to think and organize themselves in terms of their ethnic boundaries in assuming economic (e.g. job opportunity) and political (e.g. getting representations in political system) benefits and realizing such advantages from others who have already received ethnic group status. In my discussion with students, teachers and others, this constitutional right was mentioned as a legal support to their claims as a Konso (e.g. our Konso identity was acknowledged by the Constitution).

6.1.2. Becoming a Konso

In contrast to the fixed notion of identity that emphasises the hereditary feature of ethnic identity, another view emerged from students' parents. This was 'Identity as becoming', the idea that ethnic identity did not pass through blood relationships but was negotiated and constructed through a process. Thus, Felekech mother, Abebech said:

> If you take me, I was born in Derashe Woreda (adjacent to Konso) and my mother tongue is Derashigna. But my children were born and grew up here in Konso even if their father and I were from the Derashe ethnic group. They could speak Konsigna well. Thus, their ethnic identity is Konso but not Derashe (The ethnic background of the children's parents). Their ethnic identity should not be linked with ours because our children do not understand the Derashe language and culture. So, they have a Konso ethnic identity and have changed their ethnicity, ('Ezih siletewoledu ahun enesu behereseb likeyru new' in Amharic). (Felekech's mother, Abebech).

From her perspective, the social processes in which her children participated, speaking and understanding the language and culture, and the place of birth and current residence (geography)

were the major determinants of her children's ethnic identity. Abebech's idea about her daughter's (Felekech) ethnic identity can be associated with 'becoming a Konso' or an emerging identity, since it was different from that of her parents' ethnic origin. While she did not give importance to the blood relationship to decide her children's ethnic identity, like other respondents and legal documents such as the Ethiopian Constitution, she emphasised the importance of language and culture in determining ethnic identity. However, because of Konso socio-cultural system (i.e. clan system) whereby a presupposed blood relationship is the major criteria in determining ethnic identity, a major concern for her was: do others or members of the Konso community accept the claim that she makes about her children's Konso ethnic identity? In a small town like Karat Konso it was not difficult for individuals to identify and trace the ethnic background of persons and families, especially in the current ethnic politics and situation of Ethiopia (e.g. several individuals were keen to know my ethnic identity during my field work stay).

Abebech's daughter, Felekech, told me she could speak Amharic and Affa Konso fluently and some Derashigna (her parents' mother tongue and ethnic language). She had learned the Konso language through interaction with peers and adults, as most of her neighbors communicated in it. However, she understood and explained the ethnic background of her parents, which was Derashe (I suspect that her friends and other members of the school community knew this because it has become normal in conversation to discuss the ethnic background of individuals like Konso, Derashe, Amhara, Tigray, Oromo, etc. in Ethiopia). Hence, Felekech was unsure about her Konso ethnic identity despite her mother's claim. As other students, she identified with her parents' ethnic identity. She said, 'I am a Derashe, not a Konso'. This was because of how ethnic identity was defined and accepted by members of the community as a 'natural' thing rather than a social construct. Felekech's mother was exceptional in referring to the idea of 'becoming' or 'negotiated' identities of an individual. In this regard, in a discussion with teachers, they mentioned a neighboring group of people (the Kussume) residing in Derashe Woreda (neighboring Woreda to Konso) who had changed their group identity:

> The Kusume ethnic group was originally a Konso people who migrated from the Konso Woreda and ethnic group and settled where they have been living now, in Derashe Woreda. Their language and culture are very much similar to that of the Konso ethnic group. But now this group of people has their own Kussume ethnic group which is recognised by the government system. (School teachers and head teachers).

The above extract shows that group identity can be mutable. A group's ethnic identity can be formed by a group of people for different factors such as economic and political reasons. Current legislation in Ethiopia encourages people to organize themselves into ethnic groupings as this gives them access to political representation. Thus, these identities have been formed through processes and changes of time and place rather than being a 'natural' phenomena. A study conducted by Wondwosen and Mulugata (2014, 267) documents this phenomena: "Kusume and Kola Mashile peoples were initially a Konso people and due to some reasons they migrated from the Konso Woreda. They share culture, cultural dance, traditional dressing, etc. They could communicate with Konso people without the need to a translation and some of their family members still live in Konso" (My translation from an Amharic document). This example shows how not only an individual's ethnic identity but also group ethnic identity was subjected to negotiation and change. This also provides an example of ethnic identity construction which occurred through a geographically specific social process that was transformational rather than reliant on blood relationships.

6.1.3. Identity Tensions

Having explored an essentialising and a transformational approach to identity, I now move to a third perspective on identity. Starting from the experience of a teacher (Simegne), I examine the tensions that arise when choices are made between different ethnic identities.

Simegne told me about his journey with ethnic identity:

> I was born in Konso Woreda and grew up there. I have been teaching about 31 years in different schools in the Woreda. I can fluently speak Konsigna (Affa Konso) and Amharic. Interestingly, my family came from the Amhara region, 'Wollo' and lived here in Konso for long years. I learned and developed the Konso language from peers and community during my childhood and developed it throughout all my life. I speak the language as a native and as if it were my mother tongue. I know the Konso culture including the Konso proverbs. In terms of ethnic identity, on the one hand, no one accepts my Konso identity. The community has not embraced me as a member of the Konso ethnic group even though I would like to consider myself as a Konso. On the other hand, although I know the culture of Amhara (my family's heritage culture) in different ways, from family, reading and media, practically, I have never been there and do not know the Amhara community there or where my family originated. Even I doubt that they can accept my Amhara identity; for example, my Amharic accent is different from theirs. Thus, I have a difficulty in identifying myself as a Konso or an Amhara ethnic identity or both. So, I have the confusion about my ethnic identity. (Simegne, a teacher).

In Simegne's narrative, we can see how he finds himself caught between two identities because of the tension between his view of himself and the identity ascribed to him by others. Although he had spent all of his life in and with the Konso community, he was not accepted as a Konso by community members. This was because of not fulfilling the major requirement of the Konso socio-cultural system, family ethnic heritage: his parents did not belong to any of the nine Konso clans, a criteria which determines ethnic identity (see Chapter 2). At the same time, he did not fully consider himself as an Amhara (his family's ethnic origins) due to his lack of practical experience of that particular community. Simegne had never been there, was unfamiliar with their ways of life and his Amharic accent was different from the native Amharic speakers, which called into question any claims to an Amhara identity and acceptance by that community. The result was that he was unsure about which ethnic identity to claim to himself. Simegne expressed the view that he felt the pressure both internally (himself) and externally (community) to fall into one ethnic category but was rejected by both. However, on the 'Kebele' identification card (residence identification card), it is obligatory to mention one's ethnic identity and, as I have explained, this is commonly done by taking the father's ethnic origins. Local sociocultural contexts in Ethiopia are framed by an essentialised ethnic identity perspective and choices around ethnicity has political implications (e.g. most political parties in Ethiopia are organized around ethnicity), economic benefits (e.g. securing job opportunity based on ethnic and language backgrounds, see Chapter 5, how ethnic language was key for recruitment purpose) and consequences for individuals' day-to-day lives (e.g. individual friendships and inclusion and exclusion are often based on ethnic origins). All these factors add to the tension and confusion experienced by those who, like Simegne, are unable to identify themselves with a certain ethnic group or be accepted by others and do not have the option of taking on multiple ethnic identities. There were students in my example school in a similar situation.

Children and their parents talked to me about ethnic identity in relation to children who are born of parents from different ethnic groups (e.g. Kora has a Konso father and an Amhara mother).They said children took only the father's ethnic identity. Kora accepted that he was a Konso because of his father's Konso background. His father further explained that ethnic identity passed only through the father's clan lineage in Konso and that multiple ethnic identities were unacceptable. Similarly, in the formal government documents such as the personal identification card I referred to earlier, one can only identify one's self with one ethnicity (e.g. Konso or Amhara).

In my previous discussion, the mule's story illustrated how the choice and construction of identity are complex and influenced by internal (individual) and external (socio-culture, ethnolinguistic politics) factors. I have discussed ethnic identity as essentialised or static as a result of beliefs embedded in specific socio-cultural systems and the support Ethiopian politics and its constitution give to this stance. On the other hand, there is evidence of a 'becoming' identity, in which ethnic identity is negotiated and constructed through a social process, thus moving away from an understanding of identity as a natural entity. I argue that viewing identity as a social construct enhances openness, collaboration and a sense of belongingness among individuals and communities from different ethnic backgrounds. I chose the idea of identity 'tension' to describe situations in which individuals are unable to decide which ethnic identity they belong to and who, whether acceptable or not in the socio-cultural context, or hold multiple ethnic identities. Individuals can be caught between the fixed notion of identity as dependent on the paternal blood line and lack of choice in determining their own ethnic identity. Building upon my discussion above, I will now analyse language in relation to identity.

6.2. Understanding Language in Relation to Ethnic Identity

I have explored the idea of ethnic identity as more related to hereditary notions in my research context, though there were other competing views on ethnic identity. Taking into account this discussion, I analyse how individuals themselves perceive language in relation to their ethnic identity.

6.2.1. Affa Konso Only As a Part of Ethnic Identity

Many students, teachers, parents and others I spoke to in Konso believe that Affa Konso is the only language that represents the Konso identity or ethnic group. For instance, Temene, a student told me that:

> Affa Konso is my language; it is my mother tongue, the language of my ethnic group and the marker of my identity ('wanaw afen yefetawbet silehonena yekonso behereseb quanqua silehone maninete megelecha new' in Amharic). (Tamene, a grade 5 students).

In the above extract, the student emphasises the term 'my language', which is one of the key indicators of language ownership and identity. He links Affa Konso with the language and marker of the Konso ethnic group and identity. Although Temene has acquired and can fluently speak Amharic, he does not consider it as his own language. He also acquired some English as part of

his education (in fact, he was one of the top students in English and other subjects), but he does not accept it as his language; neither Amharic nor English are included in 'my language'. Rather, Tamene considers them as languages belonging to others, other ethnic groups. Many other individuals I spoke to in the Konso community held similar views, due to being their mother tongue and a marker of the Konso ethnic identity and due to the current Ethiopian political landscape that makes a one-to-one relationship between ethnic language and ethnic identity. As discussed earlier, according to the FDRE Constitution (1995), to gain the status of an ethnic group, that group must have a common language.

Tamir (a student) had a different perspective regarding the relationship between ethnic identity and the language:

> Konsigna (Affa Konso) is the language of my country (in this context, Konso Woreda, Konso ethnic group). So, it is my identity, even if I cannot speak the language. (Tamir, a grade 7 student).

While Tamir views Affa Konso as part of her ethnic identity, she has not acquired the language nor does she use it for communication purposes. Despite having no practical relationship with Affa Konso in terms of her language use, she claims it as a marker of her identity due to its association with her ethnic group. Here, members of the Konso ethnic group do not have to speak Affa Konso in order for it to be part of their Konso identity, since Affa Konso has a direct association with the Konso identity. Thus, a language can be a part of one's identity based on the language that 'belongs' to an individual's ethnic group, regardless of the ability to speak it. This illustrates the emotional attachment members of an ethnic group can have towards their ethnic language. However, the question that arises is: how can ethnic language be a marker of one's ethnic identity in the absence of performance and without using and representing it in interactional processes, whether in verbal or written forms?

For Emebet (a student), language has nothing to do with gaining ethnic identity:

> Language does not determine ethnic identity. It is unlikely to say that one is not a member of a certain ethnic group unless otherwise he/she can speak the ethnic language. Ethnic identity is about blood relationship'. (Emebet, a student).

Thus for Emebet, ethnic language is not a key aspect of ethnic identity at an individual level. In line with earlier discussions, she emphasises that as a Konso, ethnic identity is passed on through

family, regardless of an individual's proficiency in the ethnic language. Emebet is ethnically a Konso but sees Amharic as her mother tongue and cannot not speak her ethnic language, Affa Konso. But her lack of proficiency in her ethnic language does not affect her ethnic identity because it is seen as determined by her ethnic family background. Other students (e.g. Mahider, Selam) expressed similar views: in their understanding, ethnic language is not inextricably related to ethnic identity since these students see themselves as Konsos despite not speaking Affa Konso.

The other question that emerged for me is: how can Tamir and others claim Affa Konso as part of their identity despite not speaking it in the context where Affa Konso as a marker of ethnic identity is embedded in the Konso socio-cultural system? (Particularly, given that the ethnic language has become so central to political power and decision-making in Ethiopia). Students, teachers, school officials, parents and Woreda officials echoed the view that one's ethnic identity was not dependent upon speaking the ethnic language, though they highly valued it and considered it as a marker of Konso identity. At the same time, according to clan leaders, elders and parents, members of the Konso ethnic group were expected to speak Affa Konso and not doing so attracted disapproval and concern. It was also apparent that students living in the Konso community who did not speak their ethnic language, felt guilty, as did their parents.

Besides students' views on ethnic language and identity, teachers, parents and officials limited their ethnic language to their identity. For instance, Tadesse, (a teacher) explained that:

> Konsigna (Affa Konso) is my mother tongue, my language and identity. Because, it is easy for me to express and communicate with others who understand the language. Through which I can communicate with my family, ethnic group, etc. and also respect my ethnic community. (Tadesse, a teacher).

For Tadesse, besides being both his mother tongue and ethnic language, he uses Affa Konso because he can express his ideas and feelings effortlessly to others in his group so that claiming an ethnic identity can only be done through one's ethnic language. Additionally, as the widely used language in the family and the Konso community, Affa Konso is strongly connected with Tadesse's identity. Interestingly, he stated that the use of Affa Konso in the Konso community was a marker of respect to the community, which also showed a sense of belonging. In his understanding, because of all these elements, Affa Konso was the only language that could be used in relation to his ethnic identity. His second languages (Amharic and English) were not a part of his Konso identity since they did not fit the four criteria (i.e. mother tongue; ethnic language; the

language of use in the Konso community; a marker of respect to his community). Although he often used Amharic in school and English was the language of his profession and teaching (in the second cycle of primary education), they were the languages he used for communication with non-Affa Konso speakers. For Tadesse, these languages have instrumental rather than symbolic value. Thus, for a language to be part of one's identity, being proficient and using it widely is not enough: what is more important is that it is the language of the ethnic group the individual belongs to.

For the school official who discussed these issues with me, Affa Konso and the Konso identity were interconnected: 'when people speak Affa Konso, it does indicate a Konso identity'. He further said that Affa Konso provided a unique feature to the Konso ethnic group that helped differentiate them from others. He further emphasised that 'I use Affa Konso with its speakers: students, teachers and students' parents who visit the school, for its convenience to fully express my ideas and expressing a sense of closeness to them'. Similarly, the Konso Woreda Cultural and Tourism office expert, who was responsible for promoting the Konso language and culture, explained that:

> The Konso people to be considered as a community, its language, uniqueness and identity are imperative. Language is the marker of identity and the community expresses its culture using language. So, language and community and language and identity go hand in hand… (The Woreda Culture and Tourism expert).

The Woreda culture expert explained the relationship between language and identity as distinctive to the Konso community. The Konso language is indispensable to the existence of the Konso community and without it, the continuity of the Konso ethnic group as a community would be jeopardised. He also emphasised the position of Affa Konso as a signifier of Konso identity, through which people could express their culture and identity. From this perspective, one in which there is a one-to-one relationship between the Konso language and the Konso as an ethnic group, Affa Konso is what distinguishes the Konso from other ethnic groups. Yet this kind of language and identity equation is currently being challenged as language and identities change and shift due to factors like people's mobility and the increasingly multilingual environment in which people live. For instance, members of different ethnic groups can share the same language (e.g. bilinguals who live in the border of Konso and Borena Oromo) or speak both languages (Affa Konso and Afan Oromo).

In the above discussion I have discussed the view of Affa Konso as a part of individual and group identity, regardless of whether individuals speak it or not. Participants took ownership of it (e.g.

'my language' and the language of 'my ethnic group') and incorporated it into their identity. Affa Konso was seen as the only language that can represent the Konso and its members. This understanding is underpinned by the notion of language and ethnic identity as fixed, hereditary and linearly interconnected. The second languages that were acquired through the course of life were not taken as part of ethnic identity because they were considered to be the languages of 'others'. Second languages were seen as having their own ethnic groups who used them to express and represent their identities. In other words, second languages were simply seen as a means of communication with people outside the circle of one's ethnic community, rather than related to a Konso identity. I now look at a different perspective from which multiple languages are viewed as identity markers and resources.

6.2.2. Multiple Languages As Identity Markers and Resources

Unlike previous perceptions discussed here that restrict ethnic language to identity, some respondents moved beyond that position, seeing that multiple languages could be a resource and a part of one's identity. For example, Gara (a teacher) said that:

> I speak Affa Konso, Amharic, English, Gidoligna and Oromigna and all these are my languages. I developed Affa Konso from family and Konso community, Amharic from school and town community, English from school, Gidoligna from the neighboring community as I attended my secondary education in Gidole and Oromigna from the neighboring Oromo community. These communities are my people, relatives, friends; we live together in one country. I benefit from speaking all these languages; they are beneficial, like holding multiple currencies. (Gara, a grade 5 teacher).

In the above extract, Gara refers to his multilingual language behaviour and talks about how he developed multiple languages in different contexts and through different interactional processes. Although a member of the Konso ethnic group, he does not restrict himself to Affa Konso and does not claim as his only language. Rather, he embraces all the languages he can speak as part of his multi-linguistic identity. The way in which he emphasises 'my language' and 'my people' reflects his positive attitude towards different languages and communities, which seem important strands in opening up the mind of individuals, developing multiple languages and constructing multiple identities. He developed different languages through interactions with different language communities and contexts (home, school and neighboring communities) at different times and places. This illustrates how individuals construct multiple languages and identities through

ongoing processes and throughout their lives. In Gara's case, the different layers of language development are evident. From the early stages of life starting with Affa Konso as his mother tongue, Gara has continually been building upon his first language with subsequent additional languages. His account also underlines how the use of different languages is interconnected with diverse purposes and contexts, how multiple identities are represented through different language uses and performances and how languages help express identities.

The practical benefits of being a multilingual means that language is a resource to Gara, connecting well with the idea of 'language as currency' (like a money): having multiple languages can be like holding different kind of currencies in the wider market/social world (e.g. eliminates the need for currency change/translator). Gara uses his languages in different contexts and for different purposes, embracing them as 'my languages' and as part of his language repertoire, and in this way. His positive attitudes towards the different communities, 'my people', links these languages with identity, becoming a part of his multiple identities too.

Other participants referred to other languages, beyond their ethnic language, as a resource. For example, Alemu (a grade 7 student) said that:

> Affa Konso is my mother tongue, ethnic language and can express my ideas and feelings more than any other languages. I can also express my ideas in Amharic and it is also my language as I use it. Amharic is a Federal working language and the language of Ethiopia as an Ethiopian. I also use English in school. (Alemu, a grade 7 student).

As shown above, Alemu does not solely identify with ethnic language, Affa Konso in terms of his language and identity. Rather, he uses three different languages in different contexts and for different purposes, claiming them as his languages. Here, language use at different levels and purposes was the reason for considering them as part of his identities. Alemu has moved away from his ethnic language, viewing language instead as a resource for wider communication and academic purposes. Similarly, Misrak (a student), expressed her views in relation to multiple languages as a resource:

> I use Affa Konso at home, Amharic and English at school. I also want to improve my English to communicate with 'Ferenjes' (foreigners) since they do not speak Amharic. (Misrak, a grade 5 student).

Misrak links language with its use and purpose. Her positive attitudes to languages and interest in and plans to develop them further for different purposes (e.g. to communicate with foreigners using English) are an indication that these languages are becoming part of her identity. Beyond the academic benefits of English, she observed that some people were communicating in English with foreign (non-Ethiopian) tourists in Karat, Konso (e.g. tour guides); this has helped her to see language as a resource. This has encouraged her to develop further the English language she has acquired in school.

In this section, I have analysed multiple languages in terms of use and performance in different contexts and for different purposes, providing an insight into how the various languages that individuals spoke helped to manifest multiple identities. I have also illustrated how multiple languages were being continually constructed through interactions with different people, communities and in multiple contexts and how this was related to multiple identities. Additionally, language as a resource has emerged as a concept that emphasises the significance of multilingualism and signifies multiple identities through their use and performance. Taking languages and identities beyond essentialised notions that confine individuals within the boundaries of their ethnic group's language promotes flexibility and collaboration among the various ethnic groups. In the next section, I focus on the language hierarchies my multilingual respondents constructed, depending upon the language functions and relevance in different situations.

6.2.3. Hierarchies of Languages in Relation to Identities

The respondents who had multiple languages as part of their language resource, structured their languages according to their importance to specific contexts and purposes. For example, Alemu (a student) expressed that:

> I am represented by Affa Konso in my locality with Konso community, Amharic in school and out of my locality and some English in school. (Alemu, a grade 7 student).

The different languages that Alemu developed through various interactional processes were used and represented by him differently in diverse contexts. In his earlier quote, Alemu explained the hierarchy of languages in terms of his proficiency and their importance to the circumstances. He stated Affa Konso as his main language since he could express himself much better than in Amharic and English. He associated Amharic with nation-wide communication and national

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identity (in fact, all Ethiopian languages can signify an Ethiopian identity since they have equal recognition in the Constitution (FDRE, 1995)) and English as the language of schooling (second cycle of primary). Thus, the language the student chose and used in a particular interactional encounter and context implied a linguistic representation drawn from his language repertoire. In multilingual settings, every interactional situation involves an individual's linguistic representation and verbal or written interaction can manifest one's identities.

Students' parents also made reference to the hierarchy of their multiple languages in terms of importance, contexts and purposes. For instance, in discussion with Karafo (Dawit's father) about the use of his different languages, he said:

> Affa Konso is my mother tongue by which I grew up. Amharic is my second language that I use it for wider communication; English is the language of my profession that I also use it for communicating with non-Ethiopians and tourists (common in Konso), Oromigna and Derashigna are the languages that I use with neighboring Oromo and Derashe communities. (Karafo, Dawit's father).

As illustrated in this extract, Karafo expressed his multiple languages and prioritized them in terms of their importance in certain situations. He associated the use of all the languages he could speak, depending upon their significance to his life history, day-to-day life and social relationships. So Affa Konso was linked with its wider use in the Konso community, closeness to his ethnic identity and as an ethnic language. In this regard, he said that, "It is the foundation of ourselves (as a Konso people) and the source that we emerged from! It is the language that we widely communicate in and use to build a relationship with our Konso community". This suggests that his ethnic language has a core position for Karafo. The strong terms he used like our 'foundation' and 'source' also shows how he valued Affa Konso and placed it at the centre of the Konso community. It was no surprise that Affa Konso was viewed as the main language of the Konso ethnic group and that for the majority of the community, it served as a primary way in which people felt interconnected with one another. However, in a multilingual environment like Karat town, individuals negotiated and performed different languages and identities to fit the situations and depending upon their importance. This shows how people use multiple languages hierarchically, and sometimes simultaneously (through code-switching), in a particular interactional encounter (e.g. as my observation in Karafo's family and discussed in Chapter 5). As Karafo, one of the student's mothers (Almaz) said that she used to communicate in Affa Konso during her childhood in a rural

Konso village but that now, in Karat town, she predominantly used Amharic and sometimes the Oromo language. This suggests that the relationship between ethnic language to identity is not a simple one-to-one equation but rather, that individuals develop multiple languages through processes and practices and are represented by their languages based on time and place.

6.3. Conclusion

In this chapter, I have analysed people's understandings of the concept of identity and its relationship with languages since there are a "range of diverse and competing perspectives on …identity" (Baxter, 2016, 34) and language. In my research context, identity was largely essentialised, as the majority of my respondents believed in the hereditary aspect of their ethnic identity rather than seeing it as a social construct. This dominant idea of identity as a 'product rather than process' (Omoniyi and White, 2006, 17) was partly caused by Konso clan system which determines individuals' ethnic background and political factors, and partly by constitutional support for ethnic groups and the country's ethnolinguistic political structure. Being a Konso as a fixed ethnic identity resulted from the Konso clan system whereby children 'receive' their ethnic identity from one of the nine Konso clans through their father's line (see Chapter 2). In this context, the idea that ethnic identity is socially constructed rather than through blood ties is entirely at odds with the Konso community's beliefs.

However, the notion of a 'becoming identity' has emerged as an alternative concept which rejects blood relationship as a key determinant of ethnic identity, involving a shift of ethnic identity from one form (e.g. being a Dereshe) to the other (being a Konso). From this perspective, individuals were negotiating their hereditary ethnic background and shaping their ethnic identities through the process of developing the language and culture of a Konso community. I have also introduced the idea of identity tension that emphasises how individuals can be caught between the pressure of an ethnic group's social-cultural beliefs about ethnic identity and an individual's wish to make an identity choice. Individuals wishing to define their own ethnic identities encountered practical challenges, since "Identity that people 'inhabit' (that is, choose for themselves) are constrained … by others" (Blommaert, 2006, cited in Preece, 2016, 3). However, none of these conceptualizations of ethnic identity include the notion of a multiplicity of ethnic identities, one which that gives individuals the opportunity to choose and construct plural ethnic identities through social processes at a particular time and place. For instance, Simegne (a teacher) did not feel able to claim both the

Konso and Amhara ethnic identities and yet was unable to choose one, let alone to claim multiple ethnic identities.

An understanding of ethnic identity as a static idea was also reflected in how respondents perceived language. Their ethnic language was directly linked with ethnic identity, as these social constructs were assumed to have an inherent interconnection with one another. Respondents' emotional attachment to ethnic language is enhanced by the ways in which it is promoted in the current social, cultural and political landscape of Ethiopia. In the following chapters, I will analyse how such practices are reflected in the implementation of language policy processes. From other perspectives, multiple languages are accepted as part of identities and are regarded as a resource. This mirrors the reality on the ground in recognizing the multilingual situation of the Karat Konso community and the ways in which language and identities are constructed through processes rather than being givens. It also chimes with those individuals who see language as a resource and as not limited by ethnic boundaries and not solely a marker of ethnic identity. As May (2012, 134) suggests, language does not always work as a marker of ethnic identity, and a certain language does not necessarily correspond with a particular ethnic group since different ethnic groups can use the same language.

