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**The Attitudes of Tigre-Speaking Students in Eritrea towards Studying Arabic and Tigrinya as Second Languages at School: a case study.**

**By**

**Tedros Hagos Weldemichael**

(Student Number: WLDTED001)

**Supervisor**

**Prof. Raj Mesthrie**

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Department of Linguistics

Faculty of Humanities

University of Cape Town

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## **Declaration**

I hereby declare that this work has not been submitted in whole, or in part, for the award of any degree. It is my own work. Each significant contribution to, and quotation in, this dissertation from the work, or works, of other people has been attributed, and has been cited and referenced.

Signed by candidate

March 28, 2003

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## Abstract

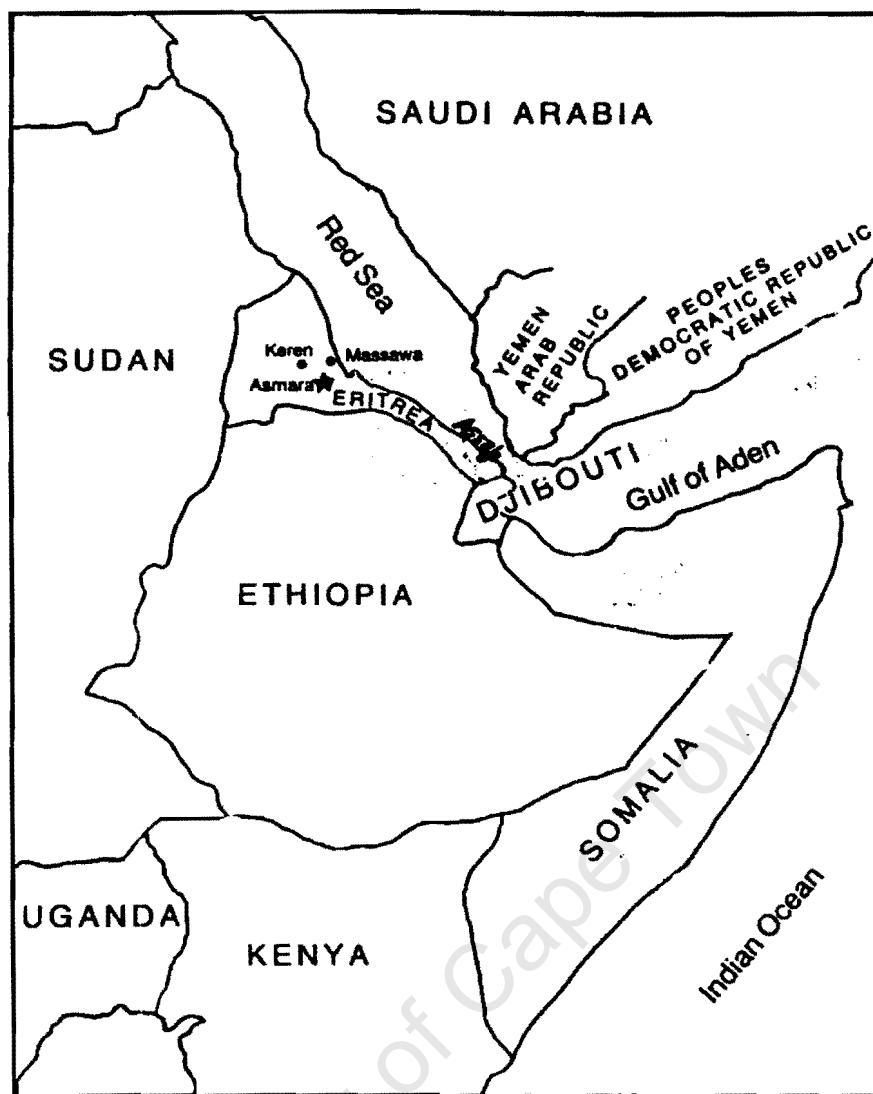
The educational language policy of Eritrea requires Tigre-speaking students (among others) to study at least one of the working languages of the country, Arabic and Tigrinya, as a school subject. As hardly any research has been done on the attitudes of the target students towards studying each of these languages this investigation attempted to find out answers to the following major questions: What are the attitudes of these students towards studying Arabic as a subject? What are their attitudes towards studying Tigrinya as a subject? What are the possible factors contributing to one kind of attitude or the other?

One hundred junior-school students between the age of 12 and 16 participated in the study. They were all Muslims (as there are a few Christian Tigre-speakers) from the Eritrean city of Keren. Data was collected (in June 2002) mainly through questionnaires which subjects had to complete independently or in assistance with their schoolmates. They were presented with 23 major questions (mostly structured) some of which contained one or more sub-items. The subjects were asked, among other things, about their language ability, language use, their desire to be able to speak additional languages, which language their family members encouraged them to learn, and relative predominance between Arabic and Tigrinya in their residential areas as spoken media. Data was also gathered concerning their evaluation and ranking of these languages (plus English) with reference to certain linguistic attributes, their feelings towards each one, and how important each one was to them for instrumental and integrative purposes. Five-point scales were used to measure their level of agreement with statements suggesting that Arabic/Tigrinya should be taught to all Tigre children at school. Most directly, they were asked which of these languages they would have liked to study as a subject in the future.

In this study, it was found that the respondents' attitude towards bi-/multilingualism was positive. Particularly, attitudes towards Arabic were favourable among most of them; attitudes towards Tigrinya were relatively less so, yet mostly positive. The main reason for favouring Arabic more (than even English) was related to its association with their religion. It was also found that 80% of the informants were favourably oriented towards studying Arabic as a subject in the future. The underlying motives appeared to be linked mainly with communication (at national and international level) and religion. Conversely, although the majority agreed/strongly agreed that

'Tigrinya should be taught to all Tigre children as a subject,' only 9% indicated that they would have liked to take this subject in the future. Four possible reasons were suggested concerning this general lack of interest: (a) most of them were already able to speak (read and write in) Tigrinya; (b) their environment provides ample opportunity for developing ability in it informally; (c) unlike Arabic, it does not have an international status; (d) lack of encouragement from parents.

The outline of the thesis is as follows. Chapter One provides background information about the target country, which includes geo-historical and socio-linguistic description as well as language policy. A review of literature on language attitudes is presented in Chapter Two. This chapter includes a definition of, and the components of, attitude, the importance of attitude study, factors influencing language attitudes, and measurement of language attitudes. The research methodology, sampling techniques and techniques of data collection used in carrying out this investigation are discussed in Chapter Three. The fourth chapter presents results of the questionnaires mostly in the form of percentage tables, in some cases with illustrative graphs, accompanied by text. The major findings of the study are outlined and discussed in Chapter Five. The thesis closes with a summary of the most important points followed by some suggestions for future research.



- Key**
- ★ Capital city
  - Other cities

**Map 1:** Locating Eritrea on the African continent (adapted from Selassie, 1980).

# Chapter 1

## Introduction

### 1.1 Background information about the target country

#### 1.1.1 Geo-historical description

Eritrea, the newest nation in Africa, is located on the horn of the continent along the Red Sea coast, which runs for more than 1000 kilometres. Its neighbouring countries are Ethiopia in the south, Djibouti in the southeastern extreme, and Sudan in the north and west (see Map 1 on page vii). It has a surface area of about 125,000 square kilometres, roughly the size of England. The country is divided into six administrative regions. These are: the Central, Southern, Anseba, Gash-Barka, Southern Red Sea, and Northern Red Sea regions. Its population size is estimated to be about 3.5 million including Eritreans in diaspora.

Historically, Eritrea has passed through many years of colonial rules and invasions by different powers. To begin with, since as early as 1557 the Turks established themselves at Massawa, a port city on the Red Sea coast of Eritrea, and stayed until 1872 with a control over some other parts of the country as well (Trevaskis, 1960: 6; Haile, 1988: 14-5). As the Red Sea became one of the world's most important maritime routes with the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869, it had already begun to attract the interests of other powers, too. Therefore, after more than three hundred years, the Turks were succeeded by the Egyptians in 1872. In this year, as has been described by Trevaskis:

[T]he Egyptian flag had been hoisted in place of the Turkish at Massawa and the Egyptian authority had been extended to the coastal clans. The Lowlands of the Barka and Gash-Setit were Egyptian, and Egyptian troops were garrisoning Keren, the key to the Northern-Highlands (1960: 7).

However, the Egyptian domination was comparatively short-lived as they had lost their control over their most important territorial domain, Massawa, in 1885. It was occupied by the Italians who had also established themselves at Assab, now the second port city on the southeastern extreme of Eritrea, since 1882. In 1889 Italy claimed the country in question as its first colony and officially called it “Eritrea” in 1890 (Trevaskis, 1960: 6; Dutcher, 1998: 261). In other words, the Italians were the first to give it its present name and shape. In regard to this, Trevaskis writes:

Eritrea was created, and so named, by the Italians, who established their first colony by the end of nineteenth century in this small sliver of territory on the western shores of the Red or ‘Erythrean’ Sea. Before this Eritrea had never enjoyed any form of unity, had never had a government of its own, had never even had a name (1960: 6, 8).

But it was unfortunate for the Italians that they had to lose this colony after having been defeated by the British during the Second World War. Therefore, from 1941 Eritrea began to be ruled under the British Military Administration. This lasted for over ten years until a resolution passed by the General Assembly of the United Nations in 1950 finally made Eritrea an autonomous unit federated to Ethiopia on 15 September 1952. This was done against the wishes of a majority of its inhabitants (Babu, 1988: 44; Fenet, 1988: 34; Tseggai, 1988: 73-4).

During the federation period Eritrea had its own flag and a parliamentary democratic system of government, unlike that of the federal (Ethiopian) government which was an absolutist monarchy (Trevaskis, 1960: 117; Iyob, 1995: 94; Tsegay, 1988: 74). Arabic, Tigrinya and English were chosen as official languages by the Eritrean Assembly. This was contrary to the wishes of the imperial government which proposed Amharic as the sole official language. In terms of power Eritrea was entitled, according to the UN Resolution 390-A(V) of 1950, to possess full 'legislative, executive, and judicial powers in the field of domestic affairs' (Haile, 1988: 22; Trevaskis, 1960: 117).

From as early as 1955, however, the Ethiopian emperor (Haile Selassie I) began making moves in the direction of annexing this autonomous unit as his fourteenth province. The goal was achieved on 14 November 1962 on which day Eritrea was pronounced a part of Ethiopia after the emperor declared the federation 'null and void' (Haile, 1988: 29; Iyob, 1995: 94). 'The acquisition of a new territory for expansion of Greater Ethiopia had been accomplished through diplomatic, military, and extra-legal means (Iyob, 1995: 94; see also Babu, 1988: 47; Fenet, 1988: 36-7).' In the words of Abdulrahman Mohamed Babu:

[The UN] was manipulated and used by the US, and its Western allies, and by Ethiopia, and kept quiet when Emperor Haile Selassie, the King of Kings, and the Lion of Judah, forcefully annexed Eritrea and abrogated UN Resolution 390-A(V) of 1950 which federated the country to Ethiopia (1988: 47).

Henceforth, everything that symbolized Eritrea was replaced by that of Ethiopia: the government, the flag, and the official languages (Tigrinya and Arabic were substituted by Amharic in government and school domains). But Tigrinya and Tigre were used in the mass media and by cultural troops during the Dergue regime, which succeeded the emperor through revolution, though mainly for propaganda purposes. For instance, most

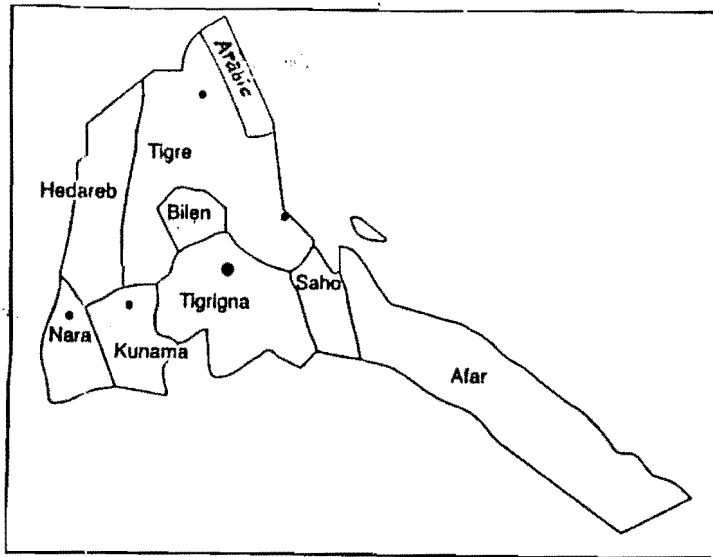
of the programmes on the radio (including the songs) had as their main aim the reflection of the "Greatness" of Ethiopia and Ethiopian patriotism, propagation of the regime's communistic ideology, and despising the "petty aims" of the Eritrean liberation fighters - the "secessionist bandits", as they were referred to by the regime.

After thirty years of armed struggle (that had already begun in 1961), the country was finally liberated on 24 May 1991 by the Eritrean Peoples Liberation Front (EPLF). The Ethiopian Dergue regime was defeated and, thus, everything that had been "Ethiopian" was now replaced by "Eritrean". The country declared its sovereignty in 1993 through an internationally supervised referendum in which 99.8% of its citizens voted "yes" for independence.

### **1.1.2 Socio-linguistic description**

The population of Eritrea is composed of Christians and Muslims, the percentage proportion of which is considered to be fifty-fifty. The relationship between these two religious groups is generally harmonious. Many believe that the long and continued struggle against a common enemy (particularly the Ethiopian regime) played a great role in consolidating their unity. This is further strengthened through equal participation of both groups in the post-liberation nation building and national defence.

In terms of ethnicity the Eritrean population belongs to nine groups, namely: Afar, Bilen, Hedareb, Kunama, Nara, Rashaida, Saho, Tigre, and Tigrinya - each with its own language. Except for the Rashaida (whose language is Arabic) the names of the eight ethnic groups and of their respective languages are the same. That is, the Afar people speak Afar, the Bilen speak Bilen, and so on. The geographical distribution of the various languages across the country (i.e. as mother tongues) can be seen from Map 2.



**Map 2:** Distribution of Eritrean languages (as mother tongues).

The Tigrinya language (alternately spelled 'Tigrigna'), which represents the Tigrinya ethnic group, has the largest number of mother tongue speakers, about 50% of the population. The language with the second largest number of speakers is Tigre, which is believed to be spoken by about 31%. The proportion of first language (mother tongue) speakers for the remaining seven languages is as follows: Afar and Saho 5% each, Hedareb 2.5%, Bilen and Kunama 2% each, Nara 1.5 % and Arabic 0.5% (Tocrurai, 1995 cited in Dutcher, 1998: 262; Gherahtu, 1999: 5). But, although it is a widely accepted fact that Arabic has the smallest percentage of mother tongue speakers, there is still a controversy over the estimated size. For example, Dutcher (1998: 261) writes:

Some experts say that less than 1% speak Arabic as a first language, namely the Rashaida in the north; others claim that with the return of Eritreans from the Sudan after the war, the children born in that Arabic-speaking country speak Arabic as a first language. Still others argue that in the areas of the country where there is much contact with Arabic-speaking

neighbours, some children speak Arabic almost as if it were their first language.

The nine indigenous languages of Eritrea are classified into three major groups, namely: the Cushitic (sometimes called Hamitic), Nilotic, and Semitic (Gherahtu, 1999: 5 citing EPLF 1985: 12). The Cushitic group includes the languages Afar, Saho, Hedareb and Bilen. The first two are more closely related to each other than to any of the last two. As languages belonging to the same group Hedareb and Bilen are believed to be the least closely related (to each other) of all Eritrean languages. The second language group consists of mainly Kunama and Nara. Among these six languages, Hedareb has not acquired a writing system yet; the rest share the same Latin script.

Arabic, Tigre, and Tigrinya belong to the Semitic group. The latter two are descendants of the ancient language Ge'ez, as is Amharic - the official language of Ethiopia. Tigre is considered to be 'the closest spoken derivative of the classical Ethiopic Ge'ez' (Trevaskis, 1960: 13). The latter is now mainly a religious language, particularly for the Orthodox Church in Eritrea and Ethiopia. Except for Arabic, all these languages (Tigre, Tigrinya, Amharic and Ge'ez) use the same script – Fidel (or Ge'ez), which is a syllabic writing system.

Grammatically, Tigre, Tigrinya and Amharic follow the same rule - i.e. SOV (Subject + Object + Verb) as opposed to VSO or SVO, as in Arabic and English respectively. Surprisingly, the grammatical structure of Ge'ez conforms to the third one instead of the first two. As an illustration, an attempt has been made below to show how the grammatical structures of the various languages in question compare with each other. The five statements in the example are all direct translations into of English of the equivalents of the statement: *'The cat killed the rat'*.

GE'EZ: Cat killed-it the-rat ("the" represents a bound morpheme indicating object of the verb).

TIGRE: Cat the rat killed-it (here, "the" describes the object, "rat").

TIGRINYA: The cat the rat killed-it (as in the others, "-it" represents a redundant object pronoun).

AMHARIC: Cat-the rat-the-it killed-it (the article is bound, as in Tigrinya in some cases).

ARABIC: Killed the-cat the-rat.

The degree of lexical, morphological, phonological, and semantic relationship among these Semitic languages is not an easy matter to explain here. However, although none of them can be regarded as being mutually intelligible with each other, a close look into the core vocabulary reveals many similarities. Below are some examples (from my personal knowledge). The asterisk (\*) has been used where complete differences exist.

<u>GE'EZ</u>	<u>TIGRE</u>	<u>TIGRINYA</u>	<u>AMHARIC</u>	<u>ARABIC</u>	<u>Meaning</u>
/semaj/	/semaj/	/semaj/	/semaj/	/sema'/	'sky'
/bet/	/bet/	/bct/*	/bet/	/bet/	'home/house' (**"geza" from Italian "casa" is more common).
/maj/	/maj/	/maj/	/wuha/*	/moja/	'water'
/ab/	/ab/	/abɔ/	/abat/	/ab/	'father'
/haw/	/Hw/	/Haw/	/wendm/*	/akh/*	'brother'
/nhnc/	/Hna/	/nHna/	/egna/*	/naHnu/	'we'
/ahadu/	/Hate/	/Hade/	/a:nd/*	/waHd/	'one'
/qetele/	/qetele/	/qetele/	/gedele/	/qatela/	'(he) killed'
/keyede/	/gese/*	/keyede/	/hede/	/masha/*	'(he) went'
/seteje/	/seteje/	/seteje/	/TeTa/*	/shereba/*	'(he) drank' (the root verbs are past tense form and contain bound male subject).

These examples should not, however, give the impression that the languages in question are particularly close to each other. For instance, no mother-tongue speaker of any of these languages can understand the others without having learnt them formally (e.g. at school) or informally (outside school). The similarities shown above could probably be more or less like the ones that exist among, say, such European languages as English,

German, French, Italian, and Spanish. Below are some examples from Robins (1989: 336; see also Ruhlen, 1987: 10).

