

**ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY  
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES  
FACULTY OF LANGUAGE STUDIES  
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH**

**AN EXPLORATION OF TEACHING ORAL SKILLS IN  
ENGLISH THROUGH COMMUNICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN  
RAYA TIMUGA SECONDARY SCHOOL: GRADES 11 AND 12  
IN FOCUS**

**HAILU KEBEDE**

**MAY 2011**

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**BY HAILU KEBEDE**

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## **Abstract**

*The purpose of the study was to explore the teaching of oral skills in English through communicative activities employed particularly in Raya Timuga Preparatory School. Specifically, the study was intended to assess students oral communication', examine whether the teacher uses a variety of communicative activities while teaching oral skills and to find out the availability of special programs designed to enhance students' oral communication.*

*In order to achieve the objectives of the study, a descriptive survey method was used and the data were gathered through questionnaire, classroom observation, interviews and content analysis. Both open-ended and close-ended questionnaire was distributed to the sample students and semi-structured interview questions were employed with the available English teachers and purposefully selected students. Observation and content analysis were also held based on checklists and chosen criteria in accordance with the objective of the study.*

*Based on the information gathered through the above instruments and its analysis and interpretation, the findings of the study revealed that teachers and students did not play their roles as stated by modern methods such as the communicative language learning and teaching. The study further revealed that teachers' method of teaching, lack of backgrounds knowledge students' fear of making mistakes, lack of authentic communicative activities, lack of well organized programs which were the major factors that inhibit students' oral communication. Finally, based on the implication of the findings, recommendations were made for language teachers, text-book designers and bodies concerned.*

# **CHAPTER ONE**

## **1. Introduction**

### **1.1 Background of the Study**

It is evidently observable that the trend of globalization is leading to closer relationship between countries. In this context, the English language plays a prominent role as a bridge apart from other languages. Thereby, it is the world's most widely studied foreign language. For example, in developing countries like Ethiopia, the English language is the principal foreign language taught where it has a high status as a medium of instruction in higher institutions and secondary schools. Secondary school students learn the language as a subject and it is used as a medium of instruction for other subjects.

The mastery of English language skills in general and oral skills in particular is a priority for many second or foreign language learners. Learners consequently evaluate their success in language learning as well as the effectiveness of their English course on the basis of how well they feel they have improved their spoken language proficiency (Richards1990).

Relating to this, Hymes (1972) states that the ability to communicate properly should be cultivated in language teaching, and that students should learn how to use the language in their daily communication in order to demonstrate their mastery of language proficiency.

Harmer (1991) states that oral communicative activities are those which are designed to provide spoken communication between the teacher and the students and among students themselves. Then they will be successful in inspiring free and spoken language use.

Richards (1990) emphasizes that students' language proficiency can be improved through the interaction between the teacher and the students, and students among themselves in the real life and authentic communication contexts.

Supporting this, Stern (1983) argues that communicative activities give students a virtual experience of functioning through realistic discourse in the target language.

Howatt (1984) states that in the interpretation of communicative language teaching, the heart of language teaching lesson is the communicative activity itself. In relation to this, Rivers (1987) points out that students will use language spontaneously and communicatively if they learn the target language in meaningful situations.

Such activities as a whole, stress the importance of providing language learners with more opportunities to interact directly using the target language.

Therefore, students should be exposed to ample opportunities to use the language themselves for communicative purposes.

## **1.2 Statement of the problem**

Speaking is the mode of communication most often used to express opinions, make arguments, offer explanations, transmit information, and make impression upon others. Chaney (1998) defines speaking as the process of building and sharing meaning through the use of verbal and nonverbal symbols in a variety of contexts.

Speaking is the crucial part of second language or foreign language teaching and learning. It is a skill by which students are most frequently judged, and through which they make or lose friends (Bygate 1987).

He further clarifies that students often need to be able to speak with confidence in order to carry out their most basic transactions.

However, the role of teaching of speaking has often been underestimated and language teachers continue teaching speaking through repetition of drills and memorization of dialogues though the goal of teaching speaking is to improve students' oral communicative skills. Supporting this Richards and Lockhart (1994) specify that speaking in traditional methodologies usually meant repeating after the teacher, memorizing a dialogue or responding to drills.

As a result, secondary school students do not have enough proficiency of English to communicate with others.

This can be attributed to a several factors.

Byrne (1986) underlines that in order to develop students' oral skills teachers have to cope with a number of obstacles, such as size of the class, classroom arrangements (which rarely favor communication), number of hours available for teaching the spoken language, the syllabus, and particularly examinations which discourage students from giving attention to the spoken language.

For instance, Strevens (1983) specifies that time budgeted for teaching and learning the spoken language is not sufficient. Consequently, oral skills are persistently neglected. This leads to students' inadequacy and lack of proficiency in oral communication (Ibid).

Most of the classroom lessons are teacher- fronted and students do not have chance for discussions. This, in turn, inhibits students' confidence when try to communicate with their peers orally.

Relating to this, Byrne (1986) points out that our main concern as language teachers is not to inform our students about the language, but to develop their abilities to use the language for a variety of

communicative purposes.

Teachers are like skillful conductors of an orchestra, giving each of the performers a chance to participate and monitoring their performance to see that is satisfactory (Ibid).

With a similar view, Marcer and Swan (1996) state that a school teacher is one who guides his or her students into active participation in a meaningful discussion. The process of teaching and learning depends on the creation of shared experience and joint understanding.

We should also be aware of that students and teachers have different attitudes towards the teaching and learning of spoken language. Thus many high school students believe that they are in the classroom to be taught and that teaching means imparting of knowledge. In other words, students still usually see the role of the English teacher as primarily that of an instructor (Hill and Holden 1989).

Moreover, students learn English just to pass exams and teachers mostly help them to achieve this goal.

Concerning the factors contributing to this problem, the researcher believes that English language teachers' teaching methodology is responsible for the existing problem. For, teachers teach more language inputs like grammar and vocabulary than oral skills, the teaching of oral skills is not even supported with authentic communicative activities. Therefore, the method that classroom teachers employ in the teaching of oral skills through interaction among students is almost negligible. Students are not given chance in and outside of the classroom to interact among them. As a result, they lose motivation and confidence to practice their oral skills.

Supporting this Littlewood (1981) points out that we must also remember that we should focus in developing the learners' ability to take part in the process of communicating through language use rather than with their

perfect mastery of individual structures.

Teresa, Kanagy and Falodun (1993:19) state that communicative activities have been quite popular in teaching English as a second language, but they seem much less well-known in foreign language teaching.

Therefore, the afore-mentioned problems motivated the researcher to conduct a study on the teaching of oral skills through the use of communicative activities.

### **1.3 Objectives of the Study**

#### **1.3.1 General objective**

The general objective of the study is to explore the teaching of oral skills through communicative activities employed in Raya Timuga Secondary School with particular reference to Grades 11 and 12.

#### **1.3.2 Specific objectives**

Specifically, the study attempts to:

- assess teachers' theoretical orientation and practical application of the teaching of oral skills;
- examine whether the teachers use a variety of communicative activities while teaching oral skills; and to
- find out whether teachers design an English Day or book land club to enhance students' oral skills. Book land/English club is a special program prepared out of the usual classes. For instance, it can be held on weekends. The availability of an English day or discussion club will promote students' oral communication.

### **1.4 Significance of the Study**

It is undeniably true that the teaching of oral skills can be improved if we have a better understanding of implementing communicative activities.

Therefore, the researcher believes that the study will be significant to foreign language students of English because it will help them understand more about communicative activities while they practice oral skills.

In addition to this, it will help them to reflect on their oral skills and may influence them to improve these skills.

Furthermore, it will be practically useful to foreign language teachers of English as it will enable them to identify various issues such that they can reflect on the issue and problems of teaching oral skills to their students in the EFL classes.

### **1.5 Scope of the Study**

The study was delimited to Grades eleven and twelve students in Raya, particularly those of Timuga Secondary School students. These grades were chosen because it is where students begin preparation for entering into higher education and where they need to develop language skills in general and oral communicative skills in particular.

According to the school record office, there were four sections with a total number of 140 preparatory students in the school. Therefore the study proposed to cover these sections of the currently enrolled 11 and 12 grade students at Timuga Secondary School. Due to time and other constraints the study was confined only to exploring the teaching of oral skills through communicative activities employed in Timuga preparatory English classes, (i.e. Grades 11 and 12).

### **1.6 Limitation of the study**

The students under the target school were in their break time when the researcher went to conduct the study. As a result, he was obliged to wait for three additional weeks until the students began their class.

The researcher believes that exploring the teaching of oral skills requires

longer time to observe the overall activities of the teachers and the students in the actual classroom.

In spite of the limitation of time and financial resources the researcher did his best to conduct the study as much comprehensively as possible. He attempted to target the most out of the limited resources and sample subjects.

### **1.7 Organization of the Study**

The study is organized in five chapters. The first chapter presents a brief account on the research problem, followed by objectives, significance and scope of the study. Chapter two discusses the review of related literature. It assesses basic concepts of oral communication, techniques of teaching oral skills, problems students face, and types of communicative activities.

Chapter three presents the methodology adopted for this study. It specifically map out, target population, tools of data collection, analysis and interpretation of data collected for the purpose of the study.

Chapter four is the analysis and interpretation of the data. So, it reveals the interpretation and ideas of data collected through the instruments. The last chapter provides the conclusion and recommendations of the study. At the last part sources, references and appendices are given.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **2. Review of Related Literature**

#### **2.1 The Concept of Communication**

The word communication is derived from the Latin terms 'cummunis' (to make common) and 'communicare' (to share). Hence, communication is defined as the exchange of information, thoughts, ideas, and feelings. ([http://rodigo75\\_wordpress.com/2011/01/21/ understanding the nature- of- oral- communication](http://rodigo75_wordpress.com/2011/01/21/understanding-the-nature-of-oral-communication)).

Communication is complex. As a result, scholars and linguists defined it differently.

For instance, Hybels and Weaver (1998) state that communication is any process in which people share information, ideas, and feelings to construct, establish relations and build understanding. Halliday (1978) remarks that communication is more than an exchange of words.

Communication is viewed as the process of understanding and sharing meaning. Communication composes sets of activities that operate in the perception, interpretation and comprehension of meaning of verbal and nonverbal behavior of individuals (Pearson and Nelson, 2000).

Rahman (2010) (as cited in *ESP*, Vol. 9 No. 27) defines communication as a dynamic, interactive process that involves the effective transmission of facts, ideas, thoughts, feelings and values. Therefore, communication is understood as a dynamic and systematic process of sharing meaning and understanding meaning through verbal and nonverbal exchange between individuals in interaction within a given context (Platter 1981).

### **2.1.1 Oral Communication**

Communication can be oral or written. Written communication is an exchange of ideas through the written medium, but oral communication is the spoken interaction between two or more people. Spoken language by its very nature implies at least two immediate participants, a speaker and a listener.

Oral communication is the art of expressing and exchanging ideas in speech. It is the ability to compose, critically analyze, present and deliver information through verbal and nonverbal interactions. Oral communication requires the background skills of presenting, audience awareness, critical listening and body language.

(<http://Sydney.edu.au/science/universescience/projectskills/jantria/communication.html>).

Oral communication is a two-way process between speakers and listeners and it involves the ability of speaking and understanding. The speaker has to encode the message he/she wishes to convey in appropriate language, while the listener is helped by prosodic features such as stress, intonation, facial expressions, body movements and gestures (Bygate 1987). Oral communication is a unique and learned rhetorical skill that requires understanding what to say and how to say it.

Therefore, oral communication skills are a set of abilities enabling individuals to be confident and competent communicators. They equip students to efficiently comprehend, criticize and analyze information and communicate clearly.

## **2.2 Techniques of Teaching Oral Skills**

Currently, linguists, and EFL and ESL teachers agree that students learn a foreign language/second language by interacting. Communicative language teaching and collaborative learning serve this purpose best.

For, communicative language teaching is based on real life situations that require communication. By applying this method in EFL and ESL classes, students will have the opportunity of communicating with others in the target languages.

([http://istesis-org/articles/kai-teaching speaking.htm](http://istesis-org/articles/kai-teaching-speaking.htm)).

However, there are still teachers who rely on the traditional approach in which the focus is in the teaching of structures and forms of the language as opposed to meaning.

Atikns, Hailom and Nuru (1995) state that in the traditional approach, the emphasis is on explanation and knowledge of grammar. On the contrary, they argue that knowledge of grammar by itself will not guarantee effective use of language since there are other nonlinguistic variables which affect the choice of language forms in real life communication.

Therefore, interactive ability or communicative competence is viewed as involving both knowledge of grammar and the context where communication takes place. The Amity teacher's Tool Kit (2003) has pointed out five golden rules with regard to the teaching of oral skills as discussed below.

### **a. Give Students much Opportunity of Practice Speaking**

One of the best ways to improve students' oral communication is through giving lots of opportunities for practice. Students will not improve their

oral communication unless they practice. Kramsch (2006) points out that teachers should set up the conditions under which learners learn to learn. This means that teachers have to provide maximum opportunity to students to speak the target language by creating a rich environment that promotes collaborative work, authentic materials and shared knowledge.

Supporting this, Swain (1985) clarifies that we learn to speak by speaking and this is applicable to teachers as well as to students. The more you practice, the more you improve your oral skills. In a similar view, Brown (1994) states that students should be given adequate opportunities to initiate their oral communication.

#### **b. Provide Ample Listening Practice**

Speaking is an interactive skill unless uninterrupted oral presentation is given. Students who do not listen well could not speak the language effectively. This means students who understand well but speak less are better than those whose speaking skill exceeds their listening comprehension.

(<http://www.Amityfoundaton.Org.page,php?> Page- 247).

Widdowson (1978), as cited in McDonough and Shaw (1993), states that:

*What is said is dependent on an understanding of what else has been said; and it is this reciprocal exchange pattern which becomes an important for learners to be exposed to practice at various stages of their language career.*

There is a clearly an overlap in the interaction which takes place between the speaker and listener for the listener has to interpret the speaker's idea (Ibid).

In relation to this, Brown (1994) and Harmer (1991) argue that teachers have to capitalize on the natural link between speaking and listening. The listener must pay attention to understand the speaker's goal and give response.

### **c. Create Opportunities for Real Life Communication**

Rivers (1984) states that teachers can create authentic practice environment within the classroom. This relaxed and enthusiastic atmosphere stimulates interaction which is essential to successful language learning.

