

Political Impediments and Opportunities that Facilitated the Fro-and-back Shift of Indigenous Language in Wolaita and Its Effects on Overall Identities of the Nation

Meshesha Make Jobo

Lecturer of English, Wolaita Sodo University

P.O.Box: 138

E-mail: mesheshamake46@gmail.com

Tel: +251911768037

Wolaita Sodo, Ethiopia

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to investigate both negative political obstacles and fertile political situations that hampered or facilitated the growth of Wolaita language and its effects on overall identities of the Nation. The subjects used for the current study were 8 elders for interview selected by purposive sampling and other 1000 people selected by availability sampling from four selected Woredas of Wolaita Zone for filling questionnaire and 40 of them for focused group discussion (FGD). The descriptive survey research design was used to conduct this study by using both quantitative and qualitative methods of data analysis. The result indicated that there were various political factors that facilitated the fro-shift of Wolaita language (from Wolaita to Amharic) in the three successive regimes (Menelik, Hailesilassie and Dergue) which highly threatened the overall identity (history, culture, heritage and indigenous wisdom) of Wolaita Nation. Before conquest of Independent Wolaita by Menelik and after downfall of Dergue; Wolaita language has got fertile political landscape for growth. However, the practical language growth in the mentioned periods has been too limited. Based on these findings, therefore, different projects of revitalization are recommended for the maintenance of Wolaita language: awareness training on the use of Wolaita language, development of a (creative) writing culture, establishment of school-based language revitalization project, planning of family-based language revitalization project and establishment of series, deep and multifaceted training and research projects that involve linguists and language experts.

Keywords: Heritage language; language shift; political landscape; language maintenance.

* Corresponding author. Tel.: +911768037; fax: +465515113
E-mail address: mesheshamake46@gmail.com

1. Introduction

Wolaita people have preserved its language, culture and linguistic identity for many centuries. However, this long and trans-generational self-identity preservation journey has passed through various tough challenges and certain fertile opportunities in different political times. According to [1], Wolaita independently ruled the whole areas of Damot Kingdom for a long period of time; controlling various territories in South and South Western parts of the present-day Ethiopia. At that time, Wolaita Kingdom was a dominant Kingdom and the language of Wolaita was a prominent means of communication for the whole speakers of people under Omotic language family without any significant language pressure from other languages (Semitic, Cushitic or Nilo-Saharan). Later, this prominent Kingdom of Wolaita shrunk in size and become present day's Wolaita Zone due to serious political pressure from the central government for the unification purpose (at the time of Menelik); hence the language of Wolaita lost its reputation of being lingua franca for the aforementioned areas of the country [1].

In the long linguistic history of Ethiopia, Wolaita language has passed under sever language pressure from dominant languages (particularly from Amharic) and systemic and sophisticated political oppression; especially from the political ideology of Menelik, Haileselassie and Derg [1]. Supporting this idea, [2] suggests "When two or more languages are in contact, it happens that one of the languages may dominate the other and become prominent with the expense of the dominated one which leads to the decline in use of the dominated language by its speech community". Confirming the same argument, [3] suggests that an indigenous language become oppressed or decline in the number of its speakers due to political factors that can cause language shift. Scholars such as [4,5,6] call such the situation language shift which can mean the partial or total, fro-or back-shift of an individual or a group from or back to a heritage language in the overall communication domains of the speech community such as in courts, in market places, in religious and political institutions, in research centers, in schools...

When we critically explore long resided linguistic landscape of Wolaita, there has been existed more than one language in contact for a long period of time in the speech community. From this, one should not expect the peaceful co-existence of those two or more languages throughout history within such the same speech community. Based on the continuous observation of the researcher, in Wolaita, there has been existed froth (during regime of Menelik, Haileselassie and Derg) and back (after down fall of Derg) shift of heritage language that distorted the nation's overall identities and their emotional attachment to their language and culture [1]. That is why this descriptive survey was proposed to investigate the political impediments and opportunities that facilitated the fro-and-back shift of indigenous language in Wolaita and its effects on overall identities of the nation.

