Attitudes Towards Code-switching in an English-medium Content Classroom

Yinager Teklesellassie

Faculty of Humanities, Bahir Dar University, Ethiopia

E-mail: y.teklesellassie@yahoo.com

Emily Boersma

Faculty of Humanities, Bahir Dar University, Ethiopia

E-mail: felizidad7@yahoo.com

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to investigate the attitudes of content subject teachers and their freshman students towards the use of a local language in English-medium content subjects given at Bahir Dar University (BDU), Ethiopia. This study examined whether attitudes towards the use of a local language in English-medium content subjects could be affected by demographic factors like first language background and gender. The participants of the study were content subject teachers and freshman students in three faculties at BDU. Data were collected through questionnaires distributed to both groups of participants. The findings show that both the content subject teachers and their freshman students had favorable attitudes towards the use of Amharic, a local language of wider communication, in the English-medium content subject classroom. Moreover, the

results indicate that the attitudes of the students towards the use of Amharic in the classroom were not affected by first language background or gender. Based on the findings, it was concluded that content subject teachers or their students should not feel restrained by using Amharic judiciously as long as Amharic helps them to deliver or understand content. Finally, recommendations are made for further research in the area.

Keywords: code-switching, English-medium content classroom, L2 attitudes

Introduction

Throughout history, there have been different language in education policies in Ethiopia that have advocated the use of foreign languages as media of instruction at different levels of education (Getachew & Derib, 2006). For example, the 1994 education and training policy, like former language in education policies, determined the use of English as the medium of instruction starting from grade nine in all regions of the country. Since Ethiopia was never a British colony, English has almost no role in the daily lives of her citizens. As a result, the majority of students have very low proficiency in English and this makes learning content subjects very challenging (Tekeste, 2006). Although the official medium of instruction in high schools and universities is English, there is a huge possibility for the use of indigenous languages such as Amharic in the teaching of content subjects. Several studies have shown that in countries where a foreign language is used as a medium of instruction teachers and students tend to use the students' mother tongue in the content classroom alternately with the foreign language (Ariffin & Husin, 2011; Makgato, 2014; Tabaro, 2013; Wolfaardt, 2005). This fact may prove Gotosa et al.'s (2013) argument that it is futile to prescribe what language to use in the classroom when the medium of instruction is a foreign language and the teacher and students share a native language.

Since the 1950s, English has been used as the medium of instruction in Ethiopian schools at least starting from junior high school onwards (Tekeste, 2006). However, different governments in Ethiopia amended the policy realizing the role played by the mother tongue in teaching and learning. The last time the language policy was amended was in 1994 by the current government. According to this policy, indigenous languages such as Amharic, Oromiffa, Tigrigna, Somali, Afar and Gurage were to be used as media for instruction up to grade eight in areas where they are commonly spoken and understood. However, some regional states, for example, the Amhara National Regional State, changed the policy slightly and decided that students in the region be taught in English rather than in their mother tongue starting from grade seven.

When it comes to the use of local languages in Ethiopia in content subjects given at educational levels where English is the medium of instruction, there appears to be a paucity of information with regard to their prevalence or the attitudes of students towards their use in the classroom. It is believed that Amharic, a language of wider communication in Ethiopia, is used in classrooms at Bahir Dar University where English is the medium of instruction like in any other institution of higher learning in the country. Amharic is the official language of the Amhara National Regional State, which is one of nine states that constitute the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia. Historically, Amharic was the official language of the country before the 1995 Constitution that relegated it to the working language of the federal government. Since Bahir Dar University is a federal university, it admits students from every part of the country, whose mother tongues may be Amharic or any one of more than eighty languages spoken in the country. This means that there can be students in the content subject classroom who know little or no Amharic. This study, therefore, aims to investigate attitudes towards the use of Amharic in the content subject classroom and the relationship between demographic factors (i.e. gender and first language background) and freshman students' attitudes towards their subject-matter teachers' use of Amharic in the content subject classroom.