Piccolo (2010) argues that teachers talking time must be kept to a minimum in EFL and ESL classes. If this is so, students will have the opportunity to speak as often as possible. Allocating much time to students talking can help create the best environment for practice.

Therefore, students should be given opportunities to express their own ideas, especially to talk about topics they are interested in.

### **d. Extend Range of Topics**

Ellis (1983) as cited in Nunan (1991) suggests that students use an expansion strategy to extend their messages discourssally rather than structurally

The development of speaking skills can be viewed as an expanding of a circle with students at the center. Firstly, topics which are relatively concrete, conceptually simple, close and familiar to the students will be discussed. These are topics of daily life. Vygotsky (1978) calls this context the 'zone of proximal development', a level of development attained when children engage in social behavior. Then, as students'

skills advance, they should be encouraged to practice talking about topics a little further out of their circle.

Following this, topics which are abstract, conceptually complex will be discussed. Krashen (1983) as cited in Richards and Rodgers (1986) states that acquisition will be created when students are exposed to a situation a little ahead of their current level (i+1).

#### **e. Build Discussions Skills**

Naturally, speaking and listening skills do not go separately. So, one important aspect of building oral skills is learning how to interact with other people effectively in English. Some of the specific skills needed for this context include:

- Clarification: explaining what you mean when others might not understand you;
- Persuasion: when other might not agree with you;
- Requesting: eliciting information;
- Drawing other people to conversation: Giving initiatives for interaction; and
- Change topic: when the topic is not interesting.

Therefore, by practicing these sub- skills, students can develop their discussion skills.

### **2.3 The Necessity of Integrating Macro Skills**

McDough and Shaw (1993) state that in our daily life, we can observe that we rarely use language skills in isolation, but in conjunction. Natural skills integration will hopefully show learners that the skills are rarely used in isolation outside of the classroom (Ibid).

Harmer (1991, 52) states that:

*Speaking and listening usually happen simultaneously and people may read and write at the same time when they make notes ...*

The author further states two main reasons to prove the ineffectiveness of teaching macro skills separately.

Firstly, one skill cannot be taught without the integration of the other skills. For instance, it is impossible to speak in a conversation if you do not listen to as well, and people seldom write without reading. Secondly, people may use different skills while learning the same subject, but still there is integration of skills.

For example, a student who listens to a lecture may take down notes and then may write a report of the lecture. Again, this student may describe the lecture to his partners (Harmer, 1991).

Teaching language by integrating macro skills creates a context where language is taught as communication. Thus, language teaching becomes meaningful, purposeful, and motivates students to learn language by using language (McDough and Shawl, 1993).

Therefore, EFL teachers should integrate the four basic or macro skills to enhance students' oral communication.

## **2.4 Factors that Hinder Students' Oral Communication**

Most of the times ESL/EFL students fail to express their ideas, feelings and thoughts in English as a result of different factors. The main factors include the following.

### **2.4.1 Affective Factors**

#### **a. Stage fright**

This often happens when students are too shy to take part in oral discussion. By remaining silent they may develop excellent listening comprehension, but little ability to express themselves orally. Quite often they are afraid of losing face by making mistakes in English (Dobson 1988). The fear of losing face prevents the students to express what they want to say. EFL students tend to conceal their mistakes and weaknesses for fear of making mistakes/ fail to find suitable words. To protect themselves from being laughed at, they are reluctant to speak. So, there is a vicious circle, the less they speak, the less they improve their speaking and the more they are afraid of speaking.

(<http://itesis.Org/Teaching>).

As a result, these students should be helped to overcome their fears to speak. Teachers should tell students that making mistakes is natural and everyone in the class makes mistakes. When the shy students understand this, they will become willing to join discussions.

#### **b. Lack of Confidence**

Students with lower confidence speak so quietly that they can't be heard. Via (1972) as cited in Dobson (1998) states that students have a good, strong voice when they speak their own language, but suddenly when they start speaking English the voice gets weak and you can hardly hear them. He further points out that to speak in loud voice gives confidence just as 'Judo/ Karate' making an explosive sound as you strike gives you extra energy, extra strength and confidence to go ahead. Therefore, teachers should encourage students to speak loudly when they are the focus of attention. This, in

turn, will give them a certain measure of confidence. It will also keep the other students awake and alert (Ibid).

### **C. Lack of Motivation**

Motivation is some kind of internal drive that encourages somebody to pursue a course of action (Harmer, 1991).

Motivation is a key factor in FL/SL acquisition.

Supporting this, Stern (1983) and Littlewood (1981) state that learners' motivation is one of the significant factors in achieving successful FL/SL learning.

These authors further indicate that in FL/SL classroom, learners who are motivated are likely to learn more successfully than unmotivated learners.

Though it is difficult to measure students' motivation, their tendency to actively engage in accomplishing language learning tasks and activities, in asking and answering questions through pair and group works and above all the effort they exhibiting to learning the target language in the classroom are indicators of FL/SL students' motivation. In contrast, students who lack motivation to learn SL/FL tend to show reluctance to under take an assignment or task to attend a discussion and feeling of confusion, anxiety, angriness and depression and uncertainty.

In relation to this, Gardner (1985) point out that unmotivated student is one who lacks;

- ✓ eagerness to learn the language,
- ✓ willingness to extend effort on the learning activity, and
- ✓ willingness to sustain the learning activity.

### **D. Attitude**

Having a positive attitude towards the target language and culture is an important contributor to the success of foreign language learning (Gardner, 1985). A positive attitude might spur learners to

interact with native speakers which in turn, increase the amount of input that learners receive (Ibid).

Gardner (1985) points out the importance of positive attitude in learning a foreign language as stated below.

A positive attitude:

- often leads learners to use a variety of learning strategy that that can facilitate skill development in language leaning,
- brings out greater overall effort on the part of language learner,
- results greater success in specific language skills such as listening, speaking , reading and writing, and
- helps learners maintain their language skills after classroom instruction is over.

However, most high school students in the countryside do not have positive attitudes towards learning a foreign language as a result of their cultural influence.

For instance, there are cultural sayings which discourage oral communication in the class. The following are some examples:

- Silence is gold.
- You have two ears and one mouth; listen more and speak less, and
- As you chew more listen more.

These sayings indicate that students are not motivated to speak even in their first language.

Therefore, positive attitude is very important in language learning and teachers should pay a special attention to the attitudes students bring to the foreign and second language learning.

### **2.4.2 Language and Topical Factors**

This happens when students do not have sufficient vocabulary and knowledge of grammar. Atkins, Hailom and Nuru (1995) and Harmer (1991) state that sufficient vocabulary and knowledge of grammar can be a ladder for their oral communication.

The other common problem is that students sometimes think they have nothing to say on a particular topic. They may be bored that the topic is unrelated to anything they know. This, in turn, impedes their participation in oral communication (Piccolo 2010).

The other reason for students' silence may simply be that the class activities are boring/ understood in the wrong way.

Therefore, the teacher has to take a close look at the type of speaking activities he/ she is using and see if they really capture students' interest and create a real need for communication.

### **2.4.3 Teacher Related Factors**

#### **2.4.3.1 Error correction**

By its very nature, there will be errors of pronunciation, grammar and vocabulary during oral communication practice in a foreign language like English. A few errors here and there indicate students are going through a natural stage in communication.

*It is extremely important for high school teachers of English to give helpful, supportive feedback to students in order to support their learning (Atkins, Hailom and Nuru 1996:139-144).*

However if teachers are serious in students' performance, students develop a sense of inferiority and fear of making mistakes.

Psychologically, this feeling is de-motivating, harmful and hinders students' communication.

In relation to this, Wondwosen (1992) as cited in Atkins, Hailom and Nuru (1996) argues that most of the time, EFL teachers are not effective when giving oral feedback on spoken errors. Many of the errors teachers correct are grammatical errors observed in Writing/ speaking, but many of them are relatively unimportant. Teachers should not interrupt students' flow of communication with constant minor corrections. The reason is that, immediate correction of error that occurs during the communication may inhibit the students' motivation to speak. Therefore, giving positive feedback helps shy students to speak more.

([http://www teaching English. Org. Uk/thing/artivle4s/teaching-speak overcoming communication problems](http://www.teaching-English.org.uk/thing/artivle4s/teaching-speak-overcoming-communication-problems))

#### **2.4.3.2. Classroom Organizational Problems**

This happens when the group is very large and advanced students monopolize the discussion. Oral communication practices in large groups seem almost impossible. Supporting this, Long (1976) as cited in Nunan (1991) states that learners use considerably more language, and exploit a greater range of language function when working in small groups as opposed to teacher- fronted activities.

Expressing a similar view, Porter (1983) and Bruton and Samuda (1980) argue that learners in small group are capable of correcting one another's errors successfully. Therefore, small group discussions are preferable to large group discussions in improving students' oral communication.

The other classroom organizational problems occur when one/more students dominate the communication giving other students little

opportunity to practice their English. These students may not wait for their turns to speak, and may interrupt other student not to speak incessantly (Dobson 1988).

## **2.5. Communicative Activities**

Arnold (1974) states that the growth of communicative language teaching has led to a wider use of communicative activities as well as creating contexts for real use of English. Communicative activities are intended to initiate learners to express what themselves want to express in authentic and communicative contexts.

Creating opportunities for free language use is essential to the achievement of students' communicative ability. Communication activities are valuable in terms of motivation and there is plenty of scope for them in communicative teaching (Ibid).

### **2.5.1 Characteristics of Successful Oral Communicative Activities**

Ur (1996) points out that successful oral communicative activities have the following characteristics:

#### **a. Motivation is high**

Learners are eager to speak because they are interested in the topic and have something new to say about. This means, there is a communicative desire in which students have a real need to participate.

#### **b. Learners talk a lot**

Much of the allotted time to the activity is to be occupied by learners' talk. Teacher's intervention is not appreciated. Allocating much time for students' talking can help create the best environment for oral activities.

### **c. Participation is even**

Classroom participation should not be dominated by a minority of talkative participants. All students are to be encouraged to speak and students' contributions should be evenly distributed.

## **2.5.2 Importance of Communicative Activities**

Littlewood (1981) summarized the importance of communicative activities as follows.

### **a. They provide whole task practice**

In foreign language learning the means for providing learners with whole task practice in the classroom should be through various kind of communicative activities, structured to suit learners level of ability (Littlewood, 1981). Communicative activities are a means for practicing total skills. According to the author, for example learning to swim usually involves not only separate practice of individual movements (part skills), but also actual attempts to swim a short distance (Whole task practice).

### **b. They improve motivation**

Students' ultimate objective is to take part in communication with others. This is because communicative activities give them motivation to express themselves in real communication contexts.

### **c. They allow natural learning**

The most natural process of learning is when students try to use the language for communication. This implies that language learning takes place within learners as participants.

Therefore, communicative activities inside and outside of the classroom are an important part for total learning process.

### **d. They can create a context which supports learning**

Communicative activities provide opportunities for positive personal relationship to develop among learners and between learners and their

teacher. This, in turn, creates a context which supports learning. The availability of rapport relations between students and teaches humanizes the classroom and creates innovative and lively environment that can support learning.

### **2.5.3 Types of Communicative Activities**

Littlewood (1981) classifies communicative activities which are used in Communicative Language Teaching as functional communicative activities and social international communicative activities.

#### **2.5.3.1 Functional Communicative Activities**

These activities aim at developing certain language skills and functions which involve communication. Functional communicative activities emphasize the functional aspect of communication. Success is measured according to the communicative demands of the immediate situation (Littlewood, 1981).

Most of the functional communicative activates are information gap activities. Each participant has information that the others do not have. These activities include tasks as learners compare a set of pictures, sequencing events, discovering a missing picture, solving a problem from shred cues etc.

Littlewood (1981) specified the following functional communicative activities to enhance students' communicative abilities.

#### **A. Picture Identification**

Students will be given pictures to describe what is in the pictures. To accomplish this activity, they can form groups and each group is given a different picture. Then students discuss the picture within their groups. Finally, the spokesperson for each group will describe it to the whole

class. This fosters students' creativity, imagination and their public speaking skills.

(<http://www.itesij.org/articles/kayi-teaching-speaking.htm>).

This activity can be practiced in pairs with similar pictures, but containing a number of distinguishing features, like color, size, place etc.

For instance, learner 'x' may have four pictures and learner 'y' may have the duplicate of one of these pictures. Then, learner 'x' will ask questions on the size and color, to find out which of the pictures learner 'y' is holding (Littlewood, 1981).

### **B. Picture Narration**

This activity is based on several sequencing pictures. Students are asked to tell the story taking place in the sequence of pictures by paying attention to the criteria provided by their teacher. Students may work in groups of four and each student in the group receives four different pictures that can be a story, when arranged in the proper order.

For instance, pictures showing: a man putting a poison on the raw meat, a rat going past without getting the poisoned raw meat, a cat eating the poisoned raw meat and the man being surprised by the death of the cat. These pictures have a clear narrative line and the partners are not likely to disagree about the appropriate sequencing.

When the pictures have alternative sequencing, the students should negotiate among themselves to agree on a satisfactory sequencing, (<http://www.simpson.edu/plan/committees/action/ips-final-report.pdf>).

### **C. Find the difference**

Littlewood (1981) states that in the 'find the difference' activities students are asked to compare and contrast the similarities and differences of the given pictures.

For example, students in pairs may have a picture of a boy reading a text-book and a picture of a girl watching television. Therefore, the students in pairs will discuss the similarities and difference of the pictures.

### **D. Interview**

Conducting interview with people gives students a chance to practice their speaking ability not only in the class but also outside and helps them becoming socialized.

(<http://iteslj.org/Articles/kayi-Teaching> speaking.html)

After interviews each student can present his /her study to the class. Moreover, students can interview each other and introduce his/her friends to the class. Doing this both the interviewer and interviewee will share a good experience. It is a good idea that the teacher provides a rubric to students so that they know what types of questions they ask/ what paths to follow, but students should prepare their own interview questions.

#### **2.5.3.2 Social Interaction Activities**

Social interaction activities allow students to practice using all the language they know in situations that resemble real settings. Littlewood (1981) says that competent speakers choose language which is not only functionally effective but also appropriate to the social situation they are in. According to the author, students must pay attention not only to conveying information but also to the social context in which the

interaction is taking place. Therefore, success is measured in terms of producing the language which is appropriate to specific kinds of social situation (Ibid).

