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ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY

FACULTY OF LANGUAGE STUDIES

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

The Practice of Language Games in the First Cycle EFL Classrooms: The case of Hawssa Kindane Mihiret School (SNNPR)

By: Tizita Abraham

June, 2011

*The Practice of Language Games in the First
Cycle EFL Classrooms: The case of Hawssa
Kindane Mihiret School (SNNPR)*

By: Tizita Abraham

Submitted to: The Department of English

(Graduate Program)

*In partial fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree
of Master of Arts in Teaching English as a foreign
Language (TEFL)*

June, 2011

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Acknowledgements:

First of all, I would like to give my thanks to all of my instructors for being good educators especially my advisor Dr Mendida, for helping and guiding me throughout my research work. I would also like to thank all the people who helped me during conducting my research by participating, and providing me with materials, English teachers of grade one to grade four, who were willing to give me answers and let me observe their classes. If they were not willing to give me answers and let me sit in their class rooms to observe it, it would not have been possible to conduct this research.

Finally, I would like to express my especial gratitude to all my family for assisting me in everything that I need without hesitating throughout my life. Had it not been through them, it would not have been possible to accomplish my study, with especial regards to my mother and father for supporting me throughout my education.

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Acronyms

EFL	English as a Foreign Language
SNNP	Southern Nations Nationalities and People's
T1	Teacher One
T2	Teacher Two
T3	Teacher Three

Abstract

This study was conducted to find out whether or not language games were being used in first cycle classrooms. It was concerned with identifying what hinders teachers from practicing language games in their English language classes. It also investigated what the attitudes of teachers towards language teaching games are, evaluated if teachers have awareness about why and how they should use games to teach English language and explored if they have been given trainings on the use of language games.

To achieve the desired objectives, the researcher employed availability sampling technique. The study was conducted in the school called Kidanemihiret which is located in Hawassa town. The study was conducted on English teachers of the school who were teaching grade one to grade four. The two important tools which were employed in the study to collect the data needed for it were classroom observation and teachers' interview. The main data collecting tool was observation and the interview was conducted with teachers based on what the researcher observed during the observation days. The students were not given a questionnaire and they were not interviewed for the study because they were too young and the researcher had a fear that it would be difficult for them to understand and answer the questions. The reason for choosing these grade levels was that most of language problems start at the early age and in elementary schools and if we find out what are the problems that are keeping teachers from using language games, measures can be taken at least to lower the problems starting from the lower grade levels. The data that are gathered through the classroom observation and teachers interview were qualitative in their nature.

In the qualitative data analysis, first, the response for the questions from the interview were transcribed and coded. Then, the results were discussed and analyzed according to similarity of responses. The observation was analyzed in a table that shows how many times the three teachers used language games and the type of games that were used during the observation time. Finally, the qualitative data collected through interview and observations were presented in tables and descriptive statements.

After the data were analyzed to find out what the hindrances that are preventing teachers from using language games are, the researcher found out that the most preventive factor was lack of training. There are also some other hindering factors like lack of material support from the school administrators, negative attitudes of the parents of the students and the directors, lack of awareness on behalf of the school administrators and also the teachers which is caused as a result of lack of trainings.

After finding out the preventive factors, the researcher suggested some recommendations for all the concerned bodies so that they can work towards the minimization of the problems and to create positive atmosphere for the teachers to use language games so that they can improve language problems students' face.

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

1.1 Background of the Study

Linguists and language teaching experts believe that early language learning plays an important role in the student's later academic and social performance. In Ethiopian schools, regarding language learning the emphasis was on the mastery of the grammar rules and structures of the language rather than helping students to practice the language itself. Language teaching experts believe that such an approach might lead to the decline of learner's motivation to learn the language and promotes easily forgetting the language after the lesson is over Sara (1989).

According to Turnbull (1981), 'let them speak' has been a battle cry in TEFL for some time. But successful ways of letting them speak or as the teachers will tend to put it, getting them to speak, remain elusive. As Dickinson (1981) states a major problem for language teachers is to find techniques which will enable and encourage learners to interact in the target language in the limiting context of the class room. The researcher believes that the perfect solution to this problem is for the teachers to introduce activities such as games to help students interact in the target language.

According to Jung (2005), games serve as excellent communicative activities and as a powerful language learning tool. They have a power to keep students interested and learn the language easily in the way babies learn their mother tongue without knowing that learning is taking place. If games are selected wisely according to purpose they serve best, they can participate all students even those who are shy.

As Sara (1989) pointed out, the source of language problems faced by students in high schools and colleges appears to be from the nature of language teaching and learning process in the primary and elementary schools. Though many methods have been developed by language teaching experts, Ethiopian elementary schools haven't tried to keep up with advances in methodology. This is creating a problem which will affect students feature negatively.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The researcher has got a chance to observe Kidanemihiret elementary school in Hawassa for a week before deciding to conduct this research to find out if schools are using this powerful device to teach English language. The finding was that the school the researcher observed doesn't use language games. That is why the researcher decided to explore deeply if it is only a coincidence that they were not using games during the observation or they don't totally use it. As the researcher's observation shows, teachers are practicing teaching in the traditional way where there is a little or no participation of learners in the process. This method doesn't motivate students to use the language. But using games to teach language can do these for the students. They help to make the teaching and learning process interesting and keep students motivated to participate in the process. As stated in Wright and et al (1984), games help the teachers create a context in which the language is useful and meaningful. Therefore, when teachers use games for teaching English, they are not just teaching the language, they are also teaching students how to use it communicatively. The researcher believes that knowing why the teachers of Ethiopian elementary schools don't use language games to help students develop their communicative competence is very essential to make the necessary facilities available and help teachers make use of games in their language classes.

There are some who fear that language games are not applicable in Ethiopian classes because of large classes but studies conducted by Sara (1989) and Tekelu (2007) show that they are practicable and are more effective in teaching English language than the traditional way of teaching where the emphasis is on making students accurate in the language than fluent. As regard to research done in this area, Sara (1989) conducted her research on the use of language teaching games and activities in Ethiopian government elementary schools. She concluded that using games are more effective than the traditional technique teachers' use in Ethiopian elementary schools. In the study, she found out that the experiment group taught by the language teaching games and activities performed better than those taught through the traditional and controlled method of teaching. She also tried to see if language teaching games are feasible and applicable in Ethiopian government schools where there are large classes and conservative teachers of limited training. Her study shows that it is applicable and it can develop motivation and also help students have positive attitude towards the lesson.

The second study is conducted by Tekelu (2007). He tried to see if English teaching games are effective or not in improving students English language competence. The focus here is on the accurate use of the languages grammatical items. He also tried to find out if language teaching games can improve learner's knowledge of vocabulary. This study differs from those in that it studied out why teachers are not using language games in their classes to teach students learn the use of the language. It is also to find out the attitudes of teachers towards language games and if they are aware of the benefits they could get out of using games in their classes. There is also difference in the grade level of the three studies. Sara's study is conducted on grade 5 students, Tekelu's on grade 6 and this study is conducted on the language teachers of grade 1, 2, 3, and 4 students. We can also see another difference in the sample of the study. Sara (1989), conducted her research on government school of Addis Ababa, Tekelu (2007), on one primary school in Addis Ababa and this study focused on conducting the research on non government primary school of Hawassa called Kidanemihiret.

1.3 Research Objectives

1.3.1 General Objective

The general objective of the study is to find the factors that hinder teachers from using language games in their language classrooms. It is concerned with identifying the reasons why language games are not being practiced in English language classes.

1.3.2 Specific Objectives

The specific objectives of the study are the following:

- What is the attitudes of teachers towards language teaching games
- Assessing if teachers have awareness of why and how they should use games to teach English language
- Exploring if they have been given trainings in the use of language games

1.4 Research Questions

1.4.1 General Research Question

The general research question of the study is: What are the factors that are hindering teachers from using language games in their English language classrooms?

1.4.2 Specific Research Questions

The specific research questions of the study are the following:

- What is the attitude of teachers towards language games?
- Is it lack of awareness, lack of training or lack of facility that is preventing them from using language games?

1.5 Significance of the Study

The finding of the study will be of some help for the following bodies:

1. Teachers in that it can help them identify the problems that are hindering them from using language games while they are teaching their students. After identification, it will help them take measures to change the existing situation so that games can be used in schools.
2. Students in that after finding out why games are not being used, teachers and other concerned bodies will take the necessary measures and the students will finally get the chance to learn language by the use of games. It will help them to learn to use the language instead of just know about it.
3. The study is also expected to be a stepping stone for further studies that are to be conducted on this area. It should be known that this study alone cannot give full information on the area and it is necessary to conduct further studies.

1.6 Delimitation of the Study

Due to its nature, the study is limited to the case of Hawassa Kidanemihiret School. The sample is restricted to grade 1, 2, 3, and 4 language teachers of that school.

1.7 limitation of the study

The study is limited by the following factors:

Limited time, resource and budget influenced the researcher to plan in a narrow context. The study is limited by time since there are only few months given to conclude the research. Due to this, the sample is very limited. This doesn't mean the conclusion or the finding will be insufficient. The study is conducted in great care to find accurate findings.

There is also limitation by low funding. There is so much to do and very limited budget to conduct the research. This is one of the reasons for planning the research in limited area.

CAPTER TWO

2.1 Literature Review

2.1.1 Communicative language teaching:

As it is stated in Sara (1989: 6), it was in the early 1970's British applied linguists like Wilkin, Candlin, Widdowson and Christopher Brumfit forwarded the basis for communicative or functional approach to language teaching. The theory spread widely and became acceptable by many teaching specialists and curriculum designers. This approach has goals of developing communicative competence and acknowledges the interdependence between language and communicative competence. A person that acquires communicative competence learns both knowledge of using the language and the rules of the language. Widdowson gave the term language usage to linguistic competence and language use to communicative competence. He implied that the acquisition of communicative competence could guarantee the acquisition of linguistic competence but not vice versa (Widdowson 1988:8).