The objectives of this study is to identify the major political impediments and opportunities that facilitated the fro-and-back shift of indigenous language in Wolaita and its effects on overall identities of the nation. The specific objectives of this study are to:

- explore political impediments that facilitated the fro-shift of heritage language in Wolaita.
- identify political opportunities that facilitated the back-shift of indigenous language in Wolaita.
- identify the overall effects of indigenous language shift on Wolaita Nation.
- propose the appropriate ways of reversing the situation (revitalizing the language).

2. Methodology of the Study

2.1. Design of the Study

The descriptive survey design was used for this study. This is because; it is suitable to survey the major political factors that facilitated the fro-and-back shift of heritage language in Wolaita (in three political eras: Pre-Menellik, Menellik to downfall of Dergue and after downfall of Dergue to present) and its effects on overall identities of the nation. For collection of data, from the relevant population (drawn through availability and purposive sampling), three tools of data collection were used: questionnaire, interview and focus group discussion (FGD). Then the pertinent data collected was analyzed using eclectic (both quantitative and qualitative) method of data analysis.

2.2. Description of the Research Setting

Wolaita is among 56 Nations and Nationalities in Southern Ethiopia commonly known by its population density and hospitality of people from other parts of the world. According to [7], the average population density of Wolaita is 385 per square kilometers. The zone has twelve Woredas and three city administrations. The major economic activities of Wolaita are agriculture and trade. The Zonal city of Wolaita (Sodo) is located 330kms from Addis Ababa through Hossana and 160kms from the Regional capital (Hawassa).

2.3. Subject of the Study

The population of this study is all Wolaita people, but for obtaining pertinent information for the current study 8 elders who have relevant knowledge of Wolaita language, culture and heritage and 1000 people selected by availability sampling were the targeted ones.

2.4. Sampling Procedure

For this study, the researcher used availability sampling for selecting 1000 people from the society. Eight elders were selected by using purposive sampling for interview and to be targeted respondents in focus group discussion. For collecting data through questionnaire, such 1,000 individuals were selected from four selected Woredas of Wolaita Zone and for interview, 8 elders having deep knowledge of Wolaita language, culture and heritage were selected from the same four Woredas. With the inclusion of two elders (selected for interview), ten individuals from those selected for questionnaire in each Woreda (the total of 40) were selected for collecting data through focused group discussion (FGD).

2.5. Tools of Data Collection

In order to achieve the intended research objectives by gathering valid, relevant and reliable data from the pertinent sample of the target population, the researcher used three tools of data collection: questionnaire, interview and focused group discussion (FGD).

2.6. Data Analysis

For this study, the researcher used eclectic (both quantitative and qualitative) method of data analysis in an integrated manner. Thus, the entire data collected through questionnaire was analyzed by using quantitative method of data analysis using frequency and percentage those by the interview and focused group discussion were analyzed by using narration; in a qualitative approach. Then, the interpretation and its discussion was presented in a systematic approach of describing, analyzing and generating conclusion.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Political Factors that Facilitated Forward and Backward Shift of Heritage Language in Wolaita

Political factors have played and still are playing significant role in upward and downward movements of Wolaita language; hence caused language shift in Wolaita. Even the majority of language shift problems or opportunities, in Wolaita, are associated with political problems or comforts that have been pursued by different successive regimes of the country. For the current study these factors can be categorized under three different political eras: Pre-Menellik, Menelik to downfall of Dergue and Downfall of Dergue to present.

