

**ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES**

**AN EVALUATION OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF
GRADE EIGHT ENGLISH SYLLABUS IN
BORENA ZONE**

FIKADU SHIRMEKA



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A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF GRADUATE
STUDIES OF ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR
THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS IN CURRICULUM AND
INSTRUCTION

BY
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like to extend my heart-felt thanks, first and for most, to Ato Tilahun Fanta, my thesis advisor, who critically read the draft copies of the thesis and gave valuable suggestions and constructive comments that were crucial for the realization of this thesis.

I should also like to thank the school of Graduate Studies of Addis Ababa University for providing financial assistance to carry out this research.

My gratitude also goes to my colleague, Ato Muiyedin Beker, who helped me in translating the students' questionnaire from English into Afan Oromo language. I would also like to acknowledge my friends, Ato Hayalu Diress, W/ro Bayush Bekele, Ato Getachew Mideksa and Ato Wondwossen Imiru for the kind support they gave me during the time of my study.

I am also grateful to those school directors, English teachers, and students at the sampled schools in Borena Zone for they spent their precious time in giving the data at the time of data collection for the study.

Still I am greatly indebted to those Educational experts in Borena Zone Education Desk, especially Ato Gebi Denboba and Ato Solomon Abbu for their unreserved co-operation in rendering every sort of information required for the research work.

Also I am extremely grateful to my colleague, Ato Seife Woldie who sacrificed his precious time in checking my work. Moreover, I would like to express my deep appreciation to W/rit Hirut Bekele who devoted her precious time in meticulously and patiently typing, editing and Printing the manuscript of this paper.

Finally, my special thank goes to my dear family who generously assisted and encouraged me throughout the study.

Table of Contents

	<u>Page</u>
Acknowledgement	i
Table of Contents	ii
List of Tables	v
Abstract.....	vi
CHAPTER ONE	1
1. Introduction	1
1.1 Background of the Study.....	1
1.2 Statement of the Problem	5
1.3 Objective of the Study	6
1.4 Significance of the Study	7
1.5 Scope of the Study	7
1.6 Limitation of the Study.....	8
1.7 Organization of the Study.....	8
1.8 Operational Definition of Terms.....	8
1.9 Acronyms Used	9
CHAPTER TWO	10
2. Review of Related Literature	10
2.1 The Concept of Syllabus	10
2.2 Kinds of Language Syllabus.....	13
2.3 The Concept of Curriculum Implementation	16
2.4 Factors Influencing Curriculum Implementation	21
2.4.1 The Human Factor	22
2.4.1.1 The Teacher	23
2.4.1.2 The School Principal	24
2.4.2 Organizational Factors.....	26
2.5 Communicative Language Teaching Methodology	28
2.5.1 Teaching Learning Activities.....	30
2.5.2 Classroom Organization.....	33

CHAPTER THREE	36
3. Methods and Procedures of the Study	36
3.1 Methods	36
3.2 Subjects of the Study	36
3.3 Sampling Techniques	37
3.4 Data Collection Instruments	37
3.4.1 The Questionnaire.....	38
3.4.2 Classroom Observation	40
3.5 Methods of Data Analysis.....	40
CHAPTER FOUR	42
4. Analysis and Interpretation of the data.....	42
4.1 Teachers' Classroom Instructional Performances ...	42
4.2 Compatibility of the School organization to Implement the Syllabus.....	44
4.2.1 Availability of School Physical Facilities	45
4.2.2 The Support Provided for Teachers	48
4.2.3 The Condition and Availability of Internal Facilities of Classrooms	49
4.2.4 The Nature of Communication Among School Community Members	50
4.2.5 Teachers' Involvement in Curriculum Activities	53
4.3 An Assessment of students' Attitude towards Learning English and Their Exposure to the Teaching-Learning Activities	54
4.4 Factors Influencing the Implementation of the Syllabus.....	57
CHAPTER FIVE	61
5. Summary, Conclusion and Recommendations.....	61
5.1 Summary	61
5.2 Conclusions	64

5.3 Recommendations..... 65
Bibliography 68
Appendices 74
Appendix A-Questionnaire for Teachers..... 74
Appendix B- Questionnaire for Students 80
Appendix C- Questionnaire for Directors 82
Appendix D- Observation Checklist 85
Appendix E- English Syllabus for Grade 8 86