Canale and Swain (1980:50) identified four dimensions of communicative competences. These are:

1. Grammatical competence
2. Sociolinguistic competence which is about understanding the social context in which communication is taking place.
3. Discourse competence which refers to the interpretation of message elements in terms of their connection and relationship to the entire discourse or text.
4. Strategic competence that is the strategy of coping with different communications by using strategies like terminating, maintaining, repairing and redirecting communication.

Furthermore, teaching will give more sense to the learners if it is based on their conception of language which is as a means of communication rather than as a structural system rather than contradicting with it (Littlewoods 1981:17).

English language teaching is taking on a new character as a result of the need for many advanced students to use the language as a tool in the study of different scientific and technical subjects. This new approach to language will shift the focus from grammar to communicative use of the language. Previously, the aim of the language usually was to talk about the language in terms of “language skills” of speaking, understanding speech, reading and writing, and these were seen as the general education in different levels. However, the need shifted from this to providing students with the basic ability to use the language (Allen and Widdowson in Brumfit and Johnson 1979)

Communicative language teaching makes use of real life situations that initiates communication. It is an approach to the teaching of second and foreign languages that emphasizes interaction as both the means and ultimate goal of learning a language. It gives attention to both structural and functional aspects of the target language but in more communicative ways. The purpose of learners is to communicate meanings intelligibly, to produce correct language or to do both depending on how the teacher puts the activities or the learners expectation of how he| she is going to be evaluated as it is stated in Littlewoods (1981). This means that how the activities are given to the learners really does determine their purpose of learning. What the teacher wants to achieve through communicative activities in the classrooms will determine his own attitude towards it and what place he gives it in his own methodology Littlewoods (1981:17). However, the problem is that students, especially those in developing countries like Ethiopia who have been receiving formal English teaching remain deficient in the ability to actually use the language and to understand its use in normal communication as it is stated by Widdowson in Brumfit and Johnson (1979).

Communicative activities lead to communicative competence which includes the following aspects of language:

- Knowing how to use language for a range of different purposes and functions.
- Knowing how to vary our use of language according to the setting and the participants (e.g. knowing when to use formal and informal speech or when to use language appropriately for written communication).
- Knowing how to produce and understand different types of texts (e.g. narrative, reports, interviews and conversation).

- Knowing how to maintain communication despite having limitations in one's language knowledge (e.g. through using different kinds of communication strategies).

Communicative activities can provide 'whole-task' practice to the students. That is, it can not only help learners know the language but also use it in different situations.

It can also motivate learners. It motivates them to participate in communication with other students and teachers. The purposes of communicative activities are as follows:

1. Provides 'whole task' practice: as it is stated in Littlewoods (1981), their use is not only to know the language; it helps learners to use the language in meaningful situations. Most learners' prior conception about language is that it is a means of communication rather than as a structural system (Littlewoods, 1981:17). Learning will give more sense to them if it goes with this perception rather than contradict with it.
2. It improves motivation: it motivates students to take part in communication with others.
3. It allows natural learning: many aspects of language are beyond pedagogical control. They can take place only through natural process, when an individual is involved in using the language.
4. They can create a context which supports the learning process: they can create a positive relationship between students and with their teachers as well. It can create favorable learning environment.

In language learning, games can be of a great help to teach students communicatively so they can learn to use the language instead of just know about it. As it is stated in Sara (1989:9), they help bring the language lessons closer to real world. They can help achieve all the purposes of communicative activities mentioned above. They can do more than entertain (Byrne, 1986). They are not just a break from routine; they contribute to language proficiency by helping students use the language communicatively.

In order to overcome communication problems learners of language two use different internal processes. The most important process involves production and communicative strategies which are defined by Ellis (1983:165) as attempts to utilize the existing language knowledge effectively and clearly with in minimum efforts. They are techniques used by learners in order to communicate meanings using their limited knowledge. They help them overcome communication problems.

Corder (1981:103) classified communication strategies in to two macro categories which are very successful but very risky. These are:-

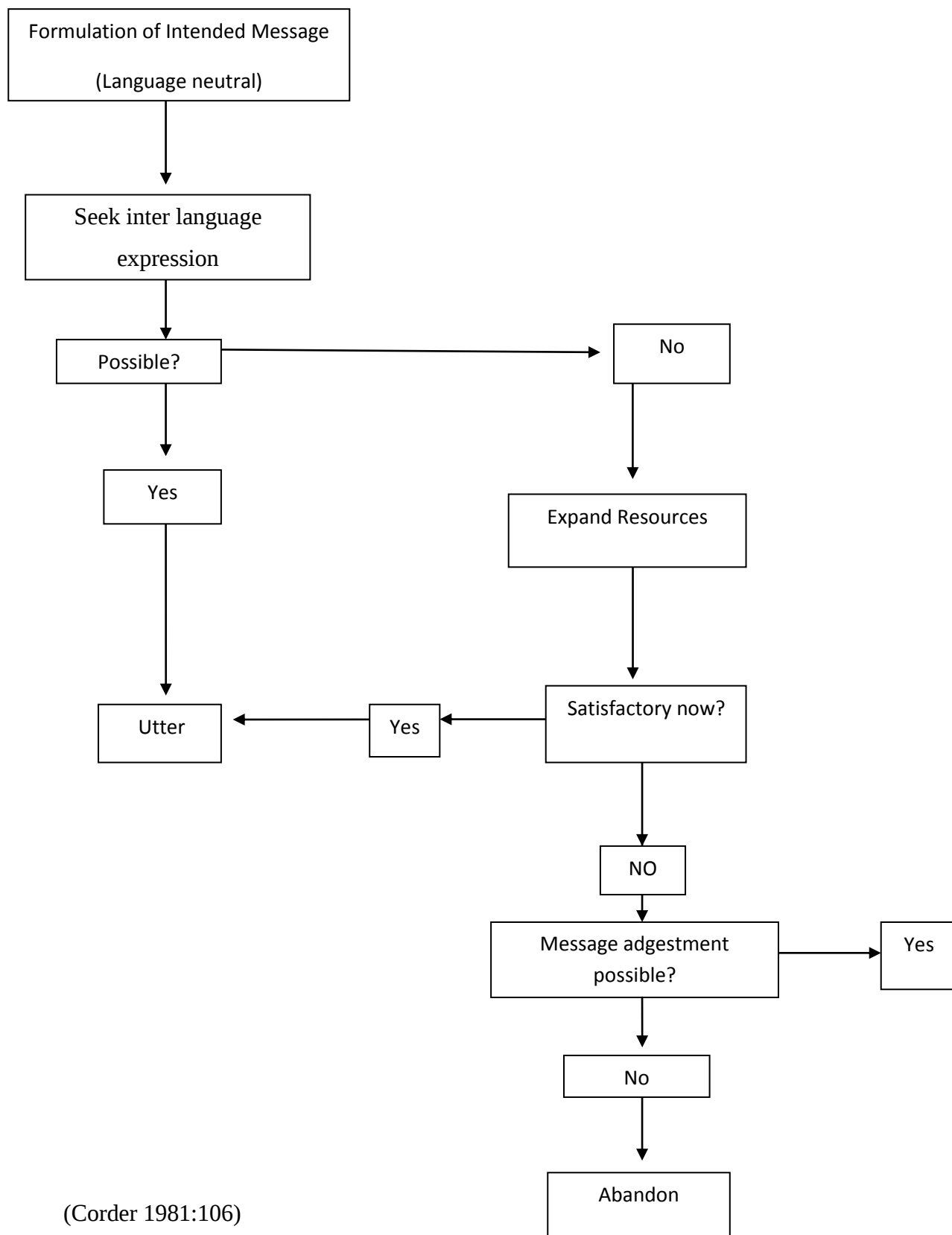
1. Message adjustment
2. Resource expansion

Message adjustment strategy involves **total withdrawal** from continuing a discourse due to the feeling of total language difficulty. Learners can also **say less** when they are facing difficulty while having conversation and this is called message reduction. The other way of message adjustment is known as ‘message abandonment’, **trying but giving up**. Here, the learner who is facing difficulty can say what he wants to say in slightly different way.

The second strategy, resource expansion asks for risk taking and is used simultaneously. Learners use it when they have fear of failure, misunderstanding or communication breakdown. The most common resource expansion is called ‘borrowing’. This means using linguistic item from another language. Extreme form of borrowing is ‘**switching**’ to another language. **Paragraphrase** or **circumlocation** is another way of resource expansion. It is not elegant way but it works (Corder, 1981). It is also called first language interference. These strategies are helpful in resource expansion and keep communication going (Ellis, 1986:189).

When a learner faces difficult to continue communication because he or she didn’t have a structure or a particular linguistic item, he/she can use a number of other words and structures to keep the communication going.

Encoding paths



(Corder 1981:106)

These strategies are very important in helping language learners to cope up with different communication situations and keep communication going. The researcher believes that teaching students using language games can help them develop communication strategies which will help them communicate using the language freely without the fear of failing and facing linguistic problems.

2.2 Definition of Game

According to Byrne (1986), games are defined as a form of play governed by certain rules or conventions. Mei and Jung (2000) also agree that games are activities with rules, a goal and an element of fun.

Edge (1983), considered language teaching games as activities that can help students play, have fun, compete and work in cooperation. Therefore games are not just activities that help students have fun in their classes, they can also challenge them, make them work together in groups or pairs and compete with each other but not in the way that can stop them from working together.

They are not just a break from routine activities or time filling activities like some think. They have a great educational value. Like Byrne (1986) states they should contribute to language proficiency by helping the students to learn.

As Rixon (1981) points out, games are closed activities. This means that they have a very clearly marked beginning and end. There is a definite point at which the game is over or has been won, and it is easy to see how near to that point players are. Students know exactly when the game will be over and how close they are to finishing it. This helps to put some kind of structure to what they are doing.

Gibbs (1978:60) in Rixon (1981) defines games as an activity carried out by cooperating or competing decision makers, seeking to achieve, within a set of rules, their objectives. Rixon believes that applying games to teaching can encourage learners to use the language to some purpose.