3.1.1 The status of Wolaita language at the time of Pre-Menellik era

Table 1. Questionnaire responses on the political landscape of Wolaita language at the time of pre-Menellik era (before 1887)

No	Items	Yes f %	No f %	One f %	Two f %	≥Three f %	VEng g f %	Eng f %	Dng f %	VDng g f %
1	Do you have any information about political ideology of Wolaita before Menellik regime?	800 80	200 20							
2	How many languages do you remember were frequently used as tools of communication in Wolaita in the pre-Menellik era?			760 95	24 3	16 2				
3	How do you see the then political situation (Pre-Menellik era) for the stability and growth of Wolaita language?						738 92	32 4	22 3	8 1

*f=frequency %=percentage VEng=very encouraging Eng=encouraging Dng=discouraging
VDng=very discouraging*

**Percentage for each item in Table 1 was calculated and rounded off to the nearest whole number*

As can be seen from the above table (Table 1), majority of the respondents 800(80%) replied that they have information about political ideology of Wolaita before Menellik regime and the remaining 200(20%) responded that they do not have any information about it. When asked to tell the number of languages used as tools of communication, from those who said that they have information about political ideology of Wolaita before Menellik, 760(95%) responded that there was only one language (Wolaita) in Wolaita used as a tool of communication and the remaining 24(3%) and 16(2%) responded two (Wolaita and English) and three (Wolaita, English and Amharic) respectively.

Regarding the then political landscape of Wolaita language, 770(96%) of the respondents replied that there was very encouraging political situation that facilitated the stability and growth of Wolaita language. Similar stand was also reflected by the FGD members. In almost all sessions, the FGD members agreed that the political landscape of Wolaita, in pre-Menellik era, was fertile, wide and stable for heritage language development. However, they pointed out that such the opportunity was not effectively exploited due to lack of awareness by the concerned bodies, backward technological environment in electronic and print media, in ICT, etc.

Similar argument was forwarded by the interviewed elders. For instance, one of the interviewed elders stated that pre-Menellik era was the most conducive and stable political time for Wolaita language as the people of Wolaita used their heritage language frequently without any interruption from other languages and linguistic resources. However, this elder regrets for the 'golden opportunity missed' saying, "Oh! It was the golden opportunity for Heritage language growth missed by the people of Wolaita due to multifaceted factors."

For the reason why pre-Menellik era was a conducive time for Wolaita language, another interviewed elder argued, "It was totally different era characterized by independent administration of Wolaita by its Kingdom (Damot Kingdom) having its heritage language a prominent means of communication." Other three elders have confirmed similar argument. However, another elder exclaims saying "It was the precious political time aborted without any adequate cultivation of our language and other endemic wisdom due to conquest of our Kingdom by emperor Menellik."

Generally speaking, in the pre-Menellik era, Wolaita language had gotten fertile opportunity for its development and growth due to the independent political administration of Wolaita by its Kingdom (Damot Kingdom). However, such the conducive linguistic landscape was missed (not effectively exploited) by the people of Wolaita. Many factors are responsible for the missing of such the opportunity: disappearance of modern education, lack of educated manpower, disappearance of technologically advanced electronic and print media and the problem of people's awareness in heritage language growth.

3.1.2. The status of Wolaita language from the beginning of Menellik era to downfall of Dergue

For the current study, this period encompasses the time from the conquest of independent Wolaita by the then central government of Ethiopia (Menellik, in 1887) to the downfall of Dergue (in 1991).

Table 2. Questionnaire responses on the political landscape of Wolaita language from the conquest of independent Wolaita by Menellik (1887) to the downfall of Dergue (1991)

N	Items	Yes f %	No f %	One f %	Two f %	≥Three f %	Wol f %	Amh f %	Eng f %	HEnd f %	End f %	NEnd f %
1	Do you have any information about political ideology of Menellik, Hailessilliasie and Dergue on Nation and Nationalities of Ethiopia?	840 84	16 0 16									
2	How many languages do you remember were frequently used as tools of communication in Wolaita in these three successive regimes of Ethiopia?			25 3	756 90	59 7						
3	Which language was given high political support in Wolaita and dominated its counterpart in those three successive regimes of Ethiopia?						20 2	732 87	48 6			
4	How do you see the heritage language situation of Wolaita in such three successive regimes of Ethiopia?									758 90	66 8	16 2

*f=frequency %=percentage VEng=very encouraging Wol=Wolaita Amh=Amharic Eng=English
HEnd=Highly endangered End=Endangered NEnd=Not endangered
Percentage for each item in Table 1 was calculated and rounded off to the nearest whole number

As revealed in the above table (Table 3), 840(84%) of the respondents replied that they have information about political ideology of Menellik, Hailessilliasie and Dergue on Nations and Nationalities of Ethiopia. From such 840(84%) of the respondents, 756 (90%) remember two languages (Amharic and Wolaita) were frequently used as tools of communication in Wolaita in those three successive regimes of Ethiopia where as 59(7%) and 25(3%) responded three languages (Wolaita, Amharic and English) and one language (Wolaita) respectively.