List of Tables

Table	Title	Page
Table 1:	Observed Frequency of Teaching-Learning Activities Occurred in the Classrooms	42
Table 2:	Number of Students in a Class, Syllabus: Teacher ratio, Teacher's guide: Teacher ratio, and Textbook: Student ratio	45
Table 3:	The condition of School Infrastructures	46
Table 4:	The Availability of Instructional Resources in the Schools as Rated by Teachers	47
Table 5:	The Availability of Instructional Resources in the Schools as Rated by Directors	47
Table 6:	Stationary Materials Provided for Teachers.....	48
Table 7:	The Availability of Classroom Facilities.....	49
Table 8:	The Type and Nature of communication in the Schools Related to English Syllabus Implementation.....	50
Table 9:	The Communication Existing in the Schools as obtained from Directors Responses	52
Table 10:	Teachers' Involvement in Curriculum Activities ..	53
Table 11:	Students' Attitude towards Learning English and Their Exposure to the Activities	54
Table 12:	Factors that Affect the Implementation of the Syllabus as Ranked by Respondent Teachers	57
Table 13:	Assessment of Classroom Implementation Barriers with Respect to time Allotment, Teaching Load, Students-Class Ratio and Organizational Factors	59

ABSTRACT

The aim of this study was to evaluate the implementation of grade eight English syllabus in selected primary schools of Borena zone. To this end, six primary schools were selected as sources of information from the eight woredas of the zone. Within these schools, all English teachers of grade eight who are ten in number, all the school directors, and a total of 300 students were taken as actual sources of information. Questionnaires and classroom observation were the data collection instruments used to obtain information from the sources.

The result of the study revealed that most of the demands of grade eighth English syllabus were not implemented as properly as they were intended to be implemented. Teachers' extent of implementation of the teaching learning activities found to be low. Only those roles and activities that demand from them very little effort and which they accustomed to use like explaining/lecturing, asking questions, and making students read aloud tend to dominate the classrooms. Besides, the result of the study indicated that the majority of students have favorable interest and positive attitude towards learning English. However, as the findings of the study showed, they are not engaged in various activities, which give them opportunity to use the language.

The study also noted that the physical and instructional facilities available in the schools were found to be less suitable for effective implementation of the syllabus. Many factors were seen to affect the implementation process. The major ones are large class size, absence or inadequacy of in service training, inadequacy of the periods allotted to cover the portion, poor supply of materials, and students' background knowledge and language skills.

Based on the result of the study, some recommendations were suggested, at least to minimize the problems that were thought to have negative influence on the effective implementation of the syllabus.

CHAPTER ONE

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Education is the modifying of the environment or the creation of a special environment fostered by a formal school. It aims to influence man's personal development and process by which he/she transmits his/her experience to strengthen individuals and society's problem solving capacity (Shiundu and Omulando, 1992).

The aim of Ethiopian education is not different from the purposes indicated above. The 1994 Education and Training Policy document reveals that the purpose of the first cycle education is to enable the students to become literate, numerate and gain basic awareness of environmental and social issues that are relevant to their surroundings (TGE 1994:16).

In line with the policy statements, the school curricula were developed and are being implemented. However, the Ethiopian school curricula had been criticized for its poor quality and low relevance (TGE 1994). Due to this, the new education policy of Ethiopia proposes the renewal of the existing curricula "... recently a new education and training policy has been formulated. The new policy stipulates the national education objectives, the nature of the new curriculum, the nature of educational assessment and evaluation" (MOE, 1994:2).

Then the process of changing the old curriculum has been taking place in primary and secondary schools of Ethiopia. Following this change, the English syllabi with communicative orientation have been designed and are being put into implementation.

These syllabi, starting from grade one, as the general objectives stated in them indicate, claim to enable the learners to use the language rather than to make them know it. In other words, they are designed by following the communicative approach to language learning.

Moreover, an introduction given in the teacher's book of grade eight asserts the above opinion. In this material, it is noted that, the course is more student-centered and communicative than its predecessors. Besides, every opportunity has been taken to involve the students in a meaningful and realistic communicative activities.

Though it is theoretically sound to hear such a claim, as many educators and methodologists, like Kochhar (1983), Nunan (1988), and Widdowson (1990) suggest, designing the syllabi and writing materials alone will not necessarily guarantee the attainment of the objectives, since they serve as the plans of actions which may or may not be practiced.