I have also discussed how respondents placed languages hierarchically in terms of their use, importance and context. Karafo, Almaz and other respondents put their ethnic language at the core of the hierarchy due to their emotional attachment to it and it being widely used in their ethnic group. However, individuals also had attachments to other languages they had acquired and that they used in different contexts, which had implications for their identities (Rampton, 1990). As Omoniyi (2006, 20) argues, in a given interactional context, language (s) is chosen according to its importance to the situation or according to how well it can express a speaker's identity. Hence, in terms of the link between language and identities, every language, including the ethnic language that the person speaks or 'performs' represents his/her identity in different contexts. This contests the essentialist notion that makes a one-to-one correspondence between an ethnic language and an ethnic identity, since using and performing different languages manifests one's multiple identities.

Chapter Seven: Language Interactions and Policy Enactment in the School Environment

The purpose of this chapter is to analyse students' and teachers' language choice and use in the school and in relation to language-in-education policy implementation. To achieve this, I will explore how and why students use different languages in different contexts in school with peers in informal spaces (e.g. a playground) and with teachers and head teachers in school. This addresses sub-research question 3 - How do primary school students use different languages in the classroom and other school settings? I will also analyse teachers' language use in classroom's teaching-learning process. This addresses part of the sub-research question 4 - How are language policies viewed, practised and planned in the classroom, school and community? I will also provide an insight into the influence of a school's official language (Amharic) and mediums of instruction (Amharic and English) on the students' and teachers' language use in different interactional contexts within school, and the response of students and teachers to this influence.

7.1. Students' Interactions in the Playground

In Karat primary school, Amharic is used as the medium of instruction in the first cycle of primary education (grades 1-4) while English is used as the medium of instruction in the second cycle of primary education (grades 5-8). This is in line with the official language-in-education policy of the Konso Woreda education office. I explore the students' informal interaction with peers, in relation to the different language uses among themselves in the school playground. I selected particular school communicative events such as regular school breaks, and times when the students collected their exam results. I have taken the school break time as it is one of the events where students interact with their peers on a daily basis. It is a good representation of the students' informal interaction in school since most of the students engage in this process. I also include students' interaction after the first semester final exam period as it provides an opportunity for the students to talk amongst themselves about their results.

The regular school break times took place between 10:00 and 10:15 a.m. and between 2:30 and 2:45 p.m. in the morning and afternoon shifts respectively. During these periods, the majority of students eagerly vacated their classrooms and rushed to the open spaces, spreading out within the school compound. The students behaved freely, when alone or with their peers, and this situation created an interesting social drama. Some students raced against each other in the field, some played games (e.g. playing and jumping in rectangular and circular lines drawn on the dusty

ground, throwing a small handmade ball at others/group members (these are mainly girls' games), or playing football with a handmade fabric ball (mainly for boys but sometimes girls also play). Some of the students chatted in pairs and groups, some stayed idle and observed others, and some discussed academic related (e.g. assignments) or personal issues.

From these different activities, I discuss two groups of girls who played games in the open space opposite the head teacher's office. Most of the students' school break time activities took place in this space (see Figure 16 below), as it was the only available convenient place for students to play (other than the football and volleyball grounds which were situated behind the classrooms). The first group of students included about 8 girls (estimated ages ranged from 10 to 15 years old) who came from Karat town, and the second group was about 6 girls (estimated ages ranged from 12 to 16 years old) who came from a rural background. Both groups separately played the same game with rectangular and circular lines sketched on the dusty ground using a piece of stick or stone (see Figure 17 below). It was an interesting game and was frequently played by girls in the school and sometimes boys also watched it.

Figure 16: School's space for children's informal interactions   Figure 17: Children playing a 'Kila kile' game during school break time

Through keen observation of the students' actions and language interactions while they were playing at break time, I saw that they mainly played and chatted with friends who shared the same language background, geographic location (e.g. town or rural), grade levels (e.g. the same section, grade, or cycle), age group, and gender. For instance, the first group of girls was from Karat town, with an Amharic background, and they used Amharic when playing the game. The second group of girls was from a rural background (outside Karat town), and mainly used Affa Konso when playing. These two groups of students primarily used their first languages when giving and taking instructions, competing to take the next turn, and complaining about friends' mistakes, etc. In these

informal peer interactions the students reflected their home language experiences while they were playing and chatting among themselves. This was because, in an informal communicative situation, students voluntarily and easily interacted in the language they understood best and, therefore, could sustain their concentration in the game. They used the easiest language for them, and sometimes there was serious dialogue in order to defend their faults and convince their group mates about their point of views. However, the students did not always strictly follow one language (Amharic or Affa Konso), they also code-switched and used Affa Konso, Amharic and some English words to effectively communicate with each other and enhance their interaction. For instance, during playing the rural students used common Amharic expressions like 'quasun amchi' (for girls)/ 'quasun amta' (for boys) (please, bring the ball), 'yene tera new' (it is my turn), 'foreshe/ch' (he/she made a mistake), and 'gobez' (a brave boy/girl). The students also used some English words such as 'nice', 'very good', and 'good' to encourage their friends. After playing their games, the two groups used a mix of Amharic and English words to return to their classrooms. (e.g. 'Ye (Amharic word) English (English word) astemari eyemeta new wede (Amharic phrases) class (English word) enigiba (Amharic word)' (Let us go to our classroom, the English teacher is coming'). This peer interaction revealed that students' choice and use of language while in the playground relied more on their own language preference with code-switching. Their language choice and use were not directly influenced by the legitimised school's official language.

The above game was one of the girls' favorite games, usually played during break times by at least one group of girls in the usual space. Often, boys circled the girls' performances and watched what they were doing. When I asked the boys why they did not play such a game, they replied 'it is a girls' game, and football, sport and gymnastics are our games.' In this regard, I often saw boys playing football during break times in school. I observed that, when the groups of children had mixed town and rural backgrounds, they used more of Amharic as a common language during their group playing. The students chose Amharic as the common language of interaction between students of different language backgrounds, while in school. This showed the students' attitudes towards different languages (e.g. which language to use when and to address different language groups). During in-group's interactions they used their mother tongue (Amharic or Affa Konso with code-switching) but in mixed groups, they used the common language (Amharic with code-switching) while engaged in playing and other school activities).

I observed similar language experiences in other informal language environments in school, particularly after the collection of the first semester final examination results (in the week of 25th January 2016), and in other non-classroom settings. For example, after morning and evening flag ceremonies, or during brief moments of walking to classrooms or leaving the school compound, students used the language they preferred with code-switching when talking with their friends or persons close to them. The language choice and use with a teacher when students were receiving their exam results and the language choice and use with their friends immediately after they received their results were different. Affa Konso speaking children used Amharic as the official language of school when they were with the teachers who delivered their exam papers; however, after receiving their exam results, the students expressed their ideas and feelings with their friends, about their exam results, in their preferred language with code-switching. As with the language use in the playground, their interaction was not influenced by external factors such as the official school language.

Figure 18: Students after collecting their exam papers.

Nevertheless, there were some cases where language power relations were reflected in a mixed language group's interaction. For example, I observed three, grade 2 male students (about 9 or 10 years old), who were sitting on the ground by the terrace of the administrative office talking about their exam results in Amharic. Two of them could speak Amharic and the other boy spoke both Amharic and Affa Konso. Due to this reason they used Amharic as a common language when playing and chatting and through which they established a friendship as well. In this type of situation, the students with a Konso background were expected to fill the communication gap within the group and converse in the common language, Amharic, even in informal

communication. This shows that, in some aspects of student interaction, there were power relations among different language speakers that influenced the language choice during students' informal interactions but that they were largely unrestricted. This also implies the indirect effect of classroom language experience, and students' predisposition to Amharic, in relation to its power as the working and academic language of the school.

In another example of peer interaction, the student monitor/leader used Amharic when he/she communicated with the other students. The classroom student monitors were responsible for classroom discipline and representing their classmates and facilitating information between the students and teachers. During collection of the exam results, some teachers assigned the student monitor to distribute the exam papers, in effect, to do the teacher's task. This assignment shared responsibility with some power for the student monitors who did tasks to assist the teachers. In terms of language use, the student monitors followed what the teachers did when communicating with students during delivery of their exam results (as assigned by their teachers); although they did not strictly follow Amharic (they sometimes mixed Affa Konso depending on who they spoke to), they mainly communicated in the official school working language, Amharic. This suggests that the teachers' behaviour and school regulations (e.g. the use of an official language for academic related purposes in school) shaped the language choice and use of the student monitors in relation to a school-focused task.

7.2. Students' Informal Interaction with Teachers

In this section, I explore the language interaction between students and teachers (and head teachers) in a non-classroom school setting. I observed that this language context is not as free as that of peer communication, nor as strict as that of the classroom language interaction which emphasises the use of an official language; however, it exists between students' peers interaction and policy framed classroom interaction.

While I was sitting on the verandah of the teachers' staff room I observed a female teacher talking to a group of students using Amharic. She was asking the students to bring their exercise books in order to get marks based on their attendance, classroom assignments, tidiness, classroom participation, etc. I observed that, as with other teachers, she used Amharic as a common language during informal communication in school with an individual or a group of students. During the flag ceremony, school officials, unit leaders, club leaders and teachers used Amharic when making

announcements (e.g. advice on studying, provide information on examination schedules and tutorial classes) to students. Although not regulated, teachers also expected from students which languages to use in school due to the influence of the school working language. Additionally, teachers' and students' language backgrounds affected the language choice and use during informal interaction in school. For instance, the students from a rural background tended to use Affa Konso with teachers and head teachers who shared the same language and ethnic backgrounds. For example, when I was with the head teacher around his office, two grade 8 female students (about 17 year old) from a rural area, came to us and directly explained their cases to him in Affa Konso:

> Students (together): 'Teacher, we want to have a photo for the grade 8 regional examination's registration. What is required from us and we want to do it now.'

> Head teacher: 'You have to pay 10 ETB for the school, and I will give you a receipt. Then you will go to the town (centre) and contact the photographer.'

> Students: 'Can we take a photo in other places and bring it for you, is it possible?' (Fully translated from Affa Konso to Amharic by the head teacher).

In the above extract, the students freely initiated conversation in Affa Konso with the head teacher, and all of them communicated in the non-official school language. In this specific case, they prioritized Affa Konso to discuss a school administrative issue (i.e. how to fulfil the school procedure in order to register for the grade 8 regional examinations) within a school with an official school working language. Thus, beyond the teachers' and students' language background, their willingness to use a certain language in their informal communication, thereby giving space for the students to value and use their language repertoire, was an essential element in informal student-teacher interaction. This head teacher commonly communicated with the rural children using Affa Konso, in school. Similarly, students with a Konso background expressed that they mostly used Affa Konso with the head teacher when discussing personal, academic and administrative matters, and also with teachers who had the Konso language and ethnic background.

Accordingly, Dawit (a student) said, 'I usually use Affa Konso with the head teacher because he is a Konso.' This indicated that if a student was a member of the Konso ethnic group (and could speak Affa Konso) they had no hesitation communicating in Affa Konso with him/her. During this kind of interactional process, students would not necessarily take into account the school working language or whether the content of discussion was formal, academic or informal. This suggests

how the students and teachers, with the same language and ethnic background, valued their ethnic language and at the same time challenged the formal language context that overlooked Affa Konso (even with the head teacher who was responsible for implementing the official policy in the school).

Moreover, the school official explained, 'I mostly use Affa Konso when I think that the students will not understand Amharic well; also it was easier for me to explain issues for students as it was my main language.' Here, both the school official and these students shared the same home language experience and attitudes towards their ethnic language, such as the use of Affa Konso to express their ideas rather than their second language, and its free use in-group interaction. Even in the school's office, students did not strictly follow the official language when communicating with the vice head teacher and head teacher; depending upon their preference they could use Affa Konso, Amharic or a mix of both languages. For instance, I observed that the vice head teacher communicated with a student at his office about his frequent absence from school and his not doing assignments, using both Affa Konso and Amharic. On another day he talked with a student in Affa Konso and advised him to bring his parents to school to discuss his low academic performance (later, the vice head teacher explained to me the content of his discussion with the student).

The above examples revealed that sharing the same Affa Konso language and Konso ethnic backgrounds encouraged students to use their ethnic language in school. However, there were also students who complied with the school official working language due to their language background and/or possibly respecting the formal context of the office. For instance, three students (two male and one female) entered the head teacher's office and formally spoke their case. They said, 'Teacher, we have corrections on the spelling of our names' (a list that holds names of the grade 8 students was posted on the school board for students to check the spelling of their names before the list was officially transferred to the Woreda education office). These students communicated with the head teacher and formally requested their case in Amharic. This indicated the use of a formal working language between students and the head teacher in the school's office. It appears to me that the use of Amharic was common for informal communication between students and teachers although there was no school policy that legitimated which language to use for informal purposes in the school. An exception was that in the Karat primary school which had a policy, proposed by the school, for students and teachers to use and practice English in their informal

interactions in school every Friday. This aimed to improve their spoken English. This proposal was posted in the staff room and also announced to the students. However, as observed and explained by the students and teachers, it was impractical due to their low English skill and confidence when practicing with friends. For instance, Bekele (one of the top students in his class at grade 7) said, 'some students laugh at me when I want to practice my English with them and others also consider it as boasting' ('Andandochu temariwoch yisikalu andandochu degmo inde gura yikotirutal' in Amharic).

The discussion above illustrates that the students' and teachers' informal interactions were partly shaped by the school working language (e.g. most teachers passed information and communicated with students in Amharic, the official language). The students and teachers also flexibly used their home languages and mixed both Amharic and Affa Konso in informal interactions in school. However, the head teacher (and Konso teachers) and rural Konso children mostly used Affa Konso in formal and informal interactions in school, including when in the office. Nevertheless, in some interactional situations, the students were expected to have a certain level of Affa Konso and Amharic language proficiency, and failing to meet this would result in undesirable comments from peers. I will discuss this issue next.

7.3. Students' Perspectives on Speaking a Second Language

This section analyses students' perspectives and comments on speaking a second language (Affa Konso or Amharic) and its influence on their use and choice of language. As discussed earlier, the students used Affa Konso, Amharic and some English words when informally interacting among themselves. When mixed language background children met, they mainly communicated using Amharic as a common language. However, Affa Konso was not commonly used by students from different language groups in school. Why students did not use Affa Konso in mixed language groups is the question to be addressed here. Mahider, a female student and an Amharic speaker, said that some of the students from Karat town had limited interaction with rural children with an Affa Konso language background (who mainly, or only, speak Affa Konso). Mahider said, 'I use Amharic in school. All my close friends speak Amharic (e.g. Aster, Sara and Emebet); they could not speak Affa Konso at all.' This experience of students restricting themselves to the use of their mother tongue and to establish friendships from a similar language background had its reasons. There were students who tended to give comments on the second language ability of different

groups (both Affa Konso and Amharic backgrounds). Accordingly, Mahider expressed these feelings:

> We are not confident to use our limited Konsigna (Affa Konso) with rural children. Oh my God! They laugh so much at us when we speak a broken Konsigna, ('Are besmeab yisikalu betam' in Amharic). Because some students think that we deliberately avoid speaking it or unwilling to speak the language. But this is not true. Others also say that why you have not developed Konsigna as you are from the Konso ethnic group. (Mahider, grade 8 student).

The above extract shows that Mahider and her friends did not have the courage to use Affa Konso with the rural background children in school for fear of negative comments from their peers. Although their home language environment and families' attitudes towards language, and the value assigned to different languages did not enable them to develop Affa Konso (see Chapter 5), this group of children were not free to receive a serious comment from their peers (e.g. 'Are not you a Konso?' 'Unwilling to speak the language'). Such comments can be associated with students' attitudes towards Affa Konso and its users. The Konso socio-cultural system that acknowledges 'the Konso language as the marker of Konso identity', people feel that the members of the Konso family should speak the language. Similarly, the children who commented ('Are not you a Konso?) reflected what they had experienced within the socio-cultural setting as a member of the community. For them, if the students of the Konso family failed to speak the ethnic language, it would be due to the negative attitudes towards the language. And it was difficult for them to accept these children who lacked Affa Konso as members of the Konso community. However, for Mahider and her friends, this claim was unacceptable; instead they blamed the home language environment for their limited Affa Konso. Moreover, these students explained that they felt some discomfort and were ashamed of not developing Affa Konso, their ethnic language, as this had some implications on their Konso ethnic identity (e.g. as the clan leader expressed, the socio-cultural milieu of the Konso community required their members to speak the language, see Chapter 5).

On the other hand, the comments of the peers were not only limited to children who wanted to speak their limited Affa Konso in school, but it also applied to the rural children who spoke their second language, Amharic. Some students from the town who had an Amharic background

laughed at or ridiculed (discouraged) the rural students when they communicated in Amharic with broken or ungrammatical use. In this regard, Dawit said that:

> There are some rural children who are afraid of speaking Amharic in school (in fear of peers' comments or ridicule) which limits them mostly to use Affa Konso. These children mostly use Affa Konso in school and they sometimes mix some Amharic. Because, some students discourage them. They will not use Amharic again in fear of such peers' comments (e.g. laugh at them). (Dawit, grade 8 student).

This extract illustrates that there were students who assigned a certain level of Amharic language proficiency to a student's identity, due to its high status position as the working language in school. In these students' views, students were expected to fulfill certain expectations in terms of their proficiency in Amharic. Thus the students' language choice and use in school was not only the result of their own interest but was also influenced by other factors (like the comments of their peers) that deterred language use. Students were not always free to speak in the second language in school. Although the students' interaction with their peers was largely considered to be a good opportunity to develop different languages, sometimes, as in this case, it had a negative effect on the students' language use and development. Negative or discouraging comments from their peers' affected both groups of children, Amharic and Affa Konso speakers. These two comments regarding different language groups appear to be rooted in two different dimensions. The first student's comments on Affa Konso speakers was the result of socio-cultural influence when not acquiring the ethnic language, which was considered as a marker of Konso identity; whereas the second student's comment on Amharic speakers was as a result of the school system that assigned the official and high status language to student identities. Consequently, the school situation played dual roles with varying degrees of influence when creating enabling conditions or hindering environments for students to develop, use and improve different languages. The school was the place where children were meant to learn and to be encouraged to develop multiple languages and use them in different contexts and purposes. However, as demonstrated above, this was not always true.

Moreover, in line with the above ideas, the school official explained that:

> Speaking Amharic can be taken as a big achievement in our school. For example, if the students from rural background make some pronunciation or grammar mistake in their conversation, others laugh at them…Due to this reason,

sometimes students are not interested to answer questions and they prefer to keep quiet in classroom. (School official).

From the above extract, the peers' critical comments were not only limited to students' informal interaction but also to the classroom situation. As the school official said, discouraging children to communicate, with whatever language they were using in the classroom, significantly affected their participation, academic performance, stability and retention in school, and also their identity. He further said that 'Students should not be ashamed of making mistake in their second language, and the teachers had to motivate children to speak and develop different languages and teach them all languages are equal.'

In connection to the above points, during my classroom observation of the grade 4 Amharic class, a student raised his hand and spoke to the teacher about some students who had limited Amharic skills. He said, 'Teacher…these children (3 children) could not speak Amharic.' The teacher said, 'Who are they …?' He approached the children and asked them about their background and their knowledge of Amharic (in a large class size of about 50 children the teacher has difficulty in closely knowing his students' language and academic profiles). He explained to me that these children had recently changed from a rural school to the Karat primary school. The teacher said, 'The students in rural schools had Amharic language difficulty as most of the teachers there used Affa Konso in their teaching.' However, because of their language background, these specific children were identified by their peers, marginalised and became an issue of discussion and attention in the classroom. At that grade 4 level, not understanding Amharic became questionable because of its official status and its associated success in academic performance and school life. That was why these three children were commented on by their peers, in the classroom, in the presence of their teacher.

Furthermore, the school official said that adults had the same experience of not speaking their mother tongue outside their localities because of critical comments from others. He said, 'In fact some adults are not comfortable in using their mother tongue (Affa Konso) when they travel outside the Konso Woreda, particularly in urban areas like Hawassa or Addis Ababa.' This adult language experience, and loss of confidence when using their ethnic language outside their locality, partly resulted from the stereotypic conviction from the wider social context that

associated undesirable meanings with minority ethnic languages and groups (like labeling minority language as a 'language that cannot help to cross a river', see Chapter 5).

7.4. Enacting Language-in-Education Policy in Classrooms

This section analyses how teachers implemented the official language-in-education policy in a structured language environment, the classroom. The official language-in-education policy of the Konso Woreda says that Amharic and English are to be the mediums of instruction in the first cycle of primary education (grades 1 to 4) and the second cycle of primary education (grades 5 to 8) respectively, and English should be given as a subject starting from grade 1 onwards. Within this policy framework, I will look at how the classroom teaching-learning process complies, competes, challenges and contradicts the official language policy in school along with the teachers' agency and how this shapes students' language use in school. To do this, I have taken two different classes within the first cycle of primary- grade 1 Amharic class and grade 1 Environmental Science class - where teachers exhibited two different approaches in their teaching. The Amharic class teacher exclusively used Amharic, but the Environmental Science class teacher employed both Amharic and Affa Konso in the classroom. Additionally, I have taken the grade 7 Civic class in order to analyse how the English medium of instruction is implemented in the second cycle of primary education. This class was selected mainly due to the use of different languages and high student/teacher interaction in the classroom, among others.

7.4.1. Complying or Competing with the Official Policy, the First Cycle of Primary Education

My discussion here focuses on how teachers employ different strategies in the teaching-learning process of the first cycle of primary education. I analyse the Grade 1 Amharic class and Environmental Science classes based on my classroom observations and discussions with teachers and students. The grade 1 students comprised of Karat town and rural backgrounds who spoke Amharic and/or Affa Konso. About 50 students were attending these lessons during my visit to the classrooms. As an introduction, Fatuma (an Amharic teacher), revised the past lesson which was about Amharic greetings, as follows:

> Teacher: 'Dehina aderachu yemintekemew sewochin tewat selamta lemesitet new' (we use good morning to greet people in the morning).
> Teacher: 'Dehina aderachu' (Good morning).
> Sudents (loudly): 'Dehina aderachu' (Good morning).

Teacher: 'Dehina walachu yemintekemew sewochin keseat behwala selamta lemesitet new' (we use good afternoon to greet people in the afternoon).
Teacher: 'Dehina walachu' (Good afternoon).
Students (loudly): 'Dehina walachu' (Good afternoon).

The teacher explained to the students how to greet people at different times of the day in Amharic, and she expected them to imitate the sounds, words and phrases and to understand the meaning of the Amharic greeting using the official language. Consequently, the students followed what the teacher was saying by repeating, loudly, together with the teacher. I observed that the students whose main language aligned with the medium of instruction easily followed and understood what the teacher was saying, because they had already acquired that knowledge and skill from their home language environment (e.g. greeting in Amharic). On the other hand, the children whose home language experience was different from the official medium of instruction, Amharic, were challenged in their understanding of what was happening in the classroom and in connecting the lesson with their home. Their prior experience of the greeting in Affa Konso ('Negeyita') was different from that of Amharic ('Dehna aderachu'). This experience required the teacher to exert a lot of effort in order to enable her students to grasp the content and achieve the daily lesson's objectives of the curriculum (e.g. after the lesson, students will be able to greet in Amharic), particularly within a large class size (about 50 students).

Eyayu (a grade 1 Environmental Science teacher) introduced the day's lesson and revised the past session with a question and answer approach. He initially explained the content using the official medium of instruction, Amharic, and then translated into Affa Konso. For instance, he requested students to tell him about the types of sense organs, orally in Amharic, as follows:

Students (in group and loudly): 'Ayin' (eye), 'Afincha' (nose), 'Joro' (ear), 'Milas' (tongue) and 'Koda woyim eji' (skin or hand).
Teacher: 'Betam Tiru' (in Amharic) (very good).
Teacher: 'Ye milas tikim mindinnew' (What is the use of tongue?).
Students (in group and loudly): 'Milas lemekimes yitekimal' (the tongue is used for tasting).
Teacher: 'Tiru' (Good).
Teacher: 'Milas chew, siquar, tafach ena merara negerochin lemeleyet yitekimal lik new lijoch' (The tongue is used to taste salt, sugar, sweet and sour food or things. Is it not?).
Students (in group and loudly): 'Ayon memhir' (Yes, it is… teacher!).

As one of his major teaching methods, Eyayu asked questions and explained the concept based on students' responses, and used Affa Konso to include the rural background students in the teaching-

learning process. For example, he explained the use of a tongue (a sense organ) using both Amharic and Affa Konso in order to help both language groups understand the concept of the lesson. However, in the case of the grade 1 Amharic class, the students' imitation and repetition of what the teacher had been saying using the official medium, was the dominant approach, regardless of some of the students' language experience.

Consequently, Fatuma, after concluding the Amharic greeting lesson, introduced a song about school. She first said the verses and melody of the song one by one and asked the students to follow her. See the song below:

> Teacher: 'Inhid timihirtbet' (Amharic) (Let us go to school) (twice).
>
> Students (in chorus): 'Inhid timihirtbet' (Amharic) (Let us go to school) (twice).
>
> Teacher: 'Iwiket lemegebyet' (Amharic) (To gain knowledge) (twice).
>
> Students (in chorus): 'Iwiket lemegebyet' (Amharic) (To gain knowledge) (twice).