Social interaction activities include role play, simulation, discussion/ debate, dialogues and conversations.

### **A. Role Play**

Landousse (1987) defines role play as a way of playing one's own/ other's part in a safe environment in which students are as inventive and playful as possible. It is one of the most important social interaction activities which are to develop students' fluency and to increase their motivation. In such activities, the teacher gives information to the learner such as who they are and what they think (Ibid).

Teaching students oral skills through role play creates fun and a relaxed environment. This, in turn, paves the way for shy students to practice their oral skills freely and confidently.

### **B. Simulation**

Simulations are complex and relatively inflexible events. They will always include role play. Simulations are similar to role plays, but what makes simulation different from role play is that it is more elaborate and complex. For instance, if a student is acting as a vocalist he may bring a microphone to sing.

For this reason, the idea of simulation is to create the presence of real life situation in the classroom. Jones (1982) as cited in Harmer (1991) states that there need to be a reality of functions. Students must accept the function/ role; they must not think of themselves as language students but as people in the situation.

Role play and simulation have many advantages. Firstly, they entertain and motivate students. In addition to this, they create self-confidence of hesitant students because in role play and simulation they have their own roles to play (Harmer 1991).

### **C. Discussions/Debates**

These activities can be held after the content-based lesson is completed for various reasons. Students may be intending to share ideas, arrive at conclusions and find solutions to problems in their discussion groups. Before the discussion, the purpose of the discussion activity will be set by the teacher. ([http://www.Iteslj/Articles/kay in teaching speaking.html](http://www.Iteslj/Articles/kay%20in%20teaching%20speaking.html))

A debate is a good way to get students talking. There is usually a lot of fun, but more than that it is an amusing way for students to put their ideas into words of their own.

Many teachers, however, complain that their students have nothing to say. They further state that students do not have opinions and are not prepared to discuss anything.

Paradoxically, the problem lies on the way teachers approach discussion as an activity.

In relation to this, Harmer (1991:122) states that:

*If students are asked to express themselves fluently on a difficult topic in front of their peers in foreign language, they may find themselves reluctant to do so.*

In this connection, the author further specifies three techniques that can be used to get students talking. These are discussed as follows.

**a. Put students in groups first**

Before asking students to discuss something as a whole class, put them in groups to try out the topic. This will help them give opinions in less threatening environment than in front of the whole class.

**b. Give students a chance to prepare.**

In discussion lessons, students have to get a chance to prepare their opinions and thoughts to say something about the topic.

For example, in debate, they need time to arrange their thoughts to support their cases.

**c. Give students a task**

One way of promoting discussion is to give students a task in the part of the discussion process. For example, students can be given controversial ideas about the given tasks.

Dobson (1988) states that EFL/ESL students need to practice speaking English more fluently during the discussion/debate if they can represent their true feelings on an issue.

**D. Language games**

Gibbs (1978) as cited in Rixon (1981) defines games as any activity carried out by cooperating/ competing decision makers, seeking to achieve their objectives. If students know why they are using a particular game and what skills they are reinforcing by using that particular game, they will be much more inclined to cooperate and enjoy the learning ( Wright, Bettering and Bucky, 1984).

Many experienced textbook and methodology manual writers argue that games are not just time filling activities, but have greater educational values.

([http://www. Teachingenglishgames.com/adults.htm](http://www.Teachingenglishgames.com/adults.htm))

Expressing a similar view, Wright, Betteridge and Bucky (1984) point out the importance of language games in ELF/ESL classes as follow:

- Learning through fun activities relaxes students, helps bonding between class members and with the teacher and makes the classroom atmosphere supportive for learners.
- Games allow students to work in small groups and practice language skills. They are highly motivating since they are amusing and at the same time challenging.
- They employ meaningful and useful language usage in real contexts.
- They are highly entertaining and motivating and can give shy students more opportunity to express their opinions and feelings.

### **E. Story Telling**

Aiex, (1988 and Cooper (1989) state that stories always play a significant role in children's growth. They further emphasize, stories not only help in stimulating students' imagination and understanding of the world, but also in developing students' language ability.

The primary reason to recommend story telling in the ELF speaking class is that stories are motivating and immensely interesting. Thus, they can attract listeners and promote oral communication (Cooter, 1991).

Secondly, the lively atmosphere and real life environment created by stories encourage students to talk and discuss with each other. When telling and listening to the story, learners will easily plunge into the plots and scenes and forget about themselves. This, in turn, relieves their nervousness.

Besides, students can also complete a story. This is a very enjoyable, whole class, free speaking activity for which students sit in a circle. For this activity, a teacher starts to tell a story, but after a few sentences, he/ she will stop narrating. Then, each student starts to narrate from the point where the previous one stopped. Each student is supposed to add four to ten sentences and they can add new characters, events and descriptions.

This fosters creative thinking and makes EFL learners become self confident to express themselves spontaneously and creatively.

## **2.6 Teacher and Student roles**

**Role:** it refers to the part that learners and teachers are expected to play in carrying out learning tasks as well as the social and interpersonal relationships among participants (Nunan, 1989).

The emergence of communicative language teaching has brought different roles and responsibilities as compared to the teacher- centered approach.

### **2.6.1 Students' Role**

Students are above all, actors/ss of the teaching- learning process in the communicative language teaching. They actively engage in negotiating meaning. Bygate (1987) as cited Nunan (1989) states that negotiating meaning refers to the skill of making sure the person you are speaking has correctly understood you and you have correctly understood them.

Students learn to communicate by communicating. They are responsible managers of their own learning since the teacher's role is less dominant. The teacher merely creates a situation and sets activities and it is

learners themselves who are responsible for conducting the interaction to its conclusion.

### **2.6.2 Teacher's Role**

In the teacher- centered approach, the teacher is in the classroom to teach, and teaching means imparting of knowledge. This, in turn, means that the teacher spends hours of teaching by talking while the students sit listening passively. Such teaching approach is one of the obstacles preventing real development of oral communication (Stabb, 1986).

The author further state that classrooms are dominated by teaches talking and by workbook exercises.

However, the teacher's role in the student-centered approach drastically changes.

Littlewood (1981) specifies teacher's role in communicative language teaching as follows:

The Primary role of the teacher is to facilitate the communication process among students in the classroom and between these students and the various activities.

In this context, the teacher encourages students to bring their ideas and background knowledge into classroom learning activities. To achieve this role the teacher must be a responsive listener to students' talk.

Secondly, the teacher is counselor of his students. When students could not cope with the demand of a situation, the teacher offers advice/ provides necessary language items. Additionally, the teacher resolves disagreements and miss- understandings when students do not agree on a given point. Furthermore, the teacher monitors their strength and weakness, offer advice and answer questions moving from group to

group. Therefore, his presence in the classroom is a psychological support for many learners.

Thirdly, the teacher is group process manager and need analyst. In such a role, he is responsible to organize the classroom as a setting for communication and communicative activities. As a needs analyst, the teacher takes responsibility for determining and responding to learners' language.

The review of the related literature section has explored, discussed and interpreted what scholars and linguists point out. While developing review of related literature, the researcher has recognized the various thoughts and perspectives. This, in turn, helped him look the problem from different angles.

In order to examine whether or not teachers and students practice what scholars stated, the researcher designed the instruments from review of related literature.

For this reason, the researcher used the review of related literature as a support while analyzing and discussing the data gathered through these instruments (questionnaire, observation, interview and content analysis).

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **3. Methodology of the study**

#### **3.1 Method of the Study**

The principal objective of the study was to explore the teaching of oral skills through the use of communicative activities in Raya Timuga Secondary School (Grades 11 and 12 in focus).

Hence for this purpose, the descriptive survey method was employed on the assumption that it would help reveal the teaching of oral skills through the use of communicative activities.

#### **3.2 Subjects of the study and Sampling technique**

The target population of the study is samples of Grades 11 and 12 students and their English teachers of Timuga Secondary School.

According to the data available, there were four sections with a total number of 140 students and two teachers. There were 80 students in grade 11 with two sections of 40 each. Similarly there were 60 students in grade 12, 46 in section one and 14 in section two.

Out of these 50% of the students were selected as a sample using the quota sampling technique and availability sampling technique for teachers. Therefore, the sample is 70. Accordingly, the proportion is 40 from grade 11 and 30 from grade 12. These samples were again selected through stratified proportionate random sampling to select the supposed respondents from each section.

### **3.3 Sources of Data**

#### **3.3.1 The classroom**

The study was intended to explore the teaching of oral skills through the use of communicative activities. For this purpose, the real classroom activities would show what happens during the teaching/ learning process. Therefore, the classroom activities were taken as the main source of data.

#### **3.3.2 Teachers**

Teachers are part of the teaching- learning process and they are the ones who deliver the lesson. So, they can be considered as a rich source of data.

#### **3.3.3 The students**

The students accomplish the classroom activities and they know how they are taught and what kinds of activities are given to them.

#### **3.3.4 Students' textbook**

The students' textbook contains language activities in general and oral communicative activities in particular. So, it was assessed how much attention is given for these activities in the textbook.

### **3.4 Scope the data**

The study was conducted in Raya, Timuga Secondary School which is 600kms away from Addis Ababa. The subjects of the study were grades 11 and 12 students and their English teachers in the school mentioned above. The school has 140 preparatory students and two English teachers. Accordingly, the researcher used the quota sampling technique to select the samples and available sampling to select teachers.

### **3.5 Tools of Data Collection**

In this section, classroom observation, questionnaire, interview and content analysis were used as means of data collecting.

#### **3.5.1 Observation**

To assess what actually happens during teaching and learning oral skills, the researcher had classroom observation. Many scholars like Kumar (1996) agree that observation provides highly accurate information that would help to analyze a research situation.

The researcher carried out eight sessions of observation when the teaching of speaking was conducted. To do this, the researcher used structured checklists and a tape-recorder as a support. The items of the checklist were adapted from the contents of literature review.

#### **3.5.2 Questionnaire**

To gather realistic information from the sample students, a questionnaire was prepared and distributed to the sample students.

The questionnaire was aimed at the teachers' and students' roles, problems students face, and communicative activities used.

The questionnaire included both open-ended and close-ended types and they were translated from English into Amharic to avoid misunderstandings.

#### **3.5.3 Interviews**

Creswell (2003) states that an interview involves unstructured and generally open-ended questions that are a few in number and intended to elicit views and opinions from the participants.

In order to elicit additional information from the subjects and bridge the likely gaps between the classroom observation and questionnaire, the

researcher prepared semi-structured separate questions of interview for the samples of students and the teachers. A total number of two teachers and six purposefully selected students were interviewed. The researcher explained the objectives and individual questions for both interviewees to get accurate information. The researcher used a tape -recorder to record their responses.

To avoid misunderstanding, the interview questions for the students were translated from English into Amharic.

### **3.5.4 Content Analysis**

In order to have a clear picture of the teaching of oral skills through communicative activities in Timuga Secondary School, the speaking communicative activities in students' textbook were analyzed.

The researcher used the target class level syllabus to analyze the activities under content analysis.

### **3.5.5 Pilot Study**

A pilot study was made to assess if the questionnaire has any defects. After the respondents filled the questionnaire, there was some confusion. For a example, most of the respondents circled 'undecided' during the pilot study. As a result, the researcher minimized the scale from five points to four points.

## **4. Analysis and Interpretation of Data**

The data gathered through, questionnaire, was analyzed and interpreted quantitatively using frequency and mean values.

On the other hand, the data gathered through observation, interviews method of data analysis and were finally triangulated to obtain reliable information.

Based on the last chapter (i.e. chapter 5) the findings, conclusions and possible recommendations were given.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **4. Data Analysis and Discussion**

This chapter is the analysis and discussion of the data obtained through questionnaire, observation, interview and content analysis. The chapter has four sections. Section one is the result of students' questionnaire and it deals with teachers' and students' roles, problems students face, the implementation of communicative activities and the nature of classroom arrangement. Section two discusses what is actually observed in classroom while section three presents the result of teachers' and students' interview. Finally section four deals with the data gathered through content analysis.

#### **4.1 Data Analysis and Discussion Based on Students'**

##### **Questionnaire**

In this section an attempt is made to examine teachers' roles, students' roles, problems students face, the implementation of communicative activities and the nature of classroom arrangement.

#### 4.1 Aspects regarding the role of Classroom Teachers

**Table 1- Students Response about the Roles of their Classroom Teachers**

<b>No</b>	<b>Items</b>	<b>No and percentage of Responses</b>								<b>Mean</b>
		<b>A</b>		<b>SA</b>		<b>D</b>		<b>SD</b>		
		<b>1</b>		<b>2</b>		<b>3</b>		<b>4</b>		
		<b>F</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>%</b>	
1	The classroom teacher: Supervises students' work.	8	12.5	14	29.7	24	37.5	13	20.3	2.5
2	Helps students when they need help.	20	31.3	22	34.3	13	20.3	9	14.1	2.3
3	Encourages students to participate freely in the speaking sessions.	8	12.5	15	23.4	18	28.1	23	36	2.87
4	Organizes students into groups by mixing up top, middle and lower achievers.	16	25	10	15.6	21	32.8	17	26.6	2.6
5	Gives chance to all students	14	21.9	13	20.3	23	35.9	14	21.9	2.67
6	Creates collaborative work.	7	10.9	9	14.1	30	46.9	18	28.1	2.9
7	Mostly acts as a lecturer.	6	40.6	18	28.1	13	20.3	7	11	2.0
8.	Sometimes, acts as a student.	5	23.4	11	17.2	24	37.5	14	21.9	2.6
<b>TOTAL</b>										<b>2.6</b>

Key: **A**- agree

**D**- disagree

**SA**- strongly agree

**SD**- strongly disagree

As it is clearly shown in the item number 1 of the above Table, 8 students (12.5%) out of 64 respondents agreed and 29.7% strongly agreed. On the contrary, 37.5% disagreed and 20.3% strongly disagreed. The mean score shows (2.5) value. This reveals that majority of the respondents (57.8%) expressed their disagreement that the classroom teacher did not constantly supervise students' work. A similar response is given by students in the open-ended questions. In addition to this, the classroom observation also showed that teachers mostly did not supervise their students' work.