The most obvious way of classifying language games from language teacher's point of view is according to the language they practice Rixon (1981). These are: listening games, spelling games, vocabulary building games, games that teach structure or a function, and so on.

2.3 Why Games?

Learning is a hard task that can sometimes cause frustration. It calls for constant effort to produce and manipulate the target language. As Ersoz (2000) states, they are highly motivating since they are amusing and at the same time challenging. They help to employ meaningful and useful language in real context. One of the reasons to use games in a class room is because it can add variation to a lesson and it can increase motivation to use the target language, Mei and Jung (2000). It can be a kind of incentive. According to Lewis,(1999) in *ibid*, games bring the target language to life. It gives students reason to speak the target language.

It can motivate even the shy students to speak. Games help and encourage many learners to sustain their interest and work Wright and et al (1984).

Games can also help teachers to create context in which the language is useful and meaningful. Games create a context in which students can communicate and exchange ideas.

The need for the language to be meaningful during learning has been accepted for some years and that is what makes games helpful to create this kind of environment. They provide language practice in the various skills: speaking, writing, reading and listening.

For games to attain its goals, it needs to be chosen in great care depending on its purpose and the level of the students. As Ersoz (2000) states, well chosen games are very valuable as they give students a break and at the same time allow students to practice language skills. There is a common perception that all learning should be serious and if students are having fun, then it really isn't learning. As Kim (1995) states, this is a miss conception. It is possible to enjoy and learn the language at the same time.

Like some think, an effective user of games in the language classroom is not necessarily the teacher who has a long list of them in his head, but someone who has really thought about them and their ingredients and how they can be varied to call forth different activities and skills from the players (Rixon 1981:1). If a teacher understands this, this will help his students to learn something important while playing games.

For language teaching purpose, we need to make sure that the skills needed in any game are heavily enough weighted on the language side (Rixon, 1981:3). For example, chess is an

excellent game in itself, but it is almost useless from language point of view. The reason behind this is that the players need not to communicate during the game- at least not with words. The skills needed for this game are intellectual and tactical, not linguistic.

As it is stated in Byrne (1986), language games contribute to language proficiency in two main ways.

1. Language games can help to improve language ability of learners on language items like sounds, vocabulary, spelling and grammatical item. We can understand that these kinds of games are concerned with fluency rather than being able to use language accurately.
2. The second contribution of games for language proficiency is to help learners use the language rather than practice what has been taught. These kinds of games need some kind of task to be completed by the students. In order to do this, they use language.

Games that help learners to be communicatively competent use two kinds of techniques to attain this goal frequently Byrne (1986). These are:

- a. The 'Information' gap: here, one of the students knows something the other doesn't know. The student that doesn't know what the other knows is to 'bridge' the gap by getting the information.
- b. The 'opinion' gap: one of the students has an idea or opinion that he would like to share it with the other student. The one with the idea should persuade the other that he| she is right by stating his opinion effectively.

The traditional types of games that are used to teach language structure and grammatical rules also use these techniques. Both types of games have their place in language learning.

2.4 Typology of Language Games:

As it is stated in Rixon (1981: 5), the first thing many people think of in connection with games is competition among players. This is a nature of many games, but there are some in which cooperation is the main focus. There are also games with both cooperation and competition. In these kinds of games, students cooperate with each other within the same team and they compete with the other team. The language that the students are expected to use varies from game to game. It depends on what they are expected to do. The rules of some games demand that a player should use formally correct English. They must produce a structure correctly, pronounce or spell correctly, or recognize different sounds. In these types of games success is judged accordingly. In some games, the most important thing is to be able to convey message successfully. They need to convey a message well enough for the other students to understand it. The emphasis in these types of games is more upon successful communication than absolute correctness. For example in games like describe and draw game, one player is expected to describe well enough for the other player to understand and draw the picture.

Teachers aim to achieve both correctness and communicative effectiveness with their students. But different techniques are appropriate for each and have to be done at different times Rixon (1981:22).in the same way, different games are appropriate for different purposes.

Games can be used with a very wide range of students. They are not just for children. They can also be used for adults. The key to make games acceptable is suitability. The teachers should make the games that they choose for their students' appropriate for their ages and knowledge levels.

One of the reasons for the teachers to think that games are not appropriate for their classes is large number of students in the classes. Providing materials for pair activities in a classroom where there are more than fifty students is very hard. Doing teacher controlled games may seem answer in this case. But it may be unproductive since there is very limited opportunity for each student to participate. As it is stated in Rixon (1981:53), one type of game that could work well in this situation is that in which the answers are not given individually from each team but by the whole team at once. To avoid noise, they can use some kind of signals to answer. For example in ship or sheep game, they can give a signal like putting their hands up if they hear the |I| sound or

|i| sound. Ever one in the team must answer at the same time. The majority decision is what the teacher counts. 50|50 votes gain no point at all.

The other game that can be used in large classes is adapting Bingo idea for language teaching by increasing the amounts of skill needed, but the luck element remains to give the game interest (ibid, 1981: 54). The numbers can include cardinals, ordinals, fractions, decimals and so on, or there can be pictures in which case the game is Vocabulary Bingo. This game can be played in any levels from children to adults. The players are one caller and any number of players. The language they use depends on the content of callers' cards since the contents can be vocabulary, forms of verbs, numbers, words chosen to practice sound discrimination, etc. The players each have a card ruled into number of sections. Each section contains a word, a number, or a picture, depending on the version played. Each player's card is different from those of the others. The caller calls out the numbers or words that are in his card each one once only. If a player has that number or word on his card, he covers it. The first one to cover his entire card shouts 'Bingo' and is the winner. Bingo type games can solve some of the problems faced by large classes. They can also be used by small classes.

2.4.1 Code- control Games

These games depend upon players producing correct language or demonstrating that they have interpreted a particular piece of language correctly Rixon (1981). As it is stated in Sara (1989), they are competitive and concerned with accuracy. Their purpose is to extend and reinforce what has already been taught. In these types of games, students need to guess the right answer to stay and win points. Examples of this type of game are: sentence building, games involving variation of items in the same structure, sound discrimination games or ship or sheep?, and spelling games like Hangman Byrne (1986:101). The length of each utterance is usually limited in these types of games. Often, one word only, and seldom longer than a sentence or two. They have a feature that makes them similar to a drill. This feature is that correct repetition of limited range of language is the important thing in this game. Just as it is in drills, someone needs to judge and monitor these games. Since the teacher is the one with sufficient command of the language, it will be him who rewards correct answers and rejects incorrect ones.

For example ship or sheep can be played by both Beginners and advanced learners with age starting from children to adults. It is played by one caller and competing teams. The caller says one pair of words distinguished by only one sound like “ship” or “sheep” players indicate which word they think he said, one point will be awarded for each correct answer. There should be visual aid so that this can be easily done. Two pictures or flash cards with the two words should be shown as the caller says the two words. The players can point to the card they think is correct. The purpose of this game is sound discrimination and five minutes is enough to play it. Playing the game is definitely fun and at the same time educational.

The teacher’s first role in code-control games is being MASTER OF CEREMONIES| QUIZ MASTER. In many of these games, it’s the teacher who poses the question or challenges the class (Rixon 1986:59). Teachers need to keep up a quick pace and a confident delivery to keep students on their toes. The second role of the teacher as it is stated in (ibid) is being JUDGE|EVALUATER OF RESPONSES. It is usually the teacher who judges correctness. In some games students can take over the role of quiz master or the challenger but the teacher will have the last word on language is acceptable. The other role is as a scorer. But it doesn’t always have to be the teacher who keeps the score. There are some students who like to do this.

2.4.2 Communication Games

In these types of games the emphasis is not on the absolute correctness of the language, rather on the message of the player. As it is stated in Sara (1989), these games give students opportunity to use language rather than just practice it. However, it should not be thought that communication games do not improve correctness since language that is too distorted by mistakes will fail to communicate effectively. A good example of a communication game is Describe and Draw. In this game the second student is not allowed to look at the picture. The only way he or she can find out about it is by the description given by the first student. This game can be played by beginners and advanced learners depending on the picture used. Both children and adults can play it. The players are one describer and a group of drawers. The drawers can be organized in to two small groups or pairs. Three minutes are given for each pictures depending up on the complexity of the pictures. Main language used here is descriptive in its nature. The drawers can ask questions so that they can produce a sketch as similar as possible to the original. The two pictures are compared at the end. The language that is used in this type of game is freer and more

varied than in code control games. When the game is over the objective will have been achieved by communication rather than perfect language. The students can measure their own success by the speed and efficiency with which they reach the objective of the game. Communicative games can be played at any level and are good games even for native speakers of the language Rixon (1981).

The teacher's role in communicative games is not to control the activities. He can't interfere too much in these activities. If he did, it will distort the purpose of the games. The teacher's roles in these games as it is mentioned in Rixon (1981:63) are: INFORMANT|LANGUAGE CONSULTANT, MONITOR|CORRECTOR, and ARBITER|REFEREE. In the first case, the teacher is there to be used as a source of information. He should be ready to help them with what they want to say. In his second role, it doesn't mean he can act as a judge. He observes them and does something about serious errors. His third role is to settle disagreements between students in some competitive games that may cause disagreements between them if they couldn't do it themselves. Byrne (1987:13) puts the role of teachers in these types of games as CONDUCTER, ORGANIZER AND MONITOR, STIMULATOR, and MANAGER AND CONSULTANT.

2.5 Accuracy Focused Games:

The purpose is to reinforce or extend the learners command of specific language items. They focus on the formation of correct examples of language. Here, language is practiced out of context and do not require meaningful communication. Even the choice of language is controlled.

They are normally played with the whole class, often with the students divided in two teams. They can also be played in smaller groups or pairs for additional practice. The purpose of using these games is to reinforce or extend the learners command of specific language items.

The teacher during these kinds of activities will monitor their performance and give them points for correct answers.