The teacher repeated the song many times together with the students, in Amharic. Some students from Karat town were active in singing and clapping their hands; however, some of the Affa Konso speakers were either clapping or observing what other children were doing in the classroom. This was partly due to a language barrier because, at this beginner's grade level, there were some rural children who did not understand Amharic. However, Fatuma employed her strategy to support these students and make the concept of the song clearer; she used the students' text book as a teaching aid and showed them pictures that indicated the school and children walking to school. By using the pictures in the text book, the teacher explained the details of the song in Amharic. For instance, she said that, 'Children are going to school… they go to school to learn and gain knowledge.' She again requested students to tell her why they came to school. Students responded as a group (not individually), as the practice of responding to a question in a whole group is the common approach at the early grades of primary school, as understood from my classroom observations.

Therefore, the experience of the grade 1 Amharic class teaching complied with the official medium of instruction, in that the teacher implemented the official language policy as intended. Unlike Eyayu, who translated the official language of teaching into the students' home language, Affa Konso, Fatuma employed the demonstration approach to help students understand both the

Amharic language and the idea of the song using instructional material (pictures). This shows how teachers use different approaches to enact the official language-in-education policy, to facilitate students' learning and to narrow the communication gap in the teaching-learning process. However, these two classrooms teachings had been carried out, not only based on different teaching approaches but also with different languages. As Fatuma explained, her priority was to teach Amharic in order for children to acquire the language without translating into Affa Konso, and she did not believe that it was important to translate her lesson into Affa Konso. She further said that:

> I deliberately use Amharic in my teaching for children to practise and learn Amharic. If I speak Affa Konso, students will not learn Amharic (the level that she could). However, some children could not understand Amharic due to their home language which is Affa Konso, particularly the rural children. Amharic is also important to learn other subjects and for wider communication as well. (Fatuma, grade 1 Amharic teacher).

The teacher's statement above is in accordance with her actual practice in her classroom teaching. Her actions and belief towards children's learning is aligned with the official medium of instruction with its language ideology, which is behind it: socialize children in Amharic and help them to fit the school system with the official language, Amharic's and its high status as an essential language for children's nationwide communication (FDRE, 1994). Similarly, I witnessed in a grade 4 Amharic classroom where Awoke (a teacher) advised his students to improve their 'Amharic and English as they are the mediums of instruction, national and international languages.' This idea expressed the value and status of dominant languages for countrywide and global communications which also implied the place of Affa Konso and its restricted role in personal and social domains. In a grade 5 Amharic classroom, I also observed that two different language background students (Amharic and Affa Konso speakers) were given a reading exercise (to read a paragraph for the whole class in Amharic) and the students did as instructed by their teacher. Then the teacher thanked both students and commented on their fluency and styles of reading (e.g. speed, pause and intonation). During my discussion with this teacher, Adanech explained that 'Amharic is difficult for children of the Konso rural background because of their first language influence on some of the Amharic sounds (e.g. 'Che' and 'Ge' which are non-existent in Affa Konso), even for students who have completed grade 12, and adults.' This assertion also revealed the teacher's beliefs about language itself and its speakers (e.g. the

difficulty of Amharic for the rural Konso students, as if these sounds were not learned and improved through practice). However, I understand that there are Affa Konso speaking students and teachers who have mastered such Amharic sounds (even though they were non-existent in Affa Konso), through practice.

Nevertheless, Fatuma did not refute that her teaching approach was a challenge for the rural Affa Konso background students in understanding Amharic, following the lesson and participating in her classroom. In this regard, some students explained their grade 1 language experience. For instance, Misrak expressed that:

> When I joined school, I could speak only Affa Konso and was unable to understand Amharic. Then through process that I learned and developed Amharic from school… I was crying as some teachers did not speak Affa Konso and we could not understand Amharic and there were no communication between us! Most of the time, we were unsuccessful in our exams. (Misrak, grade 5 student).

This extract reveals the challenges that the non-medium of instruction language background students faced during their early grades of primary education. As the official language of teaching did not consider the home language experience of children, they had to pass through the structured language situation, acquire the language and fulfil the school curriculum's expectations. It also highlights the relationship of using unfamiliar language in the teaching-learning process with children's emotional instability and low academic performance. Some of my respondents (teachers and officials) associated such a classroom language experience with one of the major contributing factors to absenteeism, school dropout, academic failure, frustration and identity negotiation. Conversely, through exposure to Amharic, and practice in classroom and school, Misrak developed Amharic by grade 5 and could adequately communicate using it (I witnessed this when she successfully communicated with me in Amharic during my interview with her). This was the way that she enriched her language repertoire and through her interactions with children and teachers she developed multiple language abilities, Affa Konso and Amharic.

On the other hand, the grade 1 Environmental Science teacher explained his classroom situation and the reasons behind his teaching approach. He said, 'For some rural background students, Amharic is strange, and they are unable to speak and communicate with it.' My use of a translator during the focus group discussion with some of the students also confirmed their difficulty in

understanding the Amharic medium in the teaching-learning process. When I asked how old they were, in Amharic, it was difficult for them to understand and respond to me. The teacher's understanding of the language situation in his classroom allowed him to translate the official policy in a way that he applied his teaching to facilitate the students' learning. The teacher's attitude towards using a student's home language in order to support their learning also pushed him to negotiate the official language policy in his classroom. This also showed the response of the teacher's agency in valuing and using Affa Konso within the structured official language policy.

When comparing and contrasting the two classrooms, I observed that they followed different approaches in complying with, and competing with, the official language policy. Fatuma complied with the official policy implementation, though her subject was Amharic. Her classroom condition did not give any opportunity for Affa Konso background students to utilize their language resources in support of their Amharic learning. Whereas, Eyayu accommodated both Amharic and Affa Konso languages and language groups in negotiating the official language policy. This teacher's attitudes towards the language (Affa Konso as a collaborative language), its users (e.g. students to be supported in their home language to gain the concept of the lesson) and his belief in using a student's home language in order to make sense of his teaching, shaped his classroom teaching. Indeed, this teacher provided space for Affa Konso in his classroom teaching in his own right within the framework of official language-in-education policy. He contested the idea stated by his colleague teacher, 'In fact, we are expected to follow and execute the government policy as part of our duties' (Simegne). However, in practice, and as shown above, implementing the official policy, as it was intended in the policy document, appeared to not always be appropriate, including in Simegne's classroom (see his classroom situation later in a grade 7 Civic lesson).

Furthermore, the students had their own ways of interpreting the official language-in-education policy in classroom. I witnessed this during a classroom's group discussion when students code-switched and used their language resources (Affa Konso, Amharic and some English) to understand and discuss issues. After students discussed and reached consensus on the answers using all the languages they could speak, they gave the answers to the class or the teachers in the official language, Amharic or English. This was how students negotiated the official policy and, at the same time, fitted in with the policy requirement by using the medium for the whole class interaction. This helped students to relate their lessons to their locality and culture, give meanings

in relation to their home experience, discuss issues in the language they understood well and facilitate their learning. However, students were not always free to use all their language resources in the classroom since the use of the non-medium of instruction for academic purposes relied on the teacher's willingness and personal attitude (e.g. in the situation where the teacher did not understand the local language and failed to follow up the content of their discussion, students may not get that opportunity). Therefore, sometimes when the teacher approached them, the students switched their group discussion to the official language (similarly, when I approached a students' group discussion during my classroom visit, I observed that the students changed the medium of their discussion into the official medium) since discussing with the language other than the official language was not sanctioned. This situation also indicated the power relations between the official language, Amharic and Affa Konso in the classroom.

The aforementioned discussions revealed that the language-in-education policy was exposed to different interpretations. It had not been uniformly implemented in the first cycle of primary education due to the response of teachers' and students' agency. The teachers had space to interpret and negotiate the official language-in-education policy in classroom in line with their personal experiences, language background, language ideology, etc., while not completely ignoring it. However, there were constraints for teachers to use their agency in translating the official policy in their own ways. For instance, the allotted time for each period (40 minutes in Ethiopian context) did not consider the translation of different languages in the classroom which also affected the completion of the daily lesson. Complying or competing with the official-language-policy was not only limited to these two cases mentioned above, but it was also applied to others. For example, the grade 2 Mathematics teacher, grade 2 Amharic teacher, grade 4 Environmental Science teacher and grade 4 Amharic teacher complied with the official policy in a similar way to my first case of the grade 1 Amharic teacher. Next, I will analyse the enactment of the English official medium of instruction in the second cycle of primary education.

7.4.2. 'We Teach in Amharic But Give the Exam in English, Which Is Unfair'

The Konso Woreda language-in-education policy of the second cycle of primary education states that English should be the medium of instruction for all subjects except Amharic. Within this policy framework, I will analyse how students and teachers interacted in the grade 7 Civic

classroom's teaching-learning process and include the views of some students, teachers and other respondents on the English medium of teaching.

As the introduction, the Civic teacher began his lesson by giving a brief of the topic of that day, 'Culture and Language Equality'. He requested that the students take out their assignments on 'Equality' and present them to the class. He provided one of the students the chance to report the group assignment. The student explained about equality using his notes: 'Equality is equal and fair treatment before the law. It is supported by our Constitution…'. Here, both the student and teacher shared the same approach in that they mixed both Amharic and English to explain their contents. Then the teacher moved onto the lesson of that day, 'equality of cultures and languages', and made a presentation using a question and answer method as follows:

> Teacher: 'What does it mean by culture? What is the meaning of culture?'
> Student: 'Culture is a way of life, life style.'
> Teacher: 'Good, any other students?'
> Student: 'Culture is manifested by wearing, walking, and language.'
> Teacher: 'Good, another one?'
> Student: 'Culture is expressed by language.'
> Teacher: 'Very good!'

In his teaching, the teacher sequentially used English and Amharic. For instance, he first wrote notes, or some important points, on the blackboard in English, since the textbooks in the second cycle of primary education are written in English (except for the Amharic subject), and then explained them in Amharic. Similarly, the students read the questions in English and responded to questions in Amharic or English or a mix of both languages. Interestingly, the teacher sometimes used Affa Konso to explain some concepts since it was part of his and the students' language resource. He also provided some interesting live examples from the locality (e.g. the well-known Konso cultural food, 'Kurkufa', and freely used his language repertoire [Affa Konso, Amharic and English] while teaching). This was how the teacher drew on the students' home and prior-learning experiences and applied them to his teaching. In doing so, he made his lesson relevant to the local situation and more understandable for students, beyond using the local language. However, the use of Affa Konso in the second cycle of primary was not only limited to this specific teacher, the Mathematics grade 8, Physics grade 8, English grade 5 and Social Science grade 7 teachers also used Affa Konso for supplementing their English and Amharic explanations. Thus, teachers used

Amharic, English and Affa Konso in the teaching-learning process though the official language-in-education policy legitimated the use of English at this level.

As observed and as students, teachers and the head teacher explained, almost all teachers (except Amharic, because it was aimed to be taught in Amharic) did not follow what the official policy stated, that is, the use of English in the second cycle of primary education. Instead, they used mostly Amharic, some English and some Affa Konso in their teaching. The official language-in-education policy (of SNNPR and Konso Woreda), that says students should learn all subjects in English, except Amharic, in order for students to learn and acquire the language of science and technology and international communication and to help students smoothly transfer to the secondary education, was not fully enacted. When this was discussed with the teachers they had no complaints about the principle of using English as the medium of the second cycle of primary education and its associated language ideology. However, the discrepancy happened due to many reasons: an inadequate preparation of the students to enable them to learn subjects in English at that level, and the sudden transfer of the language of instruction from Amharic to English at grade 5 (in fact, English was given as a subject starting from grade 1 as part of the policy but this did not help them prepare for the English medium) were the major ones. Additionally, the 'low English skill of teachers' and 'lack of confidence to exclusively teach in English' were mentioned by teachers, school and Woreda education officials as part of the major factors.

Moreover, within the context of the limited use of the medium of instruction (English) at this level, one of my respondent teachers, Bogale (and in fact, commonly said by others including the school and Woreda education officials) said, 'We are teaching in Amharic but giving examination for our students in English, which is unfair.' This idea succinctly reveals how the language-in-education policy is enacted in the second cycle of primary education, and this applies to all teachers and subjects (except Amharic). In such a context, the students' assessment and their academic progress were measured by a language that was not adequately employed in the teaching-learning process and which they did not fully comprehend. It also refers back to the official policy planning gap that overlooked the language experience and effectiveness of the English medium in the rural second cycle of primary education, such as in my example primary school. However, the use of the unofficial language of teaching, Amharic, in the second cycle of primary was highly complained about by the school and Woreda education officials. This was due to the government's

responsibility to execute the official policy and the value assigned to English language for a students' academic progress (e.g. to successfully pass the grade 8 regional examination) and their future career. Accordingly, the Woreda education officials took this issue seriously, had discussions with head teachers and teachers, and provided a directive for teachers to implement the official language of teaching in their classrooms. However, in practice, this was ineffective essentially due to students' and teachers' limited English language skills.

In this regard, Bogale (grade 8 English teacher) said:

> The subject teachers (e.g. Mathematics, Physics) think that teaching students in English and helping them improve their language skill are the only responsibility of English teachers. They do not help us and their students' English language improvement, even they teach numbers in Amharic. If all teachers follow the official medium of instruction, students will improve their English language. (Bogale, grade 8 English teacher)

Bogale supported the implementation of the official language of teaching, English, in the second cycle of primary education as it was intended, and he wanted the input of subject teachers regarding students' English improvement. His points led me to conduct additional classroom observations in order to understand more about the use of English in different subjects (e.g. grade 8 Mathematics and grade 8 Physics). These classroom observations supported what Bogale explained above. It also strengthened my understanding of the grade 7 Civic classroom situation where Amharic, English and Affa Konso were used in the classroom. I realised that students and teachers had difficulty in using English as the medium of instruction in the second cycle of primary education. Moreover, the subject teachers explained that their main focus was on their students' understanding of the concept rather than the language.

I also discussed with students about the use of English in the teaching-learning process of the second cycle of primary education. They expressed their views about the use of English medium in the teaching-learning process as follows:

> The students (in FGD) said: 'We cannot understand if teachers use only English in their teaching' ('Aniredam', 'Aygebanm' in Amharic).
> One of the group members said: 'It is just simply an extended meaningless talk' ('Zim belo meleflef new yemihonew' in Amharic).
> Bekele (a student) said: 'It is like pouring water on a stone/rock' ('zim belo dingay lay wiha mafses new yemihonew' in Amharic (laughter…).

The above expressions indicate the difficulty that the students have in understanding the content of the subject if teachers apply the official medium of instruction, English, in the second cycle of primary education. This is because of the absence of communication between the learners and teachers which resulted in the students' failure to understand the concept of the lesson. The students said, 'as English is our second language, we need the translation into Amharic to understand the content/lesson.' The majority of students that I discussed with were happy about the teachers' translation of English into Amharic in order for them to understand the lesson well, due to their low English language skill and experience. They suggested that their teachers continue using English, Amharic and Affa Konso in order for them to understand the lessons better. However, students had different views on the emphasis on English learning for their language improvement and future career. There were students (and their parents) who proposed English to replace the Amharic medium of instruction in the first cycle of primary (e.g. from grades 1 to 4) so that they could have a good command of English in the second cycle primary and beyond. A student's parent (Felekech's mother) said, 'I have completed the secondary education but my English is very limited. I prefer my children to learn in English starting from grade 1.' Such an interest in increasing the use and status of the English medium in the primary school system also implies how students and parents perceive English in relation to its academic, professional, national and global values.

From the above evidence, I can argue that students, teachers, parents and officials belief in, and attitudes towards, language (English as a global language with its high value), interests (students, parents, teachers, official, etc. have high interest for their children to learn English) and policy intentions (as an official medium of teaching) do not guarantee the implementation of the language-in-education policy in the classroom. There was space for teachers and students to interpret the official policy in their own ways when responding to the classroom situation. Indeed, the teachers and students challenged the official language-in-education policy in its actual destination where the students and teachers interacted, the classroom.

7.5. Conclusion

I have explored interactional contexts in school to understand how and why students and teachers choose and use different languages. I found that student language choice and use in diverse school environments were different and were often shaped by the student's home language experience,

attitudes to various languages and the official school language. This supports the idea that "Language operates differently in different environments" (Blommaert, 2005, 15) in a multilingual setting. In an informal school environment, students used their home languages, along with code-switching, among themselves without the restriction of the school language policy. However, students were not always free to choose and use their second languages in school because of ridicule and negative comments from their peers on their limited language abilities in both Affa Konso and Amharic. There was a belief among students that children from Konso families should speak Affa Konso as a marker of their ethnic identities. Such an attitude to ethnic language led students to make comments such as 'Are you not a Konso' and 'why have you not developed Affa Konso' to Amharic speaking students of the same ethnic group. On the other hand, there was a belief among students that associated speaking Amharic with students' academic progress and identities because of its dominant role in the school system. The failure to match such students' expectations caused ridicule and laughter towards the students (mainly the rural Affa Konso speaking students) that also discouraged them practising their limited Amharic in both informal and classroom situations. Here I argue that this experience had a particularly adverse effect on rural background students' efforts to improve Amharic, which could have enabled them to follow lessons in the classroom and enhanced their academic performance. However, both groups of students experienced embarrassment in speaking a second language due to peers' comments.

The other language context was student-teacher interaction in the informal school environment which was not as free as that of peer interactions or as strict as the interactions in the classroom. Here, the power of official school language and teachers' expectations had an indirect influence on student-teacher interaction, in which Amharic was mostly used for personal and school related tasks outside classroom. Taking Blommaert's (2006, 241) point, such teachers' conception and valuing of the official school language 'guided the communicative behaviour of language users' in the informal school setting. However, although most teachers predominantly used Amharic with students, in some cases, Affa Konso was prioritized among ethnic in-group students and teachers, with code-switching, for personal, administrative and academic related matters in school. They believed that it was easier for them to express their ideas in Affa Konso more than any other language, because the "speakers beliefs about language affect their language use" (Mbatha, 2016, 16). This illustrates how members of the minority ethnic language group (both teachers and

students) valued and promoted their language in the school context where Affa Konso was overlooked as a school working language.

Moreover, there was student-teacher interaction in the classroom which was structured by the school language policy. This policy required that the students and teachers behave and communicate in the pre-determined languages, Amharic and English. The intention of this policy was to shape the way that students were socialized in the classroom, how the school curriculum was imparted and how their academic success was measured. The language ideologies behind such a language policy were: Amharic as a language of academic progress, working language of the Konso Woreda and countrywide communication, and English as an academic language of, professional and global communication. These ideologies disregarded the role of Affa Konso in the education system. Here, the language of the Konso ethnic group, whose people considered it as a marker of ethnic identities and a mother tongue of the rural background students, lost its significant position in classroom teaching. This experience had not only placed the rural Affa Konso speaking students in a difficult classroom learning situation but it also caused them to negotiate their home language in order to acquire Amharic and English, the languages of academic progress and power for their current student life and their future lives.

Nevertheless, the students and teachers were not always dictated to by the official policy in the classroom, but demonstrate their agency in responding to different situations. They had their own ways to respond to the policy and implemented them into their practice in the classrooms, sometimes competing with the official policy. In the first cycle of primary education, teachers used the students' home language and valued the minority language in their classroom against the official medium of instruction in order to make sense of the teaching-learning process. As Mohanty et al. (2010) argue, teachers "…resist and contest the state policy...the agency of the teachers in the classrooms makes them the final arbiter of the language education policy and its implementation" (cited in Johnson, 2013, 99). Accordingly, the teachers responded to the classroom situation where Affa Konso speaking children were disadvantaged due to lack of the medium of instruction, particularly at early primary grade levels. The students also did the same when using their language repertoires for facilitating their discussions, thereby enhancing their learning in the classrooms rather than complying with the official language policy.

However, teachers had limited spaces in their use of Affa Konso for academic purposes in the classroom. In a multilingual classroom setting where the allotted time period was 40 minutes, the time consuming aspect of translating the lesson's contents into different languages, and the school and Woreda officials attempts to influence the teachers to implement the language policy as intended, limited teachers' agency to translate the policy in their preferred ways. The students' use of their home languages in the classroom teaching-learning process also depended upon teachers' language backgrounds, and their attitudes to, and interest in, the use of minority languages in the classrooms. Furthermore, the implementation of the English medium in the second cycle of primary education was challenged by different factors mainly in relation to students' and teachers' low language proficiency. As one teacher said, teachers 'teach in Amharic but give examination in English.' Hence, in the second cycle of primary education, English as the medium of instruction was almost replaced by Amharic, and it became more the language of textbooks, note taking and examination, rather than serving its official purpose as medium of instruction. Consequently, the language ideology behind English as the language of academy, science and technology and global communication as well as the interest of students, parents, teachers and officials towards English, were not attained as intended.

Chapter Eight: Promoting the Minority Language, Affa Konso, through a Local Policy Initiative in Konso

In the previous chapter I analysed the implementation of the current language-in-education policy that has legitimised Amharic and English, in the first and second cycle of primary education, respectively. I observed that teachers were not passive recipients of the official language policy in school, but they were critical about their classroom situations and used strategies to make sure that children from different language backgrounds were able to understand the lessons. Consequently, both teachers and students negotiated the mediums of instruction and used Affa Konso (in the first cycle of primary) and Amharic (in the second cycle of primary) in their classrooms, despite the official policy. Additionally, there was a belief among teachers and Woreda officials about the negative effect of this medium of instruction on some students' academic performance, retention and Affa Konso development. Partly, aiming to resolve these challenges, the Konso Woreda officials initiated a local language policy.

This chapter will explore the drive, process and assumptions of a local language policy initiative that intends to promote the minority ethnic language, Affa Konso, in the education system. I will explore how and why the local language policy was initiated, its planning, and why its implementation was delayed in Konso Woreda. I will look at how the dominant and alternative mother tongue discourses influenced this initiative, and examine different peoples' reflections when comparing it with the current language-in-education policy. I will give a brief account of the local language policy initiative and analyse its intention, processes and challenges, and look at students', teachers', students' parents' and officials thoughts on mother tongue education. This chapter addresses sub-research question 4: how are language policies viewed, practised and planned in the classroom, school and community? Insights will be provided into the dynamic and complex processes of local language policy planning in Konso, and this also contributes to the main research question - How are languages used and policy processes implemented in a Konso community?

8.1. Background to the Local Language Policy Initiative

Following the Ethiopian Education and Training Policy (FDRE, 1994) (acknowledging the right of every ethnic group to learn in their mother tongue in primary education) some discussions were held among Woreda officials and experts in Konso Woreda. There were discussions focused on

how to develop the Konso language and use it for education and other official purposes (e.g. a first symposium[13] in May 1997, and in November 1998 a discussion on draft orthography[14]) (cited in the Konso Language Development Strategic Plan (KLDSP), 2015). After the Ethiopian Constitution that ratifies, "All Ethiopian languages shall enjoy equal state recognition" (FDRE, 1995), the government requested all ethnic groups to translate the Constitution into their own languages (KLDSP, 2015). Accordingly, the Konso Woreda administration established a committee to undertake this task using the 'Sabean' (a Geez script that Amharic has been using) script. However, partly because of the "turnover in administrative leadership at Woreda level and inadequate financial allocation" (ibid. 4) the committee did not achieve its aim (KLDSP, 2015). While these attempts were not successful, they still had an effect on the current initiative by continuing to raise questions about the need to develop the Konso language. The above discussion implied how the national (Federal) policy and directive (e.g. the official request to translate the Constitution into Affa Konso) influenced the initial local language policy discussions about the Konso language development and its use for written and official purposes. It also contributed to getting mother tongue education onto the policy agenda of the Konso minority ethnic group.

The local language policy initiative in Konso Woreda was also motivated by the inscription of the Konso Cultural Landscape as a World Heritage Site by UNESCO in 2011. This registration of the Konso practices of traditional terracing, and protection of water, soil and the environment as a World Heritage Site, was seen as a great achievement of the Konso people (see Figure 19). A year later, in April 2012, the Konso Woreda administrative council, in collaboration with the Federal Culture and Tourism Ministry, and the Regional Bureau of Culture and Tourism, convened a three day event in Karat town (Konso Woreda's capital) to celebrate the recognition of their Cultural Landscape as a World Heritage. During this event, Konso and non-Konso experts gave presentations focusing on the Affa Konso script (adapted from Latin script), and culture. Committees were then established to move the Konso language development forward. The Konso Woreda administrative council took "this event as an opportunity to mobilise the native (Konso) intellectuals as well as the people to rethink about their culture, environment and language with

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[13] In May 1997 a first symposium on 'Afaa Xonso' development. The invited guests and experts from the regional bureau of Culture and Tourism, members of the Konso Woreda administration, Konso intellectuals, prominent elders from all the Kebeles, and others attended (in KLDSP, 2015)

[14] In November 1998, the discussion was held on the first draft of the Konso language orthography produced by the assigned committee (in KLDSP, 2015).

which the inscription of the cultural landscape is highly linked" (KLDSP, 2015, 1). This experience is an example of the external influence from a global agency (UNESCO that promotes culture and language internationally) on indigenous peoples' culture and their local policy around promotion of their minority languages. As a consequence of this event, a tangible action plan was made, and the main committee of the Konso language development and four sub-committees (Orthography committee, Curriculum Development committee, Dialect and Language Standardisation committee and Fund Raising committee) were established in order to work on the different components of the local language policy (ibid.).

Figure 19: The UNESCO Inscription of a Konso Cultural Landscape (Statue)   Figure 20: Part of the Konso Cultural Landscape (Indigenous Konso terracing on hilly topography to protect soil, water and environment that resulted in World recognition).