Statement of the problem

The use of English as a medium of instruction in various countries, where it is used as a foreign language, can cause extreme frustration for both teachers and students (Ahmed & Zarif, 2013; Ariffin & Husin, 2011). One of the main causes of the problem may be the low level of English language skills possessed by both teachers and students (Büyükyavuz & İnal, 2008; Darani, 2012; Jemal, 2012; Koosha & Jafarpour, 2006; Maleki & Zangani, 2008). Similar problems exist in Ethiopia where English is used in schools, colleges and universities as the medium of instruction. It is a fact that English poses one of the biggest challenges in Ethiopia's educational system because the majority of teachers and students lack sufficient command of the language (Tekeste, 2006). In practice, it is arguable whether English is truly the medium of instruction in this country because vernacular languages are so frequently used together with English in classrooms (Jemal, 2012). Moreover, in some schools, the use of local languages in classrooms may be even more dominant than that of English.

The Ethiopian Educational and Training Policy (1994) states that English must be used as the medium of instruction at secondary and tertiary levels of education. Moreover, the policy states that Amharic, which is the working language of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and a language of wider communication, should also be given as a compulsory subject in schools all over the country. However, since the current language policy of Ethiopia stipulates that children in primary schools should be taught in their mother tongue, and that vernacular languages should be used in local administration, it is not uncommon to see university students whose proficiency in Amharic is so low that they experience difficulties in understanding concepts in content subjects which are wholly or partly delivered in Amharic. This poses a dilemma for most teachers in universities because most students have poor English language skills and a few of them, coming from outside of the Amhara region, may not understand Amharic at all.

However, it is not unusual to hear much Amharic being spoken when one walks along classrooms on every BDU campus.

Apparently, when teachers at BDU think that their students do not understand a concept or a word in English, they resort to the use of Amharic that may leave some students in more confusion because understanding Amharic could be more difficult for them. Because of the Ethiopian language policy and the fact that some students joining Bahir Dar University who come from different parts of the country have very poor Amharic language skills, it might be inappropriate to use Amharic in content classrooms. The reality, however, is that Amharic is used in classrooms across faculties at BDU. If teachers take for granted that every student in their classes understand Amharic they may cause more confusion for some of their students than they think. If teachers think that they should use Amharic in their classes alternating it with English, then they have to identify who, among their students, do not understand Amharic well and have to find ways in which they can help them.

Although there are numerous local and international studies that have looked into the use of indigenous languages in the EFL classroom (Gulzar, 2014; Jemal, 2012; Kenenisa, 2003; Lin, 2013), there is scarcity of local studies that examine the use of Amharic in content subjects at tertiary level. Therefore, it would be helpful to know how prevalent the use of Amharic is in content subjects at BDU, what the causes of its use are and what the attitudes of teachers and students are towards its use.

Review of related literature

A large body of research exists that has investigated the use of students' mother tongue or vernacular languages in the context of learning English as a foreign language (Darani, 2012; Grim, 2010; Jemal, 2012; Jingxia, 2010; Khati, 2011; Mirza et al., 2012). Using the students' mother tongue in the EFL classroom has been a contentious issue (Tabaro, 2013) and writers like Krashen (1981) vehemently object to the use of it in the EFL classroom on the grounds that input of the L2 is crucial for the acquisition process which can be compromised if the mother tongue is used in the L2 classroom. On the other hand, some researchers recommend the judicious use of the students' mother tongue in the L2 classroom

for different purposes like classroom management and communication of empathy or solidarity (Polio & Duff, 1994; Schweers, 1999; Tang, 2000; Timor, 2012).

Similarly, if the medium of instruction for content subjects like mathematics and science happens to be a foreign language, then it is likely and even natural for the teacher and students to use the students' mother tongue or the vernacular in the classroom alternately with the foreign language (Gotosa et al., 2013; Zabrodskaja, 2007). This linguistic phenomenon is called code switching, and according to Bullock and Toribio (2009, p.1), code switching is "the ability on the part of bilinguals to alternate effortlessly between their two languages". Studies on code switching in content subjects have shown that teachers and their students used code switching between English, which is the medium of instruction, and the students' mother tongue or the vernacular (Jegede, 2011; Makgato, 2014; Pollard, 2002; Tabaro, 2013; Then & Ting, 2009). These studies ranged from those that investigated the use of code switching in content subjects in primary schools (Jegede, 2011) to secondary schools (Tabaro, 2013; Yamat et al., 2011) and through colleges and universities (Iqbal, 2011; Zabrodskaja, 2007).