<u>ENGLISH</u>	<u>GERMAN</u>	<u>FRENCH</u>	<u>ITALIAN</u>	<u>SPANISH</u>
me /mi:/	mich /miç/	moi /mwa/	me /me/	me /me/
two /tu:/	zwei /tsvai/	deux /do/	due /due/	dos /dos/
three /θri:/	drei /drai/	trios /trwa/	tre /tre/	tres /tres/
foot /fut/	Fuss /fu:s/	pied /pje/	piede /pide/	pie /pie/

Before proceeding to the next section, one important point is worth mentioning in connection with the historical and political phenomena described above. That is, the long-term influence of the colonial languages on Eritrean indigenous languages. As far as this is concerned, of all the colonial languages that were brought into Eritrea at different periods in its history by the successive powers (the Turks, Egyptians, British, Italians, and Ethiopians) the Italian language seems to have had the greatest influence. Taking Tigrinya as an example, it has been considerably affected by Italian, although the influence seems to be mainly lexical in nature. A number of Italian words have been assimilated into the Tigrinya language with no/slight changes in pronunciation or spelling. These words, almost all of which pertain to material culture, have established themselves as part of the Tigrinya language so firmly for decades that they are even hardly recognized by most Tigrinya speakers as borrowed lexical items. Below are some examples.

<u>TIGRINYA</u>	<u>ITALIAN</u>	<u>Meaning</u>	
/lchi/luche/*	luce	'(electric) light'	(*formal - /mebrahti/)
/autobus/	autobus	'bus'	
/shigomano/	asciugamano	'towel'	
/bshkleta/	bicicletta	'bicycle'	
/komedere/	pomodoro	'tomato'	
/fabrica/	fabbrica	'factory'	

/carosa/      carrozza      'carriage'  
/farketa/      forchetta      'fork'      (Source for the Italian words: Hazon, 1995)

On the other hand, English and Amharic left very little influence in this regard. One possible reason could be that, unlike the Italians, the British and the Ethiopians did not bring in many new cultural elements to Eritrea. Yet, due to its hegemonic power as a language of science and technology and of international communication, the English language is now making inroads again.

### 1.1.3 Language policy

According to the 1996 Draft Constitution of Eritrea 'the equality of Eritrean languages is guaranteed' (CCE, 1996: 11 quoted in Gherahtu, 1999: 10). Thus, the government of Eritrea has adopted a multilingual language policy and is determined to maintain and develop all the nine indigenous languages. In general, the language policy favours the first two of the following language paradigms (views of language) provided by Ruiz (1984: 17): *language-as-a-right*, *language-as-a-resource*, and *language-as-a-problem*.

It is stated in Gherahtu (1999: 10), for instance, that one of the aims underlying the language policy under consideration is the 'assurance of the basic rights of every ethnic group to preserve, use, and develop the spoken and written language'. This same aim was articulated in the National Democratic Programme of the EPLF during the struggle for liberation (Gherahtu, 1999: 10 citing EPLF, 1987).

The adherence of the government to multilingualism as a resource is also evident from the speeches of the Eritrean president and other key government officials. At the opening of the first national conference on Eritrean languages in October 1996, the president of the country (Isaias Afewerki) remarked that, 'Having diverse languages in a country is a

blessing (Dutcher, 1998: 259 citing *Eritrea Profile*, 24 August 1996).’ Similarly, Abdella Jaber, head of Organisational Affairs at the Peoples Front for Democracy and Justice (PFDJ) argued that ‘diversity of languages is by itself a national wealth’ (Dutcher, 1998: 263 citing *Eritrea Profile*, 27 July 1997).

This view of language contradicts what obtained for decades in some other parts of the world, such as the United States and in many Western European countries (e.g. France and England). From the point of view of most (white) majority groups in these communities multilingualism is seen not only as unnecessary but also as dangerous. The reason behind this is based on the ‘assumption’ that a multiplicity of languages (and cultures) within the borders of a country is a threat to national unity and stability (Crawford, 1992 in Herman, 1993: 106; Ada, 1986: 386; Bamgbose, 1999: 15; Ruiz, 1984: 21; Wolff, 1999: 41). Therefore, communities with this view subscribe to the language-as-a-problem paradigm and favour a policy of linguistic and cultural assimilation of minority groups into the mainstream society.

It should also be mentioned here that the language policy that existed in Eritrea during the Ethiopian rule (1962-1991) was assimilationist. As part of the scheme of “Ethiopianizing” the Eritrean population, Amharic was imposed on schools and other important government and public domains. Besides being the only official language Amharic, to the exclusion of Eritrean languages, was used as a medium of instruction in elementary schools (then Grades 1-6) after which it was substituted by English. It was also taught as a compulsory school subject throughout the school years. Dines (1988: 153-4), who describes the 'attempted destruction of Eritrean languages by the Dergue [as] part of their intention to try and create a new Ethiopian race' as unsuccessful, writes:

The first line of attack is linguistic. The majority of people in the Highland areas of Eritrea, for example, speak Tigrinya. This language is not taught in

schools, where children are forced to learn Amharic, the language of Central Ethiopia. At the adult level, literacy campaigns are run in which students and educated people are forced to teach Amharic to adults.

### *1.1.3.1 Working languages*

No policy specifications have been made in Eritrea in regard to an official language yet. Instead, both Tigrinya and Arabic have been chosen by the government to carry out its day-to-day activities and are known as the *working languages*. 'These languages however do not have juridical privilege on the other languages' (Gherahtu, 1999: 10).

At national level, as opposed to international, Tigrinya plays a much greater role as a working language compared to Arabic. For instance, in most government offices and public services the language of communication is predominantly Tigrinya. But such things as national identity cards, most government forms and pamphlets are printed bilingually in Arabic and Tigrinya. There are also some instances in which English is also used in addition to the two languages in question. For example, immigration forms and national passports are printed trilingually in Tigrinya, Arabic, and English. Most street signs are also written in Tigrinya, Arabic and English, in respective order from top to bottom. But if a street sign is written bilingually, then it is either in Tigrinya and Arabic, or Tigrinya and English; but not in Arabic and English.

As far as the role of these languages in relation to employment is concerned, in most cases, Arabic comes in third place next to Tigrinya and English. But, generally speaking, Arabic has been playing a very limited role in this regard so far. Yet, from my personal observation since the past few years, the number of job vacancy announcements that include a knowledge of Arabic as an additional requirement seems to be increasing

gradually. And there is little doubt that in the long run it will prove to be a valuable asset to individuals who possess it.

At supranational (international) level, on the other hand, Tigrinya can hardly compete with Arabic as the geographical distribution of the former is limited only to Eritrea and Ethiopia. Thus, Arabic has far greater importance than Tigrinya for international diplomatic relations, trade and tourism (especially due to Eritrea's closeness to such Arab nations as Sudan, Djibouti, Yemen and Saudi Arabia). In addition to Arabic, English also serves similar purposes in the country. In fact, this is one of the main reasons for making it a school subject at all levels.

### *1.1.3.2 Media of instruction*

The present language in education policy of Eritrea is consistent with the recommendations made by the UNESCO since 1953, which reads:

[I]t is axiomatic that the best medium for teaching a child is his mother tongue. Psychologically, it is the system of meaningful signs that in his mind works automatically for expression and understanding. Sociologically, it is a means of identification among the community to which he belongs. Educationally, he learns more quickly through it than through unfamiliar medium (UNESCO, 1953: 11 quoted in Dutcher, 2001: 17; see also Appel & Muysken, 1987: 59)

Based on the policy of multilingualism, the education policy of the Eritrean government states that, 'Every nationality [i.e. ethnic group, TW] in Eritrea has the right to use its own language or any language of its choice as a medium of instruction in primary school'

(Gherahtu, 1999: 11; see also Dutcher, 1998: 264; Gottesman, 1998: 226). Accordingly, now most of the children in the country are taught in their respective mother tongue at elementary school level (Grades 1-5).

However, as the educational program in question was initially 'prescribed' (Ghirmay, in Gottesman, 1998: 226) by the government, there have been reports that some communities were unhappy about having their children taught in their mother tongue. For example, it has been stated in Dutcher that:

[I]n the lowlands, where Tigre and other languages are spoken, most have opted for either Arabic or Tigrinya [as medium of instruction], not the students' first language. Arabic has been especially popular because it is useful for trade with neighbouring countries and because it is associated with Islam, the religion of many of the people in the lowlands (1998: 265-6).

Similar statements are also found in Gottesman (1998: 226) and Gherahtu (1999: 23). The Ministry of Education has been dealing with the problem in question by employing the strategy of awareness campaigns to change the attitudes of parents in favour of mother tongue education. According to Tesfamicael Gherahtu, Director General of the National Curriculum Department (MoE), the campaign involved the establishment of popular committees from the communities 'with religious leaders, community elders, teachers and local administrators playing key role...and has been very productive in assuring the promotion of elementary schooling in the MT' (Gherahtu, 1999: 22).

The medium of instruction from Grade 6 through university is English. As stated by Zemhret Yohannes, Secretary of the Constitutional Commission of Eritrea (Quoted in Dutcher, 1998 : 263) and by Gherahtu (1999: 10-11) one of the reasons for favouring

English as a medium of instruction beyond primary school level has to do with the fact that it is the language of science and technology.

#### ***1.1.3.3 School subjects***

The education policy of Eritrea makes provisions for Tigrinya and Arabic to be taught as school subjects at elementary as well as secondary levels (Dutcher, 1998: 265; Gherahtu, 1999: 11). With particular reference to primary level, the policy states that Tigrinya may be taught as a subject in schools where it is not used as a medium of instruction and Arabic in other-than-Arabic medium schools. Whereas junior (Grades 6-7) and secondary school pupils (Grades 8-11) may learn the one that is not their mother tongue.

However, implementation efforts in regard to this have not been successful. That is, the teaching of Tigrinya and Arabic as school subjects has been suspended temporarily due to lack of teachers in terms of quality as well as quantity, especially in the case of Arabic (i.e. according to information obtained from the Director General of the Department of National Curriculum, Tesfamicael Gherahtu, in July 2002). English is the only language that is being given as a school subject at all levels (Grade 1 up to university) and to students of all ethnic groups.

#### ***1.1.3.4 Languages of mass media***

The most widely used languages in Eritrean mass media are Tigrinya, Arabic and English. They are used in the government owned national radio, television, and newspapers. However, Tigrinya is the only language which is used in private newspapers. There were about seven private newspapers until September 2001. But since then they

have all been shut down by the government. Their owners were charged with 'irresponsibility...defamation, and rumor-mongering, thereby undermining the sovereignty of the nation and the unity of the people' (PFDJ, 2002 citing the Eritrean National Assembly). Therefore, now there are only three government-owned newspapers: *Hadas Ertra* (Tigrinya), *Eritrea Al-Hadisa* (Arabic) and *Eritrea Profile* (English). The kind of Arabic used in the mass media, and other formal domains, is Standard Arabic which is a modernized variety of Classical (Quranic) Arabic - the colloquial variety is known as Hijazi spoken Arabic - (SIL International, formerly Summer Institute of Linguistics, 2003).

Tigre also functions in the national radio (as are the languages Afar and Kunama) and has recently been introduced into the state-owned television, which is the only one in the country. And there are plans to use the rest (Saho, Nara and Hedareb) in the mass media. However, lack of qualified human resources as well as finance may delay implementation of this plan.

#### ***1.1.3.5 Languages of wider communication***

In Eritrea, there is no *lingua franca*, meaning a language which is used as a medium of communication between individuals or groups who do not speak a common language (e.g. Kiswahili in East Africa). Therefore, interpersonal communication between individuals from two different Eritrean ethnic groups is possible only if one of the parties involved speaks the language of the other, or if both of them have knowledge of the same second language. In a situation like the latter Tigrinya and Arabic play a crucial role although Tigrinya has predominance over Arabic in this regard, particularly in most of the urban areas. In general, therefore, these two are used as languages of *wider communication* - the term is defined as "the function of a linguistic

system...predominating as a medium of communication within [a] nation” (Stewart, 1968 quoted in Cooper, 1989: 104).

As in most African countries, individual bi-/multilingualism (the ability to speak two or more languages) is common in Eritrea. In most cases, bilingualism is characterized by knowledge of Tigrinya in addition to one’s own mother tongue (e.g. Tigre, Bilen, etc.). But bilingualism among Tigrinya mother-tongue speakers is relatively less common. Although it is not easy to say why this is so, for various factors and sub-factors (demographic, socio-historical, political, economic, etc.) need to be taken into consideration, one factor seems to be influential. That is, the fact that it is more common for non-Tigrinya speakers to move (for settlement, work, trade, education, etc.) to areas predominated by Tigrinya speakers than otherwise. And this means that the former are more likely to be compelled by the respective situation to learn the latter’s language (Tigrinya) than the contrary. This is so especially since the Tigrinya speakers are numerically speaking a national majority.

English is generally not used as a spoken medium of communication among Eritreans. It is important only for communication between Eritreans and foreigners. In this respect the position of English in Eritrea can be better termed as an EFL (English as a foreign language) as opposed to ESL (English as a second language). According to Mesthrie (1999:3), EFL refers to:

English as used in countries in which the influence of English has been external, rather than via a large body of ‘settlers’. For such countries English plays a role mainly for international rather than intra-national communication ([e.g.] Japan, China, Germany).

As described by Schmied (1991: 33) EFL is sub-divided into EFL proper and EIL. When English is used by non-native speakers to talk to native speakers it is referred to as EFL, whereas the term EIL refers to the function of English as a medium of communication among non-native speakers (Schmied, 1991: 33). Schmied argues that, 'As English is used by many Africans to communicate with Europeans, irrespective of whether they are English native speakers or not... the term EIL seems to be more appropriate as often only non-native speakers are involved (1991: 33).' He further adds that:

In theory, whereas ENL and ESL countries use English for intranational (as well as international) communication, EIL countries use it only for international communication, albeit as their most important medium. English certainly functions as an international language, when it is used in communication with international development agencies, even by Africans in their own country. In practice, however, it is sometimes not easy to decide whether English really has an international function, for instance, just because it is used as a language of instruction in an African university, because most of the books are in English and possibly produced in Europe or America and many lecturers come from abroad.

## Chapter 2

### Review of literature on language attitudes

#### 2.1 Definition of attitude

Edwards (1985: 139, 1995: 97) observes that there is no universally agreed upon definition of the term 'attitude'. Yet, he is of the opinion that Sarnoff's (1970) view of attitude is the most acceptable one at a general level. According to Sarnoff an attitude is defined as 'a predisposition to react *favourably* or *unfavourably* to a class of objects' (1970 quoted in Edwards, 1985: 139).

Edwards' observation is supported by several authors who have dealt with the topic in one way or the other in later years. For instance, eighteen years later Ajzen defined attitude as a 'disposition to react favourably or unfavourably to an object, person, institution, or event' (1988: 4 quoted in Baker, 1992: 11). Even Baker's more recent (1992) book titled 'Attitudes and Language' provides no new definition for the term under consideration.

Based on the preceding definitions, therefore, attitude particularly in relation to language refers to whether the orientation of individuals or groups towards a given language is generally favourable or unfavourable. The meaning of the term can however be understood better through the analysis of its major components which I shall discuss below.

## 2.2 The components of attitude

Attitude is considered to be composed of three major components. These are the *cognitive*, *affective*, and the *conative* parts (Baker, 1992: 12-3; Edwards, 1985: 139, 1995:97). The cognitive component relates to the knowledge, thoughts and beliefs that the attitude holder may have about the attitude object (e.g. a language, people, a policy, etc.). The second component of attitude, affective, is related to the feelings (hate, love, indifference, etc.) associated with the attitude object. Whereas the conative element concerns the behavioural (readiness for action) aspect of attitude.

This means that individuals/ groups differ in their feelings towards a specific attitude object based on the knowledge, thought, and beliefs they have in regard to that object. And their behavioural predisposition in relation to it is believed to differ accordingly. Thus, for instance, 'A favourable attitude to the Irish language may entail a stated belief in the importance of the continuity of the indigenous language, its value in the transmission of Irish culture and use in immersion education (Baker, 1992: 12).' And such a belief may ultimately influence, among other things, one's decision to go (or send one's own child) to an Irish medium or language school – a reflection of the conative (readiness for action) component of attitude.

However, many authors note that the relationship that exists between the different components of attitude is not necessarily straightforward (e.g. see Baker, 1992: 13, 15; Edwards, 1985: 40). In other words, an individual's belief, feelings, and behavioural reaction in relation to a given attitude object may not be consistent with each other. In connection with this Edwards argues that 'someone could believe that French *was* important for his children, yet he could loathe the language and all its associations' (1985: 40). A study by LaPiere (1934) is a classical example in which such incongruence between expressed attitudes and actual behaviour was attested (cited in Baker, 1992: 15

and Edwards, 1995: 97). In this study the investigator found that a Chinese couple were refused service in only one of 251 restaurants in the USA despite earlier reports by over 90% of these same restaurants (in response to a mailed questionnaire) that they would refuse entry to a Chinese couple.

## 2.3 The importance of attitude study

Attitude is very closely associated with many aspects of human life. Therefore, the fact that it has been one of the most widely and most consistently researched topics should not be surprising. Companies and marketers undertake research to assess the attitudes of customers towards *their* products; governments (or their agencies) conduct surveys concerning the attitudes of the respective population towards a new policy or plan of action; organisations as well as individuals carry out attitude researches targeting a particular social or ethnic group in relation to certain languages or language varieties, habits (e.g. smoking, drug-taking), and so on. The list of instances is in fact seemingly endless. In the following sections the relevance of attitude study will be discussed mainly in relation to language policy and language planning, language learning (especially L2), and language maintenance/shift.

### 2.3.1 Attitudes and language policy/planning

In the formulation as well as implementation process of a language policy attitudes are among the most important issues which are given (or are recommended by many to be given) due consideration. Especially in the *fact-finding* stage of language planning assessment of the language attitudes of the target population is very crucial as this serves to provide information in regard to the success or failure of the underlying policy in the future. In other words, 'it is necessary to know what people think about a language in

order to predict whether it will work as officials intend it to' (Eastman, 1992: 95). In connection with this, Baker (1992: 9) argues that:

A survey of attitudes provides an indicator of current community thoughts and beliefs, preferences and desires. Attitude surveys provide social indicators of changing beliefs and chances of success in policy implementation... A survey of French in Canada, attitude to Spanish in the USA, attitude to English in Japan might reveal the possibilities and problems of second languages within each country.

Neglecting the question of language attitudes in language-related policy decisions is therefore often associated with little probability of positive outcomes in its implementation. Thus, as has been noted by Lewis (1982), 'Any policy for language, especially in the system of education, has to take account of the attitudes of those likely to be affected'(quoted in Baker, 1992: 9-19).

