

LEVEL OF LOCAL LANGUAGES INTERFERENCES IN ENGLISH-MEDIUM CLASSES AND THEIR EFFECT IN ATTAINING QUALITY EDUCATION: THE CASE OF FOUR SECONDARY SCHOOLS LOCATED WITHIN HAWASSA UNIVERSITY'S TECHNOLOGY VILLAGES

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ABSTRACT

The main objective of this study was to investigate the level of interference of local languages in English medium classes in four schools in Sidama Zone. The study was designed in conformity with the principles of mixed approach, that is, largely qualitative and to some degrees quantitative. The major research tools used to collect data were classroom observation and interview conducted with students of Grade Nine. Correspondingly, the results indicated that in the selected schools, in Grade Nine, using local language (most frequently Amharic) in English-medium classes was a common scenario. Among all sentences the teachers used while they were conducting classes, 51.4% of them were in the English Language and the rest 48.6% were in Amharic and rarely in Sidama Language. This data take us to the conclusion that the level of local language use in the above selected schools was more than the required amount. The study further indicated that sentence level interference was the most frequently observed linguistic feature. The factors responsible for using local languages in the English-medium classes were: to make the lessons more clear, low level of students' English Language skills, to create a friendly classroom environment, to manage classes more successfully, pedagogical limitations and to save time for various class activities. With regard to local language use in their English medium classes, 14respondents (87.5%) had the attitude that when their teachers used local language, the lessons became clearer to them than the explanations they received in English Language. The other 2 (12.5%) of the respondents, nevertheless, contended that since the medium selected to transmit education is the English Language, mixing local language was of no advantage save confusion. Regarding different subject teachers' English Language ability, most of the respondents (87.5%) were of the attitude that their teachers did not have deficiency in explaining lessons in English Language. The other 2 (12.5%), however, had the attitude that some of their teachers had problem in expressing themselves in clear English.

KEYWORDS: Borrowing, Code Mixing, Embedded Language, Local Language Interference, Matrix Language