When requested to respond which language was given high political support in Wolaita and dominated its counterpart in those three successive regimes of government, 732(87%) of the respondents reported that Amharic was given high political support. In the majority of the sessions, the FGD members totally agreed that Amharic had given the solitary chance to be used as a communication medium of court cases, schools, markets, religious teachings etc in expense of Wolaita (the heritage language of aboriginal people in Wolaita) which become highly

endangered (as 90% of the respondents reported) and ignored from linguistic landscape of its own speech community.

Regarding such the contact situation, its impacts on one of the languages (on Wolaita) and the then political role in distorting or facilitating heritage language growth, 100% of FGD sessions reflected that it was really 'dark time' for Wolaita language and endemic wisdom. The FGD members totally agreed that they remember this era with its negative spot on the heritage language. Confirming the argument, one of the interviewed elder remembers the time saying, " Oh! It was hazardous time for Wolaita Nation in general and its linguistic and cultural resources in particular." Another interviewed elder confirms the same idea saying, "Dark time with blind and evil political ideologies on indigenous language, culture and heritage." The same interviewee adds, "Three of these successive regimes used similar uncivilized and backward political ideology of 'one size for all' for relinquishing heritage languages, endemic cultures and other aboriginal humanistic elements of Ethiopian people, including Wolaita."

The FGD members deeply discussed and totally agreed that these three successive governments of Ethiopia (Menelik, Haileselassie and Dergue) used similar and backward tools for distorting and abandoning Wolaita language from linguistic ecology of the country (even from its own Kingdom; Domot Kingdom). As to these FGD members, three of the regimes used uncivilized political tools like constitutional declaration that ignored the use of heritage language in any institutional context (marketing, education, court, religious teaching...), language policy having zero space for mother tongue education, media policy using Amharic as the only 'golden language' for reaching overall Ethiopian audience and the like.

Regarding the negative effects of such the political pressure on Wolaita language, one of the interviewed elders reported that, in such three successive governments of Ethiopia, Wolaita language suffered a lot being banned from public sphere as a tool of communication. As to the same interviewee, the then government representatives of Ethiopia officially banned the use of Wolaita in courts, in schools and in market places and pressured the aboriginal people of Wolaita to use Amharic instead. Court cases were defended in Amharic translated by the employed translators from North (particularly from Amhara Region). Schools from elementary to secondary levels were instructed in Amharic and those students who 'unfortunately' used their aboriginal language were punished.

With similar scenario, another interviewed elder remembers the time saying, "It was the time that excluded Wolaita language from the linguistic ecology of the country through different ideological wars: prejudicing those who speak heritage language, perceiving those who speak Amharic as educated ones, providing different rewards to those who speak Amharic (like jobs), etc. Totally similar responses were obtained from almost all sessions by FGD members.

From the above discussion, it can be generalized that the political landscape of Wolaita language in such three successive regimes (Menelik, Haileselassie and Dergue) was uncivilized, hazardous and discouraging. Thus the heritage language of Wolaita was officially banned from its own linguistic ecology (speech community). As a result, all public institutions in Wolaita (courts, schools, markets, government offices...) were enforced to reject their heritage language and use Amharic instead. During this era, Amharic was blindly promoted to achieve the hidden political plan of relinquishing the administrative power of each independent kingdom; including Wolaita (Damot). That is why majority of Wolaita people remember this time (the time from the conquest of independent Wolaita by Menelik to the downfall of Dergue) as 'Dark Age' for the development of their heritage language and endemic wisdom.

3.1.3. The status of Wolaita language from the downfall of Dergue to present

For the current study, this period encompasses the time from the downfall of Dergue (in 1991) to the period this research had been conducted (2013).