### **2.3.2 Attitudes and (second-) language learning**

Attitudes are believed to be one of the key factors in language learning. More specifically, their role in affecting second-language (L2) learning is considered to be significant. In an original study carried out by Gardner & Lambert (1952) 'attitude was found as a second crucial factor' in second-language acquisition (Baker, 1992: 33). In the final summing-up of the ten-year evaluation of the Primary French in Britain scheme Burstall (1975) reports that through both primary and secondary school attitudes to learning French strongly related to success in the language (McDonough, 1992: 159). Similarly, in studies summarised by Gardner (1985) it was concluded, among others, that

'attitude measures account for a significant and a meaningful proportion of the variance in second language achievement' (Spolsky, 1990: 149).

According to Gardner, attitudes do not influence learning directly but indirectly by serving as supports of the learners' motivation for learning (1979: 205; also 1985 cited in Spolsky, 1990: 149, 157; Sawhney, 1998: 120). As used by Lalonde and Gardner (1984) motivation refers to 'the individual's total drive to learn the second language...a combination of effort, desire, and affective reaction toward learning' the language (quoted in Spolsky, 1990: 156; see also Gardner, 1979: 197). The importance of attitudes is, therefore, to aid the language learner to 'maintain the desire and effort in the long and tedious process of acquiring the language' (Gardner, 1979: 206). In relation to this, Baker believes that 'the attitudes of a person towards a language may be important not only in learning that language but also in maintaining and restoring the language and avoiding attrition' (1993: 95).

Many authors distinguish between two major kinds of language attitudes. These are instrumental and integrative (Baker, 1992: 31, 1993: 89; Bialystok & Hakuta, 1994: 137; Spolsky 1990: 137, 156; Edwards, 1985: 146; Appel & Muysken, 1987: 92 and Ritchie & Bhatia, 1996: 15 citing Gardner & Lambert, 1972). Instrumental attitudes are described mostly as self-oriented and individualistic in nature reflecting pragmatic, utilitarian motives. In particular, instrumental attitudes towards a second language imply motivation to learn it in order to get economic and social benefits associated with it (Baker, 1992: 34; Cooper, 1989: 113; Edwards, 1985: 141; Laine, 1993: 64; Romaine, 1995: 43-4). Examples include: to obtain employment, to study other courses offered in it, to get social recognition through knowledge of that language, and so on. The following statements (from Baker, 1992: 31-2 citing Gardner, 1985b) are typical examples of items used to test, by eliciting agreement/disagreement, the extent to which a person is instrumentally motivated to learn a second language:

- Studying French can be important for me because I think it will some day be useful in getting a good job;
- Studying French can be important for me because it will make me a more knowledgeable person.

Integrative attitudes, on the other hand, are linked with motives that go beyond individual self-interests. That is, they are considered to be ‘mostly social and interpersonal in orientation’ (Baker, 1992: 32). They are characteristic of second-language learners who want to identify with or integrate into the community represented by that language, or (at least) to interact with or befriend members of that community (Gardner & Lambert, 1972 cited in Appel & Muysken, 1987: 92, Baker, 1992: 32, Romaine, 1995: 43-4; Spolsky, 1990: 158 citing Gardner, 1985). Integrative attitudes are mostly observed among immigrants or individuals from minority groups who wish to integrate into or affiliate with the host/majority group.

The two major kinds of attitudes under consideration are believed to influence the outcomes of language learning differently. Originally, integrative attitude was considered by Gardner & Lambert (1972) to affect language learning more strongly than instrumental attitude (Baker, 1992: 33-4, 1993: 90). This means that learners ‘with an integrative motivation...will learn the second language better than those with an instrumental motivation, i.e. learners who only want to learn the new language because of limited commercial, educational or other instrumental reasons’ (Appel & Muysken, 1987: 92 citing Gardner and Lambert, 1972). Gardner and Lambert attribute this relative difference in strength to the fact that integrative attitudes are interpersonal and long lasting while instrumental ones are purely self-oriented and short term. In regard to this Gardner (1979: 206) holds that:

Short term motivational props such as fear of failure, desire to do well in school, vague future job requirements, etc., do not have the staying power or the generality to maintain consistent levels of motivation over prolonged periods of time or diverse opportunities to develop proficiency. Attitudes which relate to the social aspects of language acquisition seem to meet these requirements (Gardner, 1979: 206).

Before moving to the next topic of discussion two important points are worth noting here. One, the classification of attitudes into instrumental and integrative categories is not without controversy as there is no clear-cut distinction between the two. For instance, one researcher may consider a certain reason for learning a language as being linked to an instrumental attitude while another person may associate the same reason with integrative attitude. Baker (1992: 34) provides a very good example of this by citing an instance in which 'travelling abroad' was regarded by Brustal *et al* (1974) as an integrative, and by Lukmani (1972) as instrumental.

The second point is that there may be instances in which second language learners may not necessarily approach the language in question with just instrumental or integrative reasons. Instead, it is possible that someone may have 'a subtle mix of instrumental and integrative motives, without clear discrimination between the two' (Baker, 1993: 90). For example, research carried out by Yatim (1988), indicated that 'the language motivations of student teachers in Malaysia appeared to combine instrumental and integrative motives into an integrated entity' (Baker, 1993: 90).

### **2.3.3 Attitudes and language maintenance/shift**

In the study of language maintenance/shift or language death attitudes are highly relevant. Almost all studies in these fields can hardly ignore the consideration of attitude-related

issues at least as part of their search for the reasons behind language maintenance/shift or death. This is because, 'In the life of a language, attitudes to that language appear to be important in its restoration, preservation, decay or death (Baker, 1992: 9; see also Brenzinger & Dimmendaal, 1992: 4).' A valid support for this argument is the fact that language shift is very often accompanied, as has been stated in Sasse (1992:14), by the development of negative attitude towards the language being 'abandoned' - (this is a technical term used by Thomason and Kaufman (188: 35, cited in Brenzinger, 1992: 287).

What Rouchdy (1989a) says below with particular reference to the Egyptian Nubian language obviously springs from this fact. Pointing to the decreased use of this language as a result of the dominance of Arabic the author remarks that:

[T]he Nubian attitude toward their language is a determining factor as to their willingness in the future to speak Nubian or alternatively to opt for Arabic. This attitude will play a major role in the persistence of the Nubian language or the linguistic tip in favour of Arabic (quoted in Sommer, 1992: 338).

## 2.4 The origin of language attitudes

Attitudes, whether favourable or unfavourable, do not originate in a vacuum. Instead, they are the results of certain factors which are related to the object of attitudes directly or indirectly. With specific reference to language in general, and second language learning in particular, the following factors and sub-factors appear to have an important role in shaping or influencing the attitudes of language learners.

#### 2.4.1 Social milieu

In this context, social milieu concerns the socio-cultural background of the individuals in question as well as the socio-cultural context in which language learning takes place. Social milieu as a factor affecting the attitudes of language learners includes the influence of the target community in general, and more specifically, of the respective family, peer groups, neighbours, etc.

‘In every speech community attitudes and beliefs are probably current about the language of the community as well as about other languages and language in general (Schiffman, 1996: 68).’ And these attitudes and beliefs of the community may play a significant role in influencing the orientations of the respective children towards language learning. This is so because as a member of a community which a child lives in s/he acquires the attitudes, beliefs, stereotypes, values, and norms that are prevalent in that community (Laine, 1993: 62; Baker, 1992: 38). And that is why it is suggested that ‘second language learning must be considered in the larger context in which the individual and the language learning programme exists’ (Gardner, 1979: 195). As has been noted by Gardner:

A student resident in a community where bilingualism is an expected part of his cultural heritage will have and will encounter cultural beliefs which are of a different order from those of a student resident in a community where unilingualism is the norm. Similarly, if a student resides in a community where the speakers of the other language are not valued, where debate exists concerning the value of that language or the reasons for teaching it, the beliefs he would take to the language learning situation will differ from those he would hold

if he where resident of an area where opposing cultural beliefs exist (1979: 195).

Thus, in communities where bi-/multilingualism is viewed as a problem or as having no value there is little likelihood, if at all, that the respective children will be favourably oriented to learn a second language. Where it is seen as a resource (having socio-economic benefits), on the other hand, the children are more likely to have favourable attitudes towards learning a second language.

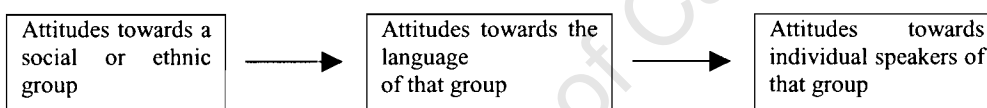
In many white communities in England, the transmitted belief is that bilingualism is unnecessary, difficult to achieve, and if achieved, it is at the expense of other areas of achievement. Such communities also tend to share the traditional United States philosophy of assimilation of minority cultures and languages. In some Canadian communities, opposite beliefs about French/ English bilingualism and biculturalism exist, thus allowing the establishment, evolution and extension of bilingual schooling (Baker, 1992: 38).

At a lower level than the community, individual families are considered to play a major role in shaping the language attitude of their respective children. That is, language attitudes of students may vary depending on their family background. Such factors as the general attitudes and beliefs of a particular family about bilingualism, the amount of encouragement and support given by parents or siblings in regard to language learning can contribute significantly in the kind of relevant attitudes the respective children may develop or maintain.

In addition to community socio-cultural beliefs and family background, peer groups are often taken as contributing factors in attitude formation. For instance, a child may have positive attitudes towards learning a certain language if it is important for communication

among his/her peer groups. Such attitudes are indicated through statements like: ‘Speaking Gujarati is important [for me] because most of my friends speak it.’ This statement was one of the items used by Mercer *et al.* (1979: 19) to assess the extent to which a group of Gujarati speakers in Leicester were positively oriented towards the use of Gujarati in their present and future lives. They found that a majority of the respondents indicated their agreement with the statement under consideration.

Unlike what has been said in the foregoing paragraphs, the source of language attitudes can be less direct. For instance, it is suggested that ‘language attitudes may be reflections of attitudes towards the speakers’ of that language (Hout & Knops, 1988: 13; see also Baker, 1992: 146; Schmied, 1991: 164-5; Romaine, 1995: 289). In other words, there is an ‘assumption ... that in a society social (or ethnic) groups have certain attitudes towards each other, relating to their differing social positions...and these attitudes affect attitudes towards the cultural institutions or patterns characterising the group such as language’ (Appel & Muysken, 1987: 16). The first two components of the following figure provided by Appel & Muysken to illustrate the formation of attitudes, with particular reference to group identity, are relevant to the argument at hand.



**Figure 2.1** Schema representing the formation of attitudes (Appel & Muysken, 1987: 16).

This means, therefore, that attitudes towards a given language and success in learning it can be affected depending on the identity of its mother-tongue speakers and how the learner feels about them (Ager *et al.* 1993: 203; Laine, 1993: 64). For example, ‘If the outgroup is considered unimportant, inferior in some way, learning its language will hardly prosper (Laine, 1993: 64).

#### 2.4.2 Demographic factors

Research findings have shown that language attitudes vary across such demographic factors such as, among others, age and gender (Hout & Knops, 1988: 12). For example, W.R. Jones (1949, 1950), Sharp *et al.* (1973), and E. P. Jones (1982) found an inverse relationship between age and attitudes to the Welsh language – i.e. a decline in favourability of attitude to the language with increasing age (cited in Baker, 1992: 41). In the same study referred to above Sharp *et al.* also found that favourable attitudes towards English increased with increasing age among a group of Welsh students (Baker, 1992: 41-2).

Many authors have proposed, however, that age in itself may not be the direct cause for the variability in language attitudes. Instead, they believe that the sources of variation in this regard are probably other factors and sub-factors which are associated with age. Thus, pointing to the reasons for the decline in language attitudes towards the Welsh language with increasing age, Baker (1992: 42) holds that:

It may be the accompaniments of changing age that are the causes (e.g. heterosexual relationships, mass media influences, influences of peer groups). Age is an ‘indicator’ or ‘holding’ variable that sums up movement over time, and does not reveal the underlying reasons for that movement.

Like age, gender is an important demographic variable in the study of language attitudes. Various studies have observed that attitudes to a language may vary based on gender (male-female) differences. For example, in their research on attitudes to the Welsh language W.R. Jones (1949, 1950), Sharp *et al.* (1973) and E. P. Jones (1982), ‘all found that girls had more favourable attitudes to Welsh than boys’ (Baker, 1992: 42). General linguistic evidence also suggests that ‘women are more likely to be favourably disposed

towards prestigious varieties (including dialects *within* a language) than are men' (Edwards, 1985: 72).

Once again, like age, the social variable gender has stimulated doubts in regard to its relationship with language attitudes. In other words, the question is whether differences in language attitudes between males and females are the direct effects of their respective gender *per se*. As far as this is concerned the general view among most sociolinguists is in line with the argument forwarded by Baker (1992) below in connection with the attitudinal differences between the boys and girls mentioned in the preceding paragraph. That is:

It is...unlikely that the difference is biological or maturational. The reasons for the difference are presumably located in the socio-cultural behaviours of the two genders, in the kind of individual differences that may exist at any point in history between girls and boys. (Baker, 1992: 42).

#### **2.4.3 Economic factors**

Previously, it was argued that the motives for learning a second language could be summarised under two main headings, namely, instrumental and integrative. The current topic of discussion is related to the first one. The main point here is that, the more people perceive a language as having economic advantages, especially such as access to jobs or to a better salary, the more motivated they will be to learn it. Thus, for instance, Cluver (1992: 128) describes the attitudes of Namibians towards English as being even 'too positive' because they perceive it as a means for economic and social advancement. And it is a well-known fact that this applies to millions of non-English speakers world-wide.

If a language is associated with little or no economic benefits, on the other hand, students are less likely to be positively disposed to learn it. In fact, lack of economic incentives has consistently been cited as one of the main reasons why most African children have negative attitudes towards learning their mother-tongue or some other African language at school (e.g. see Adebija, 1994; Alexander, 1999; Bamgbose, 1999; and Mateene, 1999). In extreme cases individuals may even go as far as giving up their own language in favor of another one which is perceived to be of greater economic advancement. A typical example is the case of Hungarian in Oberwart, as described by Gal (1979), where young Oberwarters stopped using it even as a home language, in favour of German. One of the main reasons behind the language shift was that Hungarian was a language of little socio-economic importance compared to German which had higher credits in this regard (see Gal, 1979:106-7).

#### **2.4.4 Status factors**

In this particular context status has been used to refer to the social position of a given linguistic system in relation to other languages around it. That is, the status of a language concerns the prestige accorded to it by the respective society in comparison to other languages surrounding it. For example, in many parts of the world today the English language is held with a higher esteem (prestige) than other languages (e.g. French in Canada, and most indigenous languages in many African countries).

The relationship between the status of a language and attitudes towards it is regarded to be direct. In other words, people tend to have more favourable attitudes towards languages with relatively higher status and less favourable attitudes towards those with a lower status. With particular reference to language learning, students appear to be more

motivated to learn languages that are associated with a relatively higher prestige than others.

At least two major cluster of factors are most frequently cited as determiners of the status of a given linguistic system. These are the identity or the social/economic status of the people who speak the language in question as a mother-tongue and the functions which the language serves in the community. As far as the first one is concerned, it is believed that as languages are not merely tools for communication but also markers of group identities (social, ethnic, etc.), their status can be directly affected by that of their mother-tongue speakers (Appel & Muysken, 1987: 16; Hout & Knops, 1988: 10; Schmied, 1991:164-5). This means, therefore, that the higher the status of a certain (linguistic, social, ethnic) group is, the higher will also be the status of the respective language, and vice-versa.

The second factor which is relevant to the status of a language, i.e. the functions which it is allocated to, concerns whether and the extent to which the language is used in administration, school, mass media, religious institutions, and so on. Comparatively speaking, people tend to accord a higher status often to a language which plays a greater role in terms of use in such domains than to one whose role is relatively limited.

#### **2.4.5 Institutional support**

This rubric concerns the role of a language in educational, administrative, mass media and religious institutions. To begin with, the use of a language in the educational domain is one of the most important factors determining its importance, value and status. More specifically, the functions which a particular language is assigned to in the school can greatly affect pupil's attitudes towards it. For example, a language may be taught mainly as a subject, it may be used as a medium of instruction, or it may be taught as a subject

and serve as instructional media at the same time. And students' attitudes towards the language may vary accordingly. For instance, they are likely to be comparatively more favourable towards languages that have this latter double function and less so towards those that are taught mainly as subjects. This is due to the instrumental importance of the former in terms of providing access to other content subjects.

The extent to which a language is used for administrative purposes in a given community can also significantly affect peoples' attitude towards it. Most commonly, languages which serve in government and public offices are viewed more favourably in comparison to those which do not. Knowledge of these languages is perceived to be crucial in order to maximize one's own opportunities in respect to social and economic advancement as they are important means of access to jobs and getting promotions.

Like the institutional domains mentioned above, mass media (radio, TV, newspapers, magazines) can also be influential in language attitude formation (Baker, 1992: 44). On the one hand, individuals may be positively oriented to learn a given language in order to read, listen to, or watch news, get entertainment (listen to music, watch films) and so on. Or they may develop positive attitudes towards that language as they use it more and more frequently for such purposes. In E. P. Jones' research, for example, watching English TV appeared to be one of the important predictors of decline in attitude towards Welsh, on the one hand, and increase towards English on the other (Baker, 1992: 44-5).

Languages that are associated with religion have rarely been viewed unfavourably by the followers of the respective religion regardless of whether or not such languages are linked with socio-economic benefits. Instead, they are seen almost as sacred as the religion itself, for they are considered to be the sole media of communication between the divine power and the people in question. For instance, being the language of the Koran (that is,

the language of God), Arabic is held in very high esteem in the Arabic world (Appel & Muysken, 1987: 34).

Therefore, sometimes religion may be the main reason behind people's motivation in learning a certain language, so as to participate in the religious activities of their community. These include: reading religious texts (e.g. the Qur'an/Bible), attending mosque/church services, singing/listening to hymns, praying, etc. Languages of religion are often taught in religious schools as they are usually different from those used in secular domains (i.e. official/ school languages, daily media of communication).

## 2.5 Measurement of language attitudes

The measurement of language attitudes has traditionally been approached from two major theoretical perspectives. These are the *behaviourist* and the *mentalist* views (Appel & Muysken, 1987: 16). According to the behaviourist view attitudes are best studied by directly observing the responses of individuals to certain languages, i.e. to 'their use in actual interactions' (Appel & Muysken, 1987: 16; Schmied, 1991: 163).

From the mentalist point of view, on the contrary, attitudes are not directly observable. They are seen as 'internal, mental states, which may give rise to certain forms of behaviour' (Appel & Muysken, 1987: 16). According to Fasold, an attitude 'can be described as an intervening variable between a stimulus affecting a person and that person's response' (1984: 147 quoted in Appel & Muysken, 1987: 16). This particular view suggests, therefore, the use of indirect measurement techniques (discussed below) in the study of language attitudes as opposed to direct observation of people's actual linguistic behaviour.