2.6 Fluency Focused Games:

Fluency is natural language use that occurs when a speaker engages in meaningful interaction and maintains comprehensible and ongoing communication despite limitations in his or her communicative competence.

It is developed by creating classroom activities in which students must negotiate meanings, use communication strategies, correct misunderstanding and work to avoid communication breakdown.

These types of games are used to help students use the language. It is not about the language itself; it's about using language to communicate.

According to Byrne (1986), students normally work in small groups but some games like describing and draw, find the difference can be done in pairs. Guessing games are good for class fluency work. It can be practiced with a lot of visual material with details. They can find out as much as they can by asking any kind of question. This game helps students practice fluency in the class room.

2.7 Learning Vocabulary Through Games

According to Huyen and Nga 2003 in Mei and Jung (2000), games have shown advantages and effectiveness in learning vocabulary in various ways. First, games bring relaxation and fun for students, thus help them learn and retain new words more easily. Second, games usually involve friendly competition and they keep learners interested. This creates motivation for learners to get involved and participate actively in the learning activities. Third, vocabulary games bring real life context in to the classroom, and enhance student's use of English in a flexible and communicative way.

A vocabulary game is one which the learners' attention is focused mainly on words (Lee, 1986:37). The role of games in teaching vocabulary can't be denied. However, to achieve the desired result, it is essential that suitable games are chosen. Whenever game is to be used, the number of students, proficiency level, cultural context, timing, learning topic and the classroom setting are factors that should be taken in to consideration.

Learning vocabulary through games is effective and interesting way that can be applied in any classrooms.

They are not only used for fun but more importantly for the useful practice and review of language lessons leading students towards the goal of improving their communicative competence.

One of the language games that can lead to learning vocabulary is called Broken Sentences (Lewis and Bedson, 1999 in Mai and Jung 2000). In this activity, students have to put together sentences which have been broken up into two halves. The method of playing this game is first, the teacher should copy and cut sentences so there is one sentence for each pair of students in the class. Then, students walk around the class trying to find their pair. Once they found it, they sit down. The teacher can check if they put the sentence together in the right way by making them read out their sentence.

E.g. I am going to the zoo... ... to see the animals.

Let's go to the travel agent... ...to book our summer holiday.

I need a ruler... ... to draw straight lines.

The second example of vocabulary game is called *what's this| that? Who's this| that?* The level of students who can play this game is elementary. It is suitable for children. The whole class or groups can play it and it helps to practice naming people and objects. To play this game, learners hold up or touch or point to object or people naming another team to answer. Those who answer correctly ask a similar question in return. If the answer is not right, the one who is asking the questions or someone else asks another question (Lee 1986: 37). A point can be awarded for every correct answer. Replies take the form it's a.....it's the.....it's my| your| his| her.....it's x..., etc.

Students can also play a game called **Shopping** to learn vocabulary. This game can be played by elementary and intermediate students with any age. It can be played in a groups or small classes. Its use is to practice the vocabulary needed for various kinds of shopping. There is also another game called **I spy**. It is played in elementary level with children. It can be played with the whole class or groups. This is an old and simple vocabulary game. Somebody says:

I spy

With my little eye something beginning with B.

The others guess what the object is. For example one of the students may guess, the black board? And so on. The one who guessed the right answer will take the turn. This game can also be substituted with a rhyme:

One – two – three,

What can I see?

Something in this room

Beginning with

There is another game which is played by singing called ***Old Macdonald (MacDougall)***. It is a lively reminder of farmyard vocabulary and the name of almost any domestic or farm animals can be worked in.

Old Macdonald had a farm,

E- I- E- I- O,

And on that farm he had some ducks,

E- I- E- I- O

With a quack - quack here

And a quack – quack there,

Here a quack, there a quack,

Everywhere a quack- quack,

Old Macdonald had a farm

E- I- E- I- O.

In another verse, the farm animal can be replaced by another. This is a song all ages like to sing. It is fun and helps to remember the names of different farm animals.

2.8 Games Based Spelling Learning

It is believed that voracious readers are often good spellers, but not always; nor does every language learner read voraciously (Lee 1986: 49). Language games help students to pick up spellings easily if they are the right games for teaching spellings. A lot depends on the visual image of the word, which tends to be photographed on the memory of the students, therefore it is very essential not to write the wrong spelling of the word on the black board. Words are best introduced to the class in context of sentences.

Lee (1986:49) states that spelling exercises and games are not so much needed at an elementary stage when the learners have seen relatively few words. A brief spelling game twice a week is probably enough if there are several weekly lesson periods. The games can almost be played with any kind of classes. These games overlap with vocabulary games but they are intended to practice spellings. Some of these games are: Write what you see, Write what you hear, write what you know, Filling the gaps, Stop, Word- completion, Word- cards and Letter- cards, Stepping stones, Wolves and lambs and so on.

As it is stated in Garcia and et al (2008), the objective of any education game is achieving a didactic goal while maintaining the entertaining value any game is expected to provide, therefore, by using spelling games we can achieve these goals.

2.9 Structure Games

There are games that provide the exercise of the use of particular pattern of syntax in communication and these are called structure games. Among them are number of guessing games which can be played at various age levels. These are: What is it? Is it...?, Who am i? What's my name?, What is there in my bag today?, Where is it?, Out of place and there are also others. There are also other games that do not require guessing. One of these games is called sentence building.

2.10 Listening Games

Some of listening games that can be played with the whole class are: Picture describes, Picture dictation and Describe and note (Byrne 1987: 25-27). The first game is played with the teacher describing a picture. The teacher makes mistake deliberately so that the students can correct him. The second game is played with the students without seeing the picture. You describe it to them and they have to draw it to you from the description you give them. The third activity is similar to the one above except that students take notes while listening instead of trying to draw. They can ask questions if something is not clear. After they took their notes, you can ask them to compare and draw the picture in pairs, give an oral description of the picture, or write the description of the picture. They can work in pairs.

Language teaching games give an opportunity to the learners to be involved in the learning process to participate actively and learn without being bored. Using games will give them all the benefits it has. Students involved in the games are eager to achieve, to win, and to learn how to win a language game which means the mastery of the language (Sara 1989:32). As Gazda and Corsini (1983: 212) stated, being able to express what they want to say is their success and it is a powerful reward for them.

2.11 Adapting and Inventing Games

As it is stated in Rixon (1981:85), most games can easily be changed to suit the classes and teachers may make something new of their own. Games can be modified in the way they can be more communicative. For example, word games like monopoly do not generate enough language. This game can be modified in the way they can generate more language by using different comments like, 'oh dear!' and 'that's bad luck!' and it can be more fun than just play the game. The other way of adapting the game in the way it can suit the purpose is by adding rules to it. For example the player can start or end his move by adding his remarks.

When the player takes the card, he can ask for it rather than just take it. We can also make them read the instructions out loud than read it silently for themselves. Ibid

The other way of adopting a game is to change its subject matter so that it can be suitable or acceptable for the students. Some card games are too childish for older students to use it. When

this happens, teachers could keep the rules the same but use their own sets of cards with different subject matter which is more suitable for the students' tests and interests. The other way of adopting a game is combining two games together. For example, we can combine the game called 'snap' with card games. The game is originally played with pictures and the only word in the game is 'snap'. There is no language exercise at all in this game. However combining word picture cards with word cards referring to the pictures, makes the students to try matching the vocabulary to the image would make them compete to read the words more quickly than their partners. When they find the matching cards they can cry out snap or the word itself (Rixon 1981:89).

Teachers can make the game less complex and they can also shorten the game if it is too long. some games seem more complex to play and one of the ways to make them less complex is by rewriting the rule of the game by making it simple to understand what to do. And there are some games that last too long for students to be able to finish them within the normal class.

Inventing a game on the other hand is very difficult. The one who is inventing it has to start from scratch and has to create a game that works and stimulates a significant amount of language.

2.12 How to choose games (Tyson, 2000) in Mai and Jung (2000)

- A game must be more than just fun.
- A game must involve “friendly” competition.
- A game must keep all of the students involved and interested.
- A game must encourage students to focus on the use of language rather than on the language itself.
- A game should give students a chance to learn, practice or review specific language material.

The role of the teacher in using games is to prepare sufficient materials, explaining what is to be done, check answers at the end of an activity, making sure everyone participated, and controlling the time of each games.

2.13 How to Organize Classes for Language Games:

If the teacher mixes up the rules or get confused, the children will rebel .Therefore, The teacher needs to rehearse games with friends before class. He or she should be able to distinguish noise from chaos. To prevent noise, making students sit near the teacher and explain clearly what they are going to is the right thing to do. The roles of the teacher while using games are:

- Preparing the material in sufficient quantity
- Explaining clearly what is to be done
- Checking answers at the end of an activity
- Making sure ever one practiced
- Controlling the time of each game

Chapter Three

Research Design and Methodology

The major objective of this study is to find out why language games are not being practiced in the classrooms of the concerned school. It is concerned with identifying what is hindering teachers from practicing language games in their English language classes. In this study attempts were made to investigate the attitudes of teachers towards language teaching games and their awareness about them. The study also investigates if the teachers have been given any training on the use of language games. To achieve these objectives, different data collection instruments were employed. This chapter presents the population and sample of the study, the instruments of data collection and methods of data analysis and interpretation

3.1 Population and sample of the Study

For the proposed research, availability sampling technique is used to get the data needed for it. The school chosen for the research is known as Hawassa Kidanemihiret. It is non government Catholic Church school which is located in Hawassa town. The sample is consisting of the language teachers and students of grade 1, 2, 3, and 4. The teachers are three in number because grade three and four has the same English teacher. The students are not give a questionnaire and they are not interviewed for the study because they are too young and the researcher has a fear it would be difficult for them to understand and answer the questions. The reason for choosing these grade levels is that most of language problems start at the early age and in elementary schools and if we find out what are the problems that are keeping teachers from using language games, measures can be taken at least to lower the problems starting from the lower grade levels.