Alternating between languages in the classroom is usually caused by the fact that teachers and/or students have an insufficient command of the medium of instruction, which happens to be a foreign language (Ariffin, & Husin, 2011; Iqbal, 2011; Makgato, 2014; Pollard, 2002). In the past, code switching between a foreign language used as a medium of instruction and the students' mother tongue was seen as a manifestation of a poor command of the medium of instruction (Abad, 2010). Some researchers have even argued that the shift from a foreign language that is used as the medium of instruction to the students' mother tongue is detrimental to the linguistic and cognitive developments of students (Gotosa et al., 2013; Uys et al., 2007). Interestingly, Uys et al. (2007) go as far as to say that content subject teachers have the responsibility to teach English to their students and that code switching will prevent them from discharging that responsibility.

Recently, however, it appears that some researchers have begun to see code switching not as a sign of low proficiency in a foreign language but more as a teaching and learning strategy (Abad, 2010; Jegede, 2011; Nangu, 2006; Simasiku, Kasanda, & Smit, 2015). For example, Zabrodskaja (2007) argues that a switch to the students mother tongue, whether initiated by the teacher or the student, increases attention to the content of L2 message and facilitates understanding. Likewise, Pollard (2002) contends that students who are allowed to code switch in the classroom are better able to convey their knowledge of subject matter to their classmates and teachers. Then and Ting (2009) found that teachers used code switching for the purposes of reiteration in which teachers repeated what they had already said in English in the students' mother tongue when the teachers doubted that their students understood a point they made in English.

Moreover, Simasiku et al. (2015) found that code switching could enhance academic achievement; therefore, they recommended that code switching be used to help master content subjects and aid teaching and learning. Moreover, they noted that if teachers are assured that they are doing the right thing by code switching and are viewed as linguistically competent, their use of code switching may accomplish what it is intended for, namely, enhancing teaching, learning and concept clarification. Simasiku et al. (2015) also argue that teachers should decide when they should use their students' first language and when to use the foreign language in order to enable comprehension and meaningful involvement of their students, which ultimately leads to enhancing academic achievement. Likewise, Yamat et al. (2011) see code switching as scaffolding that assists students in learning content, and argue that it is inevitable that code switching occurs in the classroom.

Research questions

1. What are the attitudes of content subject teachers and freshman students towards the use of Amharic in the content subject classroom?

2. Is there a statistically significant relationship between demographic factors (i.e. gender and first language background) and freshman students' attitudes towards their content subject teachers' use of Amharic in the content classroom?

Research design and methodology

Research design

The study employed a survey design in which content subject teachers and their freshman students responded to questionnaires. The survey design was selected for the present study because it was important to assess the attitudes of a large number of teachers and students at a specific point in time.

Participants

The participants in this study were content subject teachers and their freshmen students in two faculties and one college: Faculty of Social Science and Environmental Studies, Faculty of Behavioral and Educational Sciences and Science College.

Thirty-one teachers took part in the study. Five teachers did not return the questionnaires given to them. All but one of the teachers had master's degrees and the average work experience of the teachers in teaching in higher education was 5.7 years. The maximum years of experience was 13 and the minimum was 0.75 years. Twenty (65%) of the teachers were first language speakers of Amharic, three of them had Oromo as a mother tongue, another three spoke Tigre as a mother tongue, and two of them spoke Agew as a mother tongue. Unfortunately, three of them did not report their mother tongue. All the teachers who self-reported that Amharic was not their mother tongue described their Amharic language proficiency as high.