Ryan, Giles & Hewstone (1988) summarized the assessment techniques which are relevant to the study of language attitudes into three major groups (Hout & Knops, 1988: 6; Edwards, 1985: 150). These are: *content analysis*, *direct and indirect* measurement techniques. The first one includes inferring attitudes from historical and sociological observation as well as ethnographic studies –i.e. the subjects being studied are not asked any questions in regard to their attitudes. The other two measurement techniques have been discussed below in greater detail.

### **2.5.1 Direct method**

This is the most widely used method of measuring language attitudes. It involves presenting research subjects with 'direct questions concerning language evaluation, language preference, the desirability and motives for second language learning, the desirability of bilingualism and bilingual education and opinions concerning language planning activities'<sup>9</sup> (Hout & Knops, 1988: 7; see also Appel & Muysken, 1987: 17). There are two major alternative methods of presenting the questions. The first one is in the form of printed questionnaires which the subjects may be asked to complete independently. The second alternative is to present the questions in the form of an interview.

Questionnaires are the most widely used method of data collection in the study of language attitudes. This could be attributed, at least partly, to the following reasons. First, compared to interviews they are more affordable in terms of time and resources, financial, material and human (Bell, 1993: 76). And this means that the investigator can cover a larger sample (than s/he would through interview) in a given amount of time (Romaine, 1995: 302). Another reason is that questionnaires, particularly a self-administered one, provide informants the opportunity to respond to the questions at their

own pace and without being influenced to respond in a certain way (give biased information) due to the presence of the researcher.

Interviews are relatively more expensive and time-consuming (Bell, 1993: 96; Botha & Engelbrecht, 1992: 59; Romaine, 1995: 302). For instance, conducting an interview usually requires recording materials (e.g. tape-recorder, video camera), related accessories and sometimes a person(s) who may assist in recording, taking photos, etc. and this makes it relatively more costly. Besides, in most cases only one person can be approached at a time and this means that the sample coverage is likely to be relatively small. The fact that information collected through interviews takes quite a longer time to transcribe and summarize has also similar effects.

Regardless of the specific method employed (the questionnaire/ interview) questions may be one (or a combination) of two types: open (unstructured) and closed (structured). Open questions are those items which mostly begin with Wh-/H- words (such as “Who?”, “Why?”, “How?” etc.). Whereas closed type questions include items which elicit Yes/ No or True/ False responses, and ones which involve multiple-choice answers.

Both types of questions have their advantages and disadvantages. Compared to closed-ended ones, for instance, open questions give respondents greater opportunity to express their own thoughts, feelings, opinions, etc., without being influenced by ready-made answers to respond in a certain way (Botha & Engelbrecht, 1992: 61). And this means that information gathered in such a way is likely to be relatively more reliable. Second, if open questions are employed, additional information can be obtained by asking follow-up questions.

But they are also associated with some disadvantages. For instance, they are relatively time-consuming and may prove tiring to the research subjects. This is because questions

of this type require giving comparatively longer answers (written or oral) than do closed type ones. They also imply that the informants will have to invest more time and energy on deciding how to put their final answers.

Similarly, as open questions elicit relatively more divergent (and sometimes irrelevant) answers summarising all the responses is relatively more difficult and less affordable in terms of time for the researcher. And this has a considerable limiting effect in regard to the size of the sample population that may be covered. Another practical problem linked with the use of unstructured questions is that answers may be vague (e.g. because of illegibility of handwriting or language problems).

On the other hand, due to the similar format for responses information obtained through closed type questions can be summarised more easily and more quickly. Thus, using such questions the researcher can gather more information and cover a bigger population sample than would be possible through unstructured type within a given amount of time. Besides, questions of this type save subjects time and energy as they involve mostly either ticking a box, circling or underlining chosen answer.

However, there is at least one major disadvantage linked with the use of closed type questions. That is, unlike the open-ended, they force informants to respond mainly within the limit of the specific alternative answers which are prepared in advance based on some presumptions. And this can sometimes be disadvantageous, because it is possible that subjects could have answers that are totally or partially different from the ones that are presented to them as choices. As a result, either there will be loss of some information (because not included among the alternative answers), or a false answer may be given (as the subjects may feel compelled to choose one, or more, from the alternatives any way).

Although the direct method of language attitude measurement is still the most widely used many have questioned its effectiveness in obtaining reliable information. For instance, Blalock (1970: 94-5) doubts the possibility of knowing the real feelings and thoughts of informants based on what they tell for 'Perhaps they will merely tell us what they think we want to hear or what they consider to be the socially approved answer.' More or less the same concern has also been expressed by Jaspaert & Kroon who argue that:

People may respond to an attitude test in a way that makes them appear more prestigious, good than is real. Consciously or unconsciously people tend to give socially desirable answers, and put themselves in the best light (halo effect). A person may wish to be seen as pro-Welsh, even if the private attitude is something different (1988: 19).

Therefore, there has always been a need to resolve, at least partly, the problem under consideration through the use of other (substitute or supplementary) methods. The *indirect method* (discussed below) is considered to be useful in this regard.

### **2.5.2 Indirect method**

This is the third cluster of measurement techniques which is relevant to the study of language attitudes. In the words of Hout & Knops:

Indirect measurement refers to techniques which are applied without the subjects being aware of the purpose of the measurement. The main reason is to prevent subjects from giving self-flattering or socially acceptable answers. The aim is to elicit private or covert language attitudes instead of public ones ... (1988: 8).

The 'matched-guise' test is most frequently given by many authors as the best example of indirect measurement technique of language attitudes (e.g. Appel & Muysken, 1987: 17; Edwards, 1985: 150; Baker, 1992: 146; Romaine, 1995: 289; see also Bradac, 1990: 387; Preston, 1989: 50). It was originally developed by Lambert and his associates in the late 1950s and early 1960s in their assessment of attitudes towards French and English in Anglophone and Francophone Canada. They introduced this technique, because 'Direct questioning was an inappropriate way to elicit attitudes since respondents might not want to reveal prejudices (Preston, 1989: 50).'

The matched-guise experiment involves the following procedures. First, two or more perfectly bilingual speakers are tape-recorded reading the same text (usually a passage of prose) in both their languages. Then, the various recordings are played to subjects of language attitude study in a random sequential order – e.g. 'first speaker A in English, then speaker B in French, speaker C in English, speaker A in French, speaker D in French, etc.' (Appel & Muysken, 1987: 16-7) – to create an impression on the listeners that each reader is a different person. After listening to each fragment of recording, the subjects (judges) are asked to evaluate and rate the personality characteristics of each speaker (the assumption being that such evaluations will reflect the underlying language attitudes of the evaluators).

Among the most popular rating scales employed in the study of language attitudes are Osgood, Suci and Tannenbaum's (1957) *semantic differential scales* (mentioned in Appel & Muysken, 1987: 17; Baker, 1992: 18; Bradac, 1990: 387-9; and Preston, 1989: 50). These scales have two ends with several blank spaces (i.e. the points of the scale) in between. At either end of the scales are opposite extremes of certain traits such as: friendly/unfriendly, beautiful/ugly, trustworthy/untrustworthy, etc. Below are examples of such scales preceded by typical questions.

Q. Where do you put speaker A on this scale?/ Rate speaker A on the following scale.

friendly    \_\_\_ \_\_\_ \_\_\_ \_\_\_ \_\_\_    unfriendly  
rich        \_\_\_ \_\_\_ \_\_\_ \_\_\_ \_\_\_    poor

In scales like these (here, five-point scales) subjects may be asked to indicate their ratings by putting a tick in either of the blank spaces in between each pair of adjectives. Thus, a tick in the space halfway between the two adjectives may be interpreted to mean “I am undecided/unsure” or “neither...nor”. Whereas a mark on any other points of the scale implies favourability or unfavourability of attitudes depending on which of the two of adjectives is nearer to the point in question (e.g. “beautiful” or “ugly”, respectively).

The first contemporary study to use the matched-guise technique in language attitude assessment is considered to be that of Lambert, Hodson, Gardner and Fellenbaum (1960) – (cited in Bradac, 1990: 387; in Edwards, 1985: 147; and in Appel & Muysken, 1987: 17-8). Two groups of respondents participated in this investigation: French speaking and English speaking Canadians in Montreal. After listening to four audio-recorded French-English/ English-French bilinguals reading a prose passage in both of their languages, the respondents were asked to rate the speakers on a 14 six-point scales concerning such traits as intelligence, kindness, sociability, etc. At the end of the experiment the researchers found that the English guises (speakers of the English version) were rated more favourably by both English and French speaking respondents on several traits, including perceived kindness and intelligence (Bradac, 1990: 387; see also Appel & Muysken, 1987: 17-8; Edwards, 1985: 147).

Following this pioneering work many other matched-guise experiments have been conducted in different language contact situations. An investigation by Lambert, Anisfeld and Yeni-Komshian (1965) on the attitudes of Arab-Israeli and Jewish Israeli adolescents towards Hebrew and Arabic is one such example. In this study it was found that the

respondents (judges) rated the representatives of their own group more favourably than the representatives of the other group (Appel & Muysken, 1987: 18).

Other examples of studies which employed the matched-guise technique include: a study by Giles (1970) which 'investigated reactions of British secondary-school children to a variety of accents, including the non-regional RP (Received Pronunciation), Irish and West Indian' (Edwards, 1985: 147-8); Carrazan and Ryan's (1975) study of the reactions of Mexican-American and Anglo-American students to speakers of Spanish and English (Edwards, 1985: 148), and an investigation by Vorster and Proctor (1976) on the language attitudes of black South African students towards English and Afrikaans (Appel & Muysken, 1987: 18).

As one of the problems related to the matched-guise and other similar techniques it has been suggested that the use of tape-recorded formal or informal passages may lead to misinterpretation of language attitude research results. The point is, since languages are often linked with specific activities or situations they may be evaluated differently in different contexts. To put it in the words of Appel & Muysken, 'certain languages do not seem appropriate for certain contexts, for example, the reading of a passage of a scientific article in a non-prestige minority language ...If this factor is not taken into account, it may influence the ratings of the speakers (1987: 16).

The findings of Carrazan & Ryan's (1975) study of the language attitudes of Chicano and Anglo adolescent students towards English and Spanish lends support to the preceding argument (cited in Appel & Muysken, 1987: 16). These researchers found that Spanish was evaluated more favourably in the home context than in the school context (and generally less favourably than English) by both groups of students.

These subjects were asked to rate the personalities of 16 speakers who read prose passages in Spanish and in English on a tape. All in all four passages, two in Spanish and

two in English, were used to elicit judgements from the respondents. Of the two prose passages in each language, one was related to a home context and the other to school context. Each of the four passages was read by four mother tongue speakers of the respective language (unlike in the matched-guise technique). In other words, 'four speakers used Spanish in a home context, and four English in home context, four Spanish in school context, and four English in school context' (Appel & Muysken, 1987: 16).

In the following chapter I will discuss the research methodology and techniques used in investigating the attitudes of Tigre-speaking students in Eritrea towards learning Arabic and Tigrinya as school subjects. As was pointed out earlier both are the working languages of the Eritrean government.

University of Cape Town

## Chapter 3

### Methodology

The research method used in carrying out this investigation was the case-study, as opposed to a survey or census. The last one aims, in theory, to cover every member of the population which is relevant to the investigation (Bell, 1993: 10; Botha & Engelbrecht, 1992: 57). A survey involves taking a representative sample of such a population and making inferences and generalizations about the population as a whole based on the findings from the sample (Bell, 1993: 11; Botha & Engelbrecht, 1992: 57). A case study, on the other hand, focuses on a specific instance (sub-group) of a population. It is suitable for individual researchers who wish to investigate a single aspect of a problem in some depth within a relatively limited amount of time (Bell, 1993: 8). As used in this study, this method involved focusing on a sub-group of the population of Tigre-speaking students in Eritrea rather than on the group as a whole (details below).

#### 3.1 The sample

In regard to the topic of study, three major distinctions can be made among the population of Tigre-speaking students:

- (a) Between Muslims and Christians (there are a few);
- (b) Between those who have contacts with Tigrinya speakers and those who do not (or alternatively, between those who live in urban and rural areas respectively); and,
- (c) Between elementary, junior, and high school level students.

Due to limitations of time and resources, however, this investigation focused mainly on Muslims living in an urban area where Tigrinya is widely spoken as a mother tongue and as a second language. A total of one hundred Tigre-speaking students between the age of 12 and 16 participated in this study. Half of them (50%) were from Grade six and the other half (50%) from Grade seven. In terms of gender the total sample was composed of about two-third (66%) males and about one-third (34%) females. They were selected from the Eritrean city of Keren (see Map 1, page vii).

The decision to include such a proportion of the two genders was made after taking a sample of fourteen out of twenty-seven sections in the target school and calculating the ratio of Tigre male-students to their female counterparts. As can be seen from the following table the number of Tigre children in the fourteen sections was 218 in a total of 827 students (i.e. 609 were speakers of Tigrinya, Bilen, etc). Of these, 147 were males and 71 females. In other words, the ratio of the males to the females was found to be nearly 2 to 1.

No. of students		Sample section													Total	
		6 <sup>3</sup>	6 <sup>4</sup>	6 <sup>6</sup>	6 <sup>9</sup>	6 <sup>11</sup>	6 <sup>12</sup>	6 <sup>14</sup>	6 <sup>15</sup>	7 <sup>1</sup>	7 <sup>4</sup>	7 <sup>5</sup>	7 <sup>6</sup>	7 <sup>7</sup>		7 <sup>10</sup>
Tigre	M	8	6	8	12	8	14	13	10	13	15	11	10	8	11	147
	F	5	4	4	4	3	6	7	6	7	6	7	3	3	6	71
Others		39	40	46	28	49	31	38	44	50	39	48	53	57	47	609
Total		52	50	58	44	60	51	58	60	70	60	66	66	68	64	827

*Table 3.1:* Sample sections used to determine the proportion of informants by sex and grade.  
(The statistics were obtained from teachers rosters)

Similarly, the reason for representing an equal number of individuals from the two grade levels in question was based on two observations. First, the number of sections within both grades in the target school was nearly the same: there were 15 Grade-six sections

and 12 sections of Grade seven. Second, based on the information above, the average number of Tigre pupils per section was almost the same across the two grades, about 15 and 17 respectively.

The next table displays the composition of the subjects of this study in terms of grade and sex. It shows that among the total of 100 informants, 32 males and 18 females were from the sixth grade, and 34 males and 16 females from the seventh grade.

Grade	Number of subjects		Total
	M	F	
6	32	18	50
7	34	16	50
Totals	66	34	100

Table 3.2: Composition of the sample in terms of grade and sex.

The method used in selecting each sub-group of the sample can best be described as chance/ convenience sampling. In particular, as many subjects as required were drawn from each grade and sex group in the following two major ways. One was by approaching any of the relevant students in the school compound during break time, before/after class sessions, etc., and asking them to participate in the study. The second one involved requesting some of the teachers to send out the Tigre speakers in their respective classes to be contacted by the researcher for the same purpose. In most cases, the teachers did so during free periods or shortly before the classes were dismissed for the day.

### 3.2 Data collection technique

The main technique of data collection used in this study was the questionnaire method. This method was preferred to the other two which are also most commonly used in language attitude studies, the interview and the matched-guise technique, for the following reasons.

- (i) It was felt that the use of the questionnaire method would help to obtain more reliable information compared to the interview method. This was based on the belief that subjects are more likely to give biased information in interviews due to the presence of an interviewer (e.g. see Botha & Engelbrecht, 1992: 59).
- (ii) Although the use of a matched-guise test (as a major/supplementary technique) could be helpful in obtaining further information, it was not used as it entails greater sophistication in its preparation and implementation. For instance, finding fluent Arabic-Tigrinya/Tigrinya-Arabic bilinguals and getting them to participate as guises would not have been easy.
- (iii) The questionnaire method was favoured on account of its relative affordability in terms of time, finance, and human resources.

Not all the questionnaires were entirely self-administered. Because of lack of familiarity with similar tasks or language-related problems some of the subjects were not able to complete the questionnaires independently. As a result two major strategies were employed to deal with this problem. In the case of the first one, certain informants were interviewed or assisted by their friends who had already filled out one. This strategy was used particularly where the former had difficulty understanding the language in which the questionnaires were printed (Tigrinya). In such instances care was taken to make sure that the student-assistants themselves had understood the contents of the questionnaires very

well. A major means of checking this was by looking at the quality of the questionnaires that they had completed.

The second strategy was employed in cases where the respondents did not have language-related problems in filling out the questionnaires but needed some clarifications at certain points. It involved reading aloud and clarifying the contents of the questionnaires to several subjects (mostly between five and ten) at a time in a classroom specially arranged for this purpose. Doing so had at least two main advantages. First, the subjects had the chance to respond to the questions without being influenced by an interviewer. Second, it was possible to access several respondents in an amount of time which would have been spent in interviewing or assisting a single subject.

This task was carried out by a research assistant and myself. The latter was a bilingual in Tigrinya and Tigre who worked as a teacher in the same school. His presence greatly facilitated the process of data gathering. First of all, it was easy to obtain co-operation from the other teachers and the group of students under consideration due to the relatively closer relationship he had with them (as a colleague and teacher respectively). Besides, where several informants were approached at the same time, one of us could do the above task while the other checked the questionnaires that had been collected for completeness and clarity of information before the subjects had left the spot.

The willingness of the students under consideration to participate in completing questionnaires was greater than expected. Most of them were very eager to fill out one, some even without being asked to. This observation is contrary to what may be anticipated based on what has been noted by Romaine (1995: 302) below:

In many communities questionnaires are unfamiliar and people may refuse to participate because they are intimidated by the uncertainties of the task.

Dorian (1981: 216), for example, notes that all of the refusals given to her were motivated by a feeling of helplessness.

### 3.3 The questionnaires

Each set of questionnaires which was distributed to the subjects had about four pages and 23 major questions (as set out in Appendix A). Some of these questions had one or more sub-items under them. In most cases it took respondents 15 to 20 minutes to complete the questionnaires.

The question items were predominantly closed (structured). Most of them required informants to indicate their response by ticking a box preceding or below their chosen answer. Three major questions, 17, 21, and 22, involved filling in blank spaces with numbers representing rank orders (e.g. 1, 2, 3) or points of a scale (e.g. 1 for “strongly disagree”, 5 for “strongly agree”).

There were at least three main reasons why close-ended type questions were mostly preferred to open-ended ones. One of these had to do with the fact that subjects can respond to such questions more easily and more quickly than if the latter type were used. And this means that a relatively bigger population sample can be covered as well as more number of questions asked, which was the second main reason. Thirdly, data gathered through closed questions are comparatively less difficult to summarize and analyze.