3.2 Instruments of Data Collection

To gather the required data for the study, two different instruments were employed. They were: teacher's interview and classroom observation.

3.2.1 Classroom observation

In order to find out if the teachers use language games in their classrooms, observation was conducted by the researcher and it is the main data collecting instrument. The classroom observation was conducted for one whole chapter in the classrooms of grade one to grade four. The observation in grade one took four days. There are two sections of grade one and since the teacher is the same and taught the same lesson in both sections, the observation was conducted in both sections according to their time schedule. Grade two students were observed for three days. The teacher took three days to finish a new chapter, therefore, the researcher observed three periods of this grade level. They also have the same teachers in both sections of grade two. The researcher has observed both sections. The remaining two grade levels are also observed for three days each since that's how long it took the teacher to finish one chapter. These two grade levels have the same teacher. The teacher was using the same method of teaching in both grades but the researcher has observed the two sections to see if the teacher uses language games in his classrooms. There are two section threes and two section fours, therefore, the researcher has observed all the sections according to their time table.

3.2.2 Interview

The main data collection instrument, observation is supported by the interview and it is conducted in depth. The interview questions are semi structured and they are prepared to investigate the things that are hindering language teachers from using language games. The structured questions were designed to assess the hindrances and additional questions were posed to further investigate the issue. Interview is not conducted with the students because the researcher believed that the students are too young to understand and answer the questions they might be asked. It is conducted with the three of the teachers of grade 1, 2, 3 and four. The researcher has posed questions that she believed are important to get the data needed for the study. The interview is recorded in tape recorder and transcribed word by word. The interview was conducted in English by the choice of the teachers. Therefore, translation was not needed for the analysis.

3.3 Procedures of Data Analysis and Interpretation

Two different types of instruments were employed to collect the data required for this study. The gathered data are Qualitative in nature and are gathered through interview and observation. The researcher hasn't used questionnaires therefore, only qualitative method of data analysis is employed. In the qualitative data analysis, first, the response for the questions from the interview are transcribed and coded. Then, it is discussed and analyzed according to similarity of responses. The observation is analyzed in tables that show how many times the three teachers have used language games during the classroom observation. Finally, the qualitative data collected through interview and observations were analyzed in tables and descriptive statements.

Chapter Four

4.1 Data Analysis and Interpretation

To achieve the desired objectives of the study, the data gathered through the teachers' interview and classroom observations are analyzed in tables and in descriptive statements. This chapter presents the data analysis and interpretation.

4.1.1 Analysis of Classroom Observation

4.1.1.1 Language Games used in the Classrooms of T1 T2 and T3

Table 4.1.1.1 Frequency of Language Games used during the four days Observation

Items	Teacher 1	Teacher 2	Teacher 3 (Grade 3)	Teacher 3 (Grade 4)
Vocabulary games	1	1	0	1
Spelling games	0	0	1	0
Listening games	0	0	0	0
Writing games	0	0	0	0
Speaking games	0	0	0	0
Reading games	0	0	0	0
Code control games	0	0	0	0
Communicative games	1	1	0	1

Table 4.1.1.1 shows the data gathered from the observation in teacher one, teacher two and teacher three sections. Teacher one is the English teacher of grade one. The table shows how many times the teacher used language games during the observation time. As the table shows, the teacher has used language games only one time while teaching the chapter. The game the teacher used is vocabulary game and it was very communicative. The two observations of language games during the observation period don't mean two types of games. It only means that the game was communicative. The rest of the games were not used and the rest of the days were without language games. The observation shows that the students were enjoying the games.

Table 4.1.1.1 also shows that during the three days observation of the classrooms of teacher two a game was used only once. Teacher two used vocabulary game to teach the students like teacher one did. The game was used on the second day of observation. The teacher used flash cards with a picture that represents the words the students are being taught on them. The game was very communicative. The students were participating in the learning process. The other two days were free from the use of language games. The observation took only three days because that's how long it took the language teacher to finish one whole chapter.

Table 4.1.1.1 shows how many times language games are used during the observation time. Teacher three used language game only one time during the observation time and the type of game used during this time is spelling game. Teacher three introduced a game called write what you see. The students are expected to write what they saw written on the black board after the teacher cleaned it first. They are expected to memorize the spellings of the words he wrote on the black board. The game was like a competition, therefore, the students were competing with each other and they were very interested in the game. The game was not communicative because there was no communicating with each other or even with the teacher. The teacher selected four students to come out to the front of the class room and write the words. The game made the students want to practice. So, they all were raising their hands to come out and compete.

Table 4.1.1.1 shows that teacher three used language game only once during the observation time. The observation was conducted for three days starting from the beginning of a new chapter to the teacher concluded teaching the new chapter he started. The teacher used language teaching game during the second day of observation. The type of game the teacher used is vocabulary. The teacher called the game 'show me'. The game was intended to teach the students the names

of the body parts. The game was very communicative because it required the use of language to answer the questions raised by the teacher. The students were freely participating and they were having fun learning the names of the different body parts.

Table 4.1.1.1 shows how often teacher one, two and three used language games in their classrooms during the observation time. As the observation shows, they all have used language game only ones during the observation time. Teacher one was observed for four days as table 4.1.1.1 shows. The observation time was four because the researcher only observed the teacher and his classes starting from the beginning of new chapter until the end of the new chapter. The type of game the teacher used is vocabulary game which is used to teach the students vocabulary. Teacher one used flash cards with a picture of the words he was teaching on them. The game was very communicative and made the students use the language. The table also shows that teacher two used language game ones during the three days observation. The type of game teacher two used is also vocabulary game like teacher one. The game was seen during the second day of observation. The third teacher used spelling games on the first day of observation. It was shown on table 4.1.1.1 and as the table shows, the game is not communicative. The game was like competition. The students were expected to memorize the spellings of the words and write them on the blackboard. There was no use of language. We can also see in the table that teacher three used vocabulary game on the second day of the observation. The above table shows how many times the three teachers used language games during the observation period. It also shows that the teachers used vocabulary games than they used any other games and one of the teachers have used spelling games during the observation.

The table shows us that games are not used that often in the schools even if the students enjoyed it and learned better when they are being taught through other teaching methods. The researcher has noticed that the students are more interested in the teaching and learning process when they are playing language learning games.

4.1.2 Analysis of the Interview

In this section the interview questions and the answers received from the three teachers will be discussed in detail. The answers and the questions are directly taken without paraphrasing.

Q1. What do you know about language games?

T1. I know some. I know that it is very important for language teaching. It helps students improve their speaking skills. It helps them to speak out their ideas in simple and interesting way. It helps students understand better what they are being taught.

T2. I know that language games are one of the tools that we use in the teaching and learning process in the classrooms. So, it is very important especially in the lower levels and I really do appreciate the benefit it has to the teaching and learning process.

T3. They are very necessary for language learning especially to acquire language skill easily. In schools, you have to make the teaching and learning process very interesting otherwise, the kids will be very restless. But with games, you can easily acquire their interest and make them busy. If the teacher chooses the right games and use them appropriately, the students will learn a lot from the games.

Q2. Do you think using language games is important or just a waste of time?

T1. I don't agree with those who say language games are a waste of time. It is a method of teaching that makes a lesson easy to understand. It motivates students to learn the lesson. It can't just kill time. Students will be learning while playing. Therefore, we can't say it is a waste of time.

T2. I think they are important because it gives a chance for the students to practice the language. It helps them to understand the lesson very easily. It gives skills and knowledge about the use of language. So, we can't say they waste time.

T3. People who think language games are a waste of time are wrong. It is the easiest ways of making students learn language better. It will make them be interested in the language. They are having fun but at the same time they will be learning. Using games to teach language is not wasting time. Kids love playing and games have the advantage of making students play and have

fun and learn language with interest. Even the students who disturb the class will stop disturbing and be engaged with the games and at the same time they will learn.

Q3. What do you think is hindering you from using language games in your classrooms?

T1. There are so many problems that keep me from using language games. There are people like parents of the students and school administrators. Since they don't understand the importance of language games, they think we are wasting time by making students play games and have fun. It is hard for them to accept it as a serious teaching method. Even if we try to discuss it with parents, they only listen to what the school administrator or the director tells them and the administrators doesn't want us to use language games. We have to do what the school directors tell us to do. They are used to the teacher centered teaching method and that is what they want us to use.

T2. There are different problems in our school. The first one is large number of students in one class which makes it hard to apply language games. In addition to this, language games need some materials like flash cards, and different pictures. Our school is in lack of these materials. They are only equipped for the traditional teaching method. These two are problems in our school that are keeping English teachers of the school from using language games in their classrooms.

T3. The text books themselves are one factor that is preventing me from using language games. The books are consisting of routine things throughout the different chapters. There is a passage, exercise from the passage, and the same kind of activities over and over again. We don't even get teachers guide. Even if they are published they are not available to every teacher and every schools. The teacher guides do not give us directions to use language games. the other problem is that teachers are not getting trainings on language games. in the colleges, trainings must be given. If the teachers do not have the knowledge, then how can they come to schools and use language games? There are so many teachers who have no idea about the teaching games. This shows that even the curriculum is not interested in language games. Those who design the curriculums have not given any attention or focus to this method. Therefore, trainings need to be given and must come first before asking teachers to use the method. When I use games, it is not because I have received trainings. I read books about it and believed it is important. In some

cases, school administrator is one stumbling block. But in my case, the school administrator is not coming to class to show us what to teach and how to teach. Since we are trained on how to teach, we need to do the right thing. It is true that we have large class size. We have more than 50 students in one class which makes it hard to use language games but, if the teacher has the right training, he can use it in spite of large class size. The other problem in our school is that the chairs are not movable. They are made together which makes it difficult to make the students in groups. These are some of the problems that are keeping me from using language games in my class.

Q4. Do you believe that the most preventive factor that is keeping you from using language games in your classes is large number of students? If not, what do you think it is?