Moreover, 324 freshmen students participated in this study. Of these, 173 (53.4%) of them were male and 151 (46.6%) were female. More than 83% of the respondents were between the age group 18-21, and about 4% of them were above 25 years of age. Seventy-seven percent of the participants spoke Amharic as a mother tongue; more than 5% of the respondents spoken Oromo as

their mother tongue, and nearly 4% of the respondents had Tigre as their first language. The remaining 8% of the participants spoke twelve different Ethiopian languages as their mother tongue.

Sampling

One section of freshman students from each department across the three faculties, which were included in the study, was randomly selected for the study. Moreover, only one subject-matter teacher teaching a major course to the section of students who were selected for the study was randomly chosen to take part in the study.

Data collecting instruments

One questionnaire for teachers and another one for students were used to collect data. Questionnaire as a data collection tool was deemed appropriate for the present study for gathering data that could be used to examine individual difference variables like attitude and motivation. The teacher questionnaire had two sections. The first section consisted of items that gathered demographic data, while the second section had nine items assessing the teachers' attitudes towards their own use of Amharic in class. Another questionnaire with two sections was used to collect data from freshman students. The first section contained a few items to gather demographic information. The second section of the questionnaire included ten items assessing the students' attitudes towards the use of Amharic by their teachers and themselves. The items in both questionnaires were drawn from the related literature and the practical problems one of the present researchers faced in teaching English to students who shared a common native language with him at BDU.

Procedure

The questionnaires for both teachers and students were given to senior academic staff members of the Department of English Language and Literature to examine the items and provide feedback about the appropriateness of the items to answer the

research questions. Their comments and feedback were used to refine the items of the questionnaires. Finally, the questionnaires were piloted with one section of students and a small group of teachers to check their reliability. Therefore, the Cronbach's alpha coefficients for the teachers' and the students' questionnaires were found to be 7.4 and 8.1 respectively.

Data analysis

The data from the questionnaires were analyzed quantitatively using descriptive statistics such as mean and standard deviation. Moreover, the Chi-Square statistic was employed to test if the difference among the participants in demographic factors like first language background and gender would have an influence on freshman students' attitudes towards the use of Amharic in the classroom by their subject-matter teachers.

Findings
Attitudes towards the use of Amharic in the content classroom

Table 1generally shows that the freshman students had a favorable attitude towards the use of Amharic by their content subject teachers. For example, the participants seem to agree that they would like their content subject teachers to use Amharic when they explained concepts and terminologies with a relatively high mean score of 3.81. On a similar note, they appear to agree that they did not care whether Amharic was used in class or not by their content subject teachers or by their classmates as well (3.83). Moreover, the respondents agreed that they liked attending classes given by content subject teachers who shifted from English to Amharic (3.78). Conversely, the respondents seem to disagree with the idea that Amharic should be avoided in class (2.75). The participants also disagreed with the suggestion that since English is the medium of instruction in higher education, content subject teachers as well as students should not use Amharic in class with a mean score of 2.77. However, this particular item has the highest

standard deviation score (1.45) in Table 1, signaling variations of opinions among the freshman students who took part in the study.

Table 1: Freshman Students' Attitudes Towards the Use of Amharic by Their Content Subject Teachers

Item	Participant	Mean	Standard deviation
I would like my teachers to use Amharic when they explain concepts and terminologies.	333	3.81	1.18
I like attending classes given by teachers who shift from English to Amharic.	329	3.78	1.28
I have a low opinion of teachers who frequently use Amharic in class.	324	3.15	1.39
Since my ability in Amharic is poor, I DON'T want teachers as well as students to use Amharic in class.	324	3.58	1.38
I prefer to use Amharic during group discussion.	326	3.18	1.36
I want Amharic to be avoided in class though my Amharic is quite good.	330	2.75	1.33
I DON'T care whether Amharic is used in class or not.	324	3.83	1.23
I prefer to ask and answer questions in Amharic rather than in English.	322	2.78	1.33
I am in favor of shifting from Amharic to English in the classroom by teachers as well as students.	331	3.63	1.27
Since English is the medium of instruction in higher education, teachers as well as students should NOT use Amharic in class.	330	2.77	1.45