Table 3. Questionnaire responses on the political landscape of Wolaita language from the downfall of Dergue (in 1991) to the period this research had been conducted (2013)

No	Items	Yes f %	No f %	One f %	Two f %	≥Three f %	Wol f %	Amh f %	Eng f %	Encg f %	Discg f %
1	Have you lived in Wolaita for a long period of time (may be not less than 10 years)?	980	20								
2	How many languages do you think have been frequently used as tools of communication in Wolaita since 1991?			30	830	120					
3	Which language has given high political support in Wolaita for the last 22 years?						924	10	46		
4	How do you see the Heritage language situation of Wolaita in this 22 years' period of time?									912	12
										99	1

f=frequency %=percentage Wol=Wolaita Amh=Amharic Eng=English Encg=encouraging Discg=Discouraging

**Percentage for each item in Table 1 was calculated and rounded off to the nearest whole number*

As depicted in the above table (Table 3), 980(98%) of the respondents reported that they lived in Wolaita for long period of time (for not less than ten years). Among them, 830 (84%) replied that there were two languages (Wolaita and Amharic) which have been frequently used as tools of communication in Wolaita in the aforementioned period. When asked to tell comparatively which language has given high political support, 924 (94%) of the respondents reported the heritage language (Wolaita); hence the language has gotten an encouraging political situation for growth in this 22 years' period of time (as responded by 912 (99%) of these respondents). FGD members also reflected similar scenario in almost all sessions of the discussion.

In the open-ended parts the questionnaire, the respondents also explained the ways how such conducive political environment facilitated the growth of heritage language in Ethiopia in general and Wolaita in particular. As to these respondents, Ethiopian people including Wolaita has gotten full right of cultivating, maintaining and revitalizing their heritage languages through constitutional declaration by EPRDF (Ethiopian Peoples' Revolutionary Democratic Front) which has been the key source for the birth of all policies and strategies associated to heritage language growth. That is why, currently Ethiopian heritage languages in general and Wolaita in particular has been medium of instruction in elementary and primary levels of education (grades 1-8). Heritage languages of Ethiopia also got high government support to play the communicational roles in courts, in markets and in religious institutions. However, according FGD members, the practical communicational role that Wolaita played in such institutional contexts has been too limited.

The FGD members also reported that Wolaita language has not effectively enjoyed such the fertile political landscape of linguistic ecology because of multifaceted factors. First, there has been distorted emotional attachment of Wolaita people on their language and culture due to continued and overworked ideological installation of uncivilized linguistic-politics of 'Amharic as a better language'. Secondly, there has also been a problem of writing culture (especially creative writing) in Wolaita that hampered the relevant growth of the language. Again, the FGD respondents also reflected that there is lack of awareness in speech community of Wolaita regarding aboriginal

language as a sole carrier of identity. Hence Wolaita language has not shown significant growth in its linguistic resources and still suffers from too limited use by its aboriginal people.

Generally speaking, the time from downfall of Dergue (in 1991) to the period this research had been conducted (2013) is considered as a time of 'revival' for Wolaita language. In this era, Wolaita language has gotten high political support to be cultivated and maintained by the constitutionally declared right by its aboriginal people. Based on this constitutional right, different language policies and strategies were designed that promoted the use of Wolaita language in courts, in markets and in religious institutions which fostered the back-shift of many people to Wolaita language (from their long-stayed Amharic usage). However, the practical growth of Wolaita language still remains behind what has been expected from the conducive political environment in the 22 years' period of time.