As far as the medium of the questionnaires is concerned, they were originally prepared in English and then translated into Tigrinya. Initially, the plan was to further translate them into the subjects' mother tongue (Tigre) but this idea was dropped for two major reasons. First, doing so seemed to affect the format as well as the content of the original

questionnaires at several points. Besides, it was observed from the piloting (discussed below) that most of the target students could understand Tigrinya. It was found that out of 20 individuals who were selected using a chance sampling method 15 (75%) did not have language-related problems in completing the questionnaires. The rest 5 (25%) had either insufficient or no knowledge of Tigrinya to enable them to complete the task independently. As was discussed previously, those informants who had such problems were assisted/interviewed by student volunteers.

Broadly speaking, the questions which were asked can be classified into three categories in regard to the purpose they were intended to serve. The first category, comprising questions 1-15, aimed at eliciting background information about the subjects. Among these, questions 1-6 were devoted to obtain data related to the sex, age, religion, residential area, the mother-tongue of the respondents as well as their ability in other languages. Item No. 7 and sub-items 7A and 7B attempted to draw information concerning whether and what additional languages they wished to be able to speak, and why.

Questions No. 8, 8A, and 9 sought for data regarding the availability of Arabic and Tigrinya in the subjects' residential areas as spoken media, the relative predominance between the two, and the number of persons in the relevant families who could speak each of them. The next two items were related to whether the target students were encouraged by their parents or siblings to learn these languages (as well as English) and which of the two they had ever learned as a subject previously.

Question No. 12 and the respective sub-questions asked respondents if they had ever learned Arabic outside the public/government school (e.g. in Qur'an or private schools), and why. The following two items attempted to elicit information regarding their frequency of participation in activities related to their religion, particularly reading the

Qur'an and attending mosque, for which Arabic is a central element. The last question in this category, No. 15, served to obtain information pertaining to use of Arabic and Tigrinya among these students in different communicative activities. This includes use of the languages in spoken and written interpersonal communication, reading printed materials such as books and newspapers, listening to the radio/ music, and watching TV/video.

The second category of items tried to measure the subjects' evaluation of these languages (and English, in some cases) with reference to certain attributes, their affective reactions towards them as well as the groups of people most closely linked with each one, and how important the languages were to them for instrumental and integrative purposes. In particular, question No. 16 asked informants to indicate their evaluation of Arabic, Tigrinya, and English by selecting one from each of the following opposite pairs of adjectives: beautiful/ugly, pleasant/unpleasant, interesting/boring, important/unimportant, and valuable/worthless. The next item required them to rank the three languages in question in terms of being easy, beautiful, pleasant, interesting, important, and valuable.

Questions No. 18 and 19 enquired about the extent to which they liked Arabic and Tigrinya compared to English (as languages in general), and speaking each of these three. The next one aimed to elicit data about their feelings towards Arabic speakers in general, Arabic-speaking people in Eritrea, Muslims in Eritrea, Tigrinya-speaking people, and Christians in Eritrea (this last group being predominantly Tigrinya-speakers). Item No. 21 asked them how important Arabic and Tigrinya were to them in connection with getting a job in the future, talking to people, making friends, going to Arab countries, reading the Qur'an, and attending mosque (the last three were relevant to Arabic only).

The third category consists of mainly questions No. 22 and 23 which were intended to provide information most directly related to the research topic. The former questioned the

extent to which respondents agreed/disagreed with statements suggesting that Arabic/Tigrinya should be taught to all children of their own group (Tigre) at school. The last one sought to ascertain which of these languages they would have liked to study as a subject in the future.

It should also be mentioned here that 40 Tigre parents (20 males and 20 females) were approached for supplementary information during the closing ceremony of the target school – June 30, 2002. Apart from four questions related to personal details (sex, age, religion, and mother tongue) they were asked what languages they would have liked their children to study at school and why, and which of the languages Arabic, Tigrinya, and English they would like their children to study in the first, second and third places respectively (see Appendices C and D). The questions were printed and presented in the form of an interview (where the parents were unable to read and write) or self-administered by the informants.

### 3.4 Piloting the questionnaires

Prior to starting to collect the actual data (from the students), a pilot study was carried out on 20 individuals who were selected using the chance sampling technique. The main objectives of the piloting include: to assess the ability of the subjects to fill out the questionnaires independently, and to evaluate the time required to complete each set of questionnaires.

Of particular concern in respect to the first one was the subjects' ability to understand the language in which the questionnaires were printed (Tigrinya), and the clarity of the instructions and question items. With regard to the former it was found that two-third (75%) of these students were able to read and write in Tigrinya and could complete the

task under consideration on their own. Among the remaining one-third, two (10%) could understand this language to some extent but not the other three (15%). As was mentioned above, the actual informants who had such problems were helped by some of those who had already participated in the task. This solution was preferred to face-to-face interview so as to minimize bias of information, especially since I am a Tigrinya mother-tongue speaker.

However, almost all the subjects were unfamiliar with this kind of task, even many of those who had no language-related problems needed some assistance at certain points in the questionnaires. Such respondents either asked for clarification or they tended to leave some questions unanswered. This implied the necessity for the presence of the researcher and/ or a well-informed assistant to provide the required help and make supervision. And so was done as discussed earlier in section 3.2.

It was also found from the piloting that the questionnaires were a bit too long for the informants. They contained a total of 31 major questions and took most of the subjects 20 to 25 minutes to complete, which means slightly more than half a school period. Asked if the questions were too many for them, a majority of the students replied 'yes, to some extent'. So, in the actual study eight of the original items were omitted, thus, decreasing the time demanded from informants to a range of 15 to 20 minutes.

## Chapter 4

### Results of the questionnaires

This chapter presents data which was gathered through the questionnaires discussed in section 3.3 above. In most cases, the information has been presented in tables in the form of question-and-answer (response). To accommodate this format minor changes have been made on a few of the original questions (e.g. in wording). The originals are given in Appendix A.

To begin with, the first two questions in the relevant questionnaire elicited information related to the sex and age of the subjects, respectively. The composition of the informants in regard to these was as in the table below.

Sex	Age (in Yrs)					Sub-totals
	12	13	14	15	16	
M	13%	11%	17%	10%	15%	66%
F	6%	10%	6%	9%	3%	34%
Sub-totals	19%	21%	23%	19%	18%	100%

*N=100*

*Table 4.1: Composition of informants by age and sex.*

This table shows that of the 100 students who participated in this study, 66 were males and 34 females. As far as age is concerned the range was between 12 and 16 years.

The next two questions, No. 3 and 4, were concerned with the religion and residential area of the subjects. The importance of the former has to do with the fact that not all Tigre speakers are Muslims but there are also a few Christians among them (see section

3.1). However, the participants of this study were all Muslims. In terms of settlement patterns they were from five residential areas in the target city, Keren.

Question No. 5 asked the informants what their mother-tongue was. This term, as was explained to the target students in writing as well as orally, referred to the language they had acquired first as children at home. According to this definition all of the students represented in this study were mother-tongue speakers of Tigre. This question was useful in excluding a few children who spoke either Arabic or Tigrinya as their mother-tongue (for the focus of the study was mainly on Tigre mother-tongue speakers).

In the next question, No. 6, the informants were required to list the language(s) they spoke besides their own. The responses have been summarized in the Table below.

<i>Question No. 6</i>	<i>Response</i>							
<b>What languages do you speak besides your mother-tongue?</b>	T	A	T A	T B	ATB	T E	none	N=
	37%	19%	36%	2%	5%	1%	-	100

*Table 4.2:* Languages spoken by informants in addition to their mother-tongue (T= Tigrinya ; A= Arabic; B= Bilen; E= English)

This table shows that, in general, 56% of the subjects spoke one Eritrean language other than their mother-tongue, and the rest 44% two. More particularly, a total of 81% indicated that they could speak Tigrinya, and 60% Arabic. Speaking ability in Bilen was reported by 7%, while there was only one claim (1%) related to that of English.

Question No. 7 asked the respondents if they wished to be able to speak some other languages besides the one(s) they already claimed having knowledge of. In response to this question all (100%) of the subjects said 'yes'. Then they were presented with the sub-question in the following table.

<i>Questions No. 7A</i>	<i>Response</i>								
<b>What other languages would you like to speak ?</b>	E	A	E A	E T	A T	T B	E B	all Eri. Ls	N=
	48%	14%	20%	4%	3%	4%	5%	2%	100

*Table 4.3:* Languages which subjects wished to be able to speak (E= English; A= Arabic; T= Tigrinya; B= Bilen; Eri.= Eritrean).

As indicated in this table 62% of the informants mentioned one language which they wished to be able to speak while the remaining 38% listed two. The most frequently mentioned language in this regard was English, by 77% of the respondents. The next was Arabic, which was reported by 37%. That means by all except for three of those who did not indicate having ability in it. 11% listed Tigrinya as the additional language they wished to be able to speak. According to the reports in Table 4.2 this means more than half (57.9%) of the 19 subjects who could not speak this language. Finally, there were nine informants (9%) who said they had a desire to be able to speak Bilen, while two (2%) claimed ‘all Eritrean languages’ in this regard.

Following this, the informants were asked to state the reason why they desired to know the language(s) they mentioned. The responses have been summarized in the next table.

<i>Question No. 7B</i>	<i>Response</i>						
<b>Why do you want to know:</b>	For communication	To use it abroad	It is a world/ an international L	It is good to know any L	To learn through it / become clever	For religious reasons	N=
<b>English?</b>	19.5%	13%	31.2%	19.5%	16.9%	-	77
<b>Arabic?</b>	37.8%	10.8%	27%	16.2%	-	8%	37
<b>Tigrinya?</b>	100%	-	-	-	-	-	11
<b>Bilen?</b>	100%	-	-	-	-	-	9
<b>all Eritrean Ls?</b>	100%	-	-	-	-	-	2

*Table 4.4:* Reasons why some informants wished to be able to speak English, Arabic, Tigrinya, Bilen or ‘all Eritrean languages’.

Like the preceding one, the sub-question presented in Table 4.4 was open-ended. This means that the target students had to write down a short answer concerning the reason why they wanted to know the language(s) they listed in response to the former. The reasons given with reference to each of the languages under consideration fell into one or more of the six categories shown at the top of the table above.

To begin with, fifteen (19.5%) of the 77 students who wished to be able to speak English stated that they needed it for communication. But they did not specify whether they meant within or outside Eritrea, or both. Some of the typical answers were: 'to use it for communication', 'to communicate through it', 'for talking to other people', and the like. The reason given by other ten informants (about 13%), with reference to the same language, was also related to communication but specifically outside Eritrea. Responses belonging to this category included: 'to use it when I go abroad', 'it will help me when/in case I go abroad', 'to go abroad', etc.

On the other hand, slightly less than one-third (31.2%) of the 77 subjects in question gave answers like: I would like to know English because 'it is an international language', 'it is a language of the world', 'it is (one of) the world's most important language(s)', 'it is spoken in many countries of the world', and so on. Among the rest, fifteen students (19.5%) answered 'because it is good to know any language' while thirteen others (16.9%) gave responses such as: 'to learn through it', 'it is a medium of instruction', 'to become a clever student', etc.

Of the 37 informants who wished to know Arabic as an additional language, fourteen (37.8%) reported that they wanted to use it for communication (as with English); four others (10.8%) gave a similar reason but with particular reference to 'abroad'; ten (27%) mentioned its importance as an international language (again as with English), while six (16.2%) stated that 'it is good to know any language'. Only three (8.1%) related the main

reason to religion: ‘because of religion’, ‘it is the language of my religion’, ‘to know about my religion’.

Unlike the ones related to English and Arabic, the reasons which were given with reference to Tigrinya, Bilen, and ‘all Eritrean languages’ were linked mainly with their communicative function. That means within the borders of the target country due to the limited geographical distribution of these languages at a global level. Tigrinya might be useful for related purposes in some parts of Ethiopia but no clues were obtained from any of the subjects in question in regard to this.

<i>Question No. 8</i>	<i>Response</i>						
<b>Which of these languages is spoken in your area of residence?</b>	T	A	T A	T B	A B	ATB	<i>N=</i>
	35%	2%	39%	6%	8%	10%	100

*Table 4.5:* Percentage reports concerning languages spoken in each informant’s residential area (i.e. besides their mother-tongue). T= Tigrinya A= Arabic B= Bilen

From Table 4.5 it is observed that Tigrinya is more widely spread in the target area compared to Arabic and Bilen. It was reported by 90% of the subjects as being spoken in their respective place of residence. Whereas the response rate related to Arabic in connection with this was 59%, and 24% in respect to Bilen.

But these figures say little about the relative predominance of the languages in a particular area. For instance, any two of them may be common in a given place but either of them could be relatively more so, and vice-versa. With this in mind, the informants were presented with the following question.

<i>Question No. 8A</i>	<i>Response</i>		
<b>Which of these two languages is more commonly spoken in your area of residence ?</b>	Tigrinya	Arabic	<i>N=</i>
	83%	17%	100

*Table 4.6:* Percentage reports pertaining to the relative predominance of Arabic and Tigrinya, as spoken media, in subjects' residential areas.

Although 59% of the target students had reported earlier that Arabic was spoken in their residential area, here, only 17% said that it was more commonly used than Tigrinya. The remaining 83% reported the opposite.

<i>Question No. 9</i>	<i>Response</i>					
<b>How many people in your family (excluding you) can speak:</b>	none	one	two	three	more	<i>N=</i>
	11%	10%	21%	19%	39%	100
	<b>Arabic?</b>					
<b>Tigrinya?</b>	4%	19%	22%	17%	38%	100

*Table 4.7:* Percentage reports in relation to number of persons in subjects' family who could speak Arabic and/ or Tigrinya.

The data in Table 4.7 suggest that one or more persons in 89% of the homes represented by the subjects could speak Arabic and in 96% Tigrinya. According to these response rates there seems to be little difference in regard to the relative distribution of the two languages within the families in question. But, this should not necessarily imply that both are spoken with comparable level of fluency and frequency. As far as frequency of use is concerned, for example, the data in Table 4.12 gives a clue that Tigrinya is much more common than Arabic.

<i>Question No. 10</i>		<i>Response</i>				
<b>Who, among your family members, encourages you to learn:</b>	<b>Arabic?</b>	father	mother	brother(s)	sister(s)	none
		64%	59%	40%	36%	8%
	<b>Tigrinya?</b>	25%	28%	24%	16%	36%
	<b>English?</b>	47%	31%	33%	30%	15%

*Table 4.8:* Percentage of informants who reported that they were encouraged by their parent(s) and/ or siblings to learn Arabic, Tigrinya, and English (Note: multiple answers were permissible in each case).

Table 4.8 shows that all except for eight, or 92%, of the respondents were encouraged to learn Arabic by at least one of their family members. The relevant response rates with reference to Tigrinya and English were 64% and 85%, respectively. In other words, the data suggests that a majority of the families in question give more importance to Arabic instead of Tigrinya or English, and least to the second one.

<i>Question No.11</i>	<i>Response</i>			
<b>Which of the following have you ever learned as a subject?</b>	Arabic	Tigrinya	both	<i>N=</i>
	64%	24%	12%	100

*Table 4.9:* Percentage of informants who had learned Arabic and/ or Tigrinya as a subject in previous years.

Here, it is indicated that all in all about three-quarters of the hundred informants (76%) had taken Arabic as a subject in the previous school years (in one or more of the Grades between 1 and 5). And slightly more than one-third (36%) had learned Tigrinya in this sense.

The target students were also asked, in question No. 12, if they had ever learned Arabic outside the public school. In response to this 88% gave a 'yes' answer while the rest 12% replied 'no'. Of the former 74% had taken Arabic lessons in Qur'an schools and 14% in private language schools. This information was elicited through sub-question 12A.

<i>Question No.12B</i>	<i>Response</i>	<i>%</i>
<b>Why did you learn Arabic?</b>	For religious purposes	67%
	To use it for communication	27.3%
	To go/(use it if I go) abroad	3.4%
	Because I like Arabic	2.3%
		N= 88

*Table 4.10: Reasons for which informants had previously learned Arabic in Qur'an or private schools.*

As can be seen from Table 4.10 a majority (67.7%) of the 88 subjects who had taken Arabic lessons in Qur'an/private schools related the main reason for doing so, to religion. More specifically, most of them said because they needed the language 'for reading the Qur'an'; a few others replied 'because it is the language of my religion/ because of my religion' etc. One of the informants went as far as saying, 'Because he who does not know Arabic is not a Muslim'.

On the other hand, slightly more than a quarter (27.3%) of the subjects under consideration reported that they had learned this language for communicative purposes. However, they did not specify whether they meant to use it within Eritrea, or abroad as was reported by other three informants (3.4%). The remaining two students indicated that they had attended the schools in question because they liked Arabic.

<i>Questions No.13 &amp; 14</i>	<i>Response</i>					<i>N=</i>
	never	1-2 dys	3-4 dys	5-6 dys	ev.day	
<b>How often do you read the Qur'an per week?</b>	3%	13%	16%	24%	44%	100
<b>How often do you go to mosque per week?</b>	6%	12%	7%	23%	52%	100

*Table 4.11: Informants' frequency of reading the Qur'an and mosque attendance per week.*

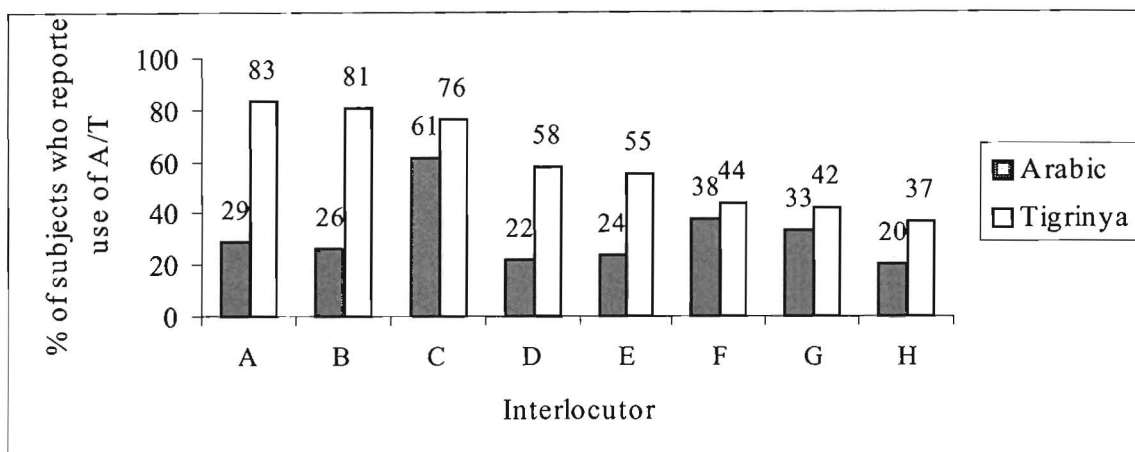
The relevance of the data presented in the table above has to do with the relationship that Arabic has with the informants' religion (Islam). To begin with, all except for three of the

subjects (97%) claimed that they read the Qur'an at least once a week. Based on measures of the mean, median, and the mode the data signifies that each of the students in question reads the Qur'an about five times per week. Generally speaking, the reports show no significant difference frequency of reading the Qur'an and mosque attendance among the target students.