The content subject teachers were also asked to reveal their attitudes towards their own use of Amharic in the classroom. As depicted in Table 2 below, the mean score 3.37 suggests that the content subject teachers had a relatively favorable attitude towards their own use of Amharic in the classroom. Moreover, when they were asked if they overlooked their students' use of Amharic in the classroom, the content subject teachers reported, with a mean score of 3.17, that they might have ignored their students' use of Amharic at least sometimes. However, the high standard deviation (1.39) is also indicative of the fact that the content subject teachers had quite some difference of opinion with regard to their students' use of Amharic in the classroom.

Table 2: Content Subject Teachers' Attitudes Towards the Use of Amharic in the Content Classroom

Item	Participant	Mean	Standard deviation
What is your attitude towards your own use of Amharic in class?	30	3.37	1.07
I overlook my students' use of Amharic in the classroom when they ask or answer questions.	30	3.17	1.39

Relationships between demographic factors and attitudes towards the use of Amharic in the content classroom

Earlier it was reported that the freshman students participating in this study had a favorable attitude towards the use of Amharic by their content subject teachers. It was also the interest of this study to investigate if the favorable attitude the students had towards the use of Amharic by their content subject teachers was influenced by their gender. Therefore, the cross-tabulation presented as Table 3 shows that 130 (73%) male participants at least agreed that they would like their content subject teachers to use Amharic when they explained concepts and terminologies. Similarly, 109 (73%) female participants agreed that they wanted their content subject teachers to use Amharic when they explained concepts and terminologies.

Table 3: Sex * I Would Like My Teachers to Use Amharic When They Explain Concepts and Terminologies Cross-Tabulation

			I would like my teachers to use Amharic when they explain concepts and terminologies.					Total
			Strongly disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly agree	
Sex	Male	Count	15	13	19	75	55	177
		Expected Count	12.4	15.2	20.0	73.6	55.8	177.0
		Residual	2.6	-2.2	-1.0	1.4	-.8	
	Female	Count	8	15	18	61	48	150
		Expected Count	10.6	12.8	17.0	62.4	47.2	150.0
		Residual	-2.6	2.2	1.0	-1.4	.8	
Total		Count	23	28	37	136	103	327
		Expected Count	23.0	28.0	37.0	136.0	103.0	327.0

To check if there was any relationship between the participants' gender and their attitudes towards the use of Amharic by their subject-matter teachers in the content classroom, the Chi-Square statistic was calculated and the results are presented in Table 4. As indicated in Tables 3 and 4, A 2x5 Chi-Square analysis revealed that there was no statistically significant relationship between the gender and the attitudes of the participants towards their teachers' use of Amharic in class, X^2 (4, 327) = 2.00, p = .735. This means that male participants did not show any marked difference in their attitudes towards the use of Amharic by their content subject teachers when compared to the attitudes of female participants in this study. Both sexes seem to have a relatively strong positive attitude towards the use of Amharic in the classroom by their content subject teachers.

Another objective of this study was to examine the relationship between the students' first language background and their attitudes towards the use of Amharic in the classroom by their content subject teachers. Table 5 shows that 195 (76%) participants whose mother tongue was Amharic expressed their agreement that they would like their content subject teachers to use Amharic when they explained concepts and terminologies. Likewise, 43 (64%) participants who had mother tongue other than Amharic at least agreed that they would like their content subject teachers to use Amharic when they explained concepts and terminologies in the classroom.

Table 4*: Results of the Chi-Square Test on the Relationship Between Gender and Attitudes Towards the Use of Amharic in the Content Classroom*

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	2.002[a]	4	.735
Likelihood Ratio	2.023	4	.732
Linear-by-Linear Association	.084	1	.772
N of Valid Cases	327		

0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 10.55.