According to these educators, the designing of the syllabus or developing the teaching materials alone is of little consequence unless it is implemented by a means of appropriate classroom methodology. For instance, Kochhar (1983:345) reveals that, "the best curriculum and the most perfect syllabus remain dead unless quicken by the right method of teaching." Similarly, Nunan (1988) states that the learners' classroom experiences will be more important than statements of intent in determining learning outcomes. In addition to this, Widdowson (1990) on his part suggests the following similar view:

... Changes in a syllabus as such need have no effect on learning whatever. They will only do so if they inspire the teacher to introduce methodological innovations in the planning and execution of activities in the classroom which are consistent in some way with the conception of content and the principles of ordering proposed in the new syllabus. (Widdowson, 1990:129)

This is to mean that, the teachers who implement the innovated syllabus

should have a good understanding of the methodology that is pertinent to teach the specified contents as well as the approach which the syllabus advocates.

Therefore, the need to evaluate the implementation of the existing syllabus is found to be necessary for educators for the realization of educational aims. It is from this background that the present researcher is interested to evaluate whether the current grade eight English syllabus is appropriately implemented in the classrooms or not.

Although their objectives differ, some studies, particularly related to the present study, were conducted at M.A level in Ethiopian context. Among these, for example, messelech Habte (1991) studied the classroom methodology used by high school English teachers'. The purpose of her study was to describe the methods and techniques which the teachers use to teach English language. She conducted her research in four senior high schools of Addis Ababa and observed one English language class for each of the grades 9 through 12 in each of the four schools. In her findings, Messelech states that the majority of the teachers use lecture method which focuses on meta-language explanation. According to her, of the total time spent on teaching, it was only 7.5% to 18% of the time that was used for language practice. She reveals that, even this amount of time was dominated by lock-step mode of instruction (messelech, 1991:68). Finally, Messelech concluded that it was not only the methodology which the teachers apply which was found to be of the traditional type, but also the syllabuses and the textbooks were found to pursue the structural approach to language teaching.

Melesse Bedane (1992) also carried out a study to investigate the causes for the deterioration of English language teaching in Ethiopian high schools (grade 9-12). To this end, Melesse evaluated the former English language curriculum of this level by concentrating on the contents and

the methodology used by the high school English language teachers. For the study, he gathered the data from the curriculum documents and high schools sited in the capitals of the former administrative regions of Ethiopia. According to the findings of Melesse, the situational and functional contents which are supposed to be useful in the teaching of language for communication were non-existent. He states that most of the exercises given in the textbooks and which the teachers in turn focus on mechanical manipulation of sentences generated from the linguistic data rather than reflections of authentic language use (Melesse Bedane, 1992:59).

Another study was conducted recently by Berhanu Hayle (1999). The objective of his study was to investigate the appropriateness of the methodology, which the English language teachers of grade 9 use in implementing the current ELT syllabus. For his study, he took five secondary schools of Addis Ababa and observed 16 grade 9 English classes. In his findings, Berhanu reveals that the classroom methodology was dominated by the teaching of language usage rather than use. According to him, of the total times spent on teaching, 74.94% of the mean time was spent on mechanical activities. The remaining 25.06% of the mean time was for cognitive activities. He further comments that, even the cognitive element of this percentage was not the result of fluency activities, rather the result of time spent on explicit teaching of linguistic rules. From his findings, Berhanu concluded that, "there exists disparity between the teaching/learning methods, procedures and techniques which the teachers use to implement the syllabus, that is, the classroom methodology and the main objective of the syllabus" (Berhanu, 1999:86).

The present study, therefore, tries to fill the gap that was not seen by the above postgraduate students either by grade level or by research perspective. For instance, Messelech (1991) studied only the methodology

practiced by high schools teachers (grades 9-12 level). Melesse (1992) also studied grades 9-12 level English curriculum and its implementation; and his main concern was to analyze the mentioned grades syllabi. Berhanu (1999), on the other hand, conducted his study at grade 9 level and his central point was to look at whether the objective of this syllabus was congruent with the classroom methodology or not. However, all of the above studies didn't see the factors that affect the process of syllabus implementation and the students' feelings towards learning English language. This is what makes the present study different from those which have been raised above, besides their differences on grade levels, times and settings in which the researches were conducted.