		<i>Q. 15.1 Which of the two languages (Arabic and Tigrinya) do you ever use in speaking to:</i>							
<i>Response</i>		father	mother	brother(s)	sister(s)	relatives	friends	neighbours	strangers
	Arabic		33%	20%	24%	22%	38%	29%	26%
Tigrinya		42%	37%	55%	58%	44%	83%	81%	76%

*Table 4.12:* Use of Arabic and Tigrinya among informants in spoken communication with family and non-family members.

At least three important points are worth noting from the table above. First, response rates indicating use of Tigrinya among the informants in speaking to each of interlocutors on the list were generally higher than those related to use of Arabic, 59.9% versus 32% on average. In other words, the reports show that use of Tigrinya in spoken communication was nearly twice more common than the use of Arabic. Second, the highest response rates in respect to use of the former were obtained with reference to friends (83%), neighbours (81%), and strangers (76%) rather than with family members and relatives of the subjects (about 46% on average). Third, use of Arabic was reported most highly (by 61%) in connection with strangers as opposed to any of the other interlocutors under consideration. The following figure provides an illustration in regard to this.



**Figure 4.1:** Use of Arabic and Tigrinya among informants in spoken communication

A= friends    B= neighbours    C= strangers    D= sister(s)  
 E= brother(s)    F= relatives    G= father    H= mother

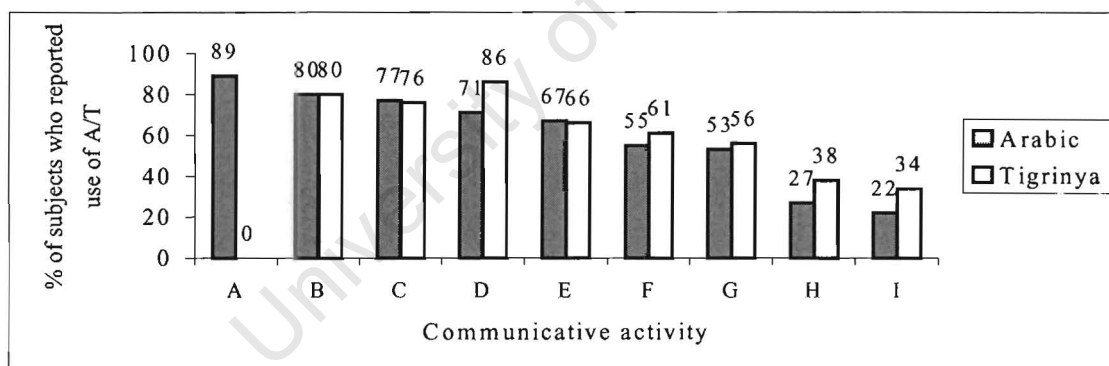
Question No. 15.2									
Which of these languages do you ever use in the following?									
Response	reading:			writing	listening to:		watching		prayers
	books	N.papers	letters	letters	radio	music	TV	video	
A	67%	53%	27%	22%	77%	80%	71%	55%	89%
T	66%	56%	38%	34%	76%	80%	86%	61%	-

**Table 4.13:** Use of Arabic (A) and Tigrinya (T) among informants in written communication, mass media, and prayers.

A comparison of these results against those presented in Table 4.12 above shows that use of Arabic among the target students in communicative activities related to printed and electronic media (i.e. excluding reading and writing letters) was much more common than in speaking. More specifically, while the average response rate in regard to use of Arabic as a spoken medium was 32%, in this case it was 67.3%. Use of this language was in turn higher in listening to and watching electronic mass media than in printed ones (reading books and newspapers). In particular, next to prayers, listening to music rated the highest (80%), then listening to radio (77%) and watching TV (72%).

But use of Tigrinya among the target students in connection with watching TV and listening to music/radio on the one hand, and in speaking to strangers, neighbours, and friends on the other was comparable. The response rates related to each of these were as follows: speaking to friends (83%), to neighbours (81%), to strangers (76%), watching TV (86%), listening to music (80%), and listening to the radio (76%) – See Figure 4.2 below for illustration.

Finally, reports related to each of the two languages in connection with watching video and writing/reading letters were relatively lower. As far as the first one is concerned, the reason could partly be attributed to lack of related facilities (e.g. video machines). With reference to the latter, it is most probably due to the fact that, under normal circumstances, such kind of written communication calls for the use of one’s mother-tongue (here Tigre) rather than some other language.



**Figure 4.2:** Use of Arabic and Tigrinya among subjects in written communication, printed/electronic mass media, and prayer.

A= praying    B= listening to music    C= listening to radio    D= watching TV    E= reading books  
 F= watching video    G= reading newspapers    H= reading letters    I= writing letters

Below is data related to the subjects’ evaluation of Arabic, Tigrinya, and English in terms of linguistic quality, importance, and value. They were asked to indicate their description

of these languages by selecting either one from each of the five pairs of adjectives shown on the list.

*Question No. 16* Indicate your evaluation of Arabic, Tigrinya, and English by selecting one from each of the following five pairs of adjectives.

Language	Subjects' evaluation									
	beautiful	ugly	pleasant	unpleasant	interesting	boring	important	unimp.	valuable	worthless
Arabic	98%	2%	98%	2%	98%	2%	98%	2%	97%	3%
Tigrinya	90%	10%	89%	11%	92%	8%	89%	11%	88%	12%
English	95%	5%	93%	7%	95%	5%	100%	-	100%	-
	N= 100		N= 100		N= 100		N= 100		N= 100	

*Table 4.14:* Informants' evaluations of Arabic, Tigrinya, and English.

It is shown in Table 4.14 above that all three of the languages under consideration were evaluated positively by most of the subjects as being beautiful, pleasant, interesting, important, and valuable (as opposed to ugly, unpleasant, boring, etc). But Arabic scored relatively higher than Tigrinya and even English with reference to the first three linguistic traits: beautiful, pleasant, and interesting. In the case of Tigrinya and English the relevant percentage reports were 90.3% and 94.3% on average, while the corresponding rate for Arabic was 98%. In respect to importance and value English and Arabic scored almost equally. The former was described as being 'important' and 'valuable' by 100% in each case, and Arabic by 97% and 98% respectively. While Tigrinya was evaluated as being so by 89% and 88%. In other words, it was judged less favourably in all cases.

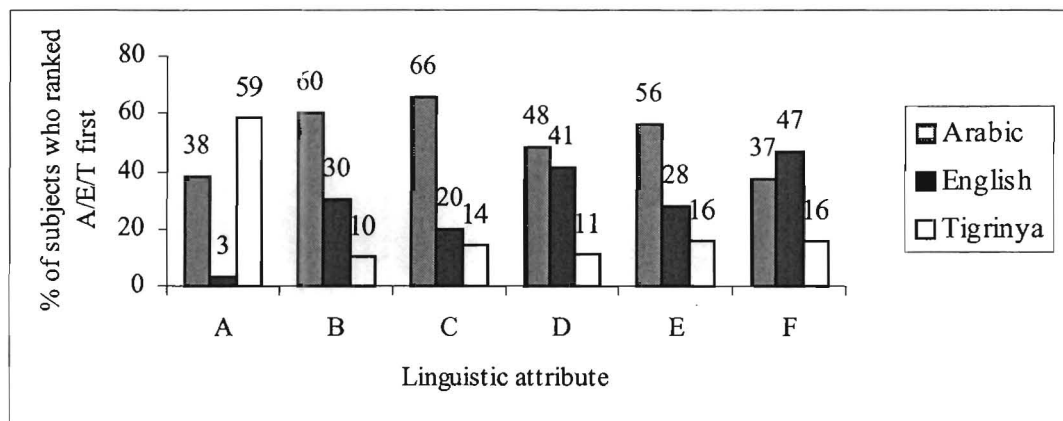
Next, the students were asked how they would rank these languages in relation to each other with reference to five of these same linguistic features and another one. The results have been presented in the following table.

Question No. 17		Response								
		Arabic			Tigrinya			English		
How would you rank Arabic, Tigrinya and English (in relation to each other) with reference to the following adjectives?		1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>
easy		38	42	20	59	38	3	3	20	77
beautiful		60	29	11	10	39	51	30	32	38
pleasant		66	19	15	14	37	49	20	44	36
interesting		48	38	14	11	22	67	41	40	19
important		56	37	7	16	19	65	28	44	28
valuable		37	39	24	16	25	59	47	36	17

Table 4.15: Informants' ranking of Arabic, Tigrinya, and English in terms of being easy, beautiful, pleasant, interesting, important, and valuable (% = f; N=100).

Here is an example of how the data in the preceding table should be read: in terms of being 'easy', 38% of the subjects ranked Arabic first, 42% second, and 20% third compared to Tigrinya and English. Tigrinya was ranked so by 59%, 38%, and 3% respectively and English by 3%, 20%, and 77%. Another way of saying this is that Arabic was considered to be the easiest by 38% of the informants, Tigrinya by 59%, and English by 3%.

With reference to beauty, Arabic was ranked first by a majority of the target students, 60%, English by 30%, and Tigrinya by 10%. Similarly, about two-third, or 66%, indicated that Arabic was the most pleasant, whereas 20% and 14% respectively evaluated English and Tigrinya as being so. The first one was judged as the most interesting by 48%, English by 41%, and Tigrinya by 11%. Likewise, more than half, 56%, of the subjects reported that the most important language among these was Arabic, 28% said it was English, and 16% Tigrinya. But, English rated higher than Arabic and Tigrinya in terms of being the most valuable language, 47% as opposed to 37% and 16% in respective order. Figure 4.3 illustrates these results.



**Figure 4.3:** Informants' ranking of Arabic, Tigrinya, and English in terms of being easy (A), beautiful (B), pleasant (C), interesting (D), important (E), and valuable (F).

Question No. 18	Response			
	more	equally	less	N=
Compared to English, how much do you like:				
<b>Arabic ?</b>	75%	20%	5%	100
<b>Tigrinya?</b>	26%	46%	28%	100

*Table 4.16:* Informants' degree of liking Arabic and Tigrinya compared to English.

In Table 4.16 it is indicated that 75%, of the hundred students under consideration said they liked Arabic more than English, while 20% claimed they liked both 'equally'. There were only five informants, 5%, who said they liked the former 'less'. On the other hand, only about one-fourth of the total sample, 26%, indicated liking of Tigrinya 'more' compared to English. Below half, 46%, said they liked both 'equally' whereas more than a quarter, 28%, reported that they liked Tigrinya relatively 'less'.

<i>Question No. 19</i>	<i>Response</i>				
<b>How much do you like speaking/ would you like to speak:</b>	very much	some extent	a little	not at all	<i>N</i> =
<b>Arabic?</b>	87%	10%	3%	-	100
<b>Tigrinya?</b>	28%	43%	21%	8%	100
<b>English?</b>	63%	21%	13%	3%	100

*Table 4.17:* Informants' extents of liking to speak Arabic, Tigrinya, and English.

The data in this table shows that speaking Arabic was very highly rated by most of the target students. That is, while only 3% said they liked speaking/would like to speak this language 'a little' and 10% 'to some extent', the degree of liking indicated by the remaining 87% was 'very much'. English rated relatively lower in this regard. The relevant responses were: 'very much', 68%; 'to some extent', 21%; and 'a little', 13%. Yet, only 3% reported disliking it. Unlike in the case of Arabic and English, the most frequent response given with reference to Tigrinya was 'to some extent' (43%) as opposed to 'very much' (28%). But reports indicating negative reaction towards speaking this language were still low, 8%.

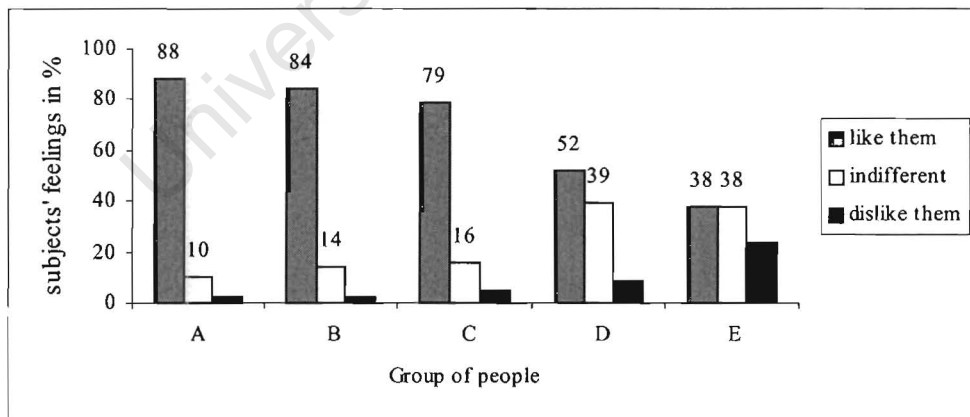
<i>Question No. 20</i>	<i>Response</i>			
<b>What is your feeling towards:</b>	like them	indifferent	dislike them	<i>N</i> =
A. Arabic speakers in general?	88%	10%	2%	100
B. Arabic speakers in Eritrea?	79%	16%	5%	100
C. Moslems in Eritrea?	84%	14%	2%	100
D. Tigrinya speakers in Eritrea?	52%	39%	9%	100
E. Christians in Eritrea?	38%	38%	24%	100

*Table 4.18:* Informants' feelings towards groups of people closely linked with Arabic (A, B, C) and Tigrinya (D, E).

The preceding information was elicited taking into account the close relationship that exists between a given language and the people associated with it. The table shows that

only 3% on average in each case indicated having a negative feeling towards the groups of people which are closely linked with Arabic (A, B, C) either through religion, language, or both. Most of the rest, an average of 83.7% in each case, said they liked the people in question, and 13.3% reported that they were indifferent to (neither liked nor disliked) them.

Percentage reports indicating disliking of Tigrinya speakers among the target students were also extremely low at 9%. Yet, compared to the groups of people associated with Arabic, ‘Tigrinya speakers’ rated so much lower in terms of being liked – i.e. 52% against an average of 83.7%. More than two-third of the informants, 39%, claimed that they neither liked nor disliked this group of people (most of whom are Christians and a minority Moslems). The same response was also given by 38% of the subjects with reference to Christian people in Eritrea (who are predominantly Tigrinya speakers). Another 38% said they liked them, but 24% indicated the opposite (disliking). In other words, the highest rate of negative reactions was related to this group, most probably due to the contrast between the religion of this people and that of the informants (Islam). This has been illustrated in the next figure.



**Figure 4.4:** Subjects’ feelings towards groups of people closely linked with Arabic (A, B, C) and Tigrinya (D, E).

A= Arabic speakers in general      B= Arabic speakers in Eritrea      C= Moslems in Eritrea

D= Tigrinya speakers in Eritrea E= Christians in Eritrea

<i>Question No. 21</i>		<i>Response</i>					
<b>How important are Arabic and Tigrinya to you with reference to the following:</b>		very highly	highly	moderately	a little	not imp.	<i>N=</i>
<b>To get a job in the future?</b>	Arabic	59%	18%	18%	5%	-	100
	Tigrinya	48%	22%	22%	8%	-	100
<b>To talk to people (in Eri)?</b>	Arabic	51%	21%	22%	6%	-	100
	Tigrinya	45%	21%	32%	2%	-	100
<b>To make friends?</b>	Arabic	52%	18%	19%	11%	-	100
	Tigrinya	46%	14%	23%	12%	5%	100
<b>To go to Arab countries?</b>	Arabic	74%	13%	3%	5%	5%	100
<b>To read the Qur'an</b>	Arabic	87%	13%	-	-	-	100
<b>To attend mosque</b>	Arabic	81%	8%	8%	3%	-	100

*Table 4.19:* Informants' evaluation of how important Arabic and Tigrinya were to them in respect to getting a job, talking to people, making friends, going to Arab countries, reading the Qur'an, and attending mosque (the last three pertain to Arabic only).

Presented above is data related to the target students' evaluation of Arabic and Tigrinya regarding how important they were to them for instrumental and integrative purposes. And it is shown that an average of 92.7% in each case said Arabic was moderately to very highly important to them for getting a job in the future, talking to people, and making friends. Tigrinya was also evaluated similarly by an average of 91% in each case. But in all cases, Arabic rather than Tigrinya was reported by relatively bigger percentage as having 'high' to 'very high' degree of importance. The relevant rates were: 77% vs 70% in connection with getting a job, 72% vs 66% in respect to talking to people, and 70% vs 60% with reference to making friends. In terms of having such degrees of importance Arabic scored most highly in relation to the following three: going to Arab countries (87%), attending mosque (89%), and reading the Qur'an (100%) - note that none of these was relevant to Tigrinya.

<i>Question No. 22</i>	<i>Response</i>					
<b>To what extent do you agree/disagree with the following statements?</b>	SD	D	U	A	SA	N=
A. Arabic should be taught to all Tigre children as a subject.	3%	7%	7%	54%	29%	100
B. Tigrinya should be taught to all Tigre children as a subject.	16%	11%	12%	48%	13%	100

*Table 4.20:* Levels of agreement among informants with statements that Arabic/ Tigrinya should be taught to all Tigre children as school subjects (*SD= strongly disagree D= disagree U= undecided A= agree SA= strongly agree*). *NB: instead of abbreviations, numbers 1-5 were used in the questionnaires.*

Here it is indicated that 83% of the subjects were in favour of Arabic to be taught to all children of their own ethnic group as a school subject. That is, 54% agreed (A) and 29% strongly agreed (SA) with the underlying statement. Only 10% were opposed, among which 7% disagreed (D) and 3% strongly disagreed (SD). Whereas the remaining 7% were undecided (U). Similarly, a majority of the respondents, 61%, were in support of the statement that Tigrinya should be taught to the same group of children. Of these, 48% agreed, and 13% strongly agreed. Slightly more than a quarter of the total sample, 27%, were against this statement (11% disagreed and 16% strongly disagreed) while 12% indicated neutrality by opting for 'undecided'.

<i>Question No. 23</i>	<i>Response</i>				
<b>Which of the following two languages would you like to study in the future?</b>	Arabic	Tigrinya	both	neither	N=
	75%	4%	5%	16%	100

*Table 4.21:* Informants' preference between Arabic and Tigrinya to be studied as a subject in the future

Like the one above, this table presents information which is among the most relevant to this study. It shows that all but 16% of the target students were interested in learning at least one of the two languages concerned in the future. In particular, 75% said they would like to learn Arabic, 4% Tigrinya, and 5% both. Put differently this means that all in all 80% were interested in studying Arabic and only 9% in Tigrinya.