T1. If we choose games without considering the number of students, yes it is a problem. If we do not consider how many students are in our class when we are choosing a game it may only participate only few of the students and the others may be forgotten. This makes them disturb the class rather than follow the lesson. If the teacher has no knowledge of which game to choose where there is large number of students in the classrooms, then large class size will be a big problem and preventive factor. But for me the most preventive factor is lack of training.

T2. I think it is one of the factors but I think the main problem is the school. It is not suitable to use language games. There are no materials and without materials it is difficult to apply games in our classrooms. This is the most preventive factor but large class size also has its own negative impact.

T3. It is true that we have large number of students in our class rooms. Even government schools do not have such large class size. But if the teacher is creative and knows which game to use, this problem can be overcome. I am not saying it will not be a problem, but teachers can choose the right games that can be applied in large classes. For me the most preventive factor is lack of training. Most of the teachers and I haven't had the chance to get trainings so it is difficult to apply them in our classes.

Q5. You have been saying that you have lack of materials. What kind of materials do you need to apply games in your classes and have you tried to get them by yourself?

T1. I need colors, flash cards, papers, pencils, and models of animals and plants. And yes, I have tried to get them on my own. I try to draw pictures on the black board and papers to teach my students using them. But there are some things I can't get on my own and the materials that I try to make or get from others are not enough.

T2. I need different pictures and flash cards. Our school is in lack of these materials. They are equipped for the traditional method. That is why it is difficult for me to apply games in my class. I try to draw some pictures but beyond this, it is difficult to get the materials. It consumes time and there is no incentive in our school. Therefore, I didn't go beyond drawing pictures.

T3. I need books for me to understand the games first and I couldn't find the right kind of books. The chairs in our school need to be changed because they can't be moved. It makes it hard to organize the students in different groups and we don't have flash cards or any materials that can assist us while playing games. There are some we can do on our own to get the materials but we also need our school to initiate us and to motivate us to use games.

Q6. How often do you use language games in your classes?

T1. I use them very rarely because I have to overcome the challenges to be able to apply it in my class. It is very difficult to use them in the class unless the problems are eliminated. Seeing you here asking about language games has motivated me to use them so I will try to apply them more often in the future.

T2. It is very difficult for me to answer this question. As I told you, there are different hindering factors to overcome. I am not saying I never use them. But I use them rarely.

T3. The books are mostly having different exercises. In most case, they are about grammar or in passages. Therefore we do comprehension exercises. Therefore, to get them out of these routine and to make the class interesting, I sometimes use language games. Not always or even very often for that matter.

Q7. How do you think your students respond to language games?

T1. When I use this method of teaching, they start to participate and have fun. They always have a smile on their face. I know that they enjoy it very much. They also understand the lesson very

well. It makes them communicate more in the classrooms. All the students participate and speak out their ideas freely.

T2. I know that they would love it so much. It motivates them and gives them more chance to participate more in the learning process. It gives them an opportunity to use the language.

T3. When they are taught through language games, they are very interested to learn. They participate and have fun while learning. They understand the lesson they are being taught very well.

Q8. Do you believe your students will be motivated by language games?

T1.yes I do. Students especially kids love games very much. When you teach them using what they love, it initiates them to learn more and they are highly motivated by them. They will be very eager to learn and they participate in the learning and teaching process than just be in the classrooms.

T2. Yes I do. They will definitely be motivated by language games. It will help the students to be active in the classrooms and use the language than just learn about it.

T3. Yes certainly. They love games and no one disturbs the class while being taught through language games. They are very motivated by them and participate better than they do when they are being taught through other teaching methods.

Q9. You have said that language games motivate students to learn. Why do you think is that?

T1. It motivates them more because it makes it easy for them to understand the lesson. It makes the lesson interesting than a routine. They love to play and while they are playing the games that they love, they can learn from them. So, it will be playing and learning at the same time for the students.

T2. The method makes it easy for them to use the language. It will give them an opportunity to use the language and improve their skills in different parts of the language. It is more interesting for the students to learn language through games. It won't just be learning. It will also be learning with interest and motivation.

T3. Kids love to play and games can give that to them. Using language games is teaching students through playing. The method creates conducive atmosphere for the students to learn without the usual methods that require a lot of work. Children do not need pressure; they want the lesson to be fun. Therefore, games help them to be free from routine and have fun while learning. It makes the lesson easy to understand and makes them learn better. When you teach them through language games, you are giving them something they want and need at the same time. They will be learning a lot without knowing that they are learning just like children acquire their mother tongue.

Q10. Do you have any fear in using language games and if so, what are they?

T1. I have no fear. The problem is getting material and moral support from the school. I also have lack of training. I have taken some but I don't feel like I have enough trainings. Other than these, I don't fear that it will create problem on the students. My fear is that I may lack the training and face material shortage. It would have been easier if the school gave us the help that we need by providing material support and by helping we get trainings.

T2. I don't have any fear because I don't think it is a distraction for the students and I know that they are not just a break from routine. They don't waste time if they are chose according to the lesson and considering different factors like class size and students level. I think it is very important method in teaching English language. And I also believe that if I use it, my students will benefit from it.

T3. No, I don't have fears. The teacher comes to the class with the lesson. For the lesson he has strategy of how to teach his students. His strategy might be using language games to achieve his pre designed goal. He sets a goal, he plans hoe to pass that lesson to his students. If the language games or the strategy he chose is not helping him achieve his goal, then he is not doing well. May be then we can say the teacher is wasting his and the students time. But if the games help him achieve his goal, if they are helping his students learn, he cannot be wasting any ones time.

Q11. If you ever use language games in your classes, which language games would you use most? And which list? Can you explain why?

Vocabulary games

Listening games

Spelling games

Structure games

T1. I would use vocabulary games most because it will help the students learn different words that they may need to communicate using the language. They can also learn the spelling of the words while learning vocabulary. Students need to have some vocabulary so that they can know what to say when they are communicating with others. I would use structure games the list. This is so because in their age, it is not easy for the students to understand the rules of the language. They can learn it through learning how to use the game but if we just teach them the rules, they will forget it or lose interest. It is good to know the rules of the language but learning it while learning through learning to communicate with the language is better and would be more interesting for the students.

T2. I would use vocabulary games the most. I believe the students must have the knowledge of words for them to be proficient in the language. They can communicate with the language only if they have words that they can put together to make a sentence. I would use grammar games the list because focusing on it only helps the students know about the language. But by learning other language skills, they can learn the rules of the language.

T3. These all are part of language skills therefore, you teach the students all the stated skills. I use them all in my class. But mostly, I use speaking games in my classes because the games can help my students to speak out and use the language than any other methods. I use structure games the list because in their age, it would be difficult for them to learn the grammars of the language. They can learn them without pressure while they are learning to communicate with the language. It is not about being perfectly correct but to be able to communicate their ideas to others.

Q12. what is the policy of the school you are teaching at regarding language games?

T1. I do not know much about it because when I try to discuss it with the director of the school, he didn't want to say much about the topic. But he gave me a negative response.

T2. They don't have any ideas about language games. I think when we see our principals and other administrators of the school's; they don't give attention to language games. it is hard for me to say that they care about quality learning because they don't provide us with the materials we need to conduct quality classes. All they care about is that whether we are present in the class rooms or not. They don't motivate us to use language games or any other teaching method they think are not traditional enough.

T3. I don't think they have any policy about it. But I don't think they are interested in other teaching methods than the one they think is the best which is teacher centered teaching method.

Q13. Do you think your school administrators lack the awareness or have a negative attitude towards language games?

T1. I do believe that they lack the awareness about language games. I don't think they have the understanding of how great teaching method games are. If they did have the awareness that they need about them, I don't think they will be this hesitant to let them be applied in their schools. I don't think they understand the fact that they can benefit their students in a great deal.

T2. I think they have lack of awareness about the method. The director came to direct the school from another area. He was not a teacher himself or even in educational system, as a result, I don't think he knows the different teaching methods and which one to choose according to the benefit the students could get out of it. How can he be directing the school if he doesn't know the first thing about teaching? So, we can definitely say they lack the awareness.

T3. I believe it is lack of awareness. They are not interested in other teaching methods than the traditional, teacher controlling all the learning process kind of teaching method. That's the method they think is better for the students.

Q14. How do you think they will react if they saw you teaching your students using language games?

T1. I don't think they will like it. Ones I gave my students a lesson on spelling using language games and the director saw me doing that. He told me that the students are here to learn and not to play games in the classrooms. He told me not to waste their times like this anymore. They don't even see it as learning not just a teaching method that can't do the best thing for the students.

T2. I don't think they will mind they just wouldn't give it emphasis or focus. They may not tell me not to use it any more but I don't think they would accept as a good teaching method.

T3. It is hard for me to speculate about their reactions. If they lack the awareness, their reaction may be positive or negative. But I don't think they will react in any way to it since they lack the awareness to it.

Q15. Do you think they will motivate you to use the method if they saw you using it ones?

T1. No. I don't think they will motivate us. Like I said before, they lack the awareness. Therefore, it is hard for me to think that they will motivate us in any ways.

T2. I don't think they will motivate us in any ways since they lack the awareness about it. I don't think they are well informed about the language games to the extent they could motivate their teachers to use them in their class rooms.

T3. these problems are not only in our school. The method needs to be introduced to all schools of Ethiopia. Otherwise it would be difficult to even talk about schools policy on it since you can't talk about something that doesn't exist. The first thing should be making all the teachers and school administrators familiar with the idea of language games. If it was in the policy of ministry of education, no one can ignore it. It should be given an emphasis or a focus in our curriculum first. If it was one of the methods of teaching that has been given a focus, everyone would be aware of it and acknowledge it as one of the best teaching tools. You see, having lack of awareness is not because of their laziness. It is because of the system of education in Ethiopia. They have not been exposed to it before. So, what I am saying is they probably will not motivate us but it is just because they lack the awareness.

Q16. When you are using language games, do your students respond to it better than they do when you are not using language games?