In this paper, besides the official document that says grade Eight English syllabus, the term syllabus is supposed to include the teacher's guide of grade eight English (a guide that indicates how teachers should teach the textbook). Besides, the terms syllabus implementation and curriculum implementation used interchangeably.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

One of the characteristics and requirement of education sector is the design and development of curriculum. The curriculum developed has to be put into practice at different levels of schooling. Supporting this view Tyler (1974) says that the curriculum development is not a theoretical study; rather it is a practical enterprise. Therefore, the designed and developed curriculum must be implemented. In line with this Saylore, et al. (1981) argue that, there would be no reason for developing the curriculum if there is no instruction. With regard to the process of curriculum implementation, in addition to the educators cited above, Dereje in (IER, 2002) suggests that, curriculum implementation is a formidable task in most developing countries of which Ethiopia is a part.

Studies also indicate that among many factors affecting effective implementation of syllabi, are teacher related factors, school

environment, inadequacy of resources and technical supports (Payne, 1974; Pate, et.al. 1997; and Derebssa in IER 2002).

Thus, it is clear from the above discussion that there exists the discrepancy between the anticipated curriculum and the observed ones in most cases.

As has been mentioned earlier, following the stipulation forwarded by the New Education and Training Policy of Ethiopia, the communicatively-oriented English syllabi were designed and are being put into implementation in the primary and secondary schools of the country.

Even though the syllabi claim to be communicatively-oriented and well designed to develop learners' communicative abilities, the researcher has some doubts about its proper implementation in the classrooms, from his personal experiences as a teacher. Therefore, the main concern of the present study is to evaluate the implementation of grade eight English syllabus in some selected elementary schools of Borena zone.

In order to achieve this purpose the following basic questions were formulated.

1. Do grade eight English teachers apply the teaching-learning activities set in the syllabus or the teacher's guide effectively in the classroom?
2. How conducive is the teaching-learning conditions in the schools for better and effective implementation of the syllabus?
3. What are the attitudes of grade eight students towards learning English?
4. What are the major factors which hinder the implementation of the syllabus?

1.3 Objective of the Study

As it has been discussed in the background section, evaluating the implementation of the existing syllabus is indispensable. Thus, this

study principally intends to explore whether the current grade eight English syllabus is effectively implemented in the classrooms or not. More specifically, the study tries to:

- investigate the extent to which teachers use the instructional methods and strategies as suggested in the guidelines.
- find out the limitations, if any, of the teachers in effectively implementing the subject matter.
- evaluate students' perception about the implementation of the syllabus
- assess the extent to which the teaching learning conditions are conducive for effective implementation of the syllabus.
- find out some major problems that influence the implementation of the syllabus.
- suggest recommendations, (on the bases of the conclusions of the findings) which could help to minimize the problems.

1.4 Significance of the Study

It is hoped that the findings of this study will be useful to the following four groups:

1. Language teachers- to identify their strong and weak side in their performances in the implementation of the syllabus.
2. School administrators and other concerned bodies (supervisors)-to take certain actions in favor of the effective implementation of the syllabus.
3. The curriculum planners-in indicating the direction as which part of the syllabus is functioning well and which part is not.
4. Others, who want to undertake further research in similar areas.

1.5 Scope of the Study

This study is delimited to some selected government primary schools of Borena zone. Hence, the findings obtained will only reflect the extent of implementation of grade eight English syllabus in the zone. Since the aspects of a program that require evaluation are numerous, the depth of

this study is limited to the question of effectiveness of implementation. Thus, issues related to the curriculum plan itself, such as its general framework, and the way it has been designed and organized will not be considered in the study.

1.6 Limitation of the Study

As it is mentioned earlier, the main aim of this study is evaluating the implementation of grade eight English syllabus. To this end, continuous classroom observation is vital to have first hand information about the process of implementation. In this study, however, each sampled teacher was observed only two times in his/her classroom. This is because, the finance required to run the study was released very mach late than the time it should have been released. As a result, there was a shortage of time to make frequent classroom observations.

1.7 Organization of the Study

The study has been organized into five major chapters. The first chapter deals with the introductory part of the study. The second and the third chapter address the review of related literature of the study, and methods and procedures of the study respectively. Then, the fourth chapter treats presentation, analysis and interpretation of the study. Finally, the fifth chapter draws summary, conclusions and recommendations of the study. Moreover, reference pages and appendices are attached at the end.