In reply to item number 2 of Table 1, the respondents answered as follows: 31.3% agreed, 34.35% strongly agreed, 20.3% disagreed and 14.1% strongly disagreed. Thus, the mean value (2.3) shows that most of the students get from their teacher when they need help. i.e. when 'agree' and 'strongly agree' are added /i.e. 65.6%/ of the respondents reported their agreement that the classroom teacher helped students when they need it. The rest of them /i.e. 34.4%/ stated that the classroom teacher did not help them unless they asked for help. A similar response was observed during the classroom observation (see App: B-1:5).

In item 3, the students were asked whether or not the classroom teacher encourages them to participate freely in the classroom oral interaction. In this regard, out of the sample students, 12.5% agreed and 23.4% strongly agreed that their teacher encouraged them to participate freely in speaking sessions. On the other hand, 28.1% and 36% expressed their disagreement stating that their teacher did not encourage them more in speaking sessions. Thus, the mean score of this item (2.87) indicates that mostly the classroom teacher did not encourage students to participate freely in speaking sessions.

Regarding this, students in the open-ended questions also pointed out that the classroom teachers including lower grade teachers were not ready to encourage students to express themselves. The classroom

observation also asserted that encouragement given by the classroom teachers in this respect was not satisfactory.

In relation to this issue, Littlewood (1981) states that the role of language teacher in the classroom is to supervise and encourage students' works and diagnose problems they face to treat them accordingly.

In item 4, students were asked whether or not their teacher organizes groups by mixing up top, middle and lower achievers. In this aspect, 25% agreed, 15.6% strongly agreed, 32.8% disagreed and 26.6% strongly disagreed. The responses with a mean value (2.6) tell us that the group organization did not promote students' communicative ability.

Teachers and students during the interview expressed a similar opinion. Teachers further outlined that, students are not free and do not volunteer to work in groups moving out of their seats. The result of classroom observation also indicated that the students were grouped according to their seats. Even, some of the groups consisted only of female students. This, in turn, impedes sharing of ideas among students. On a similar view, Porter (1983) as cited in Nunan (1991) states that students will learn from each other when the group is small and balanced.

In item 5 of Table 1, students were asked whether or not the teacher gives equal chance to all students to participate in speaking sessions. To this question, 21.9% agreed, 20.3% strongly agreed, 35.9% disagreed and 21.9% strongly disagreed. The mean value of this item (2.67) reveals that their teachers did not give equal chance to all students. They further clarified in the open-ended questions that most of the time; the teacher gives chance to clever students and those who always raise their hands. In addition to this, they also stated in their interview that one of the major problems which discourages students' oral communication is that

teachers did not provide even opportunities for students to participate without fear.

In relation to this view, Swain (1985) stresses that students learn to speak by speaking. Therefore, students should be given many opportunities to practice oral communication skills.

Teachers should encourage participation from all students and ask them to explain their thinking even if it is wrong. Cane (1991) states that when students feel good about themselves as learners, they are willing to take risks and focus attention necessary for further learning.

In item 6 of Table 1 the students were asked whether or not their teacher creates collaborative work. In this regard, 46.9% disagreed and 28.1% strongly disagreed while a very few of them / i.e. 25%/ expressed their agreement. The result of classroom observation (App B-1:6) also revealed that teachers did not create collaborating and motivate environment for students to practice their oral skills.

However, teacher in their interview (App C-2) stated a contracting view that they create innovative/ collaborative situations even when the topic does not allow them to do so.

Regarding this aspect, Rivers (1984) recommends that teachers should create authentic practicing environment within the classroom. In addition to this, (Honde, 1997) states that an ideal scene in the classroom would have students in their groups, coordinating roles and resources and celebrates mutual accomplishment with smile and handshakes. He further states that students will see the benefits that comes from working as a team accomplishing tasks that otherwise would be significantly more difficult if attempted alone.

Therefore, establishing proper environment for cooperative learning is important.

In item 7 of the above table 1, students were asked whether or not their teachers act as a lecturer. For this item, 40.6% agreed, 28.1% strongly agreed, 20.3% disagreed and 11% strongly disagreed.

The mean score value is (2.0). This reveals most of the students /i.e. 68%/ expressed their views that most of the time the classroom teachers did not assume their role as facilitator, coordinator and co-communicator instead of as a lecturer. In addition to this, item number 8 of the above table also emphasizes that teachers did not act as semi-participants (co-communicator with less dominance).

The result of the classroom observation also reflected a similar result (App: B-1 items 7 and 8). In relation to this idea, Stabb (1986) emphasizes that teachers should lower their dominance and talking time in order to supervise and coordinate students' work.

#### **4.1.2 Aspects Regarding to Students' Roles**

In this section, an attempt is made to examine students' roles in speaking sessions and their attitudes towards active learning.

**Table 2. Students' Responses on their own Roles**

<b>No</b>	<b>Items</b>	<b>Response</b>			
		<b>Yes</b>		<b>No</b>	
		<b>No</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>%</b>
1	I show interest to participate in oral classroom activities.	39	60.9	25	39.1%
2	I do not feel comfortable when I do the classroom activities with my peers.	24	37.5	40	62.5
3	I do not take initiatives to express myself in oral classroom activities because of fear of making mistakes.	54	84.4	10	15.6
4	I raise questions when I faced difficulties.	20	31.2	44	68.8

As it is shown in the above table, students were asked whether or not they are interested in participating oral classroom activities. Thus, 60.9% (i.e. 39) of the respondents are interested in participation of oral

communicative activities. Out of 64 respondents 25 (39.1%) are not interested in participating through these activities.

In item 2 of Table 2 students were asked whether or not they feel comfortable when they do classroom activities with their peers. As a reaction to this question 37.5% of the respondents replied that they did not feel comfortable when they do the classroom activities with their peers. But a majority of them (i.e. 62.5%) explained that they feel comfortable when they do the activities with their peers. However, teachers in the interview (App C-2) stated that most of the time students do not feel comfortable when they do activities out of their seats. This was also observed during the classroom observation.

In response to whether or not students take initiatives to express themselves in oral communicative activities, a majority of the respondents (i.e. 84.4%) stated that they do not take initiatives because of fear of making mistakes. The rest of them (i.e. 15.6%) pointed out that they take initiatives because they are not afraid of making mistakes.

In addition to this, students in the open-ended questions clarified that they do not take initiative to express what they want to say because it is risk taking and for fear of making mistakes. The result of classroom observation also indicated that students did not actively participate in oral activities (App B-1 items 2.1 and 2.3).

In item 4 of Table 2, students were asked whether or not they raise questions when they face difficulties. In this aspect, 31.2% the respondents said that they ask questions when they have doubts while 68.8% of the respondents do not ask question even if they have difficulties. From the majority point of view, it is possible to suggest that most of the students did not raise questions except very few of them.

A similar phenomenon has been observed during the classroom observation (App B-1:4).

Generally, it is justifiable to state that students did not play their roles as stated by modern methods such as the communicative language learning and teaching.

#### 4.1.3 Aspects Regarding Classroom Activities

In this section an attempt is made to examine the implementation of communicative activities and their impact on promoting students' oral communication.

**Table 3. Students Responses on Classroom Activities**

No	Items	Responses								Mean
		A		SA		D		SD		
		1		2		3		4		
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	
1	The classroom communicative activities: Presented in the speaking session are familiar to students.	22	34.3	13	20.3	17	26.6	12	18.8	2.1
2	Motivate students to speak freely.	13	20.3	10	15.6	29	45.3	12	18.8	2.6
3	Are varied.	8	12.5	15	23.4	22	34.4	19	29.7	2.8
4	Enable students to use their own idea.	11	17.2	14	21.9	24	37.5	15	23.4	2.67
5	Are enjoyable to students.	9	14.1	14	21.9	23	35.9	18	28.1	2.78
<b>TOTAL</b>										2.6

Key: A= agree

D= disagree

SA= strongly agree

SD= strongly disagree

As it is shown in the above Table 3, item one, students were asked whether or not the activities presented in the speaking session are familiar to them. Out of the total respondents 34.3% agreed, 20.3% strongly agreed while 20.6% and 18.8% answered 'disagree' and 'strongly disagree' respectively. Thus, the mean value (2.1) shows the majority /i.e.54.6/ reflected their agreement that the activities presented in the speaking session are familiar to students. They further stated that the activities are familiar but they lack clarity of instructions and objectives. A similar view is also found in the content analysis part.

In response to whether or not the activities motivate students to speak freely, 20.3% agreed, 15.6% strongly agreed and 45.3% and 18.8% reflected their disagreement and strongly disagreement respectively. The mean value of the item is 2.6. This reveals that majority of the students /64.1%/ , expressed their views that the activities did not motivate students to utter what they want to. In addition to this, in item 3 of table 3, responses with a mean score of 2.8 shows that the activities presented in the speaking session are not varied, while the rest of them agreed on the variation of activities. Teachers during the interview stated that they provide different kinds of activities. However, most of the student in open ended questions pointed out that their teachers provide similar and limited communicative activities.

As a result of this, the majority of the respondents in items 4 and 5 explained that these activities are not enjoyable and that they were not free from their anxiety. If communicative activities do not add something fun, students will remain passive. But the teachers during the interview expressed a contradicting opinion while the classroom observation corroborated the majority view.

#### **4.1.3.1 Application of some selected communicative Activities**

In this sub-section, an attempt is made to examine how many of the communicative activities listed in table are used in the practice of students' oral skills.

**Table. 4. Students' Responses towards Implementation of Communicative Activities**

<b>No</b>	<b>Lists of communicative Activities</b>	<b>Responses</b>								<b>Mean</b>
		<b>Most of the time</b>		<b>Some times</b>		<b>Rarely</b>		<b>Never</b>		
		<b>1</b>		<b>2</b>		<b>3</b>		<b>4</b>		
		<b>F</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>%</b>	
1	Role play	7	10.9	12	18.8	22	34.4	23	35.9	2.6
2	Simulation	5	7.8	9	14.1	32	50	18	28.1	2.98
3	Storytelling	18	28.1	20	31.1	15	23.4	11	17.2	2.3
4	Pictured description	8	12.5	17	26.6	21	32.9	18	28	2.76
5	Language games	6	9.4	8	12.5	28	43.7	22	34.4	3
6	Interview	13	20.3	32	50	7	10.9	12	18.8	2.28
7	Discussion /Debating	25	39.1	23	35.9	9	14.1	7	10.9	1.96
<b>TOTAL</b>										2.56

In Table 4 in item 1, the respondents were asked about the application of role play in speaking activities. In this aspect, 10% said 'most of the time' and 28.8% of them declared 'sometimes'; whereas the majority of the respondents 34.4% and 35.9% respectively responded 'rarely' and 'never'. The mean value of the item is 2.6 which is nearest to 'rarely and never' therefore, one can infer from this, that role play is not used by these students. Also the students in their interview (App C-1) explained that role plays are still strange in the students' oral interaction.

Regarding this point, Landousse (1987) states that teaching students' oral skills through role play will make them feel it a fun and relax.

In item 2 of the above table students were also requested to identify the occurrence of simulation in the oral classroom interaction. Accordingly,

7.8% said 'most of the time', 14.1% 'sometimes' while 50% and 28.1% answered 'rarely' and 'never' respectively. The mean value of the item (2.98) reveals that students did not use communicative activities like simulation in their speaking lessons. Most of the student in their interview (App C-1) also pointed out that they do not know the activities of simulation and role play.

In item 3 of Table 4 students were asked to state about the application of storytelling activities in their speaking lessons. As a result 28.1% and 31.1% answered 'most of the time' and 'sometimes' respectively, the rest of them /i.e. 23.4 and 17.2%/ said 'rarely' and 'never'. The mean score of the item is 2.37. This again shows a majority of students use storytelling activities in their classroom. The content analysis part has also revealed that there are activities of storytelling in students' textbooks.

In response to the application of pictured description, 12.5% said 'most of the time', 26.6% voiced 'some times' while 32.9% and 28% replied 'rarely' and 'never'. The mean value of the item is 2.76. This tells us that the students did not practice their oral skills using picture description activities. In addition to this, the students during the interview specified that they do not use such activities.

In item 5 of the above table students were asked whether or not they practice/ learn oral skills in the classroom using activities like language games. In this regard, 43.7% of the target respondents stated that they 'rarely' learn communication skills through language games. In addition to this 34.4% of them responded that they 'never' use language games in speaking lessons. Even though teachers in the interview (App C-2) reflected their view that they use language games in their class, the

result of classroom observation and students' interview confirmed the absence of language games in the classroom interaction.

In item 6 of the above table students were asked whether or not they use interview in their speaking lessons. For this question, 20.3% and 50% respectively replied 'most of the time' and 'sometimes' while the rest of them /i.e.10.9% and 18.8%/ declared 'rarely' and 'never.' The mean value (2.28) shows that students use interview activities in their speaking lessons. In relation to this, teachers' and students' interview and the result of classroom observation reflected a similar view in this context.

In response to whether or not students use discussion/ debating during the speaking session, 39.1% and 35.9% of the target respondents answered 'most of the time' and 'sometimes' respectively. In contrast the rest of them /i.e. 14.1%/ responded that they 'rarely' use discussions/ debates in their class while a very few of the respondents /i.e. 10.9%/ replied 'never'.

According to this analysis of data, one can infer that students use discussion/ debating activities in speaking lessons.

However, the total mean reveals that most of the activities listed above are not practiced by the students.

Teachers' and students' interview and the result of classroom observation have also justified this point.

With regard to the special program designed to enhance students' oral communication teachers and students during the interview specified that they have a panel discussion program which is held once a semester. In addition to this, they further explained that every Tuesday is an English day though students did not communicate in the target language on that occasion.

However, both teachers and most of students clarified that the program which takes place once a semester is not satisfactory and did not help students in any way to speak the target language.

Based on the above discussions, it possible to suggest that, students are practicing their oral skills through restricted oral communicative activities such as storytelling, interview and discussions.

#### 4.1.4. Aspects Regarding Mode of Classroom Interaction

In this section an attempt is made to examine the accessibility of classroom arrangement, mode of classroom interaction and method of teaching.