T1. Yes they do. They ask me to always teach them with games. They have a positive reaction to it. And their understanding of the lesson they are being taught is better when they are being taught through language games. They are more participant during games than other days.

T2. They are more motivated and respond to it better than the other days when they are not being taught through language games.

T3. Yes they do. They love games and no one disturbs the class when they are being taught through language games. They participate more than they do when they are not playing and learning.

Q17. Have you taken any training on language games when you are in colleges or after college?

T1. I wasn't given trainings while I was in colleges but after college I have taken some training on it for three months. And I loved it because we were playing the games and we enjoyed it. It made me realize if we the teachers and the grownups enjoyed it, the kids will really love it and I also realized that it is the best way to gain their interest and to motivate them. But I still think I lack trainings. It would be good if I have the chance to get myself more familiar to it.

T2. No. I haven't got the chance to take trainings on language games. But I will be happy to take if I had the chance.

T3. No I haven't got the chance. Not in college and even after college. That's why I fear I lack the awareness.

Q18. Why do you think you haven't had the chance to get trainings especially when you are in colleges?

T1. I don't think our instructors believed it was necessary to give us the trainings. I think this is so because they were taught through the usual teachers centered teaching method and they accepted it as the best teaching method. They may have other reasons but I think this is why. If they did, they would have taught us about it.

T2. For me, it is difficult to say our college instructors do not have information on language games since they are very educated. They just don't give it emphasis to it because they know that most teachers will not use it any ways. They know that it will not be applied so why waste their times teaching something that will not be applied? And the other reason was that they were focusing grammatical items than making the lesson communicative.

T3. When I was in college, the focus was on writing and speaking. Teaching grammar was considered as a method that can't help students be communicatively competent. Teaching grammar was considered as classical method. I believe it is important but focusing only on it is not going to help the students be able to communicate better. I can't say this is their reason why they didn't train us on language games for fact. I think maybe it is because they are not focused up on even in the curriculum. There are no books that can guide you to use games. We have a book on skill development and it has no games in it. The book is published here in Ethiopia and it has different teaching methods in it but no games. This shows that even those who are publishing books and designing curriculums do not give attention to this teaching tool.

Q19. Do you believe Ethiopian students will communicate using English language better than they are doing now if they were taught through language games?

T1.yes I do because language games can help students communicate using the language without fear of making mistakes and it gives them real life context to practice using the language. It is obvious that it is by trying to speak and by communicating that you can improve your language skills. Therefore, it really can help students do better in communicating using the language.

T2. As you know most of Ethiopian language teachers focus more on the grammatical items than using the language communicatively. Due to this, our students may not have the opportunity to develop their speaking skill. I think through language games, this skill will be developed. I believe that language problems that even advanced students are facing now would have been minimized by this teaching method. Most of Ethiopian students can tell you about the rules of the language but when it comes to speaking using the language, they face a big problem.

T3. Yes I do. I believe we would have acquired a better communicative skill if we were through language games by getting the chance to practice speaking than just know the rules. We might not be perfect but at least our communication skill would have improved.

Q20. Do you think language games are applicable in Ethiopian schools?

T1. I think we can apply it in spite of large class size and other problems if teachers are given the right training. If they have trainings, they will know what to do, which games to choose and how to use materials they can easily get around them without wasting their time looking for it and asking schools to buy for them the materials they need.

T2. I think it is applicable and suitable but the teachers are the determinant factors. If they are creative, he or she may use it in different situations like having a very large number of students in one class or any other obstacles. But training is important to be creative.

T3. Yes but training matters. It is training that brings creativity to overcome the challenges, it is training that helps to choose the right type of games for the desired result and even for the largeness of students number per class. Therefore, training must come first.

Q21. Do you believe language games should be accepted as one of the most important teaching and learning tools all over Ethiopian schools?

T1. I do. I think if trainings can be given to all teachers and those who are studying to become teachers and change all the negative attitudes towards it, we can apply it in all schools and help students improve their communication skills. I think if we do these things, it will be easy to adopt it in our educational system. Therefore, creating awareness is important before adopting it in our system.

T2. I do but trainings must be given to all teachers so that they can be able to overcome the challenges and apply it in their class rooms.

T3. Yes I do. I believe Ethiopian students will communicate better if they are taught through language games. With trainings and change of attitudes towards games, I think it is possible to adopt it in every school.

4.1.3 Interpretation and Discussion Based on the Data

The data gathered from the observation shows if the teachers use language games, how often they use them and how the students respond to language games. It shows that the teachers haven't totally discarded language games. They are practicing them in their classes but not as frequently as possible. The interview conducted with the teachers show the same result. The teachers have discussed in details with the researcher about important points like how often they use language games in their classrooms, why they are not using it more often and the kind of challenges they have to overcome to be able to use language games in their classes. They have also discussed about the students response, the policy of the school and the response they get from their school administrators, how motivated students are when they are playing games, if the school provides them with the materials they need for teaching, if they think the method is applicable in Ethiopia, if it should be adopted in the education system and so on. The answer the researcher got from the interview is very interesting. And the answers are more or less similar to the things noticed during the observation time.

All the three teachers have answered in the interview that they use language games rarely and during the observation, the researcher has observed the teachers use games only ones while teaching. To further investigate this and know if their attitudes towards language games are positive or not they were asked what about what they know of language games. They all answered accordingly and told the researcher what language games are for them. They all agree that language games are important and good way of helping students use the language communicatively. They said it is not a waste of time if it is properly used.

When the teachers were asked how the students respond to the games, all the three teachers said they like it; they participate more and are more motivated by it than other teaching methods. During the observation, the researcher has seen the same thing. The students were very interested in the lesson and were participating more than they do when they are being taught by other teaching methods.

The teachers are also asked why language games motivate students better than other teaching methods, T1 responded that he thinks the students are motivated by language games because it makes the lesson easy for them to understand and interesting than a routine. T1 also said that it

will be playing games and not just learning. T2 answered for this question that the method makes it easy for them to use the language and it will give them an opportunity to use the language and improve their skills in different parts of the language. T2 also agrees with T1 in that he thinks it is more interesting for the students to learn language through games. T3 said children love to play and games can give that to them. T3 also said that the method creates conducive atmosphere for the students to learn without the usual methods that require a lot of work. He said, Children do not need pressure; they want the lesson to be fun, therefore, games help them to be free from routine and have fun while learning. He also believes that when he teaches them through language games, he is giving them something they want and need at the same time as a result, they will be learning a lot without knowing that they are learning just like children acquire their mother tongue.

When they were asked if they have any fear in using language games, one of the teachers answered the only fear she has is having lack of trainings and lack of materials. They all said they don't fear that their students will not benefit from games. They said they know that they are helping the students when they use games.

The other question was asked to know what the hindering factors are. They answered that there are so many problems that keep them from using language games. People like parents of the students and school administrators are part of the hindrances. Since they don't understand the importance of language games, they think they are wasting time by making students play games and have fun. They also said there are different problems in their school. The first one is large number of students in one class which makes it hard to apply language games. In addition to this, they said they lack material support from the school. The third teacher said the text books themselves are one factor that is preventing him from using language games. He said the books are consisting of routine things throughout the different chapters; there is a passage, exercise from the passage, and the same kind of activities over and over again. He told the researcher that they don't even get teachers guide.

They all agree that in the colleges, trainings must be given and if not, it is hard to expect teachers to use the method. Teacher three said the fact that most of the teachers lack training shows that the method have not been given importance even in the teaching curriculum.

During the observation time the type of games seen being used are vocabulary and spelling games. In the interview, from the list of games, they were asked which one they would use most and which on list. Teacher one and two answered they use vocabulary games the most and teacher three answered speaking games. They all said they use grammar games list. When T1 and T2 were asked why they use vocabulary games mostly they answered that students need to have vocabulary knowledge to be able to communicate their messages to others. T3 on the other hand answered he uses speaking games mostly because he believes that language games can help his students speak out and use the language than other teaching methods. The observation conducted on the third teacher (T3) on the other hand shows that the teacher used spelling game in section three and vocabulary game in section four.

When the teachers were asked about the policy of their school, T1 answered, she doesn't know much about it because when she tried to discuss it with the director of the school, he didn't want to say much about the topic. But he gave her a negative response. T2 said he doesn't think they have any ideas about language games. T3 on the other hand answered he doesn't think they have any policy about it. He also said he doesn't think they are interested in other teaching methods than the one they think is the best which is teachers centered teaching method. They all agreed that they have lack of awareness. The first teacher has said the response from the director was not positive. This shows they might not have positive attitude about language games. Teacher one said they didn't react positively when they saw her using games. The other teachers also said they don't think they will react to it positively but they said it is so because they lack the awareness. The most striking point is raised by teacher three. He said the school director is not from the education system; he came from other areas and is not aware of the different teaching methods. They also said they don't get any material aids and motivations from the administrators to use language games.

When they were asked if the most preventive factor is large number of students per class, T1 said the most preventive factor for her is lack of training, not large class size. She said if she had the training she needs, it will be easy for her to overcome the problem large class size imposes on her class when she is using games. T2 said it is lack of material which is the most preventive factor for him. He said large class size is also a problem but can be handled with the right materials. The other two teachers also agree that there is lack of material and it is a problem but

not the most preventive factor. T3 said the problem of large class can be solved with trainings and he said he is highly prevented from using language games as a result of lack of training. As we can see here, two of the teachers are highly prevented by lack of training and one of the teachers is prevented by lack of material to aid him while he is using language games.

The material problem was also seen during the observation. When they lack flash cards, the teachers were using pictures that they drew on the black board. The pictures were not very good. As a result, they have to explain what the pictures are to the students. They have said they don't have picture of animals and one of the teacher have said the chair by itself is a problem since they can't move it to form groups to play different games that can be played in groups. The lack of training was also seen when they didn't use variety of language games in their class rooms. They all use similar type of games to teach their students what they want them to know and they each only used it ones during the observation periods. They have said it is because of lack of training that language games are not being used in most of the schools of Ethiopia. They said even the negative attitude people may have towards it is caused lack of awareness. Therefore, we can see how big this problem is. It is preventing teachers from applying the method in their schools.