8.2. The Intentions of the Local Language Policy

In Konso, Amharic is the working language of the Woreda and the medium of instruction in the first cycle of primary education. The goal of the local language policy was to "promote the Konso language and use it in the public domain, for educational purposes and as a working language" (my translation from the official Amharic cover letter of the strategic plan dated 'Megabit' 21, 2007 E.C (February 28, 2015)). It aimed to introduce mother tongue education as a medium of instruction in the first cycle of primary education, as a specific subject in the second cycle of primary through to secondary education and University, and subsequently to use Affa Konso as the official language of the Woreda (KLDSP, 2015). Its intention was to "use Afaa Xonso (Affa Konso) for all formal purposes in the Woreda and beyond by 2027" (ibid. 5). This policy intention was given authority by the Ethiopian Education and Training Policy (FDRE, 1994) and Constitution (FDRE, 1995) that promotes minority ethnic languages in official use. As a rationale for the local language policy initiative, the Konso language development strategic plan (2015, 1) states that it is "the constitutional right to use, protect and promote [Konso] language and culture."

Considering these Federal Education Policy and Constitution provisions, I ask the key question - Why has this right not been realised in Konso Woreda?

8.3. Why Was the Local Language Policy Initiative Delayed?

The replacement of the current Amharic medium of instruction in the first cycle of primary education by the Konso language was a major part of the local language policy initiative. Why the Konso ethnic group had not introduced mother tongue education into its education system, and preferred to use Amharic, was a question raised by many people. For example, during my discussion, the regional education bureau officials mentioned the two ethnic groups, Konso and 'Guraghe', as examples of ethnic groups who had not yet introduced mother tongue education, while other ethnic groups who had relatively less educated human resource had already begun. Regional education statistics (2008 E.C (2015/2016) also showed that about 25 out of 56 ethnic groups in SNNPR, including minority language groups, had already introduced mother tongue education (See Appendix I). Even within the Segen Area Peoples zone, where the Konso ethnic group belonged, three different minority ethnic groups (one in Amaro Woreda (Korete language), and two in Derashe Woreda ('Dashete and Derayitata languages) had already started mother tongue education (as a specific subject). Nevertheless, it was noted that the Konso Woreda had resisted the use of their mother tongue in the education system for more than two decades (since the 1994 education and training policy), even though it had been discussed during this time. In this regard, the Woreda education official explained that:

> In fact, the idea of mother tongue education was under discussion since long years ago but action was not taken. Giving more weight to technical matters was among the major reasons for its delay. The introduction of mother tongue education was not simple and should not be get into it without adequate preparation and resources. It also requires study as well. (Woreda Education Office official).

Although some attention had been given to the Konso language development, providing more weight for technical aspects in relation to language policy development, its management and provision of mother tongue education lagged behind its introduction. The education official emphasised the need to take time and support the policy work with research. Besides the willingness on mother tongue education, he underlined the importance of adequate preparation and resources. This was because this initiative required multi-disciplinary fields such as policy planning, curriculum development, linguistics, language, subject specialists, educational

administration, and others. It also brought in huge responsibilities of developing the policy and standardizing the language from oral to written, developing curriculum and training teachers. In this regard, providing emphasis on the technical aspects and making well-preparation seemed to be a sound decision. He further asserted that some ethnic groups that started mother tongue education earlier had faced many challenges:

> Some of them (ethnic groups) started it spontaneously and became unsuccessful academically compared to the others, because, they taught students in mother tongue up to grade 8 and switched to English medium at secondary education (grades 9-12). The other challenge was paying more attention to their mother tongue and overlooking the others. This affects children's nationwide communication with other communities. (Woreda Education Office official).

The above points demonstrate the practical and technical challenges that arise from introducing mother tongue education without adequate preparation. The Woreda official perceived a lack of academic success due to an immediate transfer of students to an English medium secondary education without them first acquiring English at the appropriate skill level to learn all subjects in English (except Amharic and mother tongue subjects). The lack of inter-language groups' communication and inter-regional group communication (e.g. between students from the Oromia region and students from the Tigray or Amhara region) due to lack of a common language (s) skill, such as Amharic (stated by the Ethiopian education policy to be a nationwide communication language) and the failure to compete for federal jobs in Addis Ababa (as Amharic is the federal working language) were among the major challenges. The tendency to give more attention to ethnic languages, in the framework of the Ethiopian ethno-linguistic political system, can be taken as a political factor. Perception of these limitations, in relation to Konso mother tongue education, have, therefore, contributed to the delay of this initiative.

In relation to the importance of working more on the technical aspects of local language policy, the Konso language development coordinator stated that "Developing policy and implementing mother tongue education was not as easy as passing a political decision on mother tongue education. We understood this and how it was difficult and complex after we had started it." The Woreda education official further stated, "I still accept not rushing to mother tongue education without making the necessary preparation. We need to begin it with a better ground without affecting the generation's educational life. It is good to 'stop and think' and learn from others."

(the Woreda Education Office official). These officials strongly support the need for well-thought out and good preparation before implementing mother tongue education. The Konso language development coordinator said, "We do not want to lose the best academic achievements that our students currently demonstrated in the SNNP region and we need to carefully plan our policy."

As some of the technical process, the Konso language development coordinator stated that:

> We shared the experience of some ethnic groups to draw lessons for our policy planning; 'some of them said to us that you are lucky not to begin it early with its many problems. Now, you can share the others' experience and learn from different ethnic groups who have experience on mother tongue education. (Konso language development coordinator).

The above extract emphasises the importance of experience sharing to obtain relevant inputs as a way to support the local language policy initiative. The Konso language development committee had experience sharing visits in Wolayita (a zone in SNNPR), Borena (a zone in the Oromia region), and some other zones, and received professional advice from their education experts and Konso scholars. Some of the points that the committee learned were: the need to have different experts to engage in policy development; development of a strategic plan to clearly guide the policy development; consideration of a College of Teacher Training to train enough teachers who can teach the Konso language; standardization of the Konso language starting with orthographic development and selection of dialect; collection of words from the community in order to prepare a dictionary that can help to facilitate the teaching-learning process and curriculum development; consideration to be given to the relevance of the curriculum (others that started earlier simply translated or copied the others' curriculum in their own mother tongue); and consideration of children's multiple language development for nationwide and global communications. Finally, taking all this into account, the Konso language development coordinator concluded that, "Introducing mother tongue education as a campaign is ineffective." The Konso language policy initiative benefited from others' relevant experiences. They learned what to consider, how to go about mother tongue education, how not to repeat the major mistakes that others had done, and to consider their context in local policy planning (e.g. adapt rather than simply translating or copying others' curriculum as it is).

The Konso language development strategic planning document revealed that some of the major reasons for delaying the local language policy planning and implementation were: the policy planning task was added as extra work on top of the committee members' official duties; most of

the technical committee members resided outside the Konso Woreda; commitment was not equal among different committees and their members; financial constraints; lack of facilities (e.g. office, ICT, stationery, etc.), lack of ICT skills; turnover of the higher Woreda officials; and lack of re-enforcement mechanisms to implement Afaa Xonso (Affa Konso) in different situations (e.g. job recruitment) (KLDSP, 2015, 4). Committee members also expressed that the current Konso political movement was another major reason that had delayed the local language policy implementation. Some of the Woreda officials and the experts, who were members of the Konso language development committee, were politically divided. This was a big challenge for both groups to work together due to lack of commitment, socio-cultural influence on experts to collaborate with government officials, and insecurity (some members of the committee were imprisoned by the government for a couple of weeks - see details of the political movement in Chapter 2). However, many technical processes were being worked on and I will discuss these next.

8.4. The Technical Processes of the Local Language Policy

To achieve its purpose of promoting the oral minority language, Affa Konso, for education and other official purposes, the local language policy was required to pass through status planning, corpus planning and acquisition planning. Since status planning is "about uses of language" (Hornberger, 1994 cited in Johnson 2013, 123) that "include[s], for example, the designation of the language(s) of instruction in school" (Wiley, 1996, 108), the Konso local language policy chose the ethnic language for academic and further official use. Status planning also considers the "initial choice of language, including attitudes toward alternative languages and the political implications of various choices" (Bright, 1992, cited in Wiley, 1996, 108). The status planning of Affa Konso involved a political decision, in line with the macro (Federal) policy, constitutional provisions, and ethnolinguistic politics of the country, emphasizing ethnic language and ethnic identity. Indeed, the local language policy initiative was intended to broaden the scope of the Konso language use beyond the personal, socio-cultural and economic realms in which it had been used up to this point (see Chapter 5). It also envisaged improving the tendency of some youth's and town people's reluctance to use Affa Konso in personal communication, in homes, and social services, etc. (see Chapter 5) due to what was regarded as "negative attitude towards the language and influence of Amharic in the town" (as explained by some of the teachers and Woreda officials). The Konso strategic planning document succinctly states the "tendency of the native speakers to prefer

Amharic and/or other languages to Afaa Xonso (Affa Konso)" (KLDSP, 2015, 5), due to its low status in official domains, as one of the major threats to the Konso language. The status planning of Affa Konso aimed to resolve such challenges by lifting up its official uses and status.

The local language policy also required standardization of the Konso language for written purposes since it had not been used in writing (except on a small scale by the Konso Evangelical Church ('Mekane Yesus') that had translated biblical materials in Sabaan script since the 1980s). Hence, corpus planning is required as Affa Konso is mainly an oral language. As Hornberger (1994, cited in Johnson 2013, 124) asserts, corpus planning is 'about language' and "deals with norm selection and codification, as in the writing of grammars and the standardization of spelling" (Bright, 1992, cited in Wiley, 1996, 108). One of the major language policy planning tasks is deciding which script to choose for standardizing the Konso language. There are two script options (Sabean and Latin) used when writing different languages in Ethiopia. For example: Amharic, Tigrigna, Hararegna and Silitigna use the Sabaan script; whereas, Oromigna, Sidamigna, Wolayitigna and Somaligna use the Latin script in Ethiopia. In the case of Konso, the Latin script was selected for writing and developing the Konso language, as proposed by the Konso experts and assigned committee, and approved by the Konso Woreda administrative council (this government body was responsible for the approval of big issues, such as policy decisions that had taken place in the Konso Woreda context).

The Woreda officials and members of the committee explained that the major reason for choosing the Latin script was its suitability to the Konso language in relation to sound. Some sounds of the Konso language (e.g. nasal sounds like 'Kho') and long vowels (e.g. Afaa, uses double vowels in Latin script) were non-existent in the Sabaan script. However, the Sabaan script had been used for writing the Konso language by the Konso Evangelical Church, (Mekane Yesus), for more than three decades. Because of this, some of the members of Mekane Yesus argued in favor of the Sabaan script due to its historical contribution to the Konso language development and the experience of using it for writing religious materials for many years. However, eventually they were convinced of the benefits of the proposed Latin script and they offered to deliver technical support (e.g. provide the special computer software available to convert the Sabaan written Affa Konso materials into Latin written materials). The Konso cultural leader and resource person Mr. Kora Gara, whom I interviewed, has written a few small books of Konso poetry using the Sabaan

script, and this script is also currently used in the education system of Konso Woreda, but it was not chosen in view of it is not supporting the Konso language development.

Thus, the use of Latin script is one of the new developments that the local language policy initiative will bring to the Konso Woreda education system when mother tongue education is implemented. The Latin script that was adopted for Affa Konso includes 21 consonants (A, B, C, D, F, J, K, L, M, N, P, Q, R, S, T, W, X, Y, Ny, Sh and H), 5 single vowels (a, e, i, o, and u) and 5 long or double vowels (aa, ii, ee, uu and oo) (the committee meeting minutes in Amharic and my translation, 11/05/2005, 3-4 (03/01/2013)). As an example, in combining consonants and double vowels, tomato was written in Affa Konso as 'Nyaanynyaa'. As Wiley (1996, 108) says, "Orthography planning involves the creation and reform of alphabets, syllabaries, and ideographic writing systems". Consequently, primary school students will be expected to cope with the orthographic complexity of three scripts: Latin script (Affa Konso uses the English alphabet but with different sounds and the use of double vowels (e.g. Afaa Xonso for Affa Konso); English script (uses the Roman alphabet (e.g. Affa Konso)); Sabaan script (for Amharic that Amharic uses Sabaan (e.g. የኮንሶ ቋንቋ (the language of Konso)). This shows the aspect of a multilingual policy and literacies in a school setting that officially accepts Affa Konso, Amharic and English.

Another major technical accomplishment of the local language policy initiative, is that the Karat dialect was selected from among the four Konso dialects (Karat, Fasha, Kolme, and Turo), in order to standardize the Konso language since it is widely spread in other dialects. This decision was made based on the findings of a study conducted by Paul Black and Dr. Shako in 1973 E.C (1981) on Konso dialects - "82% of the Karat dialect was used in the Fasha and Kolme areas, 80% in the Turo area and 81% in the Ayayite area" (Amharic committee meeting minutes, my translation, 13/07/2005 E.C (March 20, 2013)). Currently the Karat dialect is widely used in the Konso community (ibid.). Since the Konso local language policy planning started from scratch, it also required the collection and standardization of Affa Konso's words, preparation of an Affa Konso dictionary and development of Affa Konso grammar and curriculum. In this regard, about 2,384 Affa Konso words were collected from the community (and other sources), by the dialect and standardization sub-committee. Collection of more words and inputs to curriculum development continues (Amharic committee meeting minutes, my translation, 13/07/2005 E.C (March, 20, 2013)).

The Konso language policy initiative also included acquisition planning. This is about how to use language in the actual teaching-learning process, preparation of related materials and training of teachers and other personnel (Brown, 2015, 172). Curriculum materials are in process and familiarization training on the Affa Konso orthography has been provided for some teachers. Since one of the purposes of acquisition planning is to increase the speaking of a particular language (Johnson and Ricento, 2013), it is planned to increase the number of Affa Konso speakers by including it in the education system. And, it aimed that all students should learn and develop Affa Konso as part of their education, and a means of academic progress, as that of Amharic and English now. In relation to this, respondents offered different perspectives. For instance, Gobena (a parent) said, "It is compulsory for Amharic speakers, including my children, to acquire and learn in Affa Konso. The policy that I have participated in its development will affect my children due to their lack of Affa Konso." The school official stated that "It will be a challenge for the Amharic speaking children to learn in Affa Konso when mother tongue education is introduced in primary education." The students in a focus group discussion said, "We will learn and improve our Affa Konso when it is introduced in the school system." In contrast, the non-Affa Konso speaking teachers expressed their concern in their limited role in the Affa Konso acquisition process and their future job security in the mother tongue education system where most subjects, except Amharic and English, in the first cycle of primary, will be taught in Affa Konso.

The above examples reveal how the local language policy planning has passed through a novel and complex process that requires great efforts in order to fulfil the technical requirements (e.g. adequate word collection and standardization in order to develop the curriculum and run the teaching-learning process). It also indicated how a range of experts of multi-disciplinary fields will be required for the purpose. However, with the available human resources in the committee, literacy materials like the 'transitional material' for the training of teachers, and a one page Konso orthography with some words and visual pictures ('Yefidel gebeta' in Amharic) were developed (see Figure 21 below). Training was also given for some teachers on Konso orthography so that mother tongue education could be started in preschool in 2008 E.C (2015/16). However, this has not been implemented since the policy planning was not finalized, and the curriculum development, students' textbooks, teachers' guides, preparation of the Konso language dictionary and other supplementary materials were still at the planning stage and incomplete.

Figure 21: Affa Konso script (Latin), punctuation, numbers and visual vocabularies, developed by the Affa Konso development committee.

8.5. The Dominant Discourse around Mother Tongue Education

As I discussed in section 8.1, the Konso Woreda administrative council made the decision for the local language policy initiative based on the Federal government policy and legislation (e.g. the Ethiopian Education and Training Policy, FDRE, 1994 and Constitution, FDRE, 1995) that supported mother tongue education, as it provided a pedagogical benefit and was a right for children. In this regard, the Woreda education official said that:

> The issue of mother tongue education has already agreed nationally and internationally. It is the right of children to learn in their mother tongue and this right should not be retreated! (Woreda Education Office official)

The above idea indicates the influence of Federal legislation and international discourse on promotion of mother tongue education as a child's right. This notion was taken for granted by the officials at the Woreda level and served as a justification, and gave confidence and a framework for the officials to initiate and proceed with the local language policy planning. This dominant mother tongue discourse, that "enhances children's learning and is the right of children", was also well-grounded in the Ethiopian education system, from schools through to the SNNP regional education bureau and the Federal Ministry of Education. For example, Gara (a teacher) said that:

> Children's mother tongue enhances their learning through directly communicating with concepts with the language they are familiar with; for me, teaching in the language that students cannot understand is nothing, a waste of time and meaningless. Because, teachers have to see the result of their efforts at the end of the day, i.e. the students' results. (Gara, grade 5 English teacher)

This teacher believes that mother tongue education would resolve the language barrier in children's learning and advance their academic performance. He also emphasised that mother tongue education has a value in making the teaching-learning process meaningful and effective when attaining students' learning outcomes. As a practitioner, the teacher's argument was more focused on the educational advantage of mother tongue education. However, some of the official respondents emphasised the political aim of mother tongue education (see quote below from the regional education bureau official). Many other teachers in the Karat primary school also agreed with the idea of the academic benefit of mother tongue education for children's learning. However, there were alternative views of teachers, parents, and others that suggested, "Mother tongue education deters children's learning and wider communication". I will analyse this statement later in this chapter. Like the others who argued in favor of mother tongue education, the teacher's ideas were mainly framed by the Government Education and Training policy that says, "Cognizant of the pedagogical advantage of the child in learning in mother tongue… primary education will be given in nationality (ethnic group) language" (FDRE, 1994, 23).

The zonal education department official said, "As an education sector, what we value most is its pedagogical importance. The academic advantage and its contribution to the quality of education give us more meaning." The zonal education official emphasises the importance of mother tongue education in increasing the quality of education as one of the major educational inputs. As a great achievement of the zonal education department, he named three minority ethnic languages (Korete, Deshete and Derayitata) that were taught in the first cycle of primary education as a subject. This official strongly supported the idea of mother tongue education for children's academic benefit and progress, partly because of his formal duties to implement the government policy. As a result, the zonal education department planned to introduce mother tongue education in all (eight) minority ethnic languages in the zone, including the Konso language, within five years (by 2019, as stated by the official).

The Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples' Region (SNNPR) education bureau official also explained that, "The mother tongue education has two pillars: the first pillar is the right aspect and the second one is the scientific support or academic value." He further said that "The right pillar is political and the result of long years' struggle of subjugated ethnic groups in Ethiopia, which calls for responding to the needs of many ethnic groups and the second one is the educational benefit that children to think in their mother tongue." In his view, mother tongue education was the result of peoples' struggle for recognition of their culture, language and rights in Ethiopia (see Introduction Chapter 1, on how language and ethnic inequalities had been the national question in Ethiopia since the 1960s and continued until now). This idea was vividly evident in the current Ethiopian political system, in that language (mother tongue) was placed at the centre of the country's political structure. For example, the nine Ethiopian Regional States, Zones, and Woredas, including many of the political parties (e.g. the ruling party) in the country, are organized on ethnic and language bases. As a result, mother tongue education was instituted in the education system of the country because the education system has an important role to play in influencing people's attitudes towards what the government planned to achieve in its political system.

Moreover, a high official at the MOE explained that "Currently, it has no more relevance to discuss or debate on the academic value of mother tongue education alike that of the importance of breast feeding for a newborn baby. It has been already evidenced, and now what is more important is how to go effectively about it." This notion indicates how mother tongue education is trusted and promoted in supporting children's learning and academic progress, at the higher policy makers' level. The link of mother tongue education with the analogy of breast feeding also revealed his strong belief in mother tongue education for children's development and pedagogical benefit. The recent establishment of the Mother Tongue Directorate (higher department in Ethiopian context) at the Federal Ministry of Education in 2015 also reveals how the issue of mother tongue was given high emphasis in the education system of the country.

However, the multilevel language-in-education policies of the education system in Ethiopia provide a different emphasis to mother tongue education. The FMOE policy states, "Every ethnic group to learn in their mother tongue in primary education (grades 1-8)…Making the necessary preparation, nations and nationalities (ethnic groups) can either learn in their own language or can choose from among those selected on the basis of national and countrywide distribution" (FDRE,

1994, 23). This Federal policy was open to different interpretations and translations. Accordingly, the SNNPR and Segen Area Peoples Zone language-in-education policies recognised the use of ethnic languages or mother tongues to the lower primary education (grades 1-4), or the use of Amharic at this level, and the use of English in the second cycle of primary education (grades 5-8). The current Konso Woreda language-in-education policy provides no space for mother tongue education in primary education as previously discussed (section 8.3) though the local language policy initiative placed mother tongue at the centre of the policy.

Furthermore, mother tongue education was linked to improving girls' participation in education. In this regard, the Woreda Women Affairs office official explained that:

> Mother tongue education can liberate girls to express their ideas freely and participate in classroom and school. For example, girls can discuss with their teachers about some reproductive health issues (e.g. how to manage reproductive body changes during girls puberty age (mainly with female teachers in Ethiopian context)) and other personal and academic problems. (Woreda Women Affairs Office official).

This idea was also recognised by gender experts in the SNNP regional education bureau and Federal Ministry of Education. They said that if a student's mother tongue was officially recognised and used in the classroom and school, girls could easily express and confidently share and discuss their personal and academic problems with teachers. In relation to this, they expressed that mother tongue education can contribute to reduced absenteeism (e.g. some rural girls being absent from school during their menstrual period in rural Ethiopian schools) and improve girls' retention and academic performance, particular at their puberty age in the second cycle of primary education. Their arguments mainly relied on the result of socio-cultural barriers that affected girls' assertiveness when expressing their ideas and feelings, mainly in their second language, particularly in the rural Ethiopian context (e.g. the rural area context does not encourage females to freely express their ideas in public and encourages shyness). Therefore, the dominant mother tongue education discourse, "It enhances children's learning and is the right of children" was promoted at different levels of the education system in Ethiopia with varying emphasis. It influenced the multi-layer language-in-education policies from local, Konso Woreda (mother tongue education initiative) through to the SNNPR education bureau and the Federal Ministry of Education. However, in Konso there were other alternative views on mother tongue education.

8.6. Diverse Responses to the Mother Tongue Education in Konso

The Konso Woreda administration council used its constitutional right and decided to change the current language-in-education policy and initiated local policy that promoted mother tongue education. This policy decision was the bottom-up approach in the Ethiopian context since Konso Woreda was in the lower government administrative structure. However, in the context of Konso Woreda, the decision to implement mother tongue education was the top-down approach that engaged only a few officials and experts with little or no consultations with the other wider policy stakeholders (e.g. parents, teachers, students, community, etc.). In this regard, the Woreda education official said:

> …sensitizing and convincing the community about mother tongue education can be done further. Before that, we have to focus on the long and complex technical processes (as it takes so much time). (Woreda Education Office official).

This assertion reveals the limited participation of the community in the local policy planning process as it was believed that the different inputs of the policy stakeholders were not a priority, as long as the local policy fulfilled the technical requirements, and agreed with the macro policy at Federal level. It also showed the policy makers' perception as if the local community accepted the dominant mother tongue discourse. They disregarded alternative ideas about mother tongue education assumed by other policy stakeholders. While I was discussing this issue with another Woreda official, he expressed the view that the community had already participated in the local policy development through their representatives (the Woreda administrative officials who were elected by the community in the local general election). However, this idea could be questionable in the Ethiopian context where the political representatives rarely discuss policy issues with their constituencies and receive inputs for their decisions. Additionally, the strategic documents did not state the community's engagement in the policy planning's process. Rather, its objective said, "To make the public aware of Afaa Xonso (Affa Konso) development activities and the benefits that language development brings [and] to mobilise the public to own Afaa Xonso development activities" (KLDSP, 2015, 12). It highlighted the need to create awareness towards mother tongue education and informing the process of policy planning, however, nothing was mentioned about the community's participation and making them own the policy through engagement in the process. However, this experience limited the involvement of different language policy

stakeholders who could significantly contribute to the process with better policy outcomes and further collaboration and implementation.

With regard to the responses of the Konso officials and educated groups (or elites) and other invited Konso community members, on the local language policy initiative that emphasised mother tongue education, the minutes of the meeting held on June 2, 2014 in Karat town raised important points (Amharic minutes, my translation, 25/09/2006 E.C (June 2, 2014)). The participants were members of the Konso ethnic group who lived and worked in and outside the Konso Woreda (e.g. Addis Ababa, Hawassa, Arba Minch and Dilla towns). They (about 20 participants) expressed their views about the Konso language development initiative that would promote the Konso language in education system, and pledged their contributions to the effectiveness of the plan. For example, Gelemo (a member of the Konso community) said, "I am happy that the Konso language is moving towards a written language." He highlighted the upgrading of the Konso language, beyond oral communication, as a result of the policy initiative. Dr. Kusha also stated, "The Konso intellectuals who live outside the Woreda must continue supporting the policy initiative." This demonstrated the importance of exploring resources beyond Konso Woreda, for the local language policy planning.

The clan leader also said, "I am very excited to see the Konso individuals (intellectuals) explaining about how the Konso language is used in written form and working on developing the language and also seeing them speaking the foreign language (English)." This idea implied the past limited experience of the minority ethnic group in accessing educational opportunities, particularly at the higher level. It also praised the current education situation, compared to the previous education systems, in producing educated Konso members. Dr. Olana (one of the few highly educated Konso) said, "… in addition to mother tongue, children of the Konso community have to pay attention to develop other languages." Here, the importance of learning different languages, and not limiting children to their mother tongue, was emphasised. Hence, these selected people who attended the above mentioned meeting, and were considered to be influential (through their education level, official status, and socio-cultural status) in the Konso ethnic community, supported the local language policy initiative that was aimed at mother tongue education and other official uses.

8.6.1. Voices of Students, Teachers and Students' Parents on Mother Tongue Education

Apart from the views of the high status people, my discussions with students, teachers, students' parents and other members of the Konso community revealed multiple perspectives on mother tongue education. For example, Kora (a grade 8 student) said that:

> It is nice to give the first cycle of primary education in Konsigna (Affa Konso) as it is the mother tongue of most of the children in Konso. It will be good for them; they can get a good academic result. But, I am happy if Amharic is not left out…because, unable to speak or develop Amharic is a great loss. One cannot always work in the Konso Woreda. In this case, speaking Amharic is a must ('gid new' in Amharic). (Kora, grade 8 student).