**Tables 5: Student’s Response towards Mode of Classroom Interaction**

Item No	Items	Responses	
		No	%
1	In the speaking session most of the classroom activities are presented through:		
Variables	Pair and group work	23	35.94
	Individual work	15	23.44
	Whole class work	26	40.62
2	Most of the speaking lessons are covered through :	<b>No</b>	<b>%</b>
Variables	Teacher centered approach	40	62.5
	Student centered approach	24	37.5
3	The classroom arrangement is accessible for group discussion :	<b>No</b>	<b>%</b>
Variables	Agree	6	9.4
	Strongly agree	5	7.8
	Disagree	29	45.3
	Strongly disagree	24	37.5

As it can be seen in above Table item 1, students were asked about mode of interaction. Thus, 35.94% of the target respondents replied that they learn through pair and group work and 23.44% of them responded

that they learn through individual work while the rest of them /i.e. 40.62%/ answered whole class work.

Therefore, from the above data it is possible to infer that students most of the time learn speaking lessons through whole class work though sometime they use pair and group works. The students interview (App C-1) and the result of classroom observation also affirmed this fact.

In item 2 of Table 5, students were asked whether or not the method of teaching mostly applied in the classroom is teacher-centered or student-centered. A majority of the respondents /i.e. 62.5%/ replied that they learn through teacher-centered approach. But the rest of them /i.e. 37.5/ replied 'Student-centered approach'. Students in the open-ended questions stated that student centered approach still remains unpractical in actual classroom level. Though there is a tendency from the teachers to make the classroom interaction student-centered, what is always practically implemented is teacher-centered approach.

In item 3 of Table 5 the respondents were asked about the accessibility of classroom arrangement for oral interactions.

To this question, 45.3% and 37.5% of the respondents responded saying 'disagree' and 'strongly disagree' respectively while a few of them /i.e. 9.4% and 7.8%/ answered 'agree' and 'strongly agree'.

Therefore, it is possible to deduce from the majority point of view that the classroom arrangement (nature of desks and chairs) is not suitable for classroom oral interaction.

## **4.2. Data Analysis and Discussion Based on the Results of Classroom Observation Checklist**

This observation checklist was intended to examine teachers' and students' roles, the implementation of communicative activities and their impact on promoting students' oral skills and accessibility of classroom setup for oral interaction.

#### **4.2.1 Aspects Regarding Role of Classroom Teacher**

In this subsection an attempt is made to examine roles of classroom teachers.

According to the result of observation checklist (App B-1 items 1 and 2), it was observed that classroom teachers did not motivate and facilitate students to express themselves and communicate with each other. A similar response is given in student questionnaire (Table 1:3). The respondents to the open-indeed questions also answered that; teachers merely motivate students who actively participate. They further explained that teachers did not strive to minimize the gaps between talkative and passive students during oral participation though teachers in their interview forwarded contradicting opinions.

Secondly, teachers did not organize students into small groups and pairs. When they were asked why, they stated that classroom desks and chairs are not suitable and, above all, students do not feel comfortable to be in groups.

However, students in their interview (App C-1) and questionnaire (Table1) clarified that most of the time teachers did not organize students into small groups and pairs during the speaking session.

Thirdly, teachers did not diagnose the problems students face and treat them accordingly, unless students themselves asked for help. Students

during the interview pointed out that teachers help when students raise their hands for help. A similar response is also given by students to the questionnaire (Table 1).

Moreover, teachers did not create collaborative work which promotes students' oral skills. /Table1/ also reflects a similar opinion given in the students' questionnaire.

Fourthly, most of the time, teachers did not act as coordinators and facilitators; rather they feel comfortable when they deliver lectures. As a result, they talk more comparing with students' talk (Tables 1 and table5)

Therefore, it is possible to state that, teachers are not still out of the traditional roles though they are expected to play the roles of communicative language teaching approach.

#### **4.2.2. Aspects Regarding Students Roles**

In this sub section an attempt is made to examine the students' role.

As indicated in /App B-1:2.1/ students did not express themselves openly. They also pointed out in their interview and open-ended questions that they did not speak freely because of fear of making mistakes and losing face (peers laugh). The teachers in the interview also admitted that students lack oral communication practice.

Therefore, Students do not speak in English in front of their peers due to the fear of making mistakes. Additionally, lack of confidence and losing face were some of the factors influenced students willingness in participating classroom oral communication.

It was observed that the students were not actively doing their group work. Some of them were sleeping and a few of them were talking irrelevantly in a given situation.

Moreover, they did not ask questions when they had doubts. When some of them ask questions, they use their mother tongue because of fear of making mistakes in English. The students in the open-ended questions stated that they have been discussing through their vernacular languages.

Therefore, it is justifiable to state that the students are not communicators and active participations, but only passive recipients. As a result, they did not play the students' roles of as expected in the communicative language teaching and learning approach.

#### **4.2.3 Aspects Regarding Communicative Activities**

According to the results of observation checklist, some of the activities motivated students to interact in real life situations though most of them did not. Table 3 also supports this point.

The difficulty level of the activities was almost appropriate and familiar to students' background knowledge. However, most of the activities do not have clear objectives and instructions. As a result, these activities always require teachers' guidance to clarify instructions. A similar opinion is also found in content analysis.

This, in turn, impedes autonomous learning. Some of the activities provide whole task practice in that students were observed writing discussion notes, reading to their peers and presenting the discussion to the whole class.

However, the majority of the activities remains vague and do not let students practice self-learning.

#### **4.2.4 Aspects Regarding Classroom Setup**

As it can be seen from the results of classroom observation (App B-1), the classroom has adequate space for interaction. However, the arrangement of classroom chairs and desks is not suitable for group discussions. The teachers during the interview pointed out that immovable and heavy desks were a great hindrance for group organization during speaking sessions.

### **4.3. Data Analysis and Discussion Based on the Result of Students' and Teachers' Interview**

This section presents and discusses the results obtained from the data concerning students' and teachers' semi-structured interview.

#### **4.3.1. Students' Interview**

The researcher developed eight semi-structured questions to gather information regarding teachers' roles, implementation of communicative activities, problems students face and availability of special programs primarily designed to improve students' oral communication.

The results of students' interview are analyzed and discussed below.

**Qn.1.** *Does the teacher motivate student to participate in the speaking sessions?*

Most of the interviewees reported that their teachers did not provide much motivation. For example, **S1** replied that the teacher did not constantly motivate them. The other **S2** reported "most of the time the teacher motivates those who are clever and active participants, she does not ask questions and initiate passive students. **S4** added that the teacher did not give equal attention for every student. Similarly, **S5** and

**S6** explained similar opinions with regard to uneven motivation given by the teacher.

Therefore, it possible to infer that teachers do not give equal and consistent opportunities to their students in the classroom. This, in turn, discourages students to give their opinions and raise questions.

**Qn 2.** *Does the teacher let students discuss in groups?*

*If yes, the nature of the group is:*

- *Mixed ability*
- *Same ability*

All participants reported that classroom teachers some times organize students into groups.

However, groups are not organized considering top, middle and lower achievers among students.

For instance, **S1** reported "... in this case, there is not always mixed ability group; even if there are female students on one desk, only these students will discuss among themselves. Concerning this point, **S2** reported "the teacher does not give emphasis for this aspect ... what is the common behavior is to group students according their seats. The other **S3** reported that there is not any group organized by the teacher, but they discuss sitting within their seats. For example, he always sat and discuss with students who sat among with me. In addition to this, **S5** expressed a similar idea that "the teacher orders us to discuss with our seats ... we do not even discuss with our neighbors."

Therefore, the data indicate that students do not exchange their ideas, opinions and thoughts among the groups and there may be a probability of dominance from a limited group since the groups are not organized based on mixed ability criterion.

**Qn 3.** Students were asked to report the kind of communicative activities the teacher uses to enhance students' oral communication and most of

the activities listed by the interviewees are peer evaluation, discussions and interview.

For instance, **S1** reported that mostly the teacher presents peer-evaluation, discussion and sometimes story-telling. "... but others are strange to the class." On this aspect, **S2** stated "the common activities are peer-evaluation, panel discussion and interview ... other than these I have not seen any activities in the speaking session." Similarly, **S4** stated that storytelling, debating and interview are the activities presented in their class.

On the same point, **S5** and **S6** underlined the limitation of communicative activities i.e. the teacher do not bring various activities to improve students' oral communication.

As a result, one can predict from the results of item 3 that teachers only present a restricted number of communicative activities. Activities like simulation, role play, language games and picture description are not used by the teacher. If students do not practice their oral skills through entertaining and fun activities like these listed above, it is hard to say that students are exposed to real life situations.

**Qn 4.** *Do the activities enable you express your ideas?*

Most of the students stated that the majority the activities do not enable them express their ideas. They further clarified that most of the activities do not have tangible /observable objectives and instructions.

For example, **S6** reported that "we are not told the objectives before we do the activities, and activities themselves do not have clear instructions."

On the other hand **S5** replied that "when we have debating session, I am so eager to express myself supporting /opposing the argument." Supporting this point **S4** specified that though the activities are limited, some of these motivate students to express themselves. He said, "I

personally feel happy when we discuss in peer evaluation and discussion activities.”

This implies that students will participate and express themselves gladly if the activities are varied and creative.

**Qn. 5.** *Does the teacher provide sufficient time for discussion and presentation?*

In the interview most of the interviewees reported that their teachers do not allocate much time for discussion and presentation.

For instance, **S1** and **S2** stated that their teachers did not give enough time when they have debates and interviews. **S2** further clarified: “we are given five to six minutes time to prepare and present our discussion points.”

On the other hand, **S4** reported that “...In our class the teacher gives us much time when we have discussion sessions.” The rest of interviewees stressed that they are not given enough time for discussion and presentation. This implies that much of the class time is taken by the teacher.

**Qn.6.** *Students were asked to report problems which prevent them from speaking English?*

Most of the interviewees reported that they have deep rooted difficulties in speaking EFL for the reason that they did not practice it at lower classes. They mentioned different reasons for this. One student, (**S1**) reported that she did not practice EFL speaking while she was in elementary and high school. This is because her English teachers did not give her opportunity for practicing the language. She further clarified: “though the effort should have been from me I did not get much chance because I was passive and as a result, I used to speak Amharic”.

The other student (**S5**) blamed his poor communicative ability because of his rural background and lack of access to resources of speaking: “I came from a rural area where there are no language schools and authentic materials like magazines, cartoons and films.”

**S3** and **S4** stated that lack of vocabulary and fear of making mistakes are major problems which hinder them from speaking English. “When I try to in speak I run out of words and mix Amharic in stead” (**S2**).

**S4** again reported: “When I make a mistake students laugh at me and not to be laughed at and lose face I keep silent.”

In addition to the above factors, students (**S5** and **S6**) pointed out that poor knowledge of grammar, poor listening abilities, inaccurate pronunciation and limited English vocabulary as hindrances for their speaking English. There are learners who attributed to listening difficulties to their communicative ability. For example, **S5** reported: “My failure of speaking ability resulted from poor listening because I have not experience of listening to people speaking English.”

Student (**S6**) emphasized “I have enough words, but I am not good at grammar and as a result I am afraid of breaking grammar rules.” She further added that the society will insult you calling you ‘chatterbox’ if you speak a lot even in your mother tongue. So, attitudinal problem is the other hindrance.

**Qn 7.** *Students were asked to list solutions for the existing problems.*

The interviewees forwarded different opinions and suggestions as solutions for their problems. Most of them emphasized the practice of speaking English and the provision of realistic and authentic environment which encourage speaking.

For example, student **S1** reported: “in my opinion, we have to give emphasis for this language and practice it every day ... to do this again teachers must create authentic environment.” Besides, students (**S2** and **S3**) felt that they have to avoid shyness /stage fright. Teachers should advise students to develop positive attitudes towards speaking the target language and minimize peer interference from other students.

The other students (**S5** and **S6**) also forwarded their views that teachers have to give much opportunity and useful programs which are designed

out of the normal schedule which are consistent so that students can communicate as in real life situation.

It is obvious that most successful people do not completely avoid making mistakes but they learn from these mistakes. Hence, teachers should advise their students to speak without fear of mistakes and should frequently reinforce such practice.

**Qn 8.** *Is there any special program which is designed to enhance students' oral communication /like discussion and English Day club)?*

All participants reported the availability of special programs particularly English day and panel discussion.

The panel discussion is held once /twice a year and every Tuesday is an English Day.

The interviewees, however, reported that they do not speak in the target language for the reason that their peers always laughed at them.

For example, student (**S5**) reported "I do not speak in the English Day because students laugh at me when I break the rules of the language."

Similarly, **S6** stated "If you observe students in the break time they do not use English ... I myself do not speak because I will not be out of these students." Regarding the especial program, students reported about the insufficiency of the program since it is held once/twice a year and merely composes clever students alone. It does not include middle and lower achievers.

Therefore, it is possible to say that special programs prepared (panel discussion and English Day) are not well-organized and consistent to motivate oral communication of the students in English.

#### **4.3.2 The Result of Teachers' Interview**

The researcher developed ten semi-structured questions to gather information concerning the sample teachers' method of teaching, implementation of communicative activities, problems students face and

the availability of special programs primarily designed to enhance students' oral communication.

The results of teachers' interview are analyzed and discussed below.

**Qn1.** *Some FL and SL teachers use structural approach while others use CLT (communicative Language Teaching) in their class. Which one do you use? Why?*

Two teachers (**T1** and **T2**) reported that they use CLT approach. For example, teacher (**T1**) stated: "Personally, I appreciate CLT because the focus is on meaning". He further clarified that CLT is better since it can engage students in communication. Similarly, **T2** replied "I use the CLT because it mostly focuses on fluency."

Theoretically, both teachers are familiar with the objectives of structural and CLT approaches, but they were mostly using the structural approach when practically they were observed in the classroom.

**Qn 2.** *How do you teach oral communication skill?*

*How do you organize students while teaching oral skills?*

**T1** reported that he teaches oral skills through group discussions. He reported: "... In my class the best method I use is through group discussions ... because group discussion can enhance students speaking, they can have the opportunity to learn from themselves." On the same view, teacher (**T2**) reported: "Most of the time I teach my students through group discussion."

They further explained that, they organize students into groups composing all levels of students (i.e. top, middle and lower achievers.)

However, the results of the classroom observation and students' interview showed a contradicting fact that teachers merely organize students according to their seats.

For successful discussions and group work, cooperation is the most valuable aspect. Students will learn important sub-skills and expressions when working together and collaborating with their group-mates. As a result, teachers should establish proper environment for successful discussion and group work.