Table 5: Mother Tongue * I Would Like My Teachers to Use and Terminologies Cross-Tabulation Amharic When They Explain Concepts

			I would like my teachers to use Amharic when they explain concepts and terminologies.					Total	
			Strongly disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly agree		
Mother tongue	Amharic	Count	14	19	29	111	84	257	
		Expected Count	19.0	21.4	27.8	108.7	80.1	257.0	
		Residual	-5.0	-2.4	1.2	2.3	3.9		
	Other languages	Count	10	8	6	26	17	67	
		Expected Count	5.0	5.6	7.2	28.3	20.9	67.0	
		Residual	5.0	2.4	-1.2	-2.3	-3.9		
Total		Count	24	27	35	137	101	324	324
		Expected Count	24.0	27.0	35.0	137.0	101.0	324.0	324.0

To test if there was any relationship between the students' first language background and their attitudes towards the use of Amharic by their content subject teachers in the content classroom, the Chi-Square statistic was calculated and the results are provided in Table 6. As shown in Tables 5 and 6, A 2x5 Chi-Square analysis revealed that there was no statistically significant relationship between the type of mother tongue and the attitudes of the students' towards their teachers' use of Amharic in class, X^2 (4, 324) = 9.18, p = .057. This result indicates that participants whose mother tongue was not Amharic did not have a markedly different attitude towards the use of Amharic in class by their content subject teachers when compared to the attitudes of the participants whose mother tongue was Amharic.

Table 6: Results of the Chi-Square Test on the Relationship Between First Language Background and Attitudes Towards the Use of Amharic in the Content Classroom

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	9.184[a]	4	.057
Likelihood Ratio	8.095	4	.088
Linear-by-Linear Association	6.911	1	.009
N of Valid Cases	324		

a.1 cell (10.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 4.96.

Discussion

Both teachers and students indicated that they had positive attitudes towards the use of Amharic in the content subject classroom. These results are similar to what Gulzar (2014), Nangu (2006), Schweers (1999) and Tang (2002) found in different parts of the world. Although there is a general tendency to favor the use of the students' mother tongue in the EFL or the content classroom for specific purposes, Ariffin and Husin (2011) found that attitudes could be moderated by the level of English proficiency of both teachers and students. Teachers, as well as students with higher levels of English proficiency, are in favor of less frequent use of the mother tongue in the classroom.

However, demographic factors like gender and first language background, which were of interest in the present study, did not have statistically significant relationships with the attitudes the students had towards the use of Amharic in the content classroom. Both sexes seem to have had relatively strong positive attitudes towards the use of Amharic in the content classroom by their subject-matter teachers. Moreover, being a first language speaker of Amharic or not did not have a statistically significant relationship with the attitudes of the students towards the use of Amharic in the content classroom. This finding suggests that the students whose mother tongue was not Amharic were either indifferent or in favor of code switching between Amharic and English in the content classroom.

Conclusion

The findings show that teachers of content subjects at BDU, as well as their students, have positive attitudes towards the use of Amharic in the classroom. As a result, content subject teachers and their students should not feel restrained from using Amharic judiciously as long as Amharic helps them to deliver or understand content.

The findings also show that the belief held by some teachers about the attitudes of non-Amharic speakers towards the use of Amharic in the classroom may not be right. Students with different

first language background had positive attitudes towards the use of Amharic by their subject matter teachers or they did not care whether Amharic was used or not. Similarly, because content subject teachers had positive attitude towards the use of Amharic in their classes, they may frequently use it; this may lead to their students' using less English in the classroom which can have an effect on their English language proficiency. Moreover, caution should be taken by content subject teachers because in some classrooms a couple of students who claim that they know no Amharic can be found. These students deserve special attention if teachers of content subjects frequently use Amharic in the classroom.

A major limitation of this study was the fact that there was a huge difference between the number of participants whose mother tongue was Amharic and those for whom Amharic was not a mother tongue. This difference in the size of the participants in the two groups may have contributed to the lack of difference in the attitudes of the two groups towards the use of Amharic in the English-medium content classroom.

