

Review of the dissertation “The Agents (Students, Parents and Teachers) of Multilingualism in Oromia, Ethiopia” by Merga Feyera Wekjira

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The dissertation seeks to describe the profiles of three different groups of multilingual speakers in Oromia Ethiopia. The groups are students, parents and teachers. The profiles are based on a set of detailed questionnaires that seek to discover what languages the speakers use, how well they speak the respective languages, when they use the respective languages with different interlocutors or purposes, and the type of multilingual or cultural personality they have. The results show that indeed the different groups are highly multilingual and multicultural but with some differences in the groups and sub-groups linked to school type. These findings are related to Ethiopian educational policy.

On the whole the dissertation is well-written, well-organized and well-presented. The dissertation has 143 pages with six chapters and an appendix. They are arranged and structured very much according to the standard scientific practice. Chapter 1 frames the study and states the objectives. Chapter 2 defines multilingualism in general and then focuses on the policies and practices in Ethiopia. It ends with the factors that may contribute to degrees of multilingualism that will be examined in the study itself. Chapter 3 outlines the methodology and Chapter 4 gives the results per group. Chapter 6 summarizes the main results. The study shows how institutional language policies, educational and societal language practices, and individual linguistic agency interact in many different ways. The study also shows that some minority languages do not get the educational attention they need.

The comments I made previously have been incorporated and have helped improve readability in that readers can now more easily navigate the materials. Also my suggestions about the title were accepted and the new title has key words that potential readers might search on. In the background literature, it is now much clearer where all the information was gotten from as references are given where needed. Also the sections about different aspects or different

questionnaires are clearer in that they include brief introductions on how the section relate to other aspects of the dissertation. Moreover, redundancy has been eliminated.

The result sections and discussion have been thoroughly reorganized and I especially like the graph on page 73 with the statistical analyses and the research questions. In the method chapters, results from the tables and their interpretations are no longer mixed up in the paragraphs, and the reader can easily locate the results and interpretations.

As I was reading, I found a few minor typo's; for example, extra spaces before a period or some sentences without a capital letter. I suggest that the candidate reads for these minor errors one more time before printing the dissertation.

**Again, I want to congratulate the candidate on finishing a very comprehensive study on his dissertation and suggest that that he should be awarded the PhD degree.**

Because I do not have major comments on the dissertation itself, I would like to ask some questions that go beyond it as they may also be important for Ethiopia.

1. The results you have found are comprehensive. What will happen with your findings in Ethiopia? Who do you expect to read it and what will be done with it?
2. You say that more attention should be paid to the minority languages. It makes sense to me in that all languages deserve to survive, but is it really in the best interest of the minority language users to maintain their language? And how would you imagine their education to be improved?
3. You have concluded that there are differences in types of agents in multilingualism. Especially younger agents are more multilingual. What will you try to instill in your own children- Siinan Merga and Eenyummaa Merga—as far as multilingualism is concerned?