3.2. Impacts of Indigenous Language Shift on Overall Identities of Wolaita Nation

Table 3. Questionnaire responses on the impacts of indigenous language shift on overall identities of Wolaita Nation

N o	Items	Yes f %	No f %	VL f %	L f %	WU f %	VWU	Pos	Neg	IC	H	NH	IW
1	How do you judge the current use status of Wolaita language by its native speakers in different institutions (schools, courts, markets....)?			820 82	160 16	20 2	0 0						
2	Do you speak Wolaita language fluently without adding any word from any other language?	200 20	800 80										
3	How do you judge the feelings of indigenous bilingual/ML Wolaita individuals when you communicate them in pure Wolaita language?							180 18	820 82				
4	Do you think there is the age difference by the frequent and fluent use of Wolaita language by its indigenous and bilingual/multilingual individuals?	950 95	50 5										
5	Have you ever read any creatively written materials or books (novels, short stories, poems, dramas... except school books) in Wolaita language?	10 1	990 99										
6	What do you think are endangered due to the continuous shift of indigenous Wolaita People from using their heritage language to Amharic/others?									950 95	970 97	980 98	990 99

f=frequency %=percentage

VL=Very limited L= Limited WU=Widely used VWU=Very widely used Pos=Positive Neg=Negative

IC=Indigenous culture H=Heritage NH=Nation's history IW=Indigenous wisdom

***Percentage for each item in Table 3 was calculated and rounded off to the nearest whole number**

Table 3 above clearly indicates that 980(98%) of the respondents replied that the current use status of Wolaita language (by its native speakers) is limited. On the other hand, majority of the respondents 800(80%) responded that they do not speak Wolaita language fluently without adding any word from other languages. They stated that whenever they intend to speak in their heritage language, Amharic intrudes the use of Wolaita words and expressions. The remaining 200(20%) responded that they use pure and fluent Wolaita language when they communicate people who are able to use the language. Fortunately, these 200(20%) respondents are old people as majority of the respondents 950(95%) replied that there is the age difference by the frequent and fluent use of Wolaita language by its indigenous and bilingual/multilingual individuals. Thus old people use Wolaita language frequently and fluently where as the younger ones use it rarely and without fluency.

Similar to respondents of the questionnaire, almost all of the FGD members agreed that Wolaita language is very limited in use (by its native speakers) in different contexts of daily communication and they also come into consensus that older speakers are by far better than the younger ones in Wolaita fluency. Many of the elders interviewed confirmed the same argument. In support of this argument, [2] state that because of the endangerment of a heritage language, there comes the difference of fluency by its users (fluent speakers, semi-speakers, terminal speakers, rememberers, ghost speakers, neo speakers and last speakers) mainly due to political factors.

With regard to attitudes of native Wolaita people in using their heritage language, large number of respondents 820(82%) responded that bilingual/ML Wolaitas show negative feeling when you speak them in pure Wolaita. According to these respondents, majority of bilingual Wolaitas prefer to use their 2nd language (Amharic) for different kinds of interactions. 180(18%) of the remaining respondents responded that people's reaction towards using pure Wolaita language in its appropriate context is positive. However, the FGD members confirmed that majority of bilingual/ML Wolaitas have negative attitude towards using their heritage language. As to these respondents and almost all of the interviewed elders, bilingual/ML Wolaitas always attempt to intermingle large amount of Amharic words than using pure Wolaita even in small-sized at home communication. Regarding this, [8] argues that if the attitude of people towards their aboriginal language is negative, the use of that language shrinks time-after-time and finally dies at the end taking every humanistic element with it.

Almost all (99%) of the respondents responded that they haven't read any creatively written materials or books (novels, short stories, poems, dramas... except school books) in Wolaita language. This is, as one of the interviewed elder argued, because of mass-shift of aboriginal Wolaita people to the other coexisting dominant language, particularly to Amharic; hence the growth and intergenerational transfer of Woaita language has been highly affected. Similar idea is forwarded by almost all of FGD members. Confirming the importance of writing culture (especially creative writing) for language development, [9] states "Writing is a base for language revitalization as it offers a sequence for presenting new language materials, moving from easier to complex forms, and can also be the basis for communication. When writing in the language is included in the revitalization program, the speakers of the language can move from speaking to reading and writing, reinforcing concepts with writing.