1.8 Operational Definition of Terms

Syllabus Implementation: It is the process of putting the design and specifications of the syllabus into practice in the classroom.

Effective Implementation of the syllabus: It is the actual use of the requirement of the syllabus by the teachers so that it is congruent to the intended or planned use.

Instructional Performance: It is the capability of teachers in using the suggested instructional strategies to transform the contents of the syllabus.

Curricular Materials: It involves syllabus, the teacher's guide, and the textbook.

Compatibility of the School Organization: It is the appropriateness of the schools to hold the teaching-learning activities as to the requirements of the syllabus.

1.9 Acronyms Used

ICDR: Institute of Curriculum Development and Research.

IER: Institute of Educational Research.

MOE: Ministry of Education.

NETP: The New Education and Training Policy.

SPC: The School Pedagogical Center.

TGE: Transitional Government of Ethiopia.

CHAPTER TWO

2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1. The Concept of Syllabus

A syllabus is a plan which is more specific and explicit than a curriculum. The definitions given to them by Dubin and Olshtain (1986:34-5) show this difference clearly. According to them, "a curriculum contains a broad description of general goals by indicating an overall educational cultural philosophy which applies across subjects...". On the other hand, a syllabus is "a more detailed and operational statement of teaching and learning elements which translates the philosophy of the curriculum into a series of planned steps leading toward more narrowly defined objectives of each level." Similarly, Robertson (1971), as cited in Yalden (1987:18), defines these two terms differently. As to him, "the curriculum includes the goals, objectives, contents, processes, resources, and means of evaluation of all the learning experiences planned for pupils both in and out of the school and community through classroom instruction and related programs." Whereas, a syllabus is, "a statement of the plan for any part of the curriculum, excluding the element of curriculum evaluation itself." Accordingly, Hutchinson and Waters define the term syllabus as, "a document which says what will (or at least what should) be learnt." (1987: 80). From these definitions, we understand syllabus as an operational phase of a curriculum.

Dubin and Olshtain, once again give a detailed definition of syllabus. In their definitions the following four points were included:

1. *A syllabus is a document which describes what the learners are expected to know at the end of the course.*
2. *It is a document that describes what is to be taught or learned during the course in the form of inventory items.*

3. *It is a document that describes when the items are to be taught and the rate of progress of the teaching relating the inventory of items to the different levels and stages.*
4. *It is a document that describes how the inventory of items are to be taught - suggesting procedures (1986: 28).*

According to Dubin and Olshtain (1986), a syllabus is a link by way of covering information, between policy makers and teachers, textbook writers, examination committees and learners. It serves several purposes. It is used as an instrument for administration, as a daily guide to the teacher, and as a document of items to be taught in a certain course for certain group of learners (Stevens, 1977).

Even though there is a broad agreement on what a syllabus is as distinct from curriculum, scholars do not agree unanimously as what a syllabus should incorporate. For instance, Widdowson, (1984) makes a distinction between syllabus and teaching methodology. In his view, a syllabus should be limited to content specification and methodology should be dealt with separately. Allen (1984:61) also shares Widdowson's idea by noting that a syllabus is concerned with "a specification of what units will be taught as distinct from how they will be taught which is a matter for methodology." On the other hand, White (1988), Richards (1985), and Yalden (1987) rejected the prior specification of contents to be taught/learned. To them the first thing is methodology. Yalden (1987), for instance, points out that, a syllabus should be presented in terms of the methodology to be used in the classroom, that is in terms of classroom techniques arranged in a specific sequence.

A syllabus is generally, considered as an action plan that guides the process of teaching. Cunnigsworth (1995:5) states that, "a syllabus can be broadly defined as the specification of the work to be covered over a period of time, with the starting point and a final goal." If it is perceived

in this way, it has to, at least, suggest the way its objectives could be attained. That means, an aspect of methodology may be found in it either implicitly or explicitly.

The variation of what a syllabus should incorporate seems to prevail among countries. For example, in America, the term 'syllabus' is used interchangeably with 'curriculum' to mean, "the goals , objectives, content, process, resources and means of evaluation of all learning experiences planned for pupils" (Yalden, 1987: 29). In Britain, it means, "the part of curriculum activity concerned with the specification and ordering of course content or input" (Nunan, 1988: 14). In our country, syllabus includes specific objectives, contents, resources, teaching techniques (in general form), and evaluation instruments to be used in a specific subject.