**Qn.3.** *How often do you use communicative activities to enhance students' oral communication? These may include role play, simulation, language games, information gap activities, debate, discussions, interview, etc.*

**T1** replied that he uses communicative activities most of the time. The teacher further said, "I use peer-evaluation and discussion ... sometimes the topic does not allow me to do so, but I create suitable conditions by myself."

**T2** reported that she uses communicative activities depending on the lesson.

On the contrary, the results of classroom observation, students' interview and questionnaire showed that the communicative activities teachers use in the classroom were highly restricted.

The activities mostly used by these teachers are discussion, peer-evaluation and interview but other activities like role-play, simulation; language games are not at all used.

**Qn.4.** *Could you please, list problems you encounter during the classroom interaction?*

*What are the factors that inhibit students from speaking English?*

**T2** reported that students do not give special attention for speaking because of their background where they had been studying grammar more than speaking lessons. She further said that lack of practice creates anxiety when they begin to speak English. The other problem she raised is the attitudinal problem that students themselves and the society do not give much value for speaking English. One who speaks more is blamed as ‘talkative and bombastic’.

Similarly, **T1** pointed out that most of the problems of his students are lack of practice and unwillingness to participate which is related to their background. He further stated that students had been learning through grammatical/structural forms and now become nervous when they try to speak English.

The other problem teachers encounter is the immovable desks which inhibit group discussion and cooperative learning.

**Qn.5.** *How do you react on the communicative activities in students’ text book?* The interviewees reported that the text books are organized more on the basis of the structural approach.

For instance, teacher (**T1**) pointed out: “I appreciate the current textbook ... the old text book merely focused on analytical approach”; he further explained that the new textbook is organized communicatively though students do not have it at hand. Similarly, teacher (**T2**) reported that most of the activities are teachers-based and thus do not initiate self-learning.

The results of content analysis also showed that most of the activities do not have clear objectives and instruction so that students can not practice without the guidance of their teachers.

**Qn 6.** *Does the school have special program primarily designed to enhance students' oral communication (like book land/ discussion and English Day) club?*

Both teachers reported the availability of special programs out of the normal schedule which are adjusted to improve students' oral communication i.e. panel discussion and English Day. The panel discussion is conducted once/ twice a year in the school among all grade levels (9-12).

In addition to this every Tuesday is an English Day though students do not speak any English on that day. With regard to the panel discussion programs, students claimed that it did not bring much change in all students because it is held once/ twice a year and merely consists of clever students.

Therefore, teachers should lower panel discussion time and include medium and lower achievers too on the panel.

**Qn7.** *What should be done to improve students' oral communication?*

Both teachers underlined the provision of opportunities and establishment of authentic and collaborative environment for practice. For example, teacher (**T1**) stated: "In my opinion, we teachers have to create conducive environment inside and outside of the school in which students can practice the spoken language freely."

Similarly, teacher (T2) reported that students should practice now and then since practice makes perfect.

#### **4.4 Content Analysis**

In this section an attempt is made to examine the availability of oral communicative activities in students' text-book and their stated objectives to enhance students' oral skills.

The English textbooks prepared for grades 11 has two parts. Part one has seven units and each unit has seven sections. These are Comprehension, Vocabulary, Note making and Summary, Speaking, Listening Writing and Reading. The second part of these textbooks deals with grammar. The common characteristics of these books are that they do not have general and specific objectives clearly stated under each unit and section.

The textbook prepared for grade 11 is categorized into two parts i.e. book one and book two. The first (Book 1) has seven units and each unit contains speaking activities. In this textbook an attempt has been made to include communicative activities like discussion, debating, interview and story -telling.

The first two speaking activities are available on pages 16 and 41 entitled as 'introductions and things we have in common'. These activities require teacher's manual and guidance. The teachers themselves do not know what to do with them since they do not have manuals the syllabus at hand.

The other activity of this textbook stated in unit three on page 65 is entitled 'Story telling: Animal tales'. This activity is somewhat better than

the preceding units because here situations and instructions are clearly stated.

There is also a speaking activity in unit four, pages 82-83. This activity has lists of adjectives and adverbs. It does not make students communicate through these activities; rather it is word building activity.

On page 102 of unit five, the speaking activity deals with discussion under the topic of “school uniforms”. The situation is creative and interesting that students can practice their oral skills

supporting/opposing the essence of wearing school uniform. However, still it requires the teachers’ manual which is not available to the teachers. As a result, it does not promote self-learning.

The other speaking tasks are given on pages 121-22 and 141-42 of units six and seven of book one. The first one talks about syllable stress, while the second deals with peer and group discussion on the topic of ‘the ideal school’. Students can express their views regarding the qualities of the ideal school.

The second textbook of grade 11 is book 2. This textbook is a continuation of book 1. Like book 1, this book also does not have general and specific objectives under each unit and section.

The first speaking activity is found on page 10 of unit one entitled, ‘Starting a Farm’. The situation given is familiar to students’ background and it has clear instructions.

The second and the third speaking activities are given on pages 25 and 37 of units two and three. Both activities have clear instructions and situations. The first activity concerns with ‘understanding and translation of proverbs’ while the second deals with ‘interviewing’.

These activities were designed to develop conversational and descriptive skills though students do not know what sub-skills to develop at the end of the practice. The next activities are stated in units 5 and 6 on pages 52 and 82 respectively. The activity stated under unit 5 pays attention to oral presentation, short talks on interesting events while the later activity

is related to giving and offering advice i.e. how to share one's problem. Therefore these activities encourage autonomous learning.

The last activity of Book 2 is given on page 97 of unit 7 (seven). This activity is entitled 'proverb 2'. The task is designed to state the meanings of certain proverbs and translate them into the students' own language. This activity is a mirror of section four of unit one so, it is a redundancy.

When comparing these textbooks, book1 is much less organized than book 2. For, most of the activities stated under book one are teacher-based, not creative, do not expose students to real life speaking situations. As a result, students are not encouraged to be autonomous learners.

However, these text book share a common features in that, they do not contain much communicative activities, like role play, simulation, language games, dialogues, picture description and authentic materials, (from magazines, cartoons, pictures and newspapers). In addition to this, most of the activities are vague that they do not have well organized instructions and objectives.

Moreover, these textbooks do not contain any advice which can guide students on how to develop their oral skills.

The other book selected for content analysis is Grade 12 English Textbook. This textbook, has nine units and six sections in each unit.

The first speaking activity is concerned with 'riddles' and 'problem solving activity'. Students are required to translate the riddles into their first language and to interpret other riddles in the target language and to solve problems through critical thinking.

The second task is given on page 23 of unit 2. This activity addresses 'expressing opinion', definitions of disagreement and examples on how to agree and disagree which are clearly stated with examples. In addition to this, the third activity is about discussion on the topic 'Water Resource

in Ethiopia'. Students are requested to discuss in groups regarding with water resources of Ethiopia. The topic can let students communicate with each other as it is motivating and familiar to students.

The other activities are given on pages 47 and 71 of units four and five. The first task concerns with how to praise and congratulate people, while the latter is about 'asking and giving direction. In the first activity students can practice their oral skills through role play having different characters. For example, they can act as waiter and guest. In the second activity there are posters stated for showing directions. This, in turn, promotes students to show directions in pairs and groups acting as tourists and guides.

The activities stated under unit six share a similar feature with the preceding activities. The activities deal with words and phrases of complaining. The students are requested to practice ways of complaining taking a variety of situations.

The activity listed under unit seven is about giving and accepting invitations. Plenty of model dialogues and questions on formal and informal invitations were given to promote students oral skills.

The next activity is available on page 120. It deals with group discussion on harmful traditional practices. Students either in pairs and groups can share ideas concerning with the harmful traditional practices. The last activity of this textbook is available on page 147. Students are requested to make short talks on the impacts of HIV-AIDS. Charts and tables are given to strength students ideas.

Therefore, the grade 12 new English Textbook is much better than the grade 11 old English textbook since it contains variety of communicative activities which promotes students oral skills and autonomous learning.

The following table shows the overall speaking activities stated under the two grade level textbooks (TB1and 2 of Grade 11and TB of Grade12).2

**Table 6.Content Analysis: - the Speaking Activities Found in  
Students' Textbook.**

<b>TB</b>	<b>Unit</b>	<b>specific objectives</b>	<b>Contents</b>	<b>Methodology</b>	<b>Learning Resource</b>	<b>Evaluation</b>
Grade 11 TB 1	1	To introduce oneself and others	introduction	Pair and group work	Model dialogues	Pair and group performance
	2	To develop discussion skills	Group discussion	Group work	Group demonstration	Oral questions
	3	To develop public speaking skills	storytelling	Role play	Model story	Students' performance
	4	To describe things	description	Pair and small groups	Pictures and charts	Performance in the class
	5	To develop debating skills	Debating	simulation	Model dialogues	Students' performance
	6	To pronounce words and phrases	Pronunciation	Pair work	Model examples	Students' work
	7	to develop discussion skills	discussion	Role play	Model questions	Oral questions
Grade 11 TB2	1	To develop discussion skills	discussion	Group discussion	Model questions	Students performance
	2	To translate proverbs	translation	Pair work	Model questions	Students performance
	3	To develop conversational skills	conversation	Pair work	Model dialogues	Oral questions
	4	To describe pictures	Picture description	Pair work	Charts and pictures	Oral questions
	5	To develop presentational skills	Oral presentation	Role play	Model dialogues	Students' performance

	6	To develop skills of giving and accepting advice	Expressing advice	simulation	Model dialogues	Students' performance
	7	To translate proverbs	translation	Pair and group discussion	Model questions	Students' performance
Grade 12 TB	1	To interview each other about riddles	interviewing	Pair and group work	Interview questions	Checking group performance
	2	To develop ways of agreeing and disagreeing with someone's opinion	Agreeing and disagreeing	Simulation and role play	Model questions	Assessing group performance
	3	To develop presentational skills	discussion	Group discussion	Model questions	Class performance
	4	To express praise and congratulations	Expressing praise and congratulation	Pair and small group	Model dialogues	Checking students' performance
	5	To exchange information	Asking and giving directions	Pairs and group works	Pictures Model dialogues	Students' performance
	6	To express complains	Making compliant	Role play	Model dialogue	Continuous assessment
	7	To give and accept invitation	Invitation	Pair work	Model dialogues	Students' performance
	8	<i>To make short oral presentation</i>	<i>Oral presentation</i>	<i>Group work</i>	<i>posters</i>	<i>Students' performance</i>
	9	<i>To prepare and present oral reports</i>	<i>discussion</i>	<i>Group work</i>	<i>charts</i>	<i>Group performance</i>

**TB- 1      Textbook 1**

**TB-2      Textbook 2**

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **5. Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations**

This study has explored the teaching of oral skills in English through the use of communicative activities. Now-a-days, language teaching has placed a great emphasis on communicative language teaching and student-centered method where the goal of teaching speaking is to improve students' communicative skills.

As a result, linguists and EFL teachers agree that students learn to speak in a foreign language by communicating through that language. To explore the teaching of oral skills the researcher considered many aspects like teachers' roles, students' roles, the implementation of communicative activities, problems students face and the nature of classroom interaction. To gather reliable information with regard to the above aspects, the researcher used observation, questionnaire, interview and content analysis.

#### **5.1 Summary**

The findings of the study are summarized below.

##### **Aspects Related to Teachers' Roles**

It has been found from the data analysis and discussion that the teachers in the sample do not teach speaking through pairs and small groups though they forwarded a contradicting opinion in the interview. In addition to this, they do not act as facilitators, advisors and coordinators.

It has been also observed that the teachers do not diagnose problems students face unless they are asked for help. Moreover, the majority of the students stated that their teachers mostly encourage clever students only.

### **Aspects Related to Students' Roles**

It has been observed that students do not actively participate during the speaking activities. This is because of a numbers of factors. The main factors include students':

- Poor background of the target language. Beginning from elementary to high school level they have been accustomed to learning through the structural approach. This means, they were not exposed to real communication situations.
- Attitudinal problems: The target language has not much value starting from the school students to the society.
- Fear of making mistakes: Lack of confidence and lack of personal motivation are the other problems.
- Students also do not have an adequate numbers of textbooks. The ratio of textbooks to students is 1:3. i.e. 1 textbook to 3 students.

### **Aspects Related to Implementation of Communicative Activates**

It has been found that some of the communicative activities are authentic that they motivate students to speak English. Such activities include storytelling, interview and debating. However, most of the student- respondents stated that the activities presented to the class are limited. Activities like role play, simulation, language games and information gap activities were not presented during the speaking sessions.

Furthermore, it has been found that special programs which are primarily designed to enhance students' oral communication were not satisfactory. Teachers also expressed a similar opinion during their interview.

### **Aspects Related to Classroom Setup**

It has been perceived that the classroom has adequate space for interaction, but it consists of immovable desks so that it was not possible to organize students having clever, middle and lower achievers in each group.

## **5.2 Conclusions**

The following conclusions are drawn from the above findings.

- Teachers fail to accomplish their roles as per modern language teaching methods like CLT (Communicative Language Teaching). They do not act as facilitators, coordinators, co-communicators supervisors and counselors.
- Theoretically, teachers are well-informed on how to teach speaking but when practically observed they do not apply their theoretical knowledge.
- Most of the students could not reflect their ideas and do not show willingness to participate actively in speaking activities because of poor background of the target language.
- The immovable desks are found to be an obstacle for a successful implementation of group discussion and group work.
- Teachers' method of teaching (i.e. lecture) method has been found to be a hindrance for improving students' oral skills.
- Students' poor backgrounds of the target language i.e. lack of communication practice, lack of self-confidence and self-motivation has been found a hindrance for improving students' communication skills.
- Lack of organized and consistent special programs designed to enhance students' oral communication is found to be the other problem.

## **5.2 Recommendations**

- It is advantageous to organize students in small groups and pairs while teaching speaking skills. This is because such situations create better opportunities for learners to interact freely with their class mates.
- Teachers should provide maximum opportunity to students to speak the target language by providing a rich environment that promotes collaborative work, uses authentic materials and tasks and shared knowledge.
- Teachers should diagnose problems faced by their students who have difficulty in expressing themselves in the target language and provide more opportunities to practice the spoken language.
- The school administrators and language teachers should prepare a consistent and organized program out of the normal schedule such that students can practice the target language in real life situations.
- The use of interesting textbooks can help to increase the motivation level of students in the classroom. However, many high school and preparatory texts often contain materials which fail to capture the interests of students due to heavy emphasis on vocabulary and grammar. As a result, curriculum designers should pay attention to the objectives and instructions of communicative activities design to improve students' communication skills.
- The bodies concerned should conduct workshops and seminars for high school and elementary school teachers so that they can change their attitudes and methods of teaching and follow the recent and more effective methods.
- The current study is a small scale study conducted in a newly opened preparatory school where there is shortage of textbooks and lack of authentic materials. In order to study the problems

broadly and to increase its research data base, further research embodying more schools and considering other broad perspectives will have to be conducted.