When they were asked if they believe that language games should be accepted as one of the most important teaching tools all over Ethiopian schools they all answered that they do believe it will be good if it is accepted in the educational system of the country. But they all agree that it cannot be practiced if there is no training to be given to teachers and those who are studying to become teachers. One of the teachers also said that the curriculum needs to give attention to it so that people and teachers may take it seriously as a serious teaching tool.

All the three of the teachers agree that to be able to adopt this important teaching method to the education system of the country, trainings must come first. Teacher three said it will be difficult to ask teachers to teach using the method that they don't have trainings on.

The last question they were asked by the researcher is if they believe that Ethiopian students will communicate using the language better than they are doing now if they were taught through language games. T1 answered that he believes so because language games can help students communicate using the language without fear of making mistakes and it gives them real life context to practice using the language. She also said that It is obvious that it is by trying to speak and by communicating that students can improve their language skills; therefore, it really can help students do better in communicating using the language. T2 said most of Ethiopian language teachers focus more on the grammatical items than using the language communicatively, due to this, our students may not have the opportunity to develop their speaking skill. He thinks through language games, this skill will be developed and language problems that even advanced students are facing now would have been minimized by this teaching method. T3 said he believes that students would acquire a better communicative skill if they were taught through language games by getting the chance to practice speaking than just know the rules.

The interview shows that the teachers believe that language problems can be minimized by language games. T3 said that even those who are in advanced levels but have language problems could have improved their problems if they were taught through language games.

Even if the observation was conducted only for few days, the researcher has seen how much students like the method. It can be seen on their faces that they are having good time learning and they are highly motivated by language games they were playing. Playing is in the nature of the students and as one of the teachers said it will be giving them what they want and need at the same time. The observation also shows that the students do not worry about making mistakes. When the games are competition, all the students worry about is winning. They take the fear of making mistakes out of their minds and they participate with interest and high motivation. The difference between teaching the students with games and with other games can be clearly seen during the observation. If language is for communication, then language games are the best way of making the students communicate and use the language. they can also know the rules of the language while using the languages.

The third teacher, t3 said some people may think it is a distraction for the students from the lesson they are being given. There are some who fear that the attention of the students will be on the game than learning. He said, he doesn't think that this is true; he said it can make them have a break from routine but engage them in the lesson with interest and motivation.

Chapter Five

Conclusion and Recommendation

5.1 Conclusion

Different scholars like Dickinson, Jung, Widdowson and Ethiopians who conducted their research on this area like Sara and Tekelu believe that language games can help students improve their communication skills and be competent in using the language to express their opinions. In Ethiopia, as it is stated in Sara (1981), the focus of teachers is teaching their students grammatical items or the rules of the language instead of making the language more communicative and meaningful for the students. If they were doing this, they could have taught students the rules of the language indirectly.

The purpose of the study as it is already explained is to identify what the hindrances that are keeping teachers from using language games are. The study also investigated if the teachers have negative attitude towards language games.

The analysis shows that the teachers do not have negative attitude towards the games. In fact, they all believe that they are one of the most important teaching methods which can be very helpful in making students communicatively competent. They all agree that the language games can motivate their students and make them be interested in the language learning. They also said that it can put the language in real life context and give them opportunity to use the language not just to give answers to questions but to communicate with their teachers and class mates. They said they don't fear that when they use language games they will be wasting time. They believe that students can learn a lot from language games: it will be wasting time only if they are not using a game that is suitable for the anticipated purpose. They said people who think games are just a break from routine are wrong because they are more than that. They can also be a break from routine because they are different from the methods most teachers use most of the times and it allows the students to experience something new. It gives them a chance to experiment the language in different contexts and real life situations. One of the teachers said students don't like doing the same thing over and over again. If they are doing that, they might lose interest in the lesson. On the other hand, language games can give them a break from all the routines they been

doing. They also said language games are not distraction. They believe that games can in fact make students be more interested in the language rather than be distracted. It has an ability to obtain the students attention and even those students who disturb the class will not be doing that when they are playing games.

The teachers said students are motivated by it because when they are taught through it, they are being given something in their nature, something they love doing. Through language games they can learn the lesson without even knowing that they are learning as children acquire their mothers tongue. These points show that the teachers have a positive attitude towards language games.

From the teachers, one of them is very familiar with language games and the other two said they are a little familiar with them.

The analysis shows that one of the reasons for the teachers not to use language games in their classes is that they are afraid that they lack the awareness because they haven't received trainings on language games. Only one of the teachers has taken training and it was not being given in the college when they were studying to become a teacher. They said they fear that they lack the knowledge for using games because they haven't received trainings. The teachers said if someone is studying to become a teacher, he has to be acquainted with all the teaching methods and if they are not taught in colleges, where can a teacher learn them and be able to apply them? And a teacher can't use a method he is not familiar with to teach his students. They said trainings on language games must be given to all teachers so that they can be able to apply them in their schools because without creating the awareness, teachers can't be expected to apply them. Therefore, we can conclude that lack of training has caused lack of awareness on the teachers of the school. It is only if teachers know about language games they can adopt or even create a game that could work for their students because no one knows the students better than their teachers.

As we have seen in the analysis, teachers are facing challenges from the schools administrators as well. We have seen that the teachers believe that the administrators have negative attitude towards language games and they think that the traditional teachers centered teaching method is the best for the students. Therefore, we can conclude that the administrators lack the awareness

and they also need to be given trainings on games so that they can allow the teachers to use them in their language classes. The teachers have also said that they don't get motivation from the administrators and again, unless they are given the opportunity to get trainings this situation will not change. The teachers have commented that if language games were focused up on in the curriculum of the country, no one would neglect them. All teachers would get the knowledge and it would have been easier to apply them if that was the case. Unless trainings are given and awareness is created, it will be difficult to change the negative attitudes of the school administrators and as the teachers said it would be difficult to talk about something that does not exist.

The teachers have said that largeness of the class is not that big problem. They said it creates some problem but there are games that can be applied in large classes therefore, a teacher can solve the problems that might be caused because of large class size by using these games.

They said it is not one of the hindrances. Therefore, we can conclude that the class size is not one of the factors that are hindering the teachers from using language games in their class rooms.

The other thing that is mentioned as a problem is lack of the materials needed for games. They said the school doesn't provide materials that are needed for language games. They said they don't have books or even when they need flash cards; it is difficult for them to get it. The other material they need in the class room for language games is movable chairs so that they can make the students in groups. The existing chairs are not convenient to be moved around the class rooms.

The answers received from the teachers and the observation show that the students really love language games and they love being taught through it. Therefore, the students' attitudes are not the challenges for the teachers that made it difficult for them to apply language games. The teachers' response was that language games motivate the students and make the lesson more interesting than the usual methods that most teachers apply.

We can finally conclude that the problems that are preventing the teachers from using language games are: lack of trainings, lack of awareness on behalf of the teachers and the school administrators and also parents of the students, lack of materials and negative attitudes the school administrators have towards language learning games. The problems are somehow related to

each other. Lack of awareness is caused by lack of trainings and the teachers are having a problem in getting the materials they need because of the lack of trainings the administrators have and also as a result of negative attitude the school administrators have towards language games.

The researcher is relieved to find out that the teachers have positive attitude towards the method because as long as they are willing to get trainings and apply them in their classes, whenever the opportunity arises, it would not be difficult to help the teachers receive the necessary trainings.

5.2 Recommendations

After analyzing the data and coming to conclusion that there are problems or hindrances, the researcher recommends the following:

- Trainings are very important and the concerned bodies and the school administrators should find a way to help the teachers get the necessary trainings that would help them avoid the fear of not knowing what to do and which games to use. The trainings would also help the teachers to adopt different games in the way that would suit their classes and even create their own games.
- Measures should be taken to create awareness for both teachers and school administrators so that they both could work together for the benefit of the students. One of the measures could be starting to give courses in colleges and higher educational institutions.
- Selecting school administrators from those who have the awareness of different teaching methods that can benefit the students and motivate their teachers to be able to use language teaching methods that are best for the students and get the materials they need to apply different teaching methods.
- The method needs to be focused up on in the curriculum of the country because if that is the case, no one would neglect them and not use them.
- Provide opportunities for the teachers to receive trainings not only to know about language games but also to help them update themselves.
- Providing opportunities for the teachers to be able to share experiences with one another.

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APPENDIX ONE

Interview Questions for Teachers

1. What do you know about language games?
2. Do you think using language games is important or just a waste of time?
3. What do you think is hindering you from using language games?
4. How do you think your students will respond to language games?
5. How often do you use language games in your classes?
6. Do you believe your students will be motivated by language games?
7. Do you have any fear in using language games and if so, what are they?
8. If you ever use language games in your classes, which language games do you use most?
And which list? Can you explain why?
Vocabulary games
Listening games
Spelling games
Structure games
9. What's the policy of the school you are teaching at regarding language games?
10. Do they have positive reaction to language games whenever you use them in your classes?
11. Do they motivate you; provide you with materials so you can use them regularly in your classes?
12. Do you believe the most preventive factor that is keeping you from using language games in your classes is large number of students? If not, what do you think it is?
13. When you use language games in your classes, do your students respond to it better than they do when you are not using language games? Are they more motivated or less motivated?
14. When you use language games, do your students enjoy it? Do they participate more than ever?
15. Do you believe language games should be accepted as one of the most important learning tools allover Ethiopian schools? Should all the schools in Ethiopia adopt them as one of the methods of teaching English language?
16. Do you believe Ethiopian students will communicate using English language better than they are doing now if they were taught through language games?

APPENDIX TWO

Observation checklist

Class _____ Date _____ Teacher _____

No	Points to check	Yes	No	Points description and remarks
1	Vocabulary games			
2	Spelling games			
3	Listening games			
4	Writing games			
5	Speaking games			

6	Reading games			
7	Code control games			
8	Communicative games			