The following tables present information which was obtained from the 40 Tigre parents mentioned in section 3.3. Questions 1-4 were related to the sex, age, religion and mother-tongue of these parents. As was stated earlier, half of these informants were males and the other half females. Like the students, they were all Tigre mother-tongue speaking Muslims. According to the responses obtained through the second question, 72.5% of the parents were between the age of 36 and 55 years; 15% were 24-35 years-olds, and 12.5% between the range of 56 and 75 years.

<i>Question No. 5</i>	<i>Response</i>						
<b>What languages would you like your children to study at school?</b>	A E T	A E Tre	A T Tre	A T Tre	A E	A	<i>N=</i>
	55%	17.5%	7.5%	7.5%	7.5%	5%	40

*Table 4.22:* Languages which the parent informants said they would like their children to study at school (A= Arabic; E= English; T= Tigrinya; Tre= Tigre).

Table 4.22 shows that, asked what languages they would have liked their children to study at school, 92.5% (37) of the forty parents mentioned Arabic, 87.5% (35) added also English, 70% (28) Tigrinya, and 32.5% (13) Tigre – i.e. except for five (12.5%) all the parents mentioned three languages.

In continuation to question No. 5, the parents were asked to tell why they would like their children to study each of the languages that they mentioned. The relevant responses have been presented in Table 4.23. It is indicated in this table that, of the 37 parents who said they would have liked their children to study Arabic at school, 59.5% related the main reason to the fact that it is an international language or to its usefulness outside Eritrea. The second most frequently stated reason, mentioned by 29.7%, was related to religion (e.g. 'to know their God/ religion'); 5.4% referred to its importance as a working language of Eritrea, while another 5.4% said it was useful for communication.

Question No.5.1	Response							N=
	So that they may know their religion/ God	It is international L/ useful abroad	For Communi-cation	It is working/ national L (in Eritrea)	It is useful for a job	For knowledge	It is their L/ heritage	
Why (would you like your children to study):								
Arabic?	29.7%	59.5%	5.4%	5.4%	-	-	-	37
English?	-	74.3%	-	-	11.4%	14.3%	-	35
Tigrinya?	-	-	21.4%	35.7%	42.9%	-	-	28
Tigre	-	-	-	-	-	-	100%	13

Table 4.23: Reasons why the parent informants would like their children to study Arabic/ English/ Tigrinya/ Tigre at school.

Among the reasons given with reference to English its status/usefulness as an international language rated the highest, 74.3%. That it would help their children for knowledge (e.g. ‘to know everything’) was reported by 14.3% of the 35 parents who indicated that this language was worth studying for their children. The remaining 11.4% responded that knowledge of English would help their children to get a job in Eritrea.

Tigrinya was most highly reported as having employment-related advantages. That is, of the 28 parents who said they would like their children to study it at school, 42.9% stated as the main reason that it is useful for getting a job. For example, a forty-seven-year-old man among these remarked that ‘...all jobs are in Tigrinya’ (and evaluated the importance of Arabic in this regard as being ‘little’). While 35.7% said ‘because it is the working language/national language’, 21.4% referred to its communicative function within Eritrea.

In connection with Tigre, all thirteen of the parents who listed it as one of the languages they would like their children to study at school mentioned mainly one underlying reason - that it is ‘their’ own language. Among the actual responses were: ‘because it is their language/ their mother tongue/ their paternal language/ their heritage’.

Question No. 6	Response (in %)								
	Arabic			English			Tigrinya		
Of Arabic, Tigrinya, and English which one would you like your children to study in the first place? _____ Second? _____ Third? _____	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>
	60	27.5	12.5	32.5	50	17.5	7.5	22.5	70

Table 4.24: Ranking of Arabic, English, and Tigrinya regarding the order of priority in which the parent informants would like them to be studied by their children (N= 40).

This table shows that 60% of the forty parents said they would like their children to study Arabic in the first place; 32.5% gave the first priority to English, and 7.5% to Tigrinya. English was ranked most frequently second, by 50%, and Tigrinya third, by 70%.

University of Cape Town

## Chapter 5

### Findings and discussion

In this chapter, first, some of the major findings of the research will be summarized. Then they will be discussed under separate sub-headings pertaining to different aspects of language attitudes.

To outline the most important findings:

- All the Tigre-speaking students who participated in this study had favourable attitudes towards multilingualism (the ability to speak two or more languages);
- Attitudes towards Arabic in particular were favourable among most of these students;
- General attitudes towards Tigrinya were comparatively less favourable, but mostly not negative;
- About 80% of the sample indicated a desire to study Arabic as a school subject in the future;
- Only 9% were interested in studying Tigrinya in the future.

#### 5.1 Attitudes towards multilingualism

As outlined above the attitude of all the participants of this investigation towards multilingualism was found to be positive. One major piece of supporting evidence in regard to this is the fact that everyone of them (100%) reported a desire to be able to speak additional language(s) to the ones they had already acquired (68% mentioned one

such language and 32% two). Accepting as valid the claims that 56% were able to speak one Eritrean language other than Tigre, and 44% two, this means that the majority were wishing to become trilingual and the rest to go even beyond this.

At issue is the reason behind such a positive attitude towards multilingualism on the part of these pupils. In connection with this the subjects were asked why they wished to know one language or the other. As shown in Table 4.4 the relevant responses fell under the following six headings:

- For communication;
- To use it abroad;
- It is a world/ an international language;
- It is good to know any language;
- To learn through it/ become cleverer; and
- For religious reasons.

The first four among these are closely related to each other in the sense that they all point to the communicative function of a given language. The first is explicit in this regard. Similarly, when someone says that a certain language (here, Arabic or English) would help him/her when they go abroad we expect, more than anything else, that they are going to use it for communicative purposes in a foreign country (e.g. making reservations, asking for directions, shopping, etc.). But, generally speaking, the underlying statement may also imply that the person in question is hoping to use the language for employment or academic purposes in the host country.

By referring to the international importance of English and Arabic the subjects were inevitably implying that knowledge of these languages would enable them to communicate with other people at national as well as supranational level. Responses such

as 'because it is spoken in many countries of the world', 'it is a language of the world', etc. provide some clues in respect to this. Finally, the fourth group of reasons ('It is good to know any language') can largely be interpreted to mean something like: the more languages you know the less communicative problems you will have during encounters with out-group members or when moving from one linguistic environment to another.

As such the range of reasons underlying the informants' positive attitudes towards multilingualism is narrowed down to three major kinds: communicative, academic, and religious. Among these, reasons linked with communicative needs were the most common (see Table 4.4, page 55). The second category (e.g. 'to learn through it', 'it is a medium of instruction') was associated mainly with English but there were only 13 reports of this kind. The third group of reasons was related to Arabic but the number of reports was insignificant. That is, out of 37 students who wished to be able to speak Arabic, only 3 (8%) linked the main reason to religion.

Speaking in broader terms, the reasons included elements of both instrumental and integrative attitudes. A desire to know English in order to learn other school subjects through it is a clear instance of the former. On the other hand, wishing to be able to speak a given language (here, Arabic, English, Tigrinya, etc.) for interpersonal communicative purposes is a reflection of integrative attitudes. That some of the students under consideration hoped to benefit from knowledge of Arabic or English when/in case they went abroad may be viewed as implying instrumental or integrative motives depending whether one follows the line of classification adhered to by Lukmani (1972) or by Brustal *et al.* (1974) respectively – (both cited in Baker, 1992: 34).

## 5.2 General attitudes towards Arabic and Tigrinya

This section deals with the attitudes of the target students towards Arabic and Tigrinya as languages in general rather than as school subjects in particular, which will be discussed in the next sections. To begin with, information obtained through the questionnaires implies that almost all the participants of the study had favourable attitudes towards Arabic. Among the most relevant data in connection with this were those showing the subjects' evaluation of this language in relation to linguistic quality, importance and value. As can be seen from Table 4.14 (page 4.14) it was judged as being a beautiful, pleasant, interesting, important, and valuable language almost unanimously (by 97.8% on average). With particular reference to the first three it scored relatively higher than English and Tigrinya -- an average of 98% against 94.3% and 90.3% respectively.

This relatively more favourable attitude towards Arabic was also evident in the informants' ranking of these three languages in relation to the adjectives in question. In general, the ranking suggested that there were much higher percentage of respondents who viewed Arabic rather than English or Tigrinya as being the most beautiful, most pleasant, most interesting and most important language (see Table 4.15, page 65). A further confirmation is the fact that 75% the target students said they liked this language 'more' than English (indicated in Table 4.16, page 66). Similarly, the percentage of informants who said they liked speaking/would like to speak Arabic 'very much' was far higher than the percentage of those who reported the same degree of liking with reference to English and Tigrinya -- 87%, 63%, and 28% respectively (see Table 4.17, page 67).

As can be noticed from the above discussions, attitudes towards Tigrinya were comparatively less favourable among a majority of the subjects. Yet, in most cases responses indicating negative reactions towards this language were very low in

percentage. For example, only about 10% on average in each case evaluated it as being ugly, unpleasant, boring, unimportant, and worthless, while the rest described it positively (as being beautiful, pleasant, etc.) - see Table 4.14 on page 64. Similarly, there were only eight subjects (8%) who indicated that they did not like speaking this language at all. Whereas the remaining 92% said they liked speaking it either 'very much' (28%), 'to some extent' (43%), or 'a little' (21%).

The high number of reports in relation to use of Tigrinya in different communicative activities can also possibly be taken as partial proof that most of the sample did not have negative attitudes towards it (see Figures 4.1 and 4.2, on pages 62 and 63). These reports need not necessarily lead to such a conclusion, however, as any given language may be used for various purposes regardless of one's attitude towards it, if circumstances demand. Thus, a certain Tigre person may dislike Tigrinya and still use it for interaction with its mother-tongue speakers or with members of other linguistic group especially if the latter are unable to communicate in Tigre.

Finally, it was suggested on page 28 that attitudes towards a given group of people (social, ethnic, etc.) can affect attitudes towards the language representing that group (Appel & Muysken, 1987: 16). In this investigation the students reacted more favourably to groups of people closely associated with Arabic than to those who are linked with Tigrinya (see Table 4.18). This reflects the fact that they identify more strongly with the former (particularly with Arabic speakers in Eritrea, and Muslims in Eritrea) the most important common denominator being religion. Likewise, the reason why Arabic was viewed more favourably compared to Tigrinya (and English) can to the largest extent be attributed to its association with Islam. Apart from being the medium of their religion it is not significantly related to the Tigre-speaking Muslims in any other important ways. The worldly elements that contribute to this community's strong sense of identity are symbolized by, and embodied in, the Tigre language rather than Arabic.

### 5.3 Attitudes towards studying Arabic as a subject

In the preceding section it was noticed that attitudes towards Arabic as a language were favourable among nearly all the participants of the study. Here the main issue is whether they had also similar attitudes more specifically towards studying it as a school subject, which was the central focus of the study. As far as this is concerned, it was found that most of the students in question were favourably disposed towards studying this language. In particular, 80% indicated that they would have liked to take it as a subject in the future. As can be seen from Table 4.20, about the same proportion of the informants (83%) were also in favour of the statement that 'Arabic should be taught to all Tigre children as a subject'.

Of relevance here are the possible reasons why these pupils were positively oriented towards studying the language concerned. In other words, what advantages were they possibly expecting to get from studying Arabic? In respect to this there are particularly two sets of data which may provide some useful clues. One, those elicited through an open question which asked respondents why they wished to be able to speak Arabic. And, two, those obtained through a close-ended one that required the subjects to indicate how important Arabic was to them in connection with six specific purposes. These have been presented in Tables 4.4 (page 55) and 4.19 (page 69) respectively.

According to the second group of data it appears that there were instrumental as well as integrative motives underlying the positive attitudes towards studying Arabic. For instance, 77% of the informants claimed that this language was very highly/highly important to them with reference to getting a job in the future. Likewise, 77% and 72% respectively said it had similar degrees of importance to them for such integrative purposes as talking to people and making friends. But, response rates were the highest in

connection with going to Arab countries (87%), attending mosque (89%), and reading the Qur'an (100%).

However, some important contradictions can be observed between these claims and the information obtained through the unstructured question. First, out of 37 informants who wished to be able to speak Arabic, only 3 (8%) related the main reason to religion. Second, there was not a single subject among these who implied having anticipations of job-related advantages from knowledge of Arabic.

As far as the first one is concerned, the major reason could probably be because most of the informants had already some knowledge of Arabic which would enable them to practice the basic aspects of their religion. For instance, according to the information in Table 4.11, 97% of the hundred subjects could read the Qur'an. About nine in ten (87%) could also pray in Arabic (see Table 4.13).

On the other hand, the reason why employment-related motives were not attested among the responses to the open item under consideration could possibly be due to two factors. Firstly, the idea of "getting a job" was probably not active in the minds of the subjects for they did respond positively only when reminded of (later). This is likely if their age and grade level is taken into account. Secondly, they were possibly focusing on the less remote benefits of the language, particularly to use it 'for communication' which was reported by 37.8% of the 37 students (most of the other reasons, 54.2%, were also related to this one - discussed in section 5.1). Generally, however, the claims indicated in Table 4.19 concerning the importance of Arabic for employment purposes seem exaggerated. At least, they make this language appear more important than Tigrinya in this respect. Yet, as I show below (p. 84) this does not accord with the reality of the job marked and advertisements for employments. Perhaps Table 4.19 should be seen as an example of the 'questionnaire effect' – that drawing attention to an issue can lead to exaggerated

responses to it that people may not otherwise hold/display. This claim suggests that questionnaires need to be interpreted cautiously in the context of other evaluative approaches to social issues.

To conclude this section, most of the students in this study were interested in studying Arabic as a subject largely for one or both of the following two reasons. One is linked with religion. This could mean to understand the Qur'an better or just to know the language well because, as was hinted at by one of the informants, it seems that the target community views knowledge of this language as an important component of a "true" Muslim. The informant who suggested this said he had learned it at Qur'an school previously 'because he who does not know Arabic is not a Muslim'.

The second one is for communicative purposes within Eritrea or abroad. Although the kind of Arabic used in interpersonal interaction is normally a colloquial as opposed to a formal variety, the respondents have indicated that the latter is also useful for such functions. A particular example is the fact that some of them had learned it in Qur'an/private schools for related purposes (see Table 4.10, page 60). Thus, there is no indication of a purely diglossic situation as described by Ferguson (1959 cited in Appel & Muysken, 1987: 24). According to Ferguson's definition of 'diglossia', each of two varieties of a linguistic system in a speech community serves separate functions. A standardized variety, which he terms H (high), is used for formal (e.g. official, literary and religious) purposes while a vernacular form, termed L (low), fulfils informal communicative functions. As stated by Appel and Muysken the term 'diglossia' has gradually been 'used to refer to bilingual communities in which a large portion of the speakers commands both languages, and in which the two languages are functionally distinguished in terms of H and L (1987: 26)'.

## 5.4 Attitudes towards studying Tigrinya as a subject

It was observed earlier that general attitudes towards Tigrinya were positive among a majority of the Tigre-speaking students under consideration. The current topic of discussion focuses on whether their attitudes towards studying it as a school subject were also similar or not. As with Arabic, this was measured most directly through a couple of items. One of these attempted to assess the informants' reaction to the statement that 'Tigrinya should be taught to all Tigre children as a subject'. The second one was less general and more direct. It required them to indicate whether or not they would have liked to study this language in the future either in preference to or along with Arabic.

Interestingly, these items obtained contrasting results (see Tables 4.20 and 4.21 on page 70). That is, on the one hand, about six in ten respondents (61%) were in support of the above statement - 48% agreed and 13% strongly agreed. In spite of this, however, only 9% of the total sample reported that they were interested in studying Tigrinya as a subject. These results give the impression that about half of the informants were saying something like: "I agree/strongly agree that Tigrinya should be given to all pupils of my own group as a subject, but I am personally not interested in taking it".

An important question then is, why were most of the target students not interested in studying this language? As far as this is concerned, some of the possible reasons could be the following. Firstly, since about eight in ten (81%) were already able to speak it (i.e. according to the data in Table 4.2, page 54), they might consider it unnecessary to take it as a subject. After all, if they can speak Tigrinya, they can also read and write in it because, as was stated in section 1.1.2, it shares the same script with their mother-tongue.

Secondly, they are likely to think that they could develop their Tigrinya ability further through informal learning and give priority to Arabic, instead because the former is more prevalent in their respective areas as a spoken medium. As can be seen from Table 4.6 83% of the subjects reported that it was more common compared to Arabic in this regard, while only 17% reported the opposite. Besides its relative availability, it was also reported as being easier than Arabic by more than half of the informants (see Table 4.15, page 65), hence, implying comparatively less need for formal instruction.

Part of the reason for the general lack of interest in studying Tigrinya could also be attributed to its limited usefulness beyond the national borders. That is, unlike Arabic, it is spoken only in Eritrea and some parts of Ethiopia therefore they are likely to make a strategic decision of studying the one which has greater relevance at supranational level.

Finally, lack of motivation from the relevant parents can be another possible contributing factor. This could mean either that the pupils were not encouraged by their parents to study Tigrinya, or they were given greater encouragement to study Arabic. For example, Table 4.8 (page 59) shows that while 64% of the informants said they were encouraged by their fathers to study the latter, only 25% reported of having received such encouragement in connection with Tigrinya. The same table indicates that the percentage of students who were encouraged by their mothers to study Arabic was about twice lower than those who were encouraged to study Arabic – 28% versus 59%.

Some of the data which was gathered from the forty Tigre parents was also in line with this observation. It was found that 70% of them ranked Tigrinya next to Arabic and English in regard to the order of priority in which they would like their children to study these languages (see Table 4.24, page 73). This is despite the fact that the first one was perceived as being the most important for job opportunities in Eritrea. For example, a

forty-seven-year-old man among these parents remarked that ‘...all jobs are in Tigrinya’, and evaluated the importance of Arabic in this regard as being ‘little’.

In fact, as was noted in section 1.1.3.1, Tigrinya is much more important than Arabic for employment purposes in Eritrea, but the latter is also still useful. The following instances (from my fieldwork notes) can serve as illustrative examples in connection with this. In June 2002 a vacancy announced by USAID in Eritrea in search of a Project Management specialist included among other criteria that fluency in English and Tigrinya was ‘required’ and ‘...Arabic/ other Eritrean languages desirable’. Similarly, CARE International (Eritrea) announcing a post for a short-term consultant for Integrated Food Security project (IFS) outlined: ‘excellent command of English and Tigrinya is essential, knowledge of Tigre and Arabic an advantage’ (*Hadas Ertra*, 18 July 2002). Likewise, the Eritrean Airlines looking for 50 females to be trained as hostesses listed as one of the application criteria that knowledge of English and Tigrinya was required and knowledge of other languages desirable (June 2002).