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## APPENDIX A

**Addis Ababa University  
Institute of Language Studies  
Department of English  
Students' Questionnaire**

**Dear students,**

The purpose of this questionnaire is to explore the teaching of oral skills in English through the use of communicative activities employed in your class. Specifically, it will assess your oral communication skills, problems you encounter during oral communication, oral communicative activities you use, the role of your teacher and classroom interaction.

Your genuine response will contribute a lot for the success of the study.

*Thanks*

The respondents' background information

- Sex:                      Male                       Female
- Grade level              11                       12

### **Part One**

#### **Questions Related to the classroom teacher**

**Instruction:** Please make your own decisions saying agree, strongly agree, disagree and strongly disagree for the following statements.

Key: - A = Agree    DA= Disagree    SA= Strongly Agree    SDA = strongly disagree

No	Items	Response			
		A	SA	DA	SDA
1	The teacher structures the lesson ahead of the beginning of the class.				
2	The teacher asks interesting questions.				
3	The teacher moves around the class to check students work.				
4	The teacher supervises students' participation.				

5	The teacher helps students when they need help.				
6	The teacher encourages students to participate freely in the classroom discussion.				
7	The teacher organizes groups by mixing up, top, middle and lower achievers.				
8	Sometimes the teacher acts as a student.				
9	Most of the time the teacher acts as a lecturer.				
10	The teacher gives chance to all students.				

If you have any comments, please state them.

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**Part Two**

**Questions related to students' Role**

**Instruction:** Please put your responses using tick (✓) mark under 'Yes' or 'No' for the following points.

No	Items	Response	
		Yes	No
1	I show interest to participate in oral classroom activities.		
2	I don't feel comfortable when I do classroom activities with my peers.		
3	I do not take initiative to express myself in oral classroom activities because of fear of making mistakes.		
4	I raise questions when I face difficulties.		

5. Please, list the major problems that inhibit you from speaking English.

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**Part Three**

Questions related to classroom oral activities

**Instruction**

3.1 Please make your decisions saying A, SA, DA and SDA for the following points.

Key: A = Agree  
 SA = Strongly Agree  
 DA = Disagree  
 SDA = Strongly Disagree

No	Items	Response			
		A	SA	DA	SDA
1	The activities presented in the speaking class are familiar to the students.				
2	The classroom oral communicative activities motivate the students to speak freely.				
3	The activities provide the whole task practice.				
4	The activities are varied.				
5	The activities enable students to use their own ideas.				
6	The activities are enjoyable to the students.				
7	The activities encourage autonomous learning.				

If you have any comments, please write them below.

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**3.2 Instruction:** Decide your response, saying always, sometimes, never and not known, for the implementation of the following communicative activities in your classroom.

No	Items	Response			
		Always	Sometimes	Never	Not known
1	Role play				
2	Simulation				
3	Stringy- telling				
4	Picture description				
5	Picture narration				
6	Games				
7	Discussions (free talks)				

8	Brain storming				
9	Interviews				
10	Story completion				
11	Reporting				
12	Debating				
13	Find the difference				

If you have comments, please write in the space below.

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**Part Four**

**Questions Related to Mode of Classroom Interaction.**

**Instruction:** Please, choose one from the alternatives that best suit your ideas and explain.

1) In the speaking session most of the classroom activities are presented through:

- a) Pair and group work
- b) individual work
- c) whole class work

Choice \_\_\_\_\_

Explanation:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Most of the speaking lessons are covered through:

- a) Teacher -centered approach
- b) student -centered approach

Choice \_\_\_\_\_

Explanation:

\_\_\_\_\_

3. The classroom arrangement is accessible for group discussion.

- A. agree
- B. strongly agree
- C. disagree
- D. strongly disagree

**Thank you!!**

5. እንግሊዝኛን እንዳትናገሩ ከሚያደርጓችሁ ችግር ዋና ዋናዎቹን ጥቀሱ።

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

**3. በክፍል ውስጥ የመማር ማስተማር ሂደትን በተመለከተ**

3.1 መምርያ፡- ለሚከተሉት ሀሳቦች ከተዘረዘሩት ምርጫዎች ትክክለኛውን በመምረጥ ለምን እንደመረጣችሁት ማብራርያ ስጡ።

1. የንግግር ክህሊትን ስትማሩ የምትማሩበት ዓይነት፡-

- ሀ. በተናጠል ሥራ (individual work)
- ለ. በጥንድና በቡድን ሥራ (pair and group work)
- ሐ. በህብረት ሥራ (Whole class work)

ምርጫ \_\_\_\_\_  
 ትንታኔ \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

2. ብዙውን ጊዜ የመማር ማስተማር ሂደቱ \_\_\_\_\_ ተኮር ነው።

- ሀ. መምህር ተኮር (Teacher centered)
- ለ. ተማሪ ተኮር (Student centered)

ምርጫ \_\_\_\_\_  
 ትንታኔ \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

3. በክፍል ውስጥ ያሉ ወንበሮች፣ ጥቂቱ ስሌዳ እና ሌሎችም ለቡድን ስራ ወይይት የተመቹ ናቸው።

- ሀ. እስማማለሁ
- ለ. በጣም እስማማለሁ
- ሐ. አልስማማም
- መ. በጣም አልስማማም

ምርጫ \_\_\_\_\_  
 ትንታኔ \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix B

### Classroom Observation Checklist

The main purpose of this classroom observation checklist is to observe the teaching of Oral skills in English through communicative activities. Particularly, the checklist will assess teachers and students' role, classroom interaction, and classroom setup, in the classroom observation.

#### 5.1 Teacher's Role

**Instruction:** Please make a tick (✓) mark under 'Yes' or 'No' that corresponds with the statement.

No	Items	Response	
		Yes	No
1	The teacher motivates students to communicate with each other.		
2	The teacher facilitates classroom discussion.		
3	The teacher talks more in oral classroom interaction.		
4	The teacher organizes students into groups and pairs.		
5	The teacher helps students when they face problems.		
6	The teacher creates collaborative work for students.		
7	The teacher acts as a coordinator.		
8	The teacher acts as a lecturer.		

#### 5.2 Students' Role

No	Items	Response	
		Yes	No
1	They express themselves openly.		
2	They are interested in the participation of oral discussions.		
3	They work in groups actively.		
4	They ask questions when they have doubts.		

#### 5.3 Oral communicative activities

No	Items	Response	
		Yes	No
1	The activities motivate students to interact in real life situations.		
2	The activities' difficulty level is appropriate to students' background knowledge.		
3	The activities encourage whole task practice.		
4	The activities provide students with genuine purpose for speaking.		
5	The activities enable students to use their own		

	ideas.		
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#### 5.4 Classroom Setup

No	Items	Response	
		Yes	No
1	The classroom has accessible space for interaction.		
2	The classroom arrangement is suitable for group organization.		

## **APPENDIX C**

### **Students' Interview**

**Dear Students,**

The purpose of this interview is to explore the teaching of oral skills in English through communicative activities. The interview specifically focuses on, teachers' and students' roles in the classroom interaction and the implementation of communicative activities.

For this purpose, your genuine information is highly valuable.

1. Does the teacher motivate students to participate in the speaking session?
2. Does the teacher let students discuss in groups?

If yes, the nature of the groups is:-

- Mixed ability group
  - Same ability group
3. Could you list the communicative activities the teacher uses to enhance students' oral communication?
  4. Do the activities enable you to express your ideas?
  5. Does the teacher provide sufficient time for discussion and presentation?
  6. Could you list problems that hinder you from speaking English?
  7. Could you suggest solutions for these problems?
  8. Is there any special program which is designed to improve students' oral communication (like, English day, book land club)?

## Appendix C-1

### Students S1's Interview Response

The purpose of this interview is to explore the teaching of oral skill in English through communicative activities. It specifically focuses on teachers' and students' role, classroom interaction and the implementation of communicative activities.

Therefore the first question is, *Does the teacher motivate students to participate in speaking sessions?*

Yes. Directly or indirectly, the teacher tells us to participate, but there is no special treatment or motivation for those who do not participate actively.

*Does the teacher let students discuss in groups?*

Sometimes, the teacher organizes students for discussion, whereas most of the time, we participate by raising our hands.

*What is the nature of the group? Is it mixed/same ability group?*

In this case, there is no always mixed group. The teacher simply arranges students based on their seats. Even if there are female students in one desk, only these students alone will discuss. So, there is no mixed ability group.

*Could you list the communicative activities the teacher uses to enhance students oral communication?*

Most of the time the teacher uses peer evaluation and discussion.

*How about role play, simulation, language game, picture description?*

Sometimes, storytelling but the others are strange to the classroom discussion.

*Does it mean they are new to you?*

Yes. We have not practiced speaking through them.

*Do these activities enable you express your ideas?*

Though most of the activities do not motivate us, some of them are interesting.

*Does the teacher provide sufficient time for discussion and presentation?*

No. We are not given enough time to prepare and present the result of the classroom discussion.

*Could you list problems that hinder you from speaking English?*

'eh...eh.' in my point of view, some of the problems include, fear of making mistakes, lack of vocabulary, self censure and lack of practice. Particularly, I did not practice the spoken language while I in elementary school because my English teacher did not provide much opportunity for passive students.

"Frankly speaking the effort should have been from me, but teachers did not give much chances because I was passive and as a result I used to speak Amharic."

*Could you suggest solutions for these problems?*

In my opinion, we have to give emphasis for this language and practice every day. To do this again teachers must create authentic environment.

*Is there any special program which is designed to enhance students' oral communication (like English day and discussion clubs)?*

Yes there is. The program is mostly panel discussion and debating and it is held once/twice a year among students of the school.

*How do you see it? Is it satisfactory?*

It is enough.

*Ok. Thank you.*

Ok.

## **Appendix C-1**

### **Student S2's Interview Response**

The purpose of this interview is to explore the teaching of oral skills in English through communicative activities. It specifically focuses on teachers and students roles, classroom interaction, problem students face and implementation of communicative activities.

When I begin the first question;

*Does the teacher motivate students to participate in speaking sessions?*

The teacher motivates, but it lacks consistency. Sometimes when we make mistakes the teacher corrects intensely, 'it should be like this'.

*Does the teacher let students discuss in groups?*

It is not always, but sometimes the teacher organizes us to be in groups with our near chairs.

*Is the group organized through same/mixed ability level?*

Oh! The teacher does not give emphasis for this aspect. What is a common behavior is to group students with their seats.

*Could you list the communicative activities the teacher uses to enhance students' oral communication?*

The common activities we use are peer review, discussion and interview. Out of these I have not seen other activities.

*How about role play, simulation, language games and others?*

They are not yet applied. May be story telling very rarely.

*Does the teacher provide sufficient time for discussion and presentation?*

Sure! The teacher gives enough time.

*Do the activities enable you express your ideas?*

Of course, some of the activities motivate me speak the language, for example, the peer evaluation.

*Could you list problems that hinder students from speaking English?*

There are many problems, but the common problems are, lack of vocabulary lack of motivation, poor background experience. In addition attitudes students and people around us; say us 'bombastic' when we begin to speak in English. As a result of these and other reasons, we are reluctant to speak in the target language.

*Ok could you suggest solutions for these problems?*

Teachers should encourage us and we have to avoid shyness/stage-fright. For instance, to express myself without fear, I must practice more fun activities. Moreover we must allocate much time for practice.

*Is there any special program which is designed to enhance students' oral communication (like English day, discussion club)?*

Yes. Every Tuesday is an English day, but students do not always talk in English. "I myself use Amharic tea-room, toilet and sport field because my friends are not speaking English."

*How about special program out of the normal schedule?*

There is a panel discussion which is prepared once / twice a year among students of the school, but it merely includes the clever students. The rest of us are attendants.

*If it's once year, is it satisfactory to improve students' oral communication?*

I hope it is not sufficient. The concerned bodies should think about it; especially language teachers should strive to include more students during panel discussion.

*Thank You.*

It is ok.

## **Appendix C-1**

### **Students S3's Interview Response**

The purpose of this interview is to explore the teaching of oral skills in English through communicative activities. Specifically it focuses on teachers' and students' roles, classroom interaction, problems students face and the implementation of communicative activities. Relating this, the first question is

*Does the teacher motivate students to participate in speaking session?*

More or less the teacher motivates. But most of the times the teacher gives chance merely for those who raise their hands. So, she does not ask passive students.

*Does the teacher let students discuss in groups?*

There is no formal group organized by the teacher. We only discuss with our seats.

*Does the teacher check level of students in the group (clever- middle and lower)?*

No. As I told you before there is no consideration of top, middle and lower achievers in the group discussion.

*Could you list communicative activities the teacher uses to enhance students' oral communication?*

We do not use different communicative activities, but the common ones are; interview, panel discussion and peer review.

*Does the teacher give sufficient time for discussion and presentation?*

'eh eh '. In this case, we are given much time when we discuss in peer review

*Could list problems that hinder student from speaking English?*

As I believe, the problems include, mother tongue influence, peer interference, attitudes of the community for the target language, and less emphasis given for speaking skill. I.e. we learn only to pass exams.

*Could you suggest solutions for these problems?*

Teachers must give a piece of advice for all students of the school to stop peer interference, and we must practice a lot.

*Is there any special program which is designed to enhance students' oral communication (like English day, discussion club)?*

Though we are not speaking in English Tuesday is an English day. For example, if you observe students in their break time, they merely speak with their vernacular language. The other is panel discussion preparedly once a semester/ yearly.

*Thank You!*

Take it easy.

**Appendix C-1**  
**Students S4's Interview Response**

The purpose of this interview is to explore the teaching of oral skills in English through communicative activities. Specifically, it focuses on teachers' and students' roles, classroom interaction, problems students face and the implementation of communicative activities. So, the first question is;

*Does the teacher motivate students to participate in speaking sessions?*

The teacher does not give equal concentration to every student.