Recommendations

Since the most important thing in the content subject classroom is students' understanding of concepts, teachers of content subjects may employ a two-pronged approach in which they use English and Amharic alternately. Alternation between Amharic and English in the content classroom at BDU is not usually a choice left for teachers of content subjects because of the low English language proficiency of freshman students. Content subject teachers should always give priority to the use of English in the classroom by themselves or by their freshman students. They should encourage their freshman students to use English in asking or answering questions. However, freshman students should not be denied the right to ask or answer questions simply because they are not able to express themselves clearly in English. Studies have shown that when students are free to use the language which is

most familiar to them they are more likely to participate and to acquire knowledge (Abad, 2010; Pollard, 2002).

It might also be of interest to investigate whether preferred amount of Amharic varies from year of study to year of study. For example, questions like "What differences will be found between the attitudes of first year and third year students towards the use of Amharic in the content classroom?" and "Does students' need for Amharic drop as their English proficiency increases with the stay at the university?" can be explored to bolster the local research literature on code switching. It is also suggested that further research be conducted to see if Amharic has different roles in the EFL and the content classrooms.

The Author

Yinager Teklesellassie has a PhD in Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL). He has been teaching English at Bahir Dar University for fourteen years. His areas of research interest include classroom interaction and task-based language teaching.

Emily Boersma has a PhD in TESL-Linguistics and she has been offering graduate courses for the last ten years at Bahir Dar University. Her areas of research interest include use of communication technology in the EFL classroom and learning styles.

References

Abad, L.S. (2010). An analysis of teachers' and students' perceptions of code switching in teaching science and mathematics in a Philippine private high school. *The Journal of Asia TEFL, 7*(1), 239-264.

Ahmed, A., & Zarif, T. (2013). The role of medium of instruction used in Pakistani classrooms. *Interdisciplinary Journal of Contemporary Research in Business*, *4*(12), 609-615.

Ariffin, K., & Husin, M.S. (2011). Code-switching and Code-mixing of English and Bahasa Malaysia in Content-Based Classrooms:

Frequency and Attitudes. *The Linguistics Journal, 5*(1), 220-247.

Bullock, E. B., & Toribio, J. A. (2009). *The Cambridge handbook of linguistic code-switching.* New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Büyükyavuz, O., & İnal, S. (2008). A descriptive study on Turkish teachers of English regarding their professional needs, efforts for development and available resources. *The Asian EFL Journal, 10*(3), pp.215-233.

Constitution of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (1995). Addis Ababa. Negarit Gazette.

Darani, P.A. (2012). A critical look at the status of FLT in the Iranian context: challenges and opportunities. *The Iranian EFL Journal, 8* (2), pp. 176-184.

Ethiopian Educational and Training Policy (1994). Addis Ababa. Negarit Gazette.

Grim, F. (2010). L1 in the L2 classroom at the secondary and college levels: A comparison of functions and use by teachers. *Electronic Journal of Foreign Language Teaching,* 7(2), 193-209.

Getachew, A., & Derib, A. (2006). Language policy in Ethiopia: History and trends. *Ethiopian Journal of Education and Science*, 2(1), 37-62.

Gotosa, K., Rwodzi, M. Gilda, & Mhlanga, G. (2013). Language in education: A critical review of current proposals for official mother tongue use in Zimbabwean classrooms. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science, 3*(14), 88-94.

Gulzar, M.S. (2014). Teachers' code-switching in a content-focused English as a second language (ESL) classroom: Patterns and functions. *International Journal of Linguistics*, 6(4), 130-153.

Iqbal, L. (2011). Linguistic features of code-switching: a study of Urdu/English bilingual teachers' classroom interactions. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science, 1*(14), 188-194.

Jegede, O. (2011). Code switching and its implications for teaching mathematics in primary schools in Ile-Ife, Nigeria. *Journal of Education and Practice*, *2*(10), 41-54.

Jemal, A. K. (2012). Exploring the use of first language in "English focus" EFL classrooms: Focus on Jimma Teachers' College. Unpublished MA Thesis, Jimma University, Jimma, Ethiopia.

Jingxia, L. (2010) Teachers' Code-Switching to the L1 in EFL Classroom. *The Open Applied Linguistics Journal 3*, 10-23.