The above student spoke of the benefit of Affa Konso as medium of instruction in view of supporting the education of the majority of the Konso children whose mother tongue was Affa Konso. Interestingly, his home language (and mother tongue) was Amharic (although he was from a Konso family). That was why he said "it was good for them" and alienated his identity from the Affa Konso speakers. He also did not bother about what the Affa Konso medium meant for students like him, who could not speak the language, when the policy is implemented. In his response the student honestly wished for the majority of the Konso students to learn in their mother tongue (e.g. with no political drive). Although he accepted the Affa Konso mother tongue medium, he still valued the inclusion of Amharic in the education system for not affecting students' wider communication outside their localities and future life.

On the other hand, there were students who responded differently to mother tongue education. For instance, Misrak (a grade 5 student) said that:

> It is good for us to learn in Amharic. We learn Affa Konso at home, and Amharic and English at school. Amharic is important, because when we complete our secondary education and travel outside Konso, it will help us to communicate with other people and get job opportunity. (Misrak, grade 5 student).

Misrak preferred the existing language-in-education policy, as it provided the chance to develop Amharic and some English in the school system. Her main language was Affa Konso and she described her stress in her first grade classroom due to language circumstances and not understanding what was going on in the classroom (see Chapter 7). However, at this level, she accepted the benefit of the Amharic medium in helping her to acquire and enrich her language

repertoire. Her argument was driven by the wider use of Amharic for communication purposes and it providing access to more possibilities in her future career options. In the same way, Fanuel (grade 5 student) said, "Amharic medium helps to enhance communication with people when we go outside the Konso Woreda." The major argument of these children when assigning a high value to Amharic was in relation to its wider use outside their localities and nationally and in their future career (this idea aligns with the idea stated in Chapter 5 by Mahider's case 1 that sees Affa Konso as a language that cannot help to cross a river). According to these children's views, it was the role of the school system to deliver new languages for students, other than their mother tongue or the language that they had already acquired. Their views also show that the children's acquisition of their ethnic language was the responsibility of their family and community. It also defines the role of their minority ethnic language as being for personal and social communication. In their views, as long as the students acquired and communicated in Affa Konso, that was enough; they did not realize its use in high public domains (because they had not experienced that before in Konso).

The students' parents also had their own reflections on mother tongue education. For instance, Orkayido (student's parent) said that:

> It is good to use Amharic medium as it is now. Some people say that mother tongue education is helpful for children's academic performance but I do not agree on this idea. I feel that it can restrict their knowledge and make children at disadvantaged. Because, all the contents written in Amharic and English languages should be translated into Affa Konso which is difficult. (Orkayido, educated member of the Konso ethnic group and parent of student, Kora, above).

This parent was not confident about the use of Affa Konso as a medium of instruction. He doubted the potential to translate all the primary school curriculum contents from Amharic and English into Affa Konso. In other words, he was skeptical about the use of the Konso minority language in education system as a medium. Due to this, he did not see the academic benefit of mother tongue education, as promoted by officials and others. His argument aligns with earlier points raised by Woreda officials about the major factors that could significantly affect children's academic progress: inadequate preparation, lack of educated human resources to develop the curriculum in Affa Konso, unavailability of Affa Konso reference materials and lack of trained teachers. Orkayido further stressed that, "I do not agree with the current tendency and initiative to give all subjects in the Konso language as the medium of instruction, or Affa Konso to replace Amharic in this regard." Unlike the majority of educated members of the Konso community with whom I had

discussions, he disagreed with the academic value of the mother tongue. However, such related arguments against the dominant mother tongue discourse had no prominence and remained unheard by the policy makers and officials of different levels (e.g. as expressed by the MOE official - debate about the importance of mother tongue education had no relevance) who were partly driven by political agenda (e.g. ethno-linguistic politics of Ethiopia that promoted ethnic language).

Moreover, using a translator, a rural student's parent (Engote) said that:

> We cannot improve ourselves if our children learn in the language they have already acquired. We need other languages. We or our children cannot be changed if they learn only in Affa Konso. We remain as it is without any change or improvement'. (Engote, a student's parent).

Engote expected the school to provide additional languages for children, other than their mother tongue. She also valued Amharic and English for her children's future lives. Her fear was that the use of a minority language as a medium in the education system would keep students and the community unchanged. This was because she doubted the ability of the Affa Konso medium of instruction in transforming students to a better life, particularly outside their locality. The limited use of Affa Konso in urban areas also led her to be dismissive of its value in the education system. Her view echoes a general perception that Amharic and English are the languages of a better life and change in Ethiopia. Another student's parent, Taytu said, "Children have already developed Affa Konso and why is it important for them to learn the language they know. They have to learn additional languages." Along the same lines, Kusha (a student's parent) said, "I would like my children to develop Amharic and English in school. They have already developed Affa Konso and I do not want my children to miss an opportunity that I did not have, due to many reasons." These parents associated Affa Konso merely with personal and social communication purposes and not for formal or official uses. They also questioned its academic benefit and believed it to be limited with regards to the children's wider communication, and its effect on their learning of Amharic and English.

Therefore, in contrast to the dominant discourse that promoted the notion of "mother tongue education enhances children's learning and their rights" in primary education, there were alternative views that challenged the idea of mother tongue education. For instance, the majority of student's parents whom I had discussions with, did not support the mother tongue as medium

of instruction due to its perceived limitations with regard to wider communication outside the locality and doubts about its academic value. On the other hand, officials and educated students' parents (e.g. Karafo, Gobena, Endale) supported mother tongue education due to their official duties, political drive, and the influence of the dominant discourse around mother tongue. Moving beyond the Amharic or Affa Konso as medium of instruction, ideas about how to promote a multilingual education that provides multiple languages for students and balance such provisions in the education system seemed to be lacking in all these different perspectives. Nevertheless, there was a contradiction in terms of some officials' (and 'educated' persons) dominant language (Amharic) use at home and promotion of mother tongue education (Affa Konso) in public policy (mother tongue education policy) planning.

8.7. A Contradiction on Home Language Use and Public Language Policy Planning

Here, I provide the experiences of two members of the Konso language development committee who were engaged in the local language policy planning. As discussed in Chapter 5, there were some Konso ethnic and language background students' parents (Gobena - Woreda Education Office official and Endale - educated, religious member of the committee) who mostly used Amharic in the home - this shaped their children's language use, development and attitudes. As a result, they developed Amharic as their mother tongue and did not acquire their ethnic language, Affa Konso. In this regard, Gobena said that:

> All of my three children grew up here in Karat town that Amharic is their mother tongue. Only my older son listen some Konsigna (Affa Konso) but the other two daughters (including Emebet) do not listen Konsigna. They could not understand Konsigna 'even if someone cuts their ears' (this is a common proverb in Ethiopia to express the ignorance (unable to listen) of listening a certain language)... However, due to their Amharic language skill, my children did not face any language problem and adjustment of school and classroom environment as their mother tongue fitted the medium of instruction in primary education, Amharic. (Gobena, student's parent and Woreda Education Office official).

Gobena expressed that the convergence of his children's mother tongue and Amharic being the medium of primary education, enabled his children to adapt easily to classroom and school language situations. Gobena also expressed how challenging his early primary school experience was in the rural area because of his lack of the medium of instruction, Amharic (his mother tongue was Affa Konso). He said, "My children are lucky not to be in a classroom where there is no

communication between them and the teachers" (in fact some teachers who speak the ethnic language may use their own strategies in order to help the teaching-learning processes happen, e.g. through translation of Affa Konso into Amharic and vice versa (as discussed in Chapter 7)). On the other hand, he was unhappy about his children not understanding their ethnic language and being unable to communicate with his rural family (he expressed his feelings of guilt and his continued efforts to help them to develop Affa Konso, e.g. arranging occasional visits to his rural relatives). Endale's family also shared the same Amharic home language experience with that of Gobena's family; however, as members of the language development committee, both students' parents promoted mother tongue education and have been working hard towards that for the last five or more years.

Nevertheless, a contradiction exists between what has been practised at home (Amharic) and promoting Affa Konso in public (the language they do not use in the home). In both situations mentioned above, the dominant language use of Amharic in the home, the facilitating of conditions for their children to take Amharic as a mother tongue and ignoring the use of the ethnic language in home, while at the same time promoting Affa Konso mother tongue education in the Woreda seemed to be contradictory. There was a tension between their efforts to support the introduction of Affa Konso in the education system in the Woreda, and them not providing for Affa Konso communication at the household level. They wished for their children to develop Amharic as the nationwide communication language for their future life, and at the same time, their job and social responsibilities as official and members of the Konso language development committee pushed them towards promoting Affa Konso. These, and other similar experiences of the Woreda officials, no doubt contributed to the delay of the Affa Konso mother tongue education provision in Konso Woreda.

8.8. Conclusion

The goal of the local language policy initiative is to promote the minority language, Affa Konso, and use it in the public domain, for educational and other official purposes. To achieve this, the local language policy involved status planning, corpus planning, and acquisition planning, because Affa Konso had never been used in the education system as an official language of teaching. As part of the status planning, Affa Konso was chosen as a language, along with the Karati dialect, to be used for official purposes (drawing from Hornberger's (1994) idea of status planning (in

Johnson 2013, 123)). The local language policy also undertook a corpus planning process that aimed to standardize Affa Konso by adapting the Latin script. This was because Affa Konso was an oral language and not used in written form (except on a small scale, and mainly for religious purposes, so very few books were written in the Sabean script). The acquisition planning process engaged in curriculum development and teacher training, in relation to the Konso orthography and sounds, and the teaching and use of Affa Konso in the teaching-learning process, thereby increasing its usage.

However, the policy decisions regarding the kind of language and dialect to be used for official purposes, the script selection, and the orthography development, were made by the Woreda officials, with expert-based committee support, on behalf of the community. The wider policy stakeholders (e.g. students, teachers, students' parents, etc.), whose lives would be affected by it, had little or no participation in the process. Rather than involving the community in the policy process, the Affa Konso development strategic plan suggested informing and creating awareness about the importance of mother tongue policy within the community, after the policy planning had been completed. Indeed, in the Konso Woreda context, the local language policy followed a top-down approach, and the planning process was mainly left to linguists, educationists, and other professionals. Language planning was considered a task for professionals rather than making the effort to coordinate the various policy stakeholders and drawing on their diverse experiences for better policy inputs and outcomes. However, such a policy planning approach does have implication for future policy implementation, for instance, lack of commitment and collaboration of policy enactment.

Moreover, the local language policy initiative is influenced by the Federal Education and Training Policy of Ethiopia (FDRE, 1994). Dominant mother tongue discourse in education system is also placed at the centre of the Constitution and the ethnolinguistic political system in Ethiopia. These government legislations fully backed the Woreda officials to promote their ethnic language through introducing mother tongue education. Although the dominant mother tongue discourse that "enhanced children's learning and was their right" was promoted by officials and experts of different government echelons; there were alternative discourses and views that challenged this dominant assertion. However, the alternative views on mother tongue education that assumed it would deter children's academic progress, wider communication, and future careers, were

marginalised and not considered as input during the policy planning. Additionally, the use of Affa Konso or Amharic as the medium of instruction was polarized among officials, experts and parents, rather than looking towards how to develop a more practical bilingual/multilingual education system that would enrich the students' language resources (though the local language policy aimed to include Affa Konso, Amharic and English, the policy needs to be supported by detailed implementation strategies that can help their successful provisions for students). Students and parents also felt that it was the role of school to teach additional languages, particularly dominant languages like Amharic and English, rather than just their mother tongue. Therefore, the school's conventional role would be compromised if the minority language was used as the medium of instruction in the education system. This resulted from the assumption that children learnt Affa Konso informally from their family and community, and therefore did not require the school's formal intervention. This students parents' idea also contested the multilayered language policies' intentions and teachers' and officials' views that emphasised the pedagogical value and right aspect of mother tongue education.

Considering the dynamic and complex aspects of policy planning and its newness, the Konso local language policy initiative has already accomplished many technical requirements. However, the language policy planning and curriculum development was not yet finalized by 2016, and so the teachers, and other educational personnel, had not been trained. Its implementation was delayed for technical, financial and political reasons. On the political side, the current Konso political movement had divided the Konso language development committee members politically between the pro-government agenda and the Konso community agenda (see Chapter 2) which then affected their collaborative work on the local language policy. Other major reasons that affected the timely implementation of the local language policy in Konso were: the experts and committee members who took on the policy planning work were already overworked and did not have enough time to commit to the policy; a lack of experts in different fields (e.g. language pedagogy, policy analysis and the failure to use experts beyond the scope of Konso Woreda; some of the committee members lived outside the Woreda; consideration was not taken regarding the participation of wider policy stakeholders in the process.

Although the initiative has achieved many technical accomplishments, there is still a lot to do in order to put it into practice, including the consideration of teacher training and a College of Teacher Education that helps to provide training on the content and pedagogy of Affa Konso teaching. I believe that re-thinking and developing strategies which will engage the community in the policy planning process would be helpful and could enrich the policy and its successful implementation.

Finally, when comparing the current Amharic medium language-in-education policy to the local language policy initiative that proposes Affa Konso as the medium of instruction in the first cycle of primary education, there are implications for students and teachers and for teaching-learning processes, curriculum, and other educational inputs, such as reading materials. It would help the majority of Konso children if they could learn in their mother tongue, thereby enabling them to focus purely on the content of the lessons (rather than both concept and a second language). In contrast, the Affa Konso medium of instruction would be a challenge for Amharic speaking children (mainly in the towns in Konso Woreda); similar to what is currently experienced by the Affa Konso speaking children in the primary education system, particularly at early grade levels. The question is also raised regarding work assignment of Amharic speaking teachers in an Affa Konso mother tongue education system in the first cycle of primary school (except for those teaching Amharic and English subjects) and the possible transfer to other schools and areas they could teach in the language they speak. A major challenge to the implementation of this policy could be the lack of adequate and qualified teachers who can teach in Affa Konso and the inability to utilize qualified and experienced non-Affa Konso speaking teachers in the primary school. Moreover, a newly initiated mother tongue education impacts on the quality of education due to the absence of reference materials and supplementary reading materials written in Affa Konso.

Chapter Nine: Discussing Language Uses, Identities and Language Policy Processes

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss the major themes that emerged from my empirical analysis of the case of Karat town, a Konso community. Accordingly, I explore: how and why language ideologies and power relations shape language choice and use in multiple spaces such as in the family, the community and the school; how ethnic identities are understood by students, teachers and other members of the community and related with languages; how and why language-in-education policies involve multiple ideologies, intentions and interpretations, and how and why policy makers and teachers respond to language policy processes. As I discussed in Chapter 4, I use the key concepts of language ideology (Woolard, 1998 and Blommaert, 2006), language policy (Johnson, 2013 and Ricento, 2006) and identities (Hall, 1996 and Omoniyi, 2006) to critically analyse the above questions and issues.

9.1. Language Ideologies and Uses in Diverse Spaces/Contexts

In this section, I explore how diverse spaces along with their related language ideologies shape language choice, use and value. Drawing on Woolard's idea (1998) that language ideologies go beyond language itself and involve people's beliefs and attitudes about a particular language, its uses and users and the language's relationships with different aspects of human life, I investigate the key themes that emerged in relation to language uses and values below. In doing so, I consider the families and communities (e.g. Karat town and Durayite walled village in the Karat town), school, marketplace, religious events, social services, government offices and local politics.

In Konso, members of the community used languages differently based on context and on the way they perceived and valued the various languages and their speakers. My findings revealed that families held different attitudes towards and attached different values to languages, depending upon the spaces they inhabited, their histories, experiences and perceptions about those languages. For example, one family changed their language choice and use upon changing their residence from Durayite (a walled village) to the centre of Karat town. These two spaces (Durayite village and Karat town) are geographically very close, about a 10 minutes' walk between them, but are relatively different socio-cultural contexts, underpinned by different language ideologies and language uses. The variation of language uses within these contexts is largely due to the particular characteristics of a walled village: the closeness of its residents, relative ethno-linguistic 'homogeneity' and close socio-cultural ties, and a shared history that means the Konso people

value their enclosed village as offering security and protection. These walled villages are not easy to visit; 'outsiders' can only come in if accompanied by 'insiders'. These conditions result in limited language diversity, with high value assigned to the ethnic language, Affa Konso, as a marker of Konso ethnic identity. Thus families there privilege Affa Konso for personal, family and socio-cultural interactions (e.g. rituals and other traditional ceremonies were undertaken in the Mora using Affa Konso). These factors influenced the language choices made by families and therefore the children, both in the home and the community. Language use in this walled village aligns with Woolard's (1998) idea that language ideology, as a socio-cultural conception about language along with culturally agreed group norms about its use, shapes individuals' and families' language choices and uses.

However, when the same families (e.g. Meaza and Almaz) changed their residence from a walled or rural village to the centre of Karat town, they were exposed to a very different language environment and attitudes. Amharic is the language of the town's way of life and therefore is the prestigious language. As a result, these families tended to change their home language and use Amharic in the home and in other public spaces. The value assigned to Affa Konso diminished as it came to be seen as restricting children's wider communication, academic progress and future life. In turn, this perception affected the families' attitudes to Affa Konso and language use at home. As Blommaert (2006, 241) argues, individuals have conceptions about language's "quality', value and status' which guide language choice, use and their interactional behaviour". As explained by one student's parent (e.g. Meaza, see Chapter 5) whose children were born and grew up in a walled village, Affa Konso was their mother tongue, whereas her children who were born and grew up in Karat town (centre) picked up Amharic as their mother tongue. This was because of the different language attitudes that the family held and the value assigned to languages in different spaces. This finding supports Volk and Angelova (2007, 179) who argue that 'local interactional contexts determine language choice and use' and children's language development as well. Hence, individuals' home language uses and attitudes towards languages are contextual and subjected to change depending upon different spaces and times.

Additionally, in the same town but in different spaces (different families in Karat town), there were different attitudes to languages and language use. Although different families are from the same social or ethnic group, they do not 'use and value languages in the same way' because language

ideologies are not uniformly shared by members of the community (Gal's, 1998). Accordingly, in Karat town, there were families who used Affa Konso or Amharic and both or other languages in the home, depending upon their different conceptions to languages. For instance, as discussed in Chapter 5, in attaching different values to languages and in view of language as a resource rather than a problem (e.g. Dawit's family did not see the use of Affa Konso in home as a limiting language for their children).This family used both Affa Konso (mainly with family members and Affa Konso speaker guests), Amharic (sometimes with family members and Amharic speaker guests) and Oromo language (with Afan Oromo speaker guests). In this family, different languages were used in a multilingual setting which shaped Dawit's multiple languages and their uses. In contrast, Mahider's family dominantly used Amharic and did not use Affa Konso in the home; this narrowed the family's language repertoire though both parents were multilinguals who could speak Affa Konso, Amharic and Afan Oromo. However, Mahider's parents used Affa Konso in different ways and with a different emphasis when they were together and wanted to discuss secret issues between themselves in the home. The dominant use of Amharic in this family resulted from the way that parents perceived the minority language as a problem, in that it did not further their children's educational achievements or give them social mobility (Ruiz, 1984, cited in Ricento and Hornberger, 1996). Mahider's parents' language learning history (Mahider's mother and father were from Affa Konso and Konso ethnic backgrounds and developed Amharic as a second language in school and town), language competence (parents speak Affa Konso, Amharic and Afan Oromo) and language context (Karat town was a multilingual environment which can be applied in home) were not reflected in their language use within the home.

Apart from families' contexts, school was a space where different background children and teachers came with multiple languages and language attitudes with associated values. As a consequence of the language ideologies embedded in the official language policy, Amharic and English were the dominant languages that students had to socialize with and acquire them in order to succeed in their academic progress and school life at primary school and in their future careers. This guided students' language choice and use in primary school. In contrast, Affa Konso's official role in the school against the rural children's home language experience was ignored. This meant Affa Konso speaking students had to negotiate their home languages and use the school's privileged language, Amharic. As Makoe (2014, 556) argues, in such contexts, minority language speaking students are required to 'adapt to and fit into pre-existing sets of cultural scripts, linguistic

norms and habits of [communication]'. The use of a dominant language in the classroom and school as a working language and part of students' identities and academic progress has an influence on students' language choice and use in school and beyond.

Nevertheless, the language ideologies that were embedded in the Konso socio-cultural system - such as speaking Affa Konso as one of the key and unique markers of the Konso ethnic identity and as easier for expressing feelings and ideas - competed with the official language in school. Such attitudes towards Affa Konso meant that Affa Konso speaking students used their ethnic language for in-group interactions among themselves, teachers and head teachers in the school environment, including in the classrooms in some cases. Although schools are "highly ideological spaces in which power is continually at work … to privilege certain ways of using language, thinking, making knowledge claims, acting and interacting over others" (Makoe, 2014, 556), in practice, there was space for minority language speaker students and teachers to value and use their home language against the official language to enhance their communication and support students' learning in school.

As in the primary school, in Christian religious spaces, although not officially sanctioned, Amharic was the language of preference through which religious ceremonies and processes were carried out. The Orthodox Church leaders and clergy communicated their religious messages using Amharic, with translation into Affa Konso (see Chapter 5). Thus, the dominant position of Amharic due to its history (mainly in relation to the Orthodox Church that came to Konso with Amharic speakers and ruling groups, see Chapter 2) and power relations, influenced language use in the religious spaces. The use of Amharic by the Woreda Church head and clergy as a means to transmit religious knowledge to the majority of the Konso population that attended the Epiphany festival, consolidated the value attached to Amharic over the minority language, Affa Konso. This influenced perceptions of Amharic as a sacred or religious language and as a result, undermined the position of Affa Konso in the religious process.

On the other hand, Amharic, which was a high status language in primary education and the religious festival was not the dominant language in the open air market (though Amharic was used by many individuals there). Affa Konso was predominantly used by the rural stall holders for business and social interactions. This illustrates how the value and status of different languages is contextual rather than uniform across contexts. People also codeswitched using Affa Konso,

Amharic, Afan Oromo and others in the market depending upon their language background as well as the person with whom they communicated. I noticed that language uses in the market were associated with socio-economic backgrounds: those selling low priced agricultural products mainly spoke Affa Konso being confined to their specific locality, to residing in walled villages and communicating mainly with others in this confined community. In contrast, sellers of high priced and manufactured goods used multiple languages, including Amharic, due to their mobility and the need to engage more diversified business environments in which Amharic was used. This indicates that there is a relationship between language use and economic status, and also that in the local market, multilingualism functions as a resource to the social and economic benefit of individuals.

In the Konso Woreda, government office employees used both Amharic and Affa Konso (sometime Oromo language and some English) among themselves and customers in discharging their official duties. Nevertheless, the language ideology associated to the use of Amharic as the dominant language for official purposes had been negotiated and replaced by the use of Affa Konso in some official duties. For instance, in one of the key public domains, legal procedures in Woreda were conducted in Affa Konso for Affa Konso speakers and Amharic for Amharic speakers (As the Woreda court official explained, court processes were carried out in Affa Konso while court files and documentation were written in the official language, Amharic). Of all the social spaces, this was probably the one that privileged Affa Konso most in terms of official uses, ensuring that the Konso community (mainly the rural community) could understand the judiciary process. In this context, Affa Konso was the language of power in that it helped its speakers to confidently express their cases and not be disadvantaged in the court process due to language barriers. It also has political and constitutional implications (FDRE, 1995) in that by using the minority language in the court process, the minority ethnic group can be arbitrated by people who have a common ethnic identity.

As the above discussion shows, families and other members of the community used language differently in various spaces in line with their conceptions about languages and their uses, and assumed role of a particular language in terms of its social position and power in society. The perception of Amharic as the language of opportunity and power, influenced children, families and others to dominantly use it in the home, school, workplace and religious events in Karat town. On

the other hand, Affa Konso as a means of Konso socio-cultural communications and marker of Konso culture and identity guided individuals and families to mainly use Affa Konso in the home, walled villages and marketplace. The informal use of Affa Konso in workplaces in Woreda offices and formal use in the judiciary process can be taken as a sign that Affa Konso is increasingly being used for official purposes, as envisaged in the local language policy (see Chapter 8). Hence, my above findings suggest that language ideology - a belief in and attitudes to language and value assigned to specific languages, guides language choice and use of members of the community in diverse spaces differently. As Blommaert (2006, 241-242) argues, language users "use language on the basic of the conceptions they have and so reproduce these conceptions…as sites of power and authority".

9.2. Power Relations between Amharic and Affa Konso and their Speakers

In the previous section, I explored language choices, uses and values in the family, the community, the school and in political, religious and official spaces, along with language ideologies. Building upon that, in this part, I discuss how power relations in some spaces/contexts marginalised Affa Konso and its speakers. I argue that the power relations between languages and their speakers partly result from external factors that privilege a certain language (s) over others. The language that has high status and is recognised in the official public domains has the power to influence the minority language groups' interactional behaviour and language uses. Legitimizing the use of a certain language for a particular purpose is ideologically framed to sustain power and to influence others using language in society (Blommaert, 2006). Similarly, the type of language that an individual speaks and the ways they speak and communicate with others reflect their social positions in society (Bourdieu, 1991). For instance, in school, when the head and vice head teachers conveyed their formal messages to students (e.g in the flag ceremony) using Amharic, this demonstrated the power relations between languages and the speakers' social position in the school. Church leaders (native Amharic peakers) preached in Amharic during the Epiphany event (used Amharic with a mix of some Geez (a liturgical language in Orthodox Church) words, phrases and sentences) thus revealing certain individuals' social positions in society.