*What do you mean by equal concentration?*

When I say this, the teacher merely motivates those who participate regularly.

*Does the teacher let students discuss in groups?*

Most of the time we learn through whole class work in which the class participates together. Sometimes, depending on the activities, we discuss in groups.

*How are the groups organized?*

eh ... It is through our seats.

*Could you list the communicative activities the teacher uses to enhance students' oral skills?*

Communicative activities that mostly used in the class are peer evaluation; interview and discussion, sometimes storytelling.

*Does the teacher provide sufficient time for discussion and presentation?*

Yes, of course, when we have discussion sessions.

*Could you list problems that hinder students from speaking English?*

Most of the problems are lack of words (vocabulary), teacher's method of teaching i.e. over emphasis on grammar and less to spoken language.

*Could you suggest solution for these problems?*

In my opinion, teachers have to motivate us and give us more opportunities.

*Is there any special program which is designed to enhance students' oral communication (like English day, discussion club)?*

Once or twice a year, we have panel discussion that encompasses all grade levels (i.e. 9-12). Additionally, we have English day which is held every Tuesday.

*Do students speak English on this day?*

Almost all students do not speak English they usually speak their first language.

*Thank you.*

Do not mention.

## **Appendix C – 1**

### **Students (5's) Interview Responses**

The purpose of this interview is to explore the teaching of oral skills in English through communicative activities. Specifically, it focuses on teachers' and students' roles, classroom interaction, problems students face and the implementation of communicative activities. So, the first question is;

*Does the teacher motivate students to participate actively?*

Sometimes she motivated us in classroom participation but most of the time she only motivates and appreciate clever students. In the middle of students participation there are students who sleep, talk irrelevant opinions, whatever this is happening the teacher still goes with cleavers.

Does the teacher let students discuss in groups? If yes, the nature of the group is: mixed ability /same ability

In this case, "the teacher orders us to discuss with our seats, but we do not even discuss with our neighbor seats."

*Could you list communicative activities the teacher uses to enhance students oral communication?*

Frankly speaking, our teacher does not bring communicative activities most of the time what we usually use to discuss are limited, for example, discussions, interviews and sometimes story telling.

Do the activities enable you express your ideas

Of course: There are some activities which enable students express their views. For example, "when we have debating sessions, I am eager to express my self supporting /opposing the argument.

Does the teacher provide sufficient time for discussion and presentation?

In this aspect, when the lesson is about discussion there is no equal allotment of time. This means, the time given for students' presentation is not equally distributed. Some groups may take more than others.

*Could you list problems that hinder you from speaking English?*

There are many drawbacks which hindered me from speaking the target language. For example, "I am not good at speaking English because I came from rural area where there is no any access to resources of speaking such as authentic materials, like magazine, cartoons and films. Additionally, poor knowledge of grammar and poor listening skill are also problems.

*Could you list suggestions for these problems?*

In my opinion, teachers should organize the programs in a consistent way so that students can express themselves without any in convenience.

Is there any special program which is designed to enhance students' oral communication (like discussion and English Day club)?

Yes of course, there are two programs, panel discussion and English Day. But we all do not speak. For instance, "I do not speak in English Day because students laugh at me when I break rules of the language."

## **Appendix C- 1**

### **Student (6) Interview Responses**

The purpose of this interview is to explore the teaching of oral skills in English through communicative activities. Specifically, it focuses on teachers' and students' roles, classroom interaction, problems students face and the implementation of communicative activities. So, the first question is;

*Does the teacher motivate students to participate in speaking sessions?*

If you participate, you will get extra motivation and appreciation from the teacher. But there is no visible motivation from the teacher.

*Does the teacher let students discuss in groups?*

*If yes, the nature of the group is*

- *Mixed ability*
- *Same ability*

Teachers feel board to organize students taking them from different sorts. As a result, they only let students to be with their desks.

Could for list the communicative activities the teachers uses to enhance students oral communication?

Most of the time the teacher does not bring various communicative activities; we practice through limited activities.

*Do the activities enable you express your ideas / opinions?*

In this case, "we are not told the objectives of the activities and the activities themselves do not have clear instructions.

*Does the teacher provide sufficient time for discussion and presentation?*

We are given some minutes, when we have discussions, but it is not sufficient. Could you list problems that hinder you from speaking English?

The major problems include lack of accurate pronunciation, lack of grammar knowledge and poor listening skills.

For example, "I have enough words, but I am not good at grammar and as a result, I am afraid of breaking grammar rules". In addition to this

the society will insult you calling ‘chatter box’ if you speak a lot even in your mother tongue.

*Could you list solutions for these problems?*

In my point of view, we have to practice a lot in and out of the classroom. For this purpose, again, teachers have to play their role through organizing the panel discussion and English Day programs.

Is there any special program which is designed to improve students’ oral communication?

Yes of course. As I told before, there are programs like panel discussion and English Day but students do not practice speaking through the target language. For example, “If you observe students in the break time they do not speak and me too because I will not be out of these students.

### Appendix C-1.2

#### Students interview (Amharic Translation)

አዲስ አበባ ዩኒቨርሲቲ

የቋንቋዎች ጥናት ኢንስቲትዩት

የውጭ ቋንቋዎች ስነ-ጽሁፍ ትምህርት ክፍል

የተማሪዎች ቃለ መጠይቅ

#### ውድ ተማሪዎች

የዚህ ቃለ መጠይቅ ዋና ዓላማ ለማስትሬት ዲግሪ ማሟያ የሚሆን ጥናታዊ ጽሁፍ ለማዘጋጀት ከእናንተ መረጃ መሰብሰብ ነው። ጥናቱ የሚያተኩረው የመናገር ክህልን ንግግር ከሚያሻሽሉ ግብአቶች በመጠቀም እንዴት እንደሚሰሩ ለማጥናት ነው። ይህም ጥናት መምህራኖች ንግግርን የሚያሻሽሉ ግብአቶች (Communicative activities) ምን ያህል መጠቀማቸውን ከመፈተሹም ባሻገር የመምህሩን ድርሻ፣ የተማሪዎችን ድርሻ፣ የተማሪዎች በንግግር ጊዜ የሚያጋጥሟቸውን ችግሮችንና የተማሪዎችን የንግግር ክህል ለማሻሻል ተብሎ የተዘጋጁ ለየት ያሉ ፕሮግራሞችን ያጠቃልላል።

በመሆኑም የእናንተ ትክክለኛ ምላሽ ለዚህ ጥናት ስኬታማ መሆን ከፍተኛ ድርሻ አለው።

1. የንግግር ክህልን በምትማሩበት ጊዜ መምህሩ ተማሪዎች እንዲሳተፉ እድል ይሰጣል?
2. የንግግር ክህልን በምትማሩበት ጊዜ መምህሩ በቡድን እንድትወያዩ ያደርጋችኋልን? መልስዎ አዎ ከሆነ የቡድኑ ሁኔታ፡-
  - የተለያዩ ( ጎበዝ፣ መካከለኛና ደካማ) ተማሪዎች አንድ ላይ የያዘ ነው።
  - ጎበዝ፣ መካከለኛ እና ደካማ ተማሪዎችን ያማከለ አይደለም
3. መምህሩ የተማሪዎችን የንግግር ክህል ለማሻሻል ብሎ የሚጠወቁማቸው ግብአቶችን ዘርዝር/ሪ።
4. የእናንተን የንግግር ክህልን ለማሻሻል ተብሎ የሚቀርቡ ግብአቶች ሀሳባችሁን በደንብ እንድትገልጹ ያደርጓችኋል?
5. በምትወያዩበት ጊዜ መምህሩ በቂ ጊዜ ይሰጧችኋል?
6. እንግሊዝኛን እንድትናገሩ ከሚያደርጓችሁ ችግሮች ዋና ዋናዎቹ ጥቀሱ።
7. ለነዚህ ችግሮች መፍትሔ ይሆናሉ የሚያሟሟቸውን ሊጠቅሱን ይችላሉ?
8. የእናንተን የንግግር ክህል ለማሻሻል ተብሎ የተዘጋጁ ለየት ያሉ ፕሮግራሞች አሉ ወይ?

APPENDIX C-2

**Teachers' Interview**

*Dear teacher,*

The purpose of this interview is to explore students' oral communication and the implementation of communicative activities. These encompass teachers' and students' roles, the application of communicative activities and problems students face.

**For this purpose, your genuine response is highly valuable for the success of the study.**

1. Some FL and SL teachers use structural approach in their class, but others use CLT (Communicative Language Teaching approach) which one does you use? Why?
2. How do you teach oral communicative skills?
3. How often do you use communicative activities in your class?

4. Do you like laughter/fun in your class? If yes how do you create it?
5. How do you organize students while teaching oral skills?
6. Could you please, list problems you encounter during the classroom interaction?
7. Could you please list students' problems that inhibit them from speaking English?
8. How do you react on the communicative activities in students' textbook?
9. In your opinion, what should be done to improve students' oral communication?
10. Does the school have book land/English club primarily designed to enhance students' oral communication.

## **Appendix C-2**

### **T1's Interview**

First of all, I would like to express my profound thanks in advance for your cooperation. To begin, the purpose of this interview is to explore, the implementation of oral communicative activities, examine teachers and students roles in the speaking session. When I begin with the first questions;

*Some FL and SL teachers use structural approach in their class while others use CLT approach. Which one do you use? Why?*

'Eh - eh'... Ok. First of all I would like to say well come to our school. I appreciate your title because I did my senior essay in oral communication while I was in Addis Ababa University. Personally, I appreciate CLT because the focus is in meaning. There are two approaches analytical and communicative.

Analytical approach mainly focuses on grammar while CLT focuses in meaning. The CLT is better since it can engage students in communication. So, I use the communicative language teaching.

*When I come to my second question, how do you teach oral communicative skills?*

Well. In my class the best method I use is through group discussion. Because group discussion can enhance students' speaking and they can have the opportunity to learn from themselves.

*How often do you use oral communicative activities to enhance students' oral communication these may include, role play, Simulation, picture description, language games, debate/ discussion, interview?*

Frankly speaking, our school is special from others. For example, we have neighboring school. In the middle of the year we made several competitions. Last year, we made panel discussion and my students were good at speaking.

*Is it at school level? I will raise it later but how often do you use oral communicative activities in the classroom?*

Basically, you may have got it from students' interview that I use peer evaluation and panel discussion. Sometimes, the topic does not allow me to do so. But I create suitable conditions by myself. So, I can say most of the time.

*Ok. How do you organize students while teaching oral skills?*

Nice. 'eh- eh'. Most of the time I let students to be grouped with their near chairs to minimize wastage of time.

*Do you like laughter/ fun in your class? If yes how do you create it?*

That it is a wonderful idea. Language learning by nature is full of fun. So, I like my students to be in relaxed environment and attend the class. For this purpose, I let my students to be in groups and discuss.

*Could you please, list problems you encounter during the classroom interactions?*

This is an important question. Actually most of the problems I look at my students are lack of practice and participation. This is directly relates with their background. They have been learning through forms and are nervous when they try to speak in English. In addition to this, the immovable are the extra drawbacks that hinder group discussion and cooperative learning.

*Great! Could you please, list students' problems that hinder them from speaking English?*

This question is related with the above one. Most of the time, they are afraid of making mistakes. Above more, they lack communication practice.

*How do you react on the communicative activities in students textbook?*

Ok. I appreciate the current textbook. The old textbook merely focused on analytical approach though the students do not began using the new textbook; it is interesting as compared to the old textbook.

*Are students currently learning with the new textbook?*

No. Grade 11 students are still learning with the old textbook, but Grade 12 students are on the way to learn with the new textbook. As you know we opened the preparatory school last year that is why we face lack of new textbooks.

*Does the school have book land/ English day club primary designed to enhance students' oral communication?*

Actually it is a great question. As I told you, last year we had a chance to participate with neighboring schools but this year as students grew up to grade 12, they reluctant to participate. The program is held once a year with other schools and once a semester inside of the school.

*Is it satisfactory to enhance students' oral skills?*

Actually, it is not satisfactory. We are planning to make it twice/ three times within a semester.

*Great! In your opinion what should be done to improve students' oral communication?*

In my opinion we teachers should create conducive environment for practice inside and outside of the school.

Moreover, students should practice and practice out of their class every day.

*Thank you very much.*

You are well Come!

## **Appendix C-2**

### **T2's Interview Responses**

The purpose of this interview is to explore the implementation of oral communicative activities and examine teachers' and students' roles. Having introduced the purpose let me begin the first question.

*Some FL and SL teachers use structural approach in their class but others use CLT (Communicative Language Teaching) which one does you use? Why?*

OK! In all grades of units structural approach can be focused and we can give equal emphasis for the four basic skills.

*Which one do you use?*

I use the communicative language teaching because it focuses mostly on fluency.

*How do you teach oral communications skills?*

Well. Most of the time, I teach my students through group discussions.

*How often do you use communicative activities in your class?*

There are sections; in each section we can use communicative activities. So, I use depending on the topics.

*How do you organize students while teaching oral skills?*

In principle, I always try to organize students by mixing top, middle and lower achievers. But students do not feel comfortable to be grouped following this principle. For this reason, I let students to be grouped with their desks.

*Could you please, list problems you encounter while teaching oral skills?*

Most of the times, when we group students (clever middle and lower) together, clever students cover all the activities. This in turn, impedes lower students' participation.

*Could you list students' problems that inhibit them from speaking English?*

They did not give special attention for speaking from their background because they studied grammar more than speaking. This lack of practice again creates anxiety when they begin to speak. The other problem is problem is related to attitude. They assume that their peers and the society may blame them for speaking English. But the main problems I observe are lack of practice and motivation.

*How do you reflection the communicative activities in students textbook?*

Most of the activities are teacher based and do not promote self-learning. But it does not mean there are not activities which foster autonomous learning.

*Does the school have book land/English day club primarily designed to enhance students' oral skills?*

Yes. There is mini media club/ English day club which is held every Tuesday. In addition to this, there is a panel discussion program which is held once a semester.

*How do you see it? Is it satisfactory?*

It is not satisfactory. If we try to make it below this, students will not come because they study for their academic competition.

*In your opinion, what should be done to improve students' oral communication?*

I believe that speaking skill can be developed through process. So, students should practice without fear every day since practice makes perfect. The more they practice the more they improve their speaking skills.

*Ok. Thank you indeed*

Never mind.