## Summary

To reiterate the main points, it was found in this study that the attitudes of all the informants towards multilingualism were positive. Everyone of them spoke at least one Eritrean language other than their own, Tigre, and still wished to be able to speak some other one or two. In particular, general attitudes towards Arabic were favourable among most of them. Whereas attitudes towards Tigrinya were relatively less so but still mostly positive. The main reason for the informants' relative favourability of Arabic compared to Tigrinya (and English) was attributed to its association with their religion, Islam.

It was also noted that 80% of the respondents were favourably oriented towards studying Arabic as a subject in the future. The underlying motives appeared to be related mainly to communication (at national and international level) and religion. Conversely, although the majority were in favour of the statement that 'Tigrinya should be taught to all Tigre children as a subject,' only 9% indicated that they would like to take this subject in the future. Four possible reasons were suggested concerning why they rest were not similarly interested: (a) most of them were already able to speak (read and write in) it; (b) their environment provides ample opportunity for developing ability in Tigrinya informally; (c) unlike Arabic, Tigrinya does not have an international status (d) a lack of encouragement from parents.

### **Suggestions for future research**

Language attitude studies are not common in Eritrea and there is a great deal of opportunity for future research in this regard. For instance, it would be interesting to investigate, among others:

- (i) the attitudes of non-Muslim Eritrean students (including Tigre speakers) towards studying Arabic. Based on the findings of this study one may

anticipate relatively less favourable (or even negative) attitudes among these students, because it has no connection with their religion.

- (ii) the relevant attitudes of those students who live in the highland parts of the country (predominantly Tigrinya speakers) where Arabic has little communicative importance.
- (iii) the attitudes towards studying Tigrinya of those Tigre children who, unlike the ones represented in this research, have little/ no opportunity to learn it informally because of their limited contact with its speakers. Such children are found mostly in the rural areas. The major point of interest here is that inasmuch as they may not need this language for interpersonal communication in their area they are likely to require it at least for employment purposes.

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**Appendix A:** English version of the questionnaires

Questionnaire

**Instructions:** Please indicate your response to the following questions by ticking the box representing your chosen answer (e.g. ) or by filling the blank spaces wherever necessary.

Grade & section \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Sex:  M  F 2. Age: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Religion:  Moslem  Christian 4. Residential area (zone): \_\_\_\_\_

5. What is your mother tongue (the language you acquired first as a child)?

Tigre  Tigrinya  Arabic  other ( \_\_\_\_\_ )

6. What languages can you speak besides your mother tongue? \_\_\_\_\_

7. Do you wish to be able to speak more languages?  Yes  No

A. If "yes" what languages? \_\_\_\_\_

B. Why? \_\_\_\_\_

8. Which of the following languages is spoken in your area of residence (besides Tigre)?

Arabic  Tigrinya  Bilen

A. Is it Arabic or Tigrinya which is spoken more predominantly in your area?

Arabic  Tigrinya

9. How many people in your family (excluding you) can speak: none one two three more

Arabic?

Tigrinya?

10. Who among your family members encourages you to study the following languages?

	<u>father</u>	<u>mother</u>	<u>brother(s)</u>	<u>sister(s)</u>	<u>none</u>
Arabic?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tigrinya?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
English?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

11. Which language have you ever learnt as a subject?

- Arabic     Tigrinya     both     neither

12. Have you ever learned Arabic outside the public school?     Yes     No

A. If "yes" where?     Quran school     private Arabic school     other \_\_\_\_\_

B. For what purpose? \_\_\_\_\_

13. How often do you read the Qur'an per week?

- never     1-2 days     3-4 days     5-6 days     everyday

14. How often do you go to mosque per week?

- never     1-2 days     3-4 days     5-6 days     everyday

15. In which of which of the following do you ever use Arabic and Tigrinya?

	<u>Arabic</u>	<u>Tigrinya</u>		<u>Arabic</u>	<u>Tigrinya</u>
<b>Speak to:</b> father	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Read:</b> books	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
mother	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	newspapers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
brother(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	letters	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
sister(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Write:</b> letters	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
relatives	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Listen to:</b> radio	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
friends	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	music	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
neighbours	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Watch:</b> television	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
strangers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	video	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
			<b>Pray</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

16. Indicate your evaluation of Arabic, Tigrinya, and English as languages by selecting one from each of the following pairs of adjectives.

	<u>beautiful/ ugly</u>	<u>pleasant/ unpleasant</u>	<u>interesting/ boring</u>	<u>important/ unimportant</u>	<u>valuable/ worthless</u>
Arabic	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tigrinya	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
English	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

17. How would you rank Arabic, Tigrinya, and English with reference to the following descriptions? (Write 1 for "first", 2 for "second", and 3 for "third").

	<u>easy</u>	<u>beautiful</u>	<u>pleasant</u>	<u>interesting</u>	<u>important</u>	<u>valuable</u>
Arabic	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Tigrinya	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
English	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

18. How much do you like Arabic and Tigrinya as languages compared to English?

	<u>more</u>	<u>less</u>	<u>equally</u>
Arabic	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tigrinya	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

19. How much do you like speaking/  
would you like to speak:

	<u>very much</u>	<u>to some extent</u>	<u>a little</u>	<u>not at all</u>
Arabic?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tigrinya?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
English	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

20. What is your feeling towards these people like: I: like them dislike them am indifferent to them

A. Arabic speaking people in general?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
B. Arabic speaking people in Eritrea?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
C. Followers of Islam in Eritrea?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
D. Tigrinya speaking people in Eritrea?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
E. Followers of Christianity in Eritrea?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

21. How important are Arabic and Tigrinya to you for the purposes listed below?

(Choices: *very highly* (1) *highly* (2) *moderately* (3) *a little* (4) *not important* (5))

	<u>Arabic</u>	<u>Tigrinya</u>
To get a job in the future (in Eri)	_____	_____
To talk to people (in Eritrea)	_____	_____
To make friends	_____	_____
To visit/ live in Arab countries	_____	_____
To read the Qur'an	_____	_____
To attend mosque	_____	_____

22. To what extent do you agree/ disagree with the following statements?

(Choices: *Strongly disagree* (1), *disagree* (2), *undecided* (3), *agree* (4), *strongly agree* (5)).

- A. Arabic should be taught to all Tigre ethnic group children as a subject \_\_\_\_\_
- B. Tigrinya should be taught to all Tigre ethnic group children as a subject \_\_\_\_\_

23. Which language would you like to study as a subject in the future?

- Arabic       Tigrinya       both       neither

*Thank you very much for your co-operation once again  
And I wish you good luck in your exams*

Tedros Hagos Weldemichael

**መስተት**

**መምርሒ:-** ነዞም ኣብ ታሕቲ ዘለዉ ሕቶታት ካብቶም ተዋሂቦም ዘለዉ ኣማራጺ መልሲታት ብምምራጽ (ንኣብነት:-) ወይ ነቲ ክፍቲ ቦታ ብምምላእ መልሶ/ሲዮም::

ደረጃ ት/ትን ፍክልን \_\_\_\_\_ 1. ጸታቲ-  ተባ  ኣን 2. ዕድመ \_\_\_\_\_

3. ሃይማኖት:-  ምስልምና  ክርስትና 4. እትቐመጠሉ ከባቢ (ዞባ) \_\_\_\_\_

5. ቋንቋ ኣደኻኺ (ብህጻንነትካ/ኪ ክትዛረብ/ብሉ ዝጀመርካ/ኪ ቋንቋ) እንታይዩ?  
 ትግረ  ትግርኛ  ዓረብኛ  ካልእ ( \_\_\_\_\_ )

6. ብዝይካ ቋንቋ ኣደኻኺ ካልእ እንታይ ቋንቋ(ታት) ክትዛረብ/ቢ ትኽእል/ሊ? \_\_\_\_\_

7. ተወሰኸቲ ቋንቋታት ክትዛረብ/ቢዶ ትትምን/ዩ?  እወ  ኣይፋል

ሀ. እወ እንተኣልካ/ኪ እንታይ ቋንቋ(ታት)? \_\_\_\_\_

ለ. ስለምንታይ? \_\_\_\_\_

8. ካብዞም ዝሰዕቡ ኣዮኖት ቋንቋታት ኣብ ከባቢኻኺ ይዝረቡ?

ዓረብኛ  ትግርኛ  ብሌን

ሀ. ካብ ዓረብኛን ትግርኛን ብብዝሒ ዝዝረብ ኣዮኖይዩ?  ዓረብኛ  ትግርኛ

9. ካብ ስድራኻኺ ክንደይ እዞም ዝሰዕቡ ቋንቋታት ክዛረቡ ይኽእሉ (ብዘይካኻኺ)?

	ዋላ ሓደ	ሓደ	ክልተ	ሰለስተ	ዝያዳ
ዓረብኛ	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
ትግርኛ	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

10. ካብ ኣባላት ስድራቤትካ/ኪ ነዞም ዝሰዕቡ ቋንቋታት ክትመሃርም/ርዮም መን የተባብዓካ/ኪ?

	አቦይ	እደይ	ሓወይ	ሓብተይ	ዋላ ሓደ
ዓረብኛ	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
ትግርኛ	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
አንግሊዝኛ	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

11. ቅድሚ ሕጂ ከም ዓይነት ትምህርቲ እየናይ ቋንቋ ተማሂርካ/ኪዮ ኔርካ/ኪ?

- ዓረብኛ     ትግርኛ     ክልቲኦም     እይተማሂርኩን

12. ካብ ናይ መንግስቲ ቤት ትምህርቲ ወጻኢ ዓረብኛ ተማሂርካ/ኪዶ ትፈልጥ/ጢ?

- እወ     እይፋል

ሀ. እወ እንተኣልካ/ኪ ኣበይ?     ቤት ት/ቲ ቁርኣን     ናይ ብሕቲ ቤት ት/ቲ

ካልእ( \_\_\_\_\_ )

ለ. ምክንያት መምህራኽኺ እንታይ ነይሩ? \_\_\_\_\_

13. ኣብ ሰሙን ከንደይ ግዜ ቁርኣን/መጽሓፍ ቅዱስ ተንብብ/ቢ?

- ፊጺመ እየንብብን     1-2 መዓልታት     2-3 መዓልታት     3-4 መዓልታት  
 5-6 መዓልታት     ኩሉ መዓልታት

14. ኣብ ሰሙን ከንደይ ግዜ ናብ መስጊድ/ቤት ክርስቲያን ትኸይድ/ዲ?

- ፊጺመ እይከይድን     1-2 መዓልታት     2-3 መዓልታት     3-4 መዓልታት  
 5-6 መዓልታት     ኩሉ መዓልታት

15. ንቋንቋ ዓረብኛን ትግርኛን ካብዞም ኣብ ታሕቲ ዘለው ነዮንቶም ትጥቀሙ/ምሉ?

	<u>ዓረብኛ</u>	<u>ትግርኛ</u>		<u>ዓረብኛ</u>	<u>ትግርኛ</u>
<b>ምዝራብ ምስ:-</b>			<b>ምንባብ:-</b>		
አቦ	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	መጻሕፍቲ	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
አደ	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	ጋዜጣ(ታት)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
ሓው(አሕዋት)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	ደብዳቤታት	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
ሓብቲ(ሓሓት)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>ምጽሓፍቲ:-</b>		
አዝማድ	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	ደብዳቤታት	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
አዕሩኽ/መሓዙት	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>ምስማዕ:-</b>		
ጎረባብቲ	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	ረድዮ	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
ሓላፍቲ መንገዲ	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	ደርፊ(መ-ዚቃ)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
			<b>ምዕዛብ:-</b>		
			ቴሌቪዥን	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
			ቪዲዮ	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
			<b>ምጽላይ:-</b>		
			(ኣብ ገዛ)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

16. ነዞም ዝሰዕቡ ቋንቋታት ብኸመይ ትገልጹም/ጸብዮም? ንኣብነት፡ ጽቡቕ ወይስ ሕማቕ?

	ጽቡቕ/ ሕማቕ	ጥዑም/ ዘይጥዑም	መሳጢ/ ኣሰልካዊ	ኣገዳሲ(ኣድጋዪ)/ ዘይኣገዳሲ	ዘርብሕ/ ረብሓ ኣልቦ
ዓረብኛ	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
ትግርኛ	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
እንግሊዝኛ	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

17. ኣብ ታሕቲ ንዘለው ቋንቋታት ነዞም ዝሰዕቡ ቅጽላት ብዝምልከት ካብ ቃዳማይ ክሳብ ሳልሳይ (1-3) ስርዓ/ዲዮም፡፡ ንኣብነት፡- ኣየናይዩ ካብ ሰለስተ-ቲያም ዝቐለለ (1)? ካልኣይክ (2)? ሳልሳይክ (3)?

	ቀሊል	ጽቡቕ	ጥዑም	መሳጢ	ኣገዳሲ	ረብሓ ዘለዎ
ዓረብኛ	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
ትግርኛ	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
እንግሊዝኛ	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

18. ቋንቋ ዓረብኛን ትግርኛን ምስ እንግሊዝኛ ኣነጻጸርካ/ኪ ክሳብ ክንደይ ትፈትዎ/ዊዮ?

	ዘያዳ	ማዕረ	ዝውሓድ
ዓረብኛ	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
ትግርኛ	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

19. በዞም ኣብ ታሕቲ ዘለው ቋንቋታት ምዝራብ ክሳብ ክንደይ ደስ ይብለካ/ኪ፡-

	ኣዚዩ	ብመጠኑ	ቁሩብ	ፈጻሙ ደስ ኣይብለን?
ዓረብኛ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
ትግርኛ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
እንግሊዝኛ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

20. ኣብዞም ዝሰዕቡ ሰባት ዘለ-ካ/ኪ ኣረኣጊዮ ክመይ ይመስል?

	እፈትዎም	ኣይፈትዎምን(እጸልኦም)	ኣይፈትዎም ኣይጸልኦም
ሀ. ዓረብኛ ዝሃረቡ ሰባት ብኣፈሻ	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
ለ. ዓረብኛ ዝሃረቡ ሰባት ኣብ ኤርትራ	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
ሐ. ተኸተልቲ ምስልምና ሃይማኖት ኣብ ኤርትራ	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
መ. ትግርኛ ዝሃረቡ ሰባት ኣብ ኤርትራ	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
ሰ. ተኸተልቲ ክርስትና ሃይማኖት ኣብ ኤርትራ	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

21. ዓረብኛን ትግርኛን ነዞም ኣብ ታሕቲ ተዘርዚሮም ዘለው ብዝምልከት ንኖኻሺ ዘለዎም ኣገዳስነት ክሳብ ክንደይ እዩ? (ኣማራጺ መልስታት:- ኣዚዩ ልዑል (1) ልዑል (2) ግኣተዓይ (3) ትሑት (4) ኣገዳስነት የብሉን (5))

	<u>ዓረብኛ</u>	<u>ትግርኛ</u>
ስራሕ ንምርካብ (ኣብ መጻኢ)	_____	_____
ምስ ሰብ ንምዝርራብ (ኣብኤርትራ)	_____	_____
ኣዕናኽ/ መሓዙት ንምጥራይ	_____	_____
ናብ ኣዕራብ ሃገራት ንምኻድ	_____	_____
ቁርኣን ንምንባብ	_____	_____
ኣብ መስጊድ ንምስታፍ	_____	_____

22. ነዞም ኣብ ታሕቲ ዘለው ኣሳባት ከመይ ትሰማማዓሉም? (ኣማራጺ መልስታት:- ኣትሪሪ እቃዎም (1) እቃዎም (2) ርግጸኛ ኣይኮንኩን (3) እሰማማዓሉ (4) ኣትሪሪ እሰማማዓሉ (5))::

- ሀ. ቋንቋ ዓረብኛ ንኹሉም ቆልዑ ትግሪ ከም ዓይነት ት/ቲ ክወሃብ ኣለዎ \_\_\_\_\_
- ለ. ቋንቋ ትግርኛ ንኹሉም ቆልዑ ትግሪ ከም ዓይነት ት/ቲ ክወሃብ ኣለዎ \_\_\_\_\_

23. ንመጻኢ ነዩናይ ቋንቋ ከም ዓይነት ትምህርቲ ክትመሃር/ሪዮ ምደለኻሺ?

- ዓረብኛ
- ትግርኛ
- ክልቲኦም
- ዋላተዶ (ኣይደልን)

የቐንደይ: ንምትሕተጠርካሺ ደጊመ የመሰግን  
 ኣብ ፈተናኻሺ ከኣ ዓወት እትምነዮልካሺ  
 ቲድሮስ ሓጎስ ወልደጊኣኤል

Questionnaire

Hi, my name is Tedros. I am a university student. Presently I am conducting language-related research on Tigre-speaking students. Since I also need some supplementary information from Tigre parents, could you please help me by answering the following few questions? Thank you.

1. Sex:  M  F      2. Age \_\_\_\_\_      3. Religion:  Muslim  Christian

4. What is your mother tongue? \_\_\_\_\_

5. What languages would you like your children to study at school?

- 1. \_\_\_\_\_ Why? \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. \_\_\_\_\_ Why? \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. \_\_\_\_\_ Why? \_\_\_\_\_

6. Of Arabic, Tigrinya and English, which one would you like your children to study in the first place? \_\_\_\_\_ Second? \_\_\_\_\_ Third? \_\_\_\_\_

*Thank you for your co-operation*

መሕትት

ሰላም ጥዕና ይሃበለይ፣ ስመይ ቴድሮስ እበሃል። ተማሃራይ ዩኒቨርሲቲ እየ። አብዚ እዋንዚ ንቋንቋታት ብዝምልከት አብ መንጎ ተማሃሮ ብሄረ ትግረ መጽናዕቲ አካይድ አሸኹ። ተወሳኺ ሓበሬታ ካብ ወለዲ ብሄረ ትግረ የድልየኒ ስለገኸኩ፣ እዘን ቁሩብ ሕቶታት ብምምላሰዶ ምተሓባበርካ/ኩ? የቐንየለይ።

1. ጾታዬ  ተባ  አን 2. ዕድሙዬ \_\_\_\_\_

3. ሃይማኖትዬ  ምስልምና  ክርስትና

4. ቋንቋ አደኻኺ እንታይ እየ? \_\_\_\_\_

5. ደቐኻኺ አብ ቤት ትምህርተ እንታይ ቋንቋታት ክመህሩ ትደል(ዪ)ዮም?

- 1. \_\_\_\_\_ ስለምንታይ? \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. \_\_\_\_\_ ስለምንታይ? \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. \_\_\_\_\_ ስለምንታይ? \_\_\_\_\_

6. ካብ ዓረብኛ፣ ትግርኛን እንግሊዝኛን ደቐኻኺ አብ ቤት ት/ቲ ብቐዳምነት ክመሃሩዎ ተደል(ዪ)ዮ አየናይየ? \_\_\_\_\_ ካልአይከ? \_\_\_\_\_ ሳልሳይከ? \_\_\_\_\_

ስለ-ምትሕብሃርካ/ኩ የቐንየለይ