At the household level, my findings indicate that some Konso families (e.g. Mahider's family) ignored their ethnic language, Affa Konso and replaced it with Amharic in their home interactions, because of the asymmetric power relations between minority and dominant languages. As a result,

Affa Konso was placed in a lower position in the language hierarchy, in turn influencing the power relations between speakers from different language backgrounds. More specifically, the devaluing of Affa Konso in primary education and in other official domains at different levels of government bureaucracy affected families' language uses. In this regard, there were families who believed that their children would benefit in their academic and future life by developing proficiency in the dominant languages, Amharic and English, rather than in the minority language, Affa Konso. This supports Fishman (1990, cited in Garcia, et.al., 2006, 36) who argues that "those who have dominant languages enjoy academic and social rewards". This was among the reasons why students and parents wanted dominant languages, Amharic and English, to be developed in the classroom to improve their future life chances. Thus, asymmetric power relations between Affa Konso and Amharic and their speakers contributed to the marginalisation of Affa Konso and its speakers in some spaces (e.g. home, school, government offices, religious ceremonies).

Moreover, due to external factors and to fears of being disadvantaged in public services (e.g. transportation, local hotel), there were Affa Konso speakers who were unwilling to use their minority language in towns and cities. Such an attitude also influenced Konso families in Karat town towards language use in the home environment that facilitated children picking up Amharic as their mother tongue rather than Affa Konso; furthermore, in some families children were not even encouraged to develop Affa Konso as a second language. This finding aligns with May's (2012, 25) observation that because of power relations, minority languages come to be considered as 'unhelpful languages - not only by others, but also often by the speakers of minority languages themselves'. The traditional proverb that I discussed in Chapter 5, whereby a minority language is judged as not helping ' to cross a river' was a reflection of this marginalisation process of minority languages and its speakers. Hence, I argue that the negative attitude of individuals towards their own minority language was the result of the overall socio-political system's failure to provide people with the sense of language equality (beyond legal support) and confidence to use their languages as a resource rather than assuming them to be a problem.

Furthermore, in the education system, the rural Affa Konso speakers, particularly in the early grades of primary school, were disadvantaged as a result of their home language. Affa Konso was given low status in the teaching-learning process in primary school. Beyond a means of communication, language constructs inequality in school as a social system through imbalanced

power relations (Habermas, 1998 cited in Cao, 2011, xvi). For instance, as I discussed in Chapter 7, the participation of rural Affa Konso speaking students in the classroom was limited and their academic performance was low in the early grades because of the unfamiliar language of instruction; furthermore, some of the curriculum contents and learning experiences did not take into account or build upon their home experiences (e.g. a topic on Amharic greeting in grade 1 Amharic class 'Dehna aderachu' (good morning) in Amharic is different from that of 'Negeyita' in Affa Konso'); lacked quick school readiness due to language barrier; and negative comments and social exclusion by peers and teachers in the classroom (e.g. three boys in grade 4 Amharic class, see Chapter 7) due to limited proficiency in the medium of instruction. Taking Fairclough's (2001, 28) point, "power relations [exist] among various social groupings and language backgrounds" in Karat primary school. This kind of school experience, unresponsive to certain students' educational needs, can contribute to high dropout and failure rates and a poor quality of education.

However, a minority language did not always have a marginal position in societal life in a multilingual environment. Rather, it could be a means of 'negotiation, empowerment, resistance' (Makoe, 2014, 654) and power as well. There were cases in which minority language speakers were able to negotiate the official language and resist the dominant language and prioritize the use of their ethnic language. In this regard, the power of Affa Konso over Amharic was evident during the political unrest in the area, when speakers discussed local politics and secret issues in Affa Konso (with code-switching to Amharic, Afan Oromo and English). In this example, the minority language empowered and mobilised the community towards achieving their political aspirations (e.g. establishing their own administrative zone), taking power (e.g. the struggle for self-administration) and attending to security as well (e.g. for keeping their information from government spies) (see Chapters 2 and 5). Hence, in different spaces, different languages have different status and power in terms of how they are used, valued and recognised in a society.

9.3. Understanding Ethnic Identity

In this section I discuss how students, teachers and students' parents understood ethnic identity in the context of a minority Konso ethnic community. Understanding people's insights with regards to their ethnic identity lays the foundations for further analysis regarding the interconnections between identity, language, its uses and language policy processes. In this Konso community,

students, teachers and students' parents and other respondents had different understandings of ethnic identity. Some saw it as fixed and others had a notion of identity as 'becoming'. There were also respondents who experienced 'identity tension', whereby they felt caught between the pressures of a heredity-based fixed notion of ethnic identity and the wish to socially construct their own ethnic identities.

For those who spoke of 'Being a Konso', my findings reveal that ethnic identity was largely essentialised: the majority of my respondents believed in the hereditary aspect of ethnic identity, considering it as "…the bit of the self which remains always-already 'the same' [and] identical to itself across time" (Hall, 1996, 3). The organization of the Konso ethnic group within the clan system and inheritance being passed down through the father's clan lineage (see Chapter 2) reinforced the idea of ethnic identity as unchanging and the way ethnic identity was defined by members of the community. In this regard, ethnic identity was understood as a "'given' of social existence, including blood and kin connections, religion, language (even dialect), region and custom" (Geertz, 1973 cited in Spencer, 2006, 77).

Moreover, the Ethiopian ethnolinguistic political structure supported and strengthened the concept of identity as a fixed notion. As stated in the Ethiopian Constitution (FDRE, 1995), ethnic identity is considered to be bounded by a common language, culture, geographical location and 'psychological setup', a definition that precludes the transformational dimension of identity. Thus language is constructed as a key determinant of a group's identity and key to a group gaining official recognition as an autonomous ethnic group with constitutional rights in the Ethiopian context. Abbink (2011, 600) points out that, "Many have commented of the strong static, primordialist definition of "ethnic groups" (i.e., of what in Ethiopian legal texts are called "nations, nationalities and peoples…"). Hence, in my research context, Karat Konso community, the understanding of ethnic identity as fixed is underpinned by both traditions and current politics.

Despite the dominance of an essentialised notion of ethnic identity, there were members of this Konso community who perceived ethnic identity as changeable, as a process, I have called 'Becoming a Konso'. For instance, Felekech's mother believed that rather than identity being formed through a blood relationship, it was the social process and environments in which her children were born and raised that were key to her children's ethnic identity formation (see Chapter 6). Hall (1996) concurs with this understanding of ethnic identity when he argues that is the time

and place in which individuals operate that are essential for identity modification and construction. However, the poststructuralist view of identity as 'fluid and that individual is able to move in and out of identity categories...' (ibid.) was beyond respondents' experience of identity, since any change of ethnic identity was seen as problematic and unacceptable. For example, Felekech resisted embracing a Konso ethnic identity ('I am a 'Derashe' rather than a Konso') as a social process. Her choice of her family's identity is rooted in a socio-cultural system that essentializes ethnic identity and views ethnic identity as pre-determined at birth rather than a social construct (Berghe, 1978, cited in Song, 2003).

Where there was identity tension, individuals experienced difficulties in choosing and constructing their ethnic identities due to internal (within the individual) and external (e.g. socio-cultural and political reasons) factors. For instance, as discussed in Chapter 6, Simegne was not in a position to take on a Konso identity through social interactions and construction in the community in which he lived. At the same time, in a context in which language is considered a key marker of ethnic identity, he was unable to confidently take on the ethnic identity of his non-Konso family's heritage (Amhara) because he was practically unfamiliar with that community, and because his accent was different from the Amharic native speakers, which laid any claim to Amhara identity open to being challenged. This reveals the complexity of identity that requires reconciling "the personal dimensions of the identity equation as well as an interrogation of how these connect to the society in which we live" (Woodward, 2004, 1). The failure to resolve the personal dimension of identity and one's relationship with the community in which one lives, creates confusion and ambivalence when it comes to identity choice. Accordingly, Simegne expressed confusion about his ethnic identity, since his claim to a certain kind of identity did not match with what others ascribed to him. Considering this, I argue that an individual's identity is not only about self-convincing to hold a particular kind of identity but that an identity claim requires the support of others. As Omoniyi (2006) notes, identities require ascription of both the individual himself/herself and others.

In Ethiopia at the time of writing this thesis, ethnic identity plays a significant role in economic, political, social and day-to-day interactions. For individuals like Simegne, being unable to get the community's recognition of their ethnic identity creates conflict in their personal and social life. As Pavlenko and Blackledge (2004, cited in Omoniyi, 2006, 19) argue, in my research context, ethnic identity helps "to claim social spaces and social prerogatives". Moreover, an essentialised

and bounded ethnic identity has a negative impact on those members of the community whose ethnic identity is seen as different from that of the community in which they live (e.g. favoritism and exclusion from services and employment opportunity, deprivation of rights). At worst, it results in social conflict as evidenced by the conflict in the Oromia and Ethiopian Somali regions, which has been responsible for loss of hundreds of lives from both groups (Ethiopian Government Media, Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation, December 18, 2017 and Voice of America Amharic Service, December 19, 2017). However, in my research context, there were respondents who began to contest an essentialised notion of identity and wanted to construct their ethnic identity through processes in the community in which they lived, rather than attaching it to blood ties.

As a researcher, my position on ethnic identity is to understand it as a social construct. However, constructing ethnic identity other than blood ties in my research area was challenging because of sociocultural and ethnolinguistic politics though it was possible. I also believe that identities are multiple, constructed and situated in time and space. With regard to multiple identities, teachers had differing identities in school as a teacher, in home as a mother or father, in the community as a Konso, Christian, Islam, etc. in relation to their roles in school, family and society. To take the example of the clan leader in this community, he could be seen to have multiple identities as a member of the Ethiopian military force and leading his life in the city, Addis Ababa, and holding urban and military identities 10 years ago. However, upon the death of his father and as an elder son of his family, he had to respect and take over the clan leadership as the Konso sociocultural system demands. He was urged to resign from the security force and came back to the rural village in Konso Woreda. The clan leader negotiated his professional identity and constructed and performed a role of the clan leader with high prestige in Konso community. This example reveals how multiple identities operated through time and space as a former military man, father, clan leader, political activist (e.g. as a member of the committee who led the Konso political movement, see Chapter 2), rural man (who lives in rural area, at the centre of the dense forest), Konso and Ethiopian. Thus, members of the Konso community constructed multiple identities throughout their lives with which they defined themselves in different contexts.

9.3.1. Language in Relation to Identity

In this part, I discuss how students, teachers and other members of the community understood language in relation to their identities. Their understanding of ethnic identity as a static idea was

reflected in how language was perceived. In the Konso community, respondents' views implied that Affa Konso was directly linked with the Konso ethnic identity. Students and others who believed that ethnic identity was inherited through the family, stated that Affa Konso was the only language that linguistically represented the Konso as an ethnic group. They accepted other languages as not 'theirs' and attributed them to other ethnic groups. In addition, Affa Konso as a 'mother tongue' was a key marker of Konso identity; it provided an emotional tie with the Konso community, and a means by which to display a sense of belongingness to the Konso community; high levels of proficiency that enabled the expression of ideas helped them in relating Affa Konso with their identity. Hence, the idea of ethnic identity as a static and 'naturally' endowed element influenced how students and other respondents understood ethnic language in relation to their identities. They assumed that language and ethnic identity were related in a one-to-one equation. Yet, as May (2012) argues, language and ethnic identity do not necessarily connect. I argue that every language, including the ethnic language that a person speaks, uses and performs, represents his/her different identities in different contexts. But, in a multilingual setting, individuals construct hierarchies of languages and use their languages differently to manifest their different identities in line with their relative importance in that situation. Additionally, perceiving language only through the hereditary lens restricts the opportunities for language choice and use, and the role of agency in developing multiple languages and shaping plural identities (Chowdhury, 2016).

On the other hand, some members of the community, including students, understood language as being beyond heritage and an aspect of Konso ethnic identity. This supports the idea that "Languages and using language manifest 'who we are', and we define reality … through our language and linguistic behaviour" (Wodak, 2012, 216) rather than linking ethnic language only with identity. Accordingly, the individuals who recognised all the languages they spoke and used in different contexts as their 'own' languages were able to move away from essentialising language. Instead, they perceived language as multiple, as part of their identities and as a resource. This revealed the use of diverse languages in a multilingual environment. For instance, in Chapter 6, I analysed students and teachers who associated their languages with their uses in the home, community, school and outside their localities, and the way they developed them in different contexts. My analysis shows languages being acquired and developed through a process of interaction rather than as inherited and fixed (Rampant, 1990). Although identities are multiple and do not remain the same from moment to moment and throughout our life (Hall, 1996), the

languages that individuals develop through interactions with people in time and place are not separate from their identities.

Thus, different languages that students and teachers spoke and used were part of their identities. For instance, in Chapter 5, I illustrated how individuals exposed to different language environments (e.g. the home, the school, the market), learned multiple languages and performed them differently according to their importance to the situations and to the speaker's purposes. Building on Shohamy's (2012, 538) idea, members of the community used and performed languages pragmatically 'at times for functional reasons' in business, educational and work related purposes and 'at times for symbol purposes' for example, in celebrating traditional rituals in the Mora and in walled villages or when discussing political matters that had a direct influence on the Konso ethnic group. This shows that people use different languages and communicate in diverse spaces to achieve their needs and the ways in which individuals manifest their different identities through performing different languages.

Moreover, respondents who took on a second language as their own and used phrases like 'my own language' and 'proud of my language' in individual conversations about the languages they spoke shows that people understood multiple languages as part of their identities (Ngcoboa, 2014, 709). For instance, in Chapter 6, Gara (a teacher) expressed that 'All the languages that I use are 'my languages' and the people who speak these languages are 'my people''. I also discussed the grade 5 student who wanted to develop her English to communicate with foreign (non-Ethiopian) tourists in Konso and how she developed a positive attitude to language and wanted to shape her identity towards being a multilingual person who acquires and uses English and performs it in a particular situation. In contrast, essentialising ethnic language and assuming an innate emotional relationship with ethnic identity can deter the development and use of other languages.

At the same time, in a multilingual setting, attachment to languages does not remain the same for all time and will not necessarily remain linked with ethnic language. As Rampton (1990) argues, different factors (e.g. education, working language and socio-cultural factors) can affect an individual's attachment to the languages he/she speaks and vary from context to context and purpose to purpose. In this regard, Lytra (2016, 133) argues that language is not 'a marker of inherited ethnic identity' and 'language may not be intrinsically valuable in itself' (May, 2012, 135). Nevertheless, the way that ethnic language and identity are promoted in Ethiopian

ethnolinguistic politics and reflected in people's economic, social, political and day-to-day interactions, influenced individuals' perceptions of an ethnic language and identity as bound to a particular ethnic group and as inextricably linked (e.g. an ethnic group must have a common language and identity, FDRE, 1995). This has led to members of the community, including students, seeing "language and ethnic identity [as] fixed and bounded categories [pre-imposed] on individuals and groups in a given [context]" (Lytra, 2016, 133) rather than a social process and construct. This ideology upon which Ethiopia's political system is founded, undermines the legitimacy of particular ethnic communities that comprise multiple languages and identities. In such a context, it is difficult to promote and implement the national multilingual education policy legislated in 1994 (FDRE, 1994). Yet, refraining from essentialising language and choosing to see different languages as a resource would help to facilitate communication among different language backgrounds in these multilingual settings.

9.4. Language Policy Creation, Interpretation and Agency

In this section, I discuss how language ideologies influence the ways in which language-in-education policies are approached, developed and implemented, and how individual agency works in language policy processes. I also analyse how the local language policy was planned with its complexities and challenges with regard to this Konso community.

9.4.1. Multilayered Language-in-Education Policy Spaces

Language-in-education policy planning can be undertaken at different levels of decision making about languages (Shohamy, 2006). Considering this, I discuss how language ideologies shape multilayered language-in-education policy creation and intentions. In doing so, I take Johnson's (2013) idea of language ideologies framing policy intentions and processes, including implementation. Building on my discussion in Chapter 8, I analyse the Federal Ministry of Education, Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples' Region (SNNPR), Segen Area Peoples Zone, and Konso Woreda language-in-education policies in relation to their language ideologies and intentions. The aim of the federal language-in-education policy was to give the right to all ethnic groups of the country to promote their languages and use them in primary education and other public domains. This was also the dominant discourse in the federal official documents including the Constitution (FDRE, 1995, 132) that states, "All Ethiopian languages shall enjoy equal state recognition". This discourse as an ideologically derived social construct (e.g. from ethnolinguistic ideology and federalism of Ethiopia) is meant to influence people's actions towards

an intended direction (Blommaert, 2005; Fairclough, 2001) through educational policies and practices. Yet in the same policy document, the Federal MOE states that, "…Making the necessary preparation, nations and nationalities can either learn in their own language or can choose from among those selected on the basis of national and countrywide distribution" (FDRE, 1994, 23). When critically analysing this policy assertion, I found out that its ideological position implicitly accepted and marginalised the use of minority languages and their inadequacy as a medium of primary education instruction. It, in fact suggests the use of a high status language, widely used in the country, is preferable. So although the policy acknowledges the right of each ethnic group's language to be used as the medium of instruction, at the same time it sidelines the minority languages as official languages of instruction. This is an example of a covert policy that implicitly states which language minority ethnic group students should use in their education.

Nevertheless, drawing on the notion of Ricento and Hornberger (1996, 409), I consider the federal language policy as "the outer layers of the onion [and] the broader language policy objectives articulated in legislation …at the national level…" and this is interpreted differently at various levels. The federal language policy has been open to further policy negotiation, creation and interpretation at different levels, according to policy makers' language ideologies and contexts. In this regard, some dominant ethnic groups and regions in Ethiopia, such as Oromia and Tigray, enacted the policy and used their respective languages for education and other official purposes following the 1994 Training and Education policy (FDRE, 1994) that stated the use of ethnic language in primary education. However, the SNNPR negotiated and implemented the Federal MOE policy differently.

The SNNPR language policy says, "The first cycle of primary education to be given in mother tongue of each ethnic group or Amharic, and English to be used as the medium of instruction of the second cycle of primary education" (SNNPR Education bureau officials). This SNNP regional language-in-education policy implies that the diverse regional languages (about 56 languages) are not fit for use in the second cycle of primary education as the medium of instruction. This policy also assigns all ethnic languages of the region to lower primary (grades 1-4) and English as the medium of instruction in the second cycle of primary education (grades 5-8). In line with what Ricento (2006, 15) argues, the SNNPR language-in-education policy favours "majoritarian or dominant interests at the expense of minority and non-dominant interests". This is due to the

SNNPR policy makers' view of English as having high national and global status and the assumption that envisage students of primary education will be able to transfer smoothly and unproblematically to using English as the medium of instruction in secondary education (grades 9-12) and higher institutions in Ethiopia. Moreover, in the Federal Education Policy (FDRE, 1994) English is stated as being the language of science and technology and global communication. Taking this policy assertion, the SNNPR policy makers provided more value than the federal policy in using English as the medium of instruction in the second cycle of primary education.

Moreover, the lack of dominant language (s) of the ethnic groups in the region that could serve for all ethnic groups and its language diversities (about 56 ethnic languages and groups) caused the SNNPR to be unable to choose one or more languages of the region as a common and working language. Instead, the SNNPR decided Amharic, which was not the language of any ethnic group in the region, should be used as the working language of the region as well as the medium of the first cycle of primary education (if mother tongue was not used as a medium). In this regard, I argue that the official status and prestige of Amharic in the SNNPR has had an impact on language choice and use in primary education in terms of children's future career opportunities in the region and nationally. As Hornberger (2006) states, decisions made about which language should be used in official public spheres, infers the power relations that are played out in educational, social, political and economic domains. Legitimizing a particular language for official purpose affects minority language use in the community in view of its associated academic, economic and other benefits. This was among the reasons that many minority ethnic groups, including Konso in SNNPR, decided to use the dominant language, Amharic, as the medium of instruction in their first cycle of primary education.

In between the SNNPR and Konso Woreda administrative structures, the Segen Area Peoples zone also implemented a language-in-education policy in the framework of the SNNPR policy directives. The zone administration that involved eight ethnic groups (including Konso) implemented the language policy following two approaches: among eight ethnic groups in the zone, five of them used Amharic as the medium of instruction, and three ethnic groups started a provision of mother tongue as a single subject in the first cycle of primary education. These variations in language policy implementation in the same zone resulted from the political and technical decisions of each ethnic group (e.g. lack of qualified staff and non-human resource of

each ethnic group to support the policy planning), since they had a constitutional mandate to do that and also because of the policy makers' attitudes towards the use of a minority language in the education system.

Accordingly, the current Konso Woreda language-in-education policy states, 'Amharic is to be used as the medium of the first cycle of primary education and English is to be used as the medium of the second cycle of primary education' (Konso Woreda Education Office officials). Here, the Konso Woreda officials accepted the use of the dominant language as the medium of instruction in primary school against the Federal, SNNPR and Segen Area Peoples zone language-in-education policy provisions (the first option was to use an ethnic language of the people there and the second option was to use a dominant language). Due to their high status in Konso and beyond, higher value had been ascribed to Amharic and English than specific ethnic language in education until the recent local language policy initiative started in 2012 to promote Affa Konso as the medium of instruction in the first cycle of primary education. Current language-in-education policy practices in Konso supports the idea of Mahanty and his colleagues (2009a, cited in McCarty and Nicholas, 2012, 149), in that minority languages are considered as "inadequate, impoverished and under-developed and, hence, unfit for educational and scientific use".

However, there were other external factors that influenced the use of the dominant language rather than the minority languages in the education system. For instance, the Konso Woreda official said, 'We do not want to miss the advantage that our students have in the current education system [non-mother tongue education]', thereby indicating a strong bias against the value of the minority language in education (Chapter 8). Despite policies, he still favored the use of the dominant language as the medium in primary school and remained unconvinced about the academic and other benefits (in relation to wider communication outside their localities) of a minority language for students. In relation to this, Wiley (1996) points out that minority groups often fear that use of minority language in education and lack of proficiency in the dominant language will exclude them from social, political and economic positions. I argue that this is one of the main reasons why the Konso Woreda officials decided to use the dominant language in primary education.

Moreover, students' families see school as a system that will provide their children with the language of opportunity and power, which is not their minority ethnic language. The fact that Affa Konso was promoted in the local language policy planning while local officials used Amharic in

their own home so that their children would acquire an academic and high status language (Chapter 8) is also an indication of how policy makers perceived the value of the minority language in education. In the case of Konso case; however, the technical challenges of implementing mother tongue education following the 1994 Education and Training policy, and the lack of the required human resources, explain the failure to implement mother tongue education to some extent, but it is now more than two decades since the policy was promulgated. However, within the framework of Amharic being the medium of instruction in the first cycle of primary education, Affa Konso was informally used in classrooms across the Woreda, mainly in the rural schools, due to the agency of practitioners in policy implementation (I will discuss this in the next section). My previous discussion revealed that multilayered language-in-education policy spaces in the education system from federal level through to SNNPR and Konso Woreda, have allowed policy makers to decide which languages are to be used in primary education, determine which languages are to be used at which levels or cycles and to value or disregard minority languages or favor dominant languages in primary education. This legitimization of minority languages or dominant languages, or both, in primary education with different emphases is a result of the language ideologies that policy makers held, the agency and their role entails and their understanding of and response to language policy planning on the one hand and their respective circumstances on the other.

9.4.2. Practitioners' Agency in Language-in-Education Policy Interpretation

Here, I discuss how teachers and students responded to official language policies and the nature of their agency. Although teachers as government employees were well-aware of their duties to implement the official policy, they had the space to translate the policy differently in responding to their classroom situations and according to their beliefs. In relation to this, Johnson (2010) argues that teachers use the opportunity of policy space to understand and implement official language policies in the local context of educational practices and classrooms. My findings show that there were teachers who negotiated the official medium of instruction, valuing and using students' home and minority language in the teaching-learning process. Teachers' attitudes towards Affa Konso and its speakers' shaped how teachers put into practice the official language policy in the classrooms whilst assisting children's learning in using their language repertoire. As Johnson (2013) argues, language ideology does not only influence language policy creation and intentions (as I discussed in an earlier section) but also its implementation. And, teachers can take

advantage of a policy space in enacting the language-in-education policy according to the situation, by considering multiple languages (Hornberger, 2002, cited in Johnson, 2010). Moreover, Affa Konso speaking teachers who wanted to implicitly promote the use of Affa Konso in the education system in view of its academic benefits (e.g. the grade 1 Environmental Science teacher who used Affa Konso for supporting children's learning) take the policy space as an opportunity to realize their aspirations.

Nevertheless, there were also teachers who complied with the official language policy in their classroom teaching (e.g. the grade 1 Amharic teacher). Teachers who believed in the prestigious position of the medium of instruction and as the means by which students would progress socially and academically (as embedded in the official language policy) continued to apply the official language policy in their classrooms. Here, the teachers' language background and language ideologies influenced their classroom teaching. In turn, teachers' language background, attitudes to and interest in using a minority language in the teaching-learning process affected the use of students' home languages in the classrooms. In addition, teachers were not always free to interpret official policy since there were circumstances that limited their agency. As Horner and Bellamy (2016, 322) note, institutional structures were among the factors that constrained practitioners' agency. In relation to this, the requirement to deliver the daily lesson and curriculum contents as planned, Amharic being the language of academic assessment and the diversity of languages in the classroom, constrained the extent to which teacher were able to exert agency in translating the official policy. Additionally, the translation of language-in-education policy is 'mediated by the leadership practices within the school' (Bell and Stevenson, 2006 cited in Rizvi and Lingard, 2010, 5-6). In this regard, the expectations of officials and head teachers that teachers would implement the policy as it was intended, the consideration of such a practice as commensurate with the good quality of a teacher and its relationship with performance appraisal and promotion, constrained teachers' agency in translating the official policy in their own ways.