Kenenisa, B. (2003). Using L1 in the EFL classroom: The case of the Oromo language with particular reference to Adama Teachers College.Unpublished MA Thesis, Addis Ababa University, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

Khati, A.R. (2011). When and why of mother tongue use in English classrooms. *Journal of Nepal English Language Teachers' Association*, 16(1-2), 42-51.

Koosha, M., & Jafarpour, A.A. (2006). Data-driven learning and teaching collocation of prepositions: The case of Iranian EFL adult learners. *Asian EFL Journal Quarterly*, *8*(4), 192-209.

Krashen, S. (1981). *Second language acquisition and second language learning*. Oxford: Pergamon Press.

Lin, A. M. Y. (2013). Classroom code-switching: Three decades of research. *Applied Linguistics Review*, *4*(1), 195-218.

Makgato, M. (2014). The use of English and code switching in the teaching and learning of technology in some schools in Eastern Cape Province, South Africa. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*, *5*(23), 933-940.

Maleki, A., & Zangani, E. (2008). A survey on the relationship between English language proficiency and the academic achievement of Iranian EFL students. *The Iranian EFL Journal*, *1*, pp. 146-155.

Mirza, G.H., Mahmud, K., & Jabbar, J. (2012). Use of other languages in English language teaching at tertiary level: A case study on Bangladesh. *English Language Teaching,5*(9), 71-77.

Nangu, B.B. (2006). Teaching in English and Isixhosa: Code-switching in grade 11 biology classes at a school in

Khayelitsha. An M.A. Thesis, University of the Western Cape, South Africa.

Pollard, S. (2002). The benefit of code switching within a bilingual education program. *Honors Projects.*
http://digitalcommons.iwu.edu/hispstu_honproj/2

Polio, C., & Duff, P. (1994). Teachers' language use in university foreign language classrooms: A qualitative analysis of English and target language alternation. *The Modern Language Journal 78*, 313-326.

Schweers, W. Jr. (1999). Using L1 in the L2 classroom. *English Teaching Forum, 37*(2). 6-9.

Simasiku, L., Kasanda, C., & Smit, T. (2015). Can code switching enhance learners' academic achievement? English Language Teaching, *8*(2), 70-77.

Tabaro, C. (2013). Code-switching in Rwanda: A case study of Kigali City secondary schools. *Southeast Asia: A Multidisciplinary Journal, 13*, 14-26.

Tang, J. (2002). Using L1 in the English classroom. English *Teaching Forum, 40*(1).

Tekeste, N. (2006). *Education in Ethiopia: From crisis to the brink of collapse.* Uppsala: Nordiskainstituet.

Then, D. C.O., & Ting, S.-H. (2009). A preliminary study of teacher code-switching in secondary English and science in Malaysia. *The Electronic Journal for English as a Second Language, 13*(1), 40-47.

Timor, T. (2012). Use of the Mother Tongue in Teaching a Foreign Language. *Language Education in Asia, 3*(1), 7-14.

Uys, M., Van der Walt, J., Van den Berg, R., & Botha, S. (2007). English medium of instruction: A situation analysis. *South African Journal of Education, 27*(1) 69-82.

Wolfaardt, D. (2005). Namibia: A case for a gradual transitional bilingual language programme, In J. Cohen, K. T. McAlister, K. Rolstad, & J. MacSwan, *Bilingualism.* Paper presented at *The 4th International Symposium,* (pp. 2358 -2368). Somerville, MA: Cascadilla Press.

Wong, R.M.H. (2010). The effectiveness of using English as the sole medium of instruction in English classes: Student responses and improved English proficiency. Porta Linguarum, 13, 119-130.

Yamat, H., Maarof, N., Maasum, T.N.T.M., Zakaria, E., & Zainuddin, E. (2011). Teacher's code-switching as scaffolding in teaching content area subjects. *World Applied Sciences Journal, 15,* 18-22.

Zabrodskaja, A. (2007). Russian-Estonian code-switching in the university. *Arizona Working Papers in SLA & Teaching, 14,* 123-139.