Due to continuous shift of Wolaita aboriginal people from using their heritage language to Amharic (as more than 950 (95%) of the respondents responded in the questionnaire), the indigenous culture, long lived heritage and history, as well as the endemic wisdom of the Nation become endangered. As to respondents of FGD members, the overall identity of Wolaita Nation become threatened. Supporting this idea of language shift as a threat to the overall indigenous identity of a nation, [10] suggests "When you lose your language, you lose yourself." This indicates that heritage language represents every aspect of identity for its speech community as [4] confirms "Language is the primary index, or symbol, or register of identity. It is the emblem of its speakers," and with the death of an indigenous language, everything about that society becomes forgotten [11].

Generally speaking, the overall results of this study portrayed that the continuous fro-shift of Wolaita people from using its heritage language to Amharic (especially at the time of Menelik, Haileselassie and Dergue) highly affected the overall identity of the Nation: indigenous culture, long lived history and heritage and endemic wisdom; hence highly affected the continuous growth of the language.

4. Conclusions and Recommendations

4.1. Conclusions

Based on the results and discussions of the current study, the following conclusions have been reached:

1. Political pressure that have blown at different administrative era especially in the regime of Menelik, Hailesillassie and Dergue have highly affected the growth of Wolaita language and opened an extremely vast opportunity for mass language shift in Wolaita.
2. It is concluded that the time before conquest of Independent Wolaita (Damot Kingdom) by Menelik and after 1991 to present has been a great opportunity for the growth of Wolaita language because of its favorable political landscape for the growth of heritage language despite Wolaita people exerted very limited effort of utilizing of the opportunity.

3. It is concluded that majority of bilingual/ML and young Wolaitas have negative attitude towards using pure Wolaita language for their daily communication.
4. It is identified that Wolaita language is too poor in its writing culture; hence it has sever lack of creatively written materials or literary genres.
5. It is also concluded that the continuous shift of Wolaita people from using its heritage language to Amharic highly affected the overall identity of the Nation: indigenous culture, long lived history and heritage and endemic wisdom; hence highly affected the continuous growth of the language.

4.2 Recommendations

Based on the discussions and conclusions made above, the following recommendations are forwarded:

1. It needs awareness training for the young generation of Wolaita Nation in the use of heritage language for daily communication.
2. There should be development of a writing culture and beginning to use Wolaita as the language of writing.
3. Concerned bodies should establish school-based language revitalization project for the revival of Wolaita language.
4. There should be a planning of family-based language revitalization project, particularly at the urban areas of Wolaita Zone.
5. It needs the establishment of series, deep and multifaceted training and research projects that involve linguists and language experts to make them play extremely larger roles in the process of language revitalization in Wolaita.

References

- [1] G. Asella. *Early Wolaita and Kaffa*. Addis Ababa: Artistic Printing Enterprise, 2012.
- [2] J. Fishamn. *Language and Ethnicity in Minority Sociolinguistic Perspective*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters, 1989.
- [3] C. B. Paulston. "Linguistic minorities and language policies: Four case studies" in *Maintenance and Loss of Minority Languages*, (eds), No 1 W. Fase, K. Jasper & S. Kroon 49 Studies in Bilingualism, Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 1992.
- [4] C. B. Paulston, P. C. Chen, and M. C. Connerty. "Language regeneration: A conceptual overview of language revival, revitalization, and reversal". *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, vol.14, 275–286, 1993.
- [5] R. W. Emerson. *Can Threatened Languages Be Saved?* Clevedon: Multilingual Matters, 2001.
- [6] D. Crystal. *Language Death*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003.
- [7] SNNPR Regional Statistics Agency. *The Population Data of South Region*. SNNPR SA, 2007.
- [8] R. M. W. Dixon. *The Rise and Fall of Languages*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997.
- [9] J. Reyhner, G. Cantoni, R. N. St. Clair, and E.P. Yazzie. *Revitalizing Indigenous Languages*. Flagstaff, AZ: Northern Arizona University, 1999.
- [10] J. Van Hoorde. "Let Dutch die? Over the Taalunie's dead body." *Conférence des Services de Traduction des Etats Européens, The Hague*, 1998, 6–10.
- [11] G. Steiner. *Language and silence*. London: Faber and Faber, 1967.