Moreover, the context of the second cycle of primary education was different from that of the first cycle. This was not only because English was accorded official status but also because of its limited role as the medium of instruction in the teaching-learning process, mainly due to technical reasons (e.g. limited English proficiency). Teachers consistently used their language resources (Amharic and English and sometimes Affa Konso) in their teaching. For teachers, what was more important

was effectively communicating their lessons to students using all the languages they spoke, regardless of what the official policy legitimised. There were teachers who believed that exclusively using English in the second cycle of primary education was futile exercise because of the communication barriers it created between students and teachers. This view was shared by students. For instance, one student interviewee told me, "Exclusively learning in English at the second cycle of primary is the same as 'pouring water on the basaltic rock'" (see Chapter 7). Thus, in the context of the second cycle of primary education, I argue that accepting the language ideology behind the official policy that promoted English as the language of science and technology and global communication (since students, teachers, parents and others accepted the high value of English and wanted children to develop it for their future) did not always guarantee its implementation. The technical reasons around limited English proficiency not just among students but among teachers too affected its implementation. Instead, teachers designed their strategies to make sense of their lessons for students and facilitate student-teacher interaction in the teaching-learning process. Though constrained by different factors (e.g. school administration), this example illustrates how teachers use a policy space to exert agency in the classroom. In group work, students used a mix of Amharic, Affa Konso and English to communicate and discuss, thereby enhancing their learning in classroom, understanding the concepts and interacting with the teachers. Therefore, using Ricento's and Hornberger's (1996, 409) terms, in the most inner 'layer of the onion of the language policy' where the teaching-learning process took place, teachers had room to use their own strategies of policy translation. As Menken argues (cited in Stephens and Johnson, 2015, 41) teachers, along with their students, are the 'final arbiters' of language policy in the classroom.

In relation to international experience, my findings around the failure to use English as the medium of instruction in the second cycle of primary school in Karat primary school due to lack of English proficiency (Chapter 7) supports Mose's (2017) findings in Kenya (though the Kenyan experience in relation to English is different from that of Ethiopia). He says that because students' English skill is limited in rural schools in Kenya, this resulted in students and teachers using their mother tongue in the classroom instead of English medium to facilitate students' learning. There are scholars who argue that implementing English medium of instruction in school in Africa where students do not understand the language appears inappropriate. For instance, Brock-Utne and Desai (2010, 29) note that "If we are serious about the intellectual development of African learners,

then we need to give greater currency to African languages". Malekela (2010, 41) also views English as a medium of instruction in Tanzania, even in post-primary education as imposing the policy on students which 'oppresses most of the learners'. However, in Konso, in principle the use of English as the medium of instruction in the second cycle of primary education was not a contested issue but its limited use in the teaching-learning process was taken as a challenge. The Kenyan, South Africa and Nigerian international experiences including Ethiopia, revealed how language and the decision to make a particular language(s) for education purpose were complex due to the power relations of dominant (e.g. English, Yoruba, Kiswahili, Amharic) and minority languages in multilingual settings.

9.4.3. Local Language Policy Planning in a Konso Community

The local language policy planning was initiated in Konso at the Woreda level in 2012 with the aim of promoting Affa Konso in education and other official spheres. I described this policy planning process as a local initiative that had been undertaken with no previous experience of Affa Konso in official policy and its absence in official realms. I have analysed the complexities and challenges of this local language policy planning and the different processes it was subjected to. As Ricento (2007b, 7, cited in Johnson and Ricento, 2013) argues, "Language policies can never be properly understood or analysed as free-standing documents or practices" unless their ideological aspect is critically examined. Accordingly, the zonal, regional and federal language policy provisions and ethnolinguistic political ideology of the country framed the Konso local language policy's intentions. As part of this, the dominant mother tongue discourse in Konso and beyond that 'promotes children's learning and their rights' influenced the Konso language policy initiative. This dominant discourse legitimised policy makers' actions and guided local language policy planning for a particular social change and purpose (Fairclough, 2001).

Policy decisions and planning can be undertaken through top-down or bottom-up approaches (Johnson, 2013). Considering the Federal and SNNPR policy provisions, educational and other factors, the Konso Woreda officials decided to develop Affa Konso and replace the current language-in-education policy (Amharic medium) with mother tongue education (Affa Konso). This decision was made on behalf of the Konso community. As Johnson (2013, 9-10) notes, taking into account "who is doing the [policy] creation and who is doing the interpretation and appropriation" are important to understand the Konso local language policy planning approach.

Drawing on this, I see the Konso language policy planning as a bottom-up policy process when analysing it from the higher federal government structure. At the same time, it was a top-down policy when looked at from the lower community structure, having little or no engagement of students, teachers and students' parents whose lives would be most affected by the policy. As my experience and observation reveal, the Ethiopian practice favors policy imposition rather than engagement with the wider community and concerned stakeholders in policy processes that the country seemed to have limited experience in that regard. Indeed, it was not surprising that local language policy decisions in Konso and technical processes were undertaken by officials and some experts, without the necessary inputs from diverse policy stakeholders.

At the same time, local language policy planning in Konso was not an easy task; rather, it was a complex one because of technical (e.g. linguistic works) and other reasons (e.g. financial constraints). The status of Affa Konso as an oral language and promoting it to official uses required policy planners to pass through complex technical processes, which included: status planning (the choice of official language and the roles of other languages in the Woreda); corpus planning (standardizing the oral language and related technical works) and acquisition planning (the use of languages in the actual teaching-learning process and related tasks) (Cooper, 1989; Wiley, 1996). Accordingly, since 2012, the Konso language development committees have made huge efforts to select a script, develop the Konso orthography, select a dialect, standardize the Konso language and grammar, collect words from the community, in order to develop an Affa Konso dictionary (on going), develop the curriculum (on going) and putting in place the necessary teacher training (on going). Taking Johnson's and Ricento's (2013) idea of acquisition planning, the Konso local language policy aimed to 'increase the users or uses of language' in education system. This would influence language choices and uses in primary school by providing Amharic speaker children the opportunity to develop Affa Konso as part of their education. Nevertheless, Amharic speaker students who had been at an advantage while Amharic was the medium of instruction would be challenged when Affa Konso was implemented as the medium of instruction. They would be required to negotiate their home language, Amharic, and pay attention instead to developing Affa Konso in the classroom so as to fit with the requirements of the official policy. As Hornberger (1996, 161) says, the language of teaching can have a direct effect on the 'opportunities, participation, and potential contributions of minority learners' in education.

Additionally, the technicalities of language planning necessitated multidisciplinary experts and other resources (e.g. finance, infrastructure, computers, time, resource materials based on the Konso context), otherwise the quality of the policy would be compromised. In the Konso context, however, the necessary language policy inputs (e.g. human and non-human resources) were not sufficiently available. This was partly because of the effect of marginalisation in successive regimes (e.g. relative inaccessibility of public services, including education). This affected the Woreda's 'educated' human resources, particularly at higher level (see details in Chapter 2). Moreover, all the planning tasks were given to the committees. Some committee members resided outside the Konso Woreda, which constrained their availability. Not exploring the required experts' inputs outside the Konso ethnic group had also its negative impact on the local policy planning process. Due to these challenges, the policy had yet to be finalized and enacted in schools in 2016.

A further tension in the process of introducing a minority language as the medium of instruction was that the issues raised by students, teachers and students' parents were not considered as policy inputs. Since a top-down approach was applied at the Woreda level, this local language policy initiative came out of the dominant discourse that had gained the approval of the officials and experts. However, how to balance the promotion of mother tongue in the classroom while enriching students' language repertoire was among the major challenges for the policy planners, since students would need to widen their language repertoire in order to be successful in their current and future lives. To do this, the local language policy needed to go beyond promoting the local ethnic language and consider the wider socio-economic and regional, national and global contexts. Moreover, the importance of the other elements that would contribute to students' learning outcomes, namely, the quality of the curriculum, language teaching approaches, teachers training, supplementary reading materials and references, the use of different instructional media (e.g. radio, TV, computer) and developing a positive attitude towards language need to be addressed.

9.5. Conclusion

In this chapter, I have discussed the key themes that emerged from my research. I have argued that contrasting language ideologies prevailed in diverse spaces (i.e. Affa Konso as a key marker of

Konso ethnic identity or Affa Konso as limiting students' opportunities and power in contrast to the dominant language, Amharic) shaped individuals' and families' language choices and uses and language policy processes. I found, as Woolard (1995, cited in Kiss, 2011, 229-30) did, that language ideologies that are embedded in society influence individuals' "social practices and processes such as 'identity, socialization, or schooling'". Drawing on this point, I have further argued that language uses, identities and language policy interact with and influence each other. In other words, the way individuals used language and perceived the role of different languages in society and how this related to notions of identity had a bearing on the language policy processes. As Ricento (2015, 6) notes, high status and "…written languages, [are] believed to be more 'correct,' 'logical' and 'efficient' in communicative terms than other [languages]", and this conception can be reflected in language policy. Due to historical and political reasons over the past century, Amharic has become privileged in official domains across the country, well developed in terms of literature and also considered as a marker of national identity in Ethiopia. The current prestigious status of Amharic in public domains in Konso and beyond, also influenced policymakers and others to legitimise it and place it at the centre of the existing primary education language policy. It is also why policy makers resisted to some extent the dominant discourse, embedded in the Federal and SNNPR Constitutions, of mother tongue education or ethnic language as a key determinant of ethnic identity. Thus, the current language policy of primary education in Konso that legitimised Amharic and English as the mediums of instruction did not reinforce Affa Konso, despite being considered as one of the key markers of the Konso identity by members of the community.

On the other hand, the local language policy placed Affa Konso at the heart of the policy and provided space for members of the Konso community who perceived ethnic language as a key marker of Konso ethnic identity. For those who believed in the idea of the Konso community's responsibility to keep its language, culture and identity, the local language policy initiative was taken as an important intervention that could safeguard the assumed Konso ethnic boundary. Moreover, in the context of Ethiopian ethnolinguistic politics, this kind of local policy that promotes ethnic language and identity was not only seen as necessary for minority groups but was also praised by government officials as an important step towards effecting the country's constitution. However, the role of a minority language like Affa Konso within education was a matter of dispute among the local community, students, teachers and others in my research context

and beyond. Moreover, how to balance the promotion of a minority language whilst at the same time effectively implementing a multilingual policy and providing access to the dominant national language (s) (Amharic and others) and global language (English) in school was not only a challenge for Konso's local language policy but also for Ethiopia's education system in general. This is partly because besides a conducive multilingual policy environment, achieving this balance requires human and non-human resources. Similar to my research context in Konso, South Africa, Nigeria and Kenya experienced a tension in promoting minority languages as part of culture and identity and the high demand of students and parents for acquiring dominant languages (English and other African dominant languages in their respective country). How to resolve such a tension seems a shared challenge for these African countries.

My study has also shown that within a multilayered language-in-education policy, language choices in primary education are shaped on the one hand by the policy makers' beliefs in and attitudes towards the dominant language as a language of the academy, opportunity and power and on the other, the minority language as a key marker of ethnic identity and a means to promote its students' learning. This supports Johnson's argument (2013) that language ideologies shape language policy planning, intentions and implementation. The research has also shown how teachers also translated the official language policy in their classrooms differently, according to their beliefs in and attitudes towards the dominant and minority languages. Thus, teachers took advantage of the policy space to exert their agency by responding to their classroom situations in their own ways.

With regard to identities, I have discussed contrasting views of ethnic identity, from an essentialist view of identity as fixed to a 'becoming' identity that suggests identity is a social construct rather than hereditary. In the latter case, ethnic identity was constructed through interaction with people in the community and through learning the language and culture of the community in which someone lived. I have also analysed the tension that arises when an individual is caught between these two categories, pressured by the essentialised view of ethnic identity and yet unable to socially construct their own identities. At the same time, within this tension, the fixed notion of ethnic identity can be challenged and a space created in which ethnic identity can be talked about in terms of its construction through processes and interactions in the community. From this perspective, identity is a process that does not exist outside action (Omoniyi and White, 2006).

Similarly, from an essentialising perspective, the ethnic language, Affa Konso was perceived as the only language that represented Konso identity while for others, language identities were accepted as multiple and a resource linked with multiple language uses.

Finally, in synthesizing the major findings and arguments of my research, I found that language, identity and language policy were viewed differently by respondents as a social process and construct by some and as static by others. Although there were respondents who viewed language, identity and language policy as fixed, their narratives showed them to be open to negotiation and change in their everyday lives, and to being transformed through processes, time and place. The education system with its language-in-education policy shaped language uses as a result of language ideologies embedded in the policy and assigning high value to a particular language(s). The current language-in-education policy and the local language policy initiative in Konso were rooted in contrasting language ideologies: the use of the dominant language in education as providing opportunity and power on the one hand, and the promotion of the ethnic language as giving pedagogical advantage to its speakers in the classroom, as being a key marker of ethnic identity and as a means to promote Konso culture. The implementation of these polices would also have different effects on students' and families' language uses and identities. Finally, the teachers could take advantage of the policy space by diverging from the official policy intentions in enacting the two language-in-education policies in their classrooms.

Chapter 10: Concluding My Research Journey

My study has focused on three key conceptual areas: language use, language-in-education policy and identity. Following my observations from working in the field, I wanted to know more about the different language uses in minority ethnic communities and primary schools and the implementation of language-in-education policy at different levels of the education system. With this in mind, I began to explore language use and the implementation of language policy processes in a Karat Konso community in Ethiopia. In preparation for this, I raised four sub-research questions that focused on the community's language use, students' language use in primary school, and the views, practices and planning processes of language policies in the classroom, school and community. What became clear was that one could not understand language use without considering the relationship between language and ethnic identity; this relationship therefore also became the focus of a sub research question.

Through my research journey, I have been exposed to the dynamics of language interaction among individuals from different language backgrounds and witness official language policy processes from the perspective of different agents and the reasons behind various ways of using language, planning policies and interpreting them. In my previous experience, policy was viewed by officials and others as a collection of fixed written official documents and legal frameworks to support a linear way implementation of the policy as set out in these documents. In this research, I have questioned this view of policy, through adopting Johnson's (2013, 9) concept of language policy as "…not just products but processes- "policy" as a verb, not a noun- that are derived by a diversity of language policy agents across multiple layers of policy creation, interpretation, appropriation, and instantiation". Additionally, I learned that the notion of identity was far more intricate than I had thought and more complex than the official documents (e.g. Constitutions) in Ethiopia and the literature suggest. Taking the poststructuralists' idea of identity as fluid, multiple and transforming across time and place (Hall, 1996) helped me to understand how different people perceived their identities, how they used languages, how they explained what they thought about their languages and language choices, within the wider context of a highly essentialised notion of language and identity in Ethiopia.

My research design initially featured a top-down, quantitative and mixed method approach, based on my previous academic and professional experience. However, the process of conducting this

research introduced me to a different way of exploring research problems, using a qualitative interpretive approach, and shifted my perspective to that of an ethnographer. This enabled me to investigate my research questions through gaining 'insider' views through in-depth and close-up observing and by exploring my research questions with diverse research participants. Having provided an overview of my research process, in this concluding chapter, I explore my major findings along with their complexities, and then reflect on the research implications and contributions of my work.

10.1. Complexities in Language Uses, Ethnic Identity and Language Policy Processes

My research findings revealed that language use and value are contextual and vary from person to person, family to family and context to context. Amharic, which was highly privileged in the school, the government workplace, the local Hotel and Orthodox Christian events was not high status in all public and private spaces in Karat town and walled villages. Although asymmetric power relations existed in Karat town between minority language speakers (Affa Konso) and dominant language speakers (Amharic) due to the value of Amharic in and outside the Konso Woreda, Affa Konso also had a dominant position differently in some spaces. For instance, Affa Konso was predominantly used in the Woreda court process in the framework of Amharic's official status, to serve the local community in the language they understood well. While this contravenes policy regarding the official working language, it adheres to the part of the Ethiopian Constitution (FDRE, 1995) that states that every ethnic group should use their language in judiciary processes. In the local political space, Affa Konso was also dominant, in that it was used to discuss pressing issues in the Konso community, politics and was used when there was a perceived need to exclude out-groups (non-Konso speakers) and to include its members with the aim of achieving social cohesion or fulfilling their political goals. In terms of socio-cultural spaces, members of the community used Affa Konso to celebrate rituals and conduct social gatherings in the Mora and the walled villages.

Considering the above findings, I concluded that there was no consistency with regards to a specific language being dominant or marginal in personal, family, official and other community spheres. Moreover, taking language as a social process, in multilingual settings, individuals did not always follow the use of a certain language, but often code-switched and used their language

repetoires to facilitate their communications as appropriate and effective to the conversational situations they were in. My findings support Woolard's argument (1998) that individual, family and group language choices and uses are guided by beliefs in and attitudes towards specific languages, their uses and speakers; in other words, their sociocultural conceptions about particular languages.

In the school system, Affa Konso speaking students negotiated their home language and fitted in with the official medium of instruction in the classroom, as the requirement in a structured classroom situations. This was necessary for academic progress and as a useful language for wider communication beyond their localities. By prioritizing Amharic as the language of opportunity and power, this official language policy devalued Affa Konso and its speakers in the classroom and school. However, my research also shows that students were not passive recipients of these external influences; they used Affa Konso to communicate with their peers, in-language and ethnic group students and were able to use Affa Konso with peers and teachers to discuss their group work and assignments, thus supporting their learning. Hence, building upon Makoe's (2014) idea, I conclude that although school was an ideological space that legitimised the use of a particular language in a certain way, there was room for minority language speakers to use their home language and facilitate their communication and the teaching-learning process. Indeed, in primary school system, the language ideology of the current official language policy as a language of the academy and opportunity and students' and teachers' socio-cultural conceptions about their ethnic language as a key marker of Konso identity were in competition, which also was partly what had led to the local language policy initiative in Konso.

My findings revealed that ethnic identity, although perceived as changing by some students' parents, was seen by the majority of my respondents as static and inherited through blood relationships (e.g. 'I am a Konso because of my parents' ethnic origin' and 'my Konso ethnic identity is supported by the Constitution'). I have shown that the two major factors that shaped this belief were: on the one hand, the belief embedded in the Konso socio-cultural system that it is the father's lineage that determines ethnicity; on the other, the ethnolinguistic federalism that characterises a country organized on the basis of language and ethnicity. Identity was understood by respondents as remaining the same throughout an individual's life (Hall, 1996). Similarly, respondents perceived language and ethnic identity as a one-to-one relationship. I have contested

these ideas by alluding to the current mobility of people, inter-ethnic marriages and multilingual and multicultural natures of the community and by referring to the poststructuralist notion of identity as fluid and transforming.

Furthermore, in practice, students, teachers and others in my research context had acquired different languages from the home, school and community and used them in different contexts. These individuals developed multiple languages through social processes rather than through birth. There were also students, teachers and others who had more than one ethnic background and were unable to align themselves with one ethnic language and ethnic identity. Borrowing Lytra's (2016, 133) idea, I have concluded that far from being bounded and pre-imposed on individuals at birth as a given, the language and ethnic identity of my participants were constructed through everyday processes across time and place. The other complex issue that arose regarding individual ethnic identity was the importance of community recognition: individual claims of identity required the recognition of the surrounding community in order to be validated. This constrained individuals' agency with regards to choosing and/or constructing their ethnic identity, other than their families' ethnic identity, through interaction with people and social processes in the community in which they lived.

With regard to language policy processes, my findings revealed that policy spaces in different government structures allowed policy makers and practitioners to take advantage of being able to set policy goals and translating them into practice differently, according to their situations. The language ideologies embedded in the language-in-education policies of different levels of the education system (Federal MOE, Regional EB, Zonal ED and Woreda EO levels) intersected (e.g. the use of mother tongue in primary education) and varied with one another (e.g. the decision to use mother tongue from grade 1 to 4 or from grade 5 to 8 or not using it at all). Use of minority language as the medium of instruction in primary education in the Federal Education and Training policy (FDRE, 1994) has been limited to the lower primary in the SNNPR language-in-education policy and has been disregarded entirely in the current Konso Woreda language-in-education policy. At different levels of education system, policy makers took different decisions with regards to legitimizing the use of minority languages or dominant languages at different levels of primary education. These decisions were shaped by attitudes to different languages in use, the perceived low value attached to minority languages outside their localities and the role of policy makers'

own sense of agency in the policy planning process. Moreover, teachers and students took advantage of policy spaces by translating the language-in-education policy in the classroom in their own ways, for example, using Affa Konso to facilitate learning. However, this practice was constrained by school and administrative factors such as the allotted time for a daily lesson, the need to follow an annual lesson plan and the requirement for school officials to implement the policy as it was intended.

However, within the framework of Ethiopian ethnolinguistic politics that promotes ethnic language and identity, the practice of using the dominant language at the expense of a minority language in primary education seems to me contradictory. This has come about because language policy is an ideological construct that aims to influence language use in the community (McCarty, 2004). On behalf of Affa Konso and out of step with the country's ethnolinguistic federalism, the Konso Woreda took the decision to use Amharic as medium of instruction in the first cycle of primary and English in the second cycle of primary education. This decision was justified based on the high status of Amharic and English as a means of wider communication outside Konso, the opportunity and power they give access to at zonal, regional, federal and global (English) levels. This outcome supports Ricento's argument (2006) that policy makers favor the dominant languages at the expense of minority language, due to the high status of the dominant languages. Nonetheless, as a social process, language policy is subjected to change and revision through time within a particular communities and in the case of Konso Woreda, this led to the initiative of the local language policy in 2012 which aims to change the current language-in-education policy and promote Affa Konso for official uses.

According to the stated aims of this local language policy, Affa Konso would be upgraded from an oral to a written language, giving Affa Konso speaking students the chance to learn in the language they understand best, which, it is argued, contributes to better school readiness, stability and academic performance. It also enables the development of their language and culture through the curriculum, through literature and drama, thereby supporting "the promotion, maintenance and revitalization of minority and indigenous languages" (Johnson, 2013, 8). Despite these advantages, the implementation of this local language policy is beset with challenges. The necessary educational quality indicators such as educational inputs, throughputs (processes) and outputs could be compromised. A lack of adequate and trained teachers who can teach in Affa Konso,

teacher trainers and College of Teacher Training in the Woreda and reference materials written in Affa Konso and for the Konso context, affect the quality of educational provision. Moreover, parents fear that the use of Affa Konso will limit their children's future and deny them access to the languages of opportunity and power (e.g. Amharic and English) in SNNPR, Ethiopia and beyond, has to be addressed. In this regard, I suggest that the local language policy planning to consider and develop workable implementation strategies for successfully teaching of Affa Konso, Amharic and English and also to clearly specify the roles of parents, students, teachers, officials and others in a multilingual education system.

With regard to my overarching research question, how languages are used and language policies processes are implemented, I conclude that language use and language policy are intimately interconnected. Just as language uses are guided by language ideologies, by people's beliefs and attitudes towards language, its uses and users (Woolard, 1998), the planning and implementation of language policies are also framed by language ideologies (Johnson, 2010). The value attached to specific languages shapes individual and family language uses as well as language policy processes. For instance, as a high status language, Amharic shaped the current language-in-education policy of primary education in Konso and influenced individual and family choices regarding language use. Similarly, the value assigned to Affa Konso in relation to Konso identity and current ethnolinguistic politics, framed the local language policy initiative in Konso and will influence individual and family language use further, through its implementation. Moreover, by choosing Amharic as medium of instruction, the language-in-education policy of primary education has an influence on the extent to which students identify with Amharic as part of their identity; behind the local language policy initiative is the assumption that increasing the official use of Affa Konso will influence students' language choices and use and strengthen the Konso ethnic identity through Affa Konso medium of instruction. Hence, in my research context, language use, identity and language-in-education policy are intimately interconnected. Despite the promotion of the dominant language at the expense of the minority language in the classroom, Affa Konso speaking children have enriched their language repertoires and formed multiple languages (e.g. Affa Konso, Amharic and some English) through participating in the processes and practices of primary education and beyond the boundaries of the school.

10.2. Implications of the Research Findings

In this section, I discuss the implications of my research findings for the teaching-learning process, curriculum and language policy planning, and identities.

The Teaching-Learning Process in the Classroom: In the teaching-learning process, the use of an unfamiliar language affects the readiness, stability and academic progress of Affa Konso speaking students, particularly those from rural backgrounds, mainly in the early grades of the first cycle of primary education. In contrast, the local language policy that aims for Affa Konso to be the medium of instruction in primary education, helps Affa Konso speaking students to understand the curriculum content, enhances their classroom participation and learning outcomes. However, the provision of mother tongue education alone cannot solve all the educational challenges faced by minority ethnic groups. Supplementary educational inputs are needed that will enhance learning outcomes and enhance the quality of educational provision. Such inputs range from children's books that reflect local stories and Konso indigenous knowledge, qualified and trained teachers (e.g. in contents such as active learning methods, inclusive education that responds to students' different needs), trained education administrators, library and other facilities (e.g. ICT materials) and resources. As one of the Konso Woreda officials said, 'Implementing mother tongue education is not as easy as passing a political decision' (see Chapter 8). I suggest that the inputs described above are essential components in the implementation of mother tongue education.

The international experience of language policies and uses in schools (i.e. South Africa, Nigeria and Kenya) also reveals that the use of mother tongue as the medium of instruction is not a straightforward practice. It has been surrounded by uncertainties and differently practised in schools and different levels of government structures within and among different African countries. For example, in my research context, my findings show that mother tongue education is differently valued and practised within different government structures from Konso Woreda education office to Ministry of Education. Other research findings around mother tongue medium of instruction also show that learning in mother tongue has implications for quality education provision for all children in linking their home experiences to school and enable parents to follow up and assist their children's education in contributing to the content of subjects in the language(s) they understood. Learning in mother tongue also provides the opportunity for children to use their richer vocabularies as a means of expressing themselves (Brock-Utne and Desai, 2010). It can also

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help children to make sense of their world, construct meaning and build better conceptual understanding on the lessons provided (Langenhoven, 2010). With all its challenges, however, valuing and using minority languages in the primary education system (about 30 languages are used in primary education as a single subject and medium of instruction) can be learnt from the Ethiopian experience. In relation to this, Heugh (2011, 394) says that in Ethiopia "what is important for the international community … is evidence that it is possible to implement a linguistically diverse education system, even in a poorly resourced country like Ethiopia".

By contrast with mother tongue education, bilingual education with a sudden transition from mother tongue to second language (e.g. English), lack of trained and qualified teachers that can teach in mother tongue, inadequate school facilities, lack of relevant curriculum and other instructional materials and negative attitudes of parents and others towards mother tongue instruction are among the major problems that affect implementation of mother tongue education (Aliyu and Rabiu, 1991). These points can be considered as key areas for Ethiopian policy makers to address as the education system aims to move towards using all the minority ethnic languages as the medium of instruction in primary education. Developing the education system that can help to provide children with quality education in their mother tongue and other national languages (e.g. Amharic, Afan Oromo and others) and international languages (e.g. English) is important rather than polarising the use of either mother tongue or second language medium of instruction. This could help children to develop multilingual identities which seems to be essential for competing in the local, national and global world and to enhance their intellectual capacity and academic performance.

Curriculum Development within Primary Education: The Konso primary education curriculum was developed regionally by the SNNPR education bureau. The REB was given the responsibility for developing a school curriculum for about 31 ethnic groups in the region who had chosen Amharic as the medium of instruction in the first cycle of primary education. However, it proved virtually impossible to make one curriculum relevant for these diverse ethnic groups, because of the challenge of developing curriculum contents and learning experiences that would fit with and respond to their local contexts, cultures, languages and experiences. Additionally, regional curriculum developers, faced with this centrally developed curriculum, had the challenge of identifying and selecting curriculum contents from across the diverse ethnic groups to include

in the curriculum. At the same time, the local language policy provides the opportunity to develop curriculum materials (e.g. students' text books and teachers' guides) using the syllabus of the SNNPR primary education as a framework. This decentralized curriculum could help to make the education system and curriculum more responsive to the local context, whilst also taking into account the realities beyond the locality (zonal, regional, national and global issues). However, in the Konso context, there was a lack of both material and human resources (e.g. subject matter specialists, curriculum developers, language teaching specialists with experience in the development of curriculum materials). Thus, if Konso Woreda is to develop better curriculum materials and improve primary education provision overall, a priority is to identify these professional inputs and experiences outside Konso Woreda, whilst also utilizing community resources and knowledge.

Language Policy Planning and Practice: The current language-in-education policy practices I observed in Konso showed that Affa Konso was being used informally in primary education. The majority of the primary schools in Konso Woreda are located in the rural areas and Affa Konso was widely used in school, within the framework of Amharic and English as languages of instruction. The recruitment of 500 primary school teachers based on language background (Affa Konso competency) (see Chapter 8) also encouraged teachers to use Affa Konso in their teaching, since the requirement for Affa Konso proficiency was a signal that Affa Konso was an important, albeit it was an informal language of teaching in rural primary schools (and in some respects, in Karat primary school too). However, ultimately the aim of the Konso local language policy is to legitimise the current informal use of Affa Konso and for it to be used officially in the teaching-learning process of primary education (when the policy is implemented). With this in mind, I suggest that assessing the existing practices with regards to the informal use of Affa Konso in the rural primary school and identifying its opportunities and challenges, would provide useful insights that would enrich local language policy planning.

Moreover, in practice, mother tongue education provision tends to focus only on the ethnic languages themselves and ignores other national languages. This was a major concern for officials, teachers and parents in Konso and beyond (although the education policy of the country supports multilingualism, by which is meant at least two languages including English other than a mother tongue). The neglect of the federal working language was seen as endangering students' future

employment prospects in the SNNPR and Federal systems that legitimised Amharic as the main working language. Looking beyond the ethnic language and instead developing positive attitudes towards the notion of all languages being potential resources, regardless of their status would create an enriched environment for both policy planning and classroom learning, since students would be encouraged to develop multiple languages.

Conceptualizing Identity along with Current Politics: As my research findings show, ethnic identity was mainly essentialised by respondents in my research, due to the beliefs which are inherent to the Konso socio-cultural system and the current ethnolinguistic politics of Ethiopia along with its Constitution. Due to this cultural and political landscape, issues of ethnic identity and ethnic language were promoted across the country through the education system (e.g. in civic education), government dominated media and policies. Above all, in the current Ethiopian context, ethnic language and notions of ethnic identity are bound up with the political, economic and administrative structure of the country, day-to-day lives and relationships of individuals and groups. These factors shape the education system and language-in-education policies so that they support the country's political ideology of ethnolinguistic federalism.

Essentialised notions of ethnic and language identity can adversely affect students' openness to the wider world and their efforts in becoming multilingual (e.g. the Konso Woreda education official explained that in some regions of the country, students were confined to their ethnic languages and lacked a language of wider communication, Chapter 8). Boundaries based on language and ethnic identity negatively influence the extent to which people are able to accommodate behaviours and values of other ethnic groups, impede collaboration between diverse ethnic groups and undermine societal cohesiveness. Ethiopia, a country with more than 80 languages and ethnic groups, struggling to stand as a strong country, needs a political and education system that enhances its citizens' and future citizens' ability to cross ethnic languages and ethnic boundaries.

Additionally, the emergence in Ethiopia today of ethnic identity and language as the most important markers of the individual has not resolved the social, economic, political and other inequalities among different social and ethnic groups. In my research area, the Konso political movement I have discussed in this thesis is an example of this. The demands coming from this political movement for self-administration, equitable economic development and job

opportunities, are also about rights and ethnic identity (to establish a separate Konso administrative zone instead of being included in the current zone that includes eight ethnic groups under the Segen Area Peoples zone, see Chapter 2).

During the writing up of this thesis, political instability had put Ethiopia in a 10 month state of emergency (September 2016 –July 2017) across the country. Large scale protests took place in different parts of the country, mainly in Oromia, Amhara regions and Konso. The protesters in conflict over the power relations among ethnic groups, challenged the feasibility of ethnolinguistic ideology. Some of the ethnicity-based conflicts in the country and the displacement of about 500,000 people from their home, mainly from Oromia and Ethiopian Somali, (according to the Ethiopian Broadcast Corporation, 2017 and Voice of America Amharic service, 2017) are also an indication of the way people perceive ethnic identity as bounded and the difficulties of looking beyond the ethnicity box towards collaboration, living together and the common interests of the country. Promoting the language and culture of all ethnic groups in Ethiopia and their right to self-determination was of historical importance, particularly for the minority ethnic groups that were deprived of such rights and indeed, in many cases, faced the possible extinction of their languages. However, the current essentialising notion of ethnicity and language that prevails in Ethiopia seems to be having a devastating effect on the country's stability. A rethink is required, which looks for ways of promoting unity in diversity, within the context of multiethnic and multilingual Ethiopia.

10.3. The Contributions of my Thesis

My research contributes to methodological and conceptual aspects of language policy planning in Ethiopia. In terms of methodological contribution, although there has been an increase in ethnographic research in Ethiopia, this is rarely in the field of education. The most common methodology employed in the field of educational research is the descriptive survey. Thus, my research will contribute to the use of ethnographic research in the field of education in Ethiopia. As Hornberger and Johnson (2007, cited in Johnson, 2013, 44) note, "Ethnography of language policy …illuminate the links across the multiple LPP (Language Policy and Planning) layers, from macro to micro, from policy to practice". In doing ethnography, I learned how through ethnography, one can explore language policy at the grassroots level: in the classrooms, schools and communities; and then interconnect the data and findings with the different levels of the

education system (ZED, REB and FMOE). Moreover, I learned that ethnography is also a useful approach for exploring the dynamics, interactions and interconnections of language use, identity and language policy processes, in that it generates in-depth qualitative data and analysis. Adopting this approach enabled me to explore beyond what was happening on the ground and investigate the why of language uses and policy processes, through using multiple methods (observations, interview and documentary analysis). These experiences are useful methodological inputs to my research context, in Ethiopia.

Regarding the policy contribution this thesis makes, the findings of the study will contribute to both language policy planning and practices. It has demonstrated the importance of including stakeholders in the policy process for better policy outputs. Paying attention to the unheard voices and concerns of different respondents on mother tongue education (e.g. students, students' parents and teachers) can help the language policy makers to provide more equitable, quality education for all children. However, although different level officials commented on the relevance of my research to the Ethiopian education system based on the issues that I raised and the purpose of the study, their attitude towards qualitative research (ethnographic approach), which they view as limited in scope and coverage, persuading them to take account of my findings, will remain a challenge. In this regard, my use of different research sites, from the classroom to FMOE, will help to 'sell' my findings and suggestions to policy makers and education planners.

Moreover, through my previous work experience and social networks, I intend to promote evidence-based or research informed discussions on language use, language policy and ethnic identity, through conferences and meetings with government officials and experts. Publishing parts of my thesis will be my initial strategy to introduce the findings of my research. I will also use my connections with lobby policy makers at Ministry of Education, Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples' Regional Education Bureau and Konso Woreda Education Office, International Non-Governmental Organizations and UN Agencies to support and convene a meeting and conference to present and share the findings of my study. In terms of conceptual contribution, my research supports the viewing of language policy as a social process and challenges the 'traditional' view of policy that separates policy legislation and official documents from practice (a commonly held view among officials and the media in Ethiopia), 'We have a good policy but its implementation has a problem' which excludes its practices) in promoting policy as a 'verb' (process). The idea of

policy being a verb could help policy makers to see policy more broadly and inspire them to develop policies that are implementable, rather than simply focusing on the production of policy documents.

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Appendixes

Appendix I: List of Ethnic Groups and Languages (Mother Tongues) Used in Primary Education in Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples' Regional State, Ethiopia in 2008 E.C. (2015/2016)

SN	Nationality (Ethnic Group)	Language	Medium of instruction (Grades 1-4)	As a single subject (Grades 1-4)	As a single subject (Grades 5-12)	Script used
1.	Bench	Benchigna	√ (grades 1-3)			Latin
2.	Dawro	Dawrogna	√		√	Latin
3.	Dizi	Dizigna	√ (grades 1-3)			Latin
4.	Gamo	Gamogna	√		√ (grades 5-10)	Latin
5.	Gedeo	Gedeofa	√		√ (grades 5-10)	Latin
6.	Gofa	Gofigna	√		√ (grades 5-10)	Latin
7.	Hadya	Hadyisa	√		√	Latin
8.	Kaficho	Kafinano	√		√	Latin
9.	Kambata	Kambatigna	√		√ (grades 5-8)	Latin
10.	Konta	Kontigna	√		√ (grades 5-8)	Latin
11.	Sheko	Shekogna	√ (grades 1-3)			Latin
12.	Sidama	Sidamu Afo	√		√	Latin
13.	Siltie	Silitigna	√		√	Saba
14.	Wolayita	Wolaitigna	√		√	Latin
15.	Zeyise	Zeyisegna		√		Latin
16.	Minit	Minitigna	√ (grades 1-3)			Latin
17.	Shakacho	Shekinano		√	√ (grades 5-8)	Latin
18.	Oyida	Oyidigna		√		Latin
19.	Kebena	Kebenigna		√		Saba
20.	Mareko	Libidigna		√		Latin
21.	Basketo	Basket		√		Saba
22.	Yem	Yemsa		√		Latin
23.	Kore	Korete		√		Latin
24.	Burji	Dashete		√		Latin
25.	Halaba	Halabisa		√		Latin

Source: Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples' Region Education Bureau (2016).

N.B. The ethnic groups that teach their mother tongue as a single subject at the first cycle of primary education (Grades 1-4) use Amharic as the medium of instruction. English is the medium of instruction of the second cycle of primary education (grades 5-8) for all ethnic groups in SNNPR (and those who started mother tongue education at the first cycle of primary continued providing their mother tongue as a single subject from grade 5 onwards).

Other 31 ethnic groups in the SNNPR used Amharic as the medium of instruction in the first cycle of primary and English as the medium of the second cycle of primary education.

Appendix II: Table I: The Schedule of Classroom Observations

Name of School: Karat Primary School

Woreda/District: Konso

Academic Year: 2008 E.C (2015/2016)

Grade Level	Subjects	Teacher's Name	Sex			School's Shift	Remarks
			M	F	T		
1	Amharic	Xxx		F	F	Morning*	
	English	Xxx		F	F	Morning	
	Environmental Science	Xxx	M		M	Morning	
2	Amharic	Xxx		F	F	Afternoon**	
	English	Xxx				Afternoon	
	Environmental Science	Xxx		F	F	Afternoon	
4	Amharic	Xxx	M		M	Morning	
	Environmental Science	Xxx	M		M	Morning	
5	Amharic	Xxx		F	F	Morning	
	English	Xxx	M		M	Morning	
7	Amharic	Xxx		F	F	Afternoon	
	English	Xxx	M		M	Afternoon	
	Social Science	Xxx	M		M	Afternoon	
	Civic	Xxx	M		M		
8	English	Xxx	M		M	Afternoon	
	Physics	Xxx	M		M	Afternoon	
	Mathematics	Xxx	M		M	Afternoon	
Total			10	6	16		

Morning shift: 8:00 Am-12:00 Pm, Afternoon* Shift: 12:30 Pm-4:30 Pm*

Appendix III: Classroom Observation Checklists

Name of the Teacher: …............................ Sex…………

Grade Level: ……………………..

Subject: ……………………………

No. of Students: M:…………F:……………T:…………………..

Shift and Time: ………………………………

Date:……………………………………………..

SN	Activities to be Focused	Remarks
1.	How is the status of classroom facilities (blackboard, neatness, ventilation, desks, class size, etc.)?	Is the classroom convenient for the teaching-learning process?
2.	What is the medium of instruction?	
3.	How is the students' sitting arrangement in the classroom? Is it arranged by the teacher or students on voluntary basis?	What is the condition for such arrangement (to be discussed further)?
4.	Is there any background difference among children with regard to readiness of the classroom environment?	
5.	Is there language difference between students who come from urban and rural areas?	
6.	Which language (s) does the teacher mostly use in the teaching-learning process?	
7.	Which language (s) does the teacher use to give instruction to students (assignments, homework, classwork, responding to questions, etc.)?	
8.	Does the teacher speak the language that students speak/understand well or students' mother tongue (e.g. Affa Konso)?	
9.	Do students understand the language (s) that the teacher uses in the classroom?	
10.	Which group of students (e.g. urban/rural) has difficulties in understanding the medium of instruction?	
11.	What strategies does the teacher use to make the content of the lesson clearer to students?	
12.	How do students use languages in the classroom?	
13.	Which languages do the students use to respond and ask questions in the classroom?	
14.	Which group of students (e.g. urban or rural) is actively engaging in the teaching-learning process (asking and responding to questions)?	

SN	Activities to be Focused	Remarks
15.	Is there any strategy that the teacher uses to support the non-medium of instruction speaking students?	
16.	Which language (s) do students use to communicate with their peers in the classroom or during pair work or group discussion?	
17.	Is there any side talk among students and which language (s) do students use for such a purpose?	
18.	How does the teacher translate and practice the official language-in-education policy in the classroom?	
19.	Any other related comments	

Thank you,

Appendix IV: Semi-Structured Interview Questions for Primary School Students

Name of the Student: …............................ Sex…………Age:……………

Grade Level: …………Section:…………….

Residence/ Location: ………………………..

Time: …………………………………….

Date:…………………………………………

1. Which language (s) do you speak?
2. What is your mother tongue? Is it different from Affa Konso?
3. How do you acquire/develop your second languages (e.g. Amharic, Affa Konso, and some English)?
4. Which language (s) do your father and mother and family members use in home, neighborhoods and community? Why?
5. Which language (s) do you mostly use with peers in school? Why?
6. Who are your close friends? Which language(s) do you use with them in and out of school? Why?
7. Which language (s) do teachers mostly use in the teaching-learning process?
8. Which language (s) do teachers mostly use to give instruction to students (assignments, homework, classwork, responding to questions, etc.)?
9. Do your teachers speak the Konso language? Who does speak it and who does not?
10. Do you and other students in your class understand the language(s) of teaching in the classroom?
11. Which group of students (e.g. urban or rural) has difficulty in understanding the language of teaching?
12. How do teachers support this group of children?
13. How do students use language (s) in classroom?
14. Which language (s) do the students use to respond and ask questions in the classroom? And why?
15. Which language (s) do students use to communicate with their peers in the classroom or during pair work or group discussion?
16. Could you tell me the value of language (e.g. Affa Konso, Amharic, English and others)?
17. By which language (s) would you like to learn in primary school? Why?
18. Will you happy if mother tongue (Affa Konso) is the language of teaching in primary education? Why?
19. What is your ethnic identity?
20. How do you relate language with culture and identity?
21. Any other related comments:

Thank you,

Appendix V: Semi-Structured Interview Questions for Primary School Teachers

Name of the Teacher:……………………., Sex:………………….

The Grade Level Taught:…………………………………………

Subject: …………………………………………………………..

Qualification:……………………, Field of study:………………….

Time: ……………………

Date:…………………….

1. What is the medium of instruction for the subject that you are teaching?
2. How do you define or see language, which language(s) do you speak and how did you acquire them?
3. Do you speak the local language or students' home language other than the school official/working language?
4. Is there any background difference among students in your school in relation to school readiness (exposure of preschool, family support and other informal or indigenous education/learning?)
5. Do you think that there is language difference between children from urban and rural areas? Why?
6. Which languages do you mostly use in the teaching-learning process?
7. Do you think that your students understand the languages of teaching in your classroom?
8. Which group of children understands the language of teaching well and which group of students has difficulties to follow the lesson? Why
9. What strategies do you employ to make the content of the lesson clearer to all students?
10. Do you use the local language or students' home language in your teaching and why?
11. How do children use language(s) in classroom in group discussion, responding and asking questions in classroom? And why?
12. Which students are actively engaging in the teaching-learning process (asking and responding to questions)?
13. Which language do students use to communicate with their peers in and out of classroom?
14. Is there any relationship between language background and academic performance of students? Why?
15. Do you use any strategies to support the non-medium of instruction language speakers?
16. Are there any factors that influence children's language ability, choice and use (family, community, socio-economic background)?
17. Which language do teachers use in school compound/staff room or at work? Why?
18. Which language do you prefer to communicate/express complex or sophisticated ideas or address the large audience effectively? Why?
19. How do you use language in the community and families, market, local hotel, shop, church?
20. By which language(s) would you like to be represented? Why?
21. How do you see the different values of languages and students' and community members' attitudes towards languages?

22. Do you think that students attach values to a particular language and why?/What is the attitudes of children towards different language (Amharic, mother, Oromo and others)? Why?
23. How do you understand, translate and practise the official language-in-education policy in your classroom teaching?
24. Have you got a chance to participate in the language-in-education policy preparation or read the government policy document?
25. What do you think about mother tongue education, its benefits and disadvantages for students?
26. What do you think about that the mother tongue education has not been started in Konso?
27. How do you see your ethnic identity?
28. How do you relate language with culture and identity?
29. Do you have other comments?

Thank you,

Appendix VI: Semi-Structured Interview Questions for Primary School Head Teacher

Name of the Head Teacher:………………… Sex:………………..

Name of the School:……………………………………………………..

Qualification:……………, Field of study:……………………………

Time: ………………

Date:……………….

1. How do you describe the Karat primary school in terms of students and their academic status?
2. From which areas/localities/villages do your students come?
3. Is there any background difference among students in your school in relation to school readiness (exposure of preschool, family support and other informal or indigenous education/learning?)
4. What is the language-in-education policy at school and Woreda level?
5. Which language do teachers use as the medium of instruction in practice?
6. Is there any relationship between language background and academic performance of students? Why?
7. How do you define/see language, its purpose?
8. Which language(s) students use in classrooms, school and out of school?
9. What do you think is the influence of non-mother tongue education on students' learning and identity?
10. Do you consider the language issues when you assign teachers at grade 1, lower grades or different grade levels?
11. Which language(s) do you use with students, teachers and students' parents in school? why?
12. What about the interest and attitudes of students towards languages, mother tongue, Amharic and English?
13. What do you think about families' willingness for children to learn different languages? Which languages and why?
14. What do you think about the language use in the community and families, market, local hotel, shop, church?
15. How do teachers use language in staff room, meetings and school and out of schools? Why?
16. What do you think about mother tongue education?
17. What do you think about others views such as students' parents on mother tongue education?
18. How do you see ethnic identity and culture?
19. How do you relate language with culture and identity?
20. By which language(s) would you like to be represented and why?
21. What do you think about that the mother tongue education has not been started in Konso?
22. Do you get a chance to read the Education and Training Policy or get training on policy issues? Do you have a copy of a policy as a reference in school?
23. Do you have other comments?

Thank you,

Appendix VII: Semi-Structured Interview Questions for Students' Parents and Community Members Including Clan and Cultural leaders

Name of Student's Parent/Community Members: ……………………………

Age: …………………………………Sex: …………………………………

Education Background……………………………………………………..

Children's Education Level: …………………………………………………

Residence/Villages: ………………………………………………………..

Time:…………………..

Date:……………………

1. How many children do you have in Karat primary school/other schools? Their Age? Sex?
2. What do you think about the importance of education for your children?
3. Do you participate in the school programmeme? Meeting? School development programmeme? Contribution?
4. Do you have any role in school as a committee or other duties?
5. How do you see language? Which language(s) do you speak? How did you develop them?
6. What is your mother tongue and how do you define the mother tongue? What about your wife's/husband's mother tongue? What about your children's mother tongue?
7. What is your ethnic background and language of your ethnic group?
8. Which language(s) do you usually use with family at home, neighborhoods, work place, at shop, market, etc.? Why?
9. Do your children speak the Konso language and how do they develop that? If not why? Do they speak Amharic and how do they develop that and other languages as well?
10. What do you think about the value of different languages? Why?
11. How do you use language with different people (the same ethnic group's members and others)? Why?
12. What do you think about the current language-in-education policy at school and in Konso, or the Amharic and English mediums of instruction?
13. What do you think about the importance of mother tongue education? Or its disadvantages?
14. By which language (s) would you like your children to learn at primary school? Why?
15. Which language (s) would you like your children to develop and improve at primary school? Why?
16. By which language(s) would you like to be represented and why?
17. What do you think about your and community members' attitudes towards mother tongue and different languages?
18. How do you explain the Konso culture?
19. How do you relate culture and religion in Konso?
20. Do the young generation or town background Konso's families' children understand the Konso culture and language? Why?
21. How do you relate language with Konso culture and identity?
22. Do you have any other comments?
    Thank you,

Appendix VIII: Semi-Structured Interview Questions for Woreda/District Officials

Name of the Official:……………………… Sex:………………..

Name of the Office……………..…………………………………………

Position:…………………………………………………………………….

Department:…………………………………………………………………

Location: …………………………………………………………………

Qualification:……………, Field of study:……………………………

Time: ………………

Date:……………….

1. Could you briefly explain the status of the Woreda primary education?
2. What do you understand about language?
3. Could you explain the Woreda language-in-education policy of the primary education?
4. What are the major deriving forces of mother tongue education?
5. What are the major preconditions to use mother tongue education in primary school?
6. What do you think that the language-in-education policy and its implementation in zonal, regional and country levels?
7. What do you think that the Konso Woreda has not started the mother tongue education?
8. Could you please explain the process of the mother tongue education initiative and its status and challenges?
9. What do you think about the advantage and disadvantages of mother tongue education?
10. Who are engaged in the process of language policy planning and why?
11. What is the working language of the office and which language(s) do you use it in office with different people?
12. What do you think about the value of different languages and community's attitudes towards language?
13. How do you explain the Konso culture?
14. What do you understand about identities?
15. How do you relate education system (with language policy) with students' identities?
16. How do you relate language with culture and identity?
17. Do you think that the primary school teachers are well-aware of the education policy of the country, SNNPR and Woreda if not why?
18. How do primary school teachers implement language-in-education policy in classroom (in town and rural)? Why?
19. What is the next plan of the Woreda in terms of language-in-education policy?
20. Do you have other comments?

Thank you,

Appendix IX: Semi-Structured Interview Questions for Zonal, Regional and Federal Officials

Name of the Official:………………………… Sex:…………………..

Administrative level (ZED, REB, FMOE):…………………………….

Name of the organization:………………………………………………

Department:………………………………………………………………..

Position:…………………………………………………………………….

Location: ……………………………………………………………………

Qualification:……………., Field of study:……………………………

Time: ………………

Date:……………….

1. Could you briefly explain the status of the Zonal/Regional and Federal primary education system?
2. What do you understand about language?
3. Could you explain the language-in-education policy of the primary education of zone education department, regional education bureau and federal Ministry of Education?
4. What are the major deriving forces of mother tongue education?
5. What are the major preconditions to use mother tongue education in primary school?
6. What do you think that the language-in-education policy and its implementation in zonal, regional and country levels?
7. Who take part in the decision on language-in-education policy planning and goals' setting?
8. What do you think that some Woredas or ethnic groups have not started mother tongue education?
9. Could you please explain the status and challenges of mother tongue education in your zone, region and country?
10. What do you think about the advantage and disadvantages of mother tongue education?
11. What do you think about the value of different languages and community's attitudes towards minority languages?
12. Could you explain the primary school curriculum development and its challenges?
13. What do you understand about identities?
14. How do you relate education system (with language policy) with students' identities?
15. How do you relate language with culture and identities?
16. Do you think the primary school teachers are well-aware of the education policy of the country, if not why?
17. How do primary school teachers implement language-in-education policy in classroom (in town and rural)? Why?
18. What is the role or support of your organization to the Woreda policy planning and other educational activities?
19. What is the next plan of your organization in terms of language-in-education policy?
20. Do you have any other comments?

Thank you,