The syllabus under consideration, that is, grade eight English syllabus, has 15 units. Each unit has three basic components: listening and speaking, reading, writing, and two sub-components: vocabulary, and structure. The units are stated in the form of activities that students carry out: asking for and giving personal information, asking about and describing people, animals and objects, asking and talking about the future, telling stories from pictures, reporting what people ask and say, advising and warning people, talking about what happened in the past, describing actions and processes ... etc. To these end, dialogues, questions and answers, silent reading, role play, language games, pair/group work, oral presentation, writing sentences, interviewing and reporting are suggested in the syllabus.

2.2. Kinds of Language Syllabus

The English language teaching and learning nowadays has available a range of different types of syllabus from which a choice will be made for a specific situation. In this section, however, the most popular and widely practiced types of syllabus in the history of language pedagogy will be discussed. These include: the grammatical/ structural syllabus, the situational syllabus, the notional functional syllabus, and the task-based syllabus.

The structural syllabus is the first and the most familiar type of language syllabus in language teaching. Its focus is on discrete items of structure or grammar. This kind of syllabus, as Cunningsworth (1995) reveals, sets from the view that language is a system of structurally related elements for the coding of meaning. The target of language learning is seen to be the mastery of elements of its system, which are generally defined interims of phonological units (phonemes), grammatical units (clauses, phrases, sentences), grammatical operations (adding, shifting , joining, or transforming elements), and lexical items (function words and structure words) (Wills, 1990; Cunnigsworth, 1995).

The structural syllabus reflects a more traditional approach, and taking as its starting point the internal structure of the language rather than its use. According to Nunan, (1988), the structural syllabus sequences the items of language to be taught in order of presumed difficulty, largely on the basis of complexity of structure. In other words, it is simply a list of the basic structures and sentence patterns of English, arranged according to their order of presentation. In this kind of syllabus, structures are always taught within sentences, and vocabulary is chosen according to how well it enables sentence patterns to be taught (Richards and Rodgers, 1986; Nunan, 1988).

The essential objective of the structural syllabus seems to be the skill of manipulating language forms with little concern for the functional

meaning that the forms can be used to express. Hence, it is criticized for its failure to make students acquire the skills and strategies of language (Allen and Widdowson, in Brumfit and Johnson 1979).

Another type of syllabus, the situational syllabus, was suggested later. It attempts to see language in context or situations. The analysis of the situations in which students will use the language is essential in it. According to Richards and Rodgers (1986), in situational syllabus, speech is regarded as the basis of language, and structure is viewed as being at the heart of speaking ability. One of the distinctive features of situational syllabus, as to them, is the theory that knowledge of structures must be linked to situations in which they could be used.

They farther explain that, the theory of learning underling the situational syllabus is a type of behaviorist habit-learning theory. It addresses primarily the processes rather than the conditions of learning. This type of syllabus also criticized, because it is impossible to predict all the language fixed to a particular setting (Widdowson, 1990; Richards and Rodgers, 1986).

The other type of language syllabus is the functional- notional syllabus. It stems from the view that language is a vehicle for the expression of functional meaning. The communicative movement in language teaching subscribes to this view of language. This kind of syllabus, as to Widdowson (1990), emphasizes the semantic (meaning) and communicative dimension rather than merely the grammatical characteristics of language, and leads to a specification and organization of language teaching content by categories of meaning and function rather than by elements of structure and grammar. In other words, a functional-notional syllabus includes not only elements of grammar and lexis but also specify the topics, notions, and concepts the learner needs

to communicate about (Finocchiaro and Brumfit, 1983; Widdowson, 1990).

Therefore, functional – notional syllabus places major emphasis on the communicative purpose of a speech act. In other words, it focuses on what people want to do on, and what they want to accomplish through the language.

The unique characteristic of the functional – notional syllabus is that it starts not from the question “what is the grammar of the language?”, but from the question “what kind of meanings do learners need to express in the language?” (Finocchiaro and Brumfit, 1983:77)

Consequently, linguists and language scholars work hard to find means and better ways of teaching foreign and second language. They strongly argued that activities that involve real communication promote learning. Thus, they forwarded language syllabus (task- based syllabus) that includes activities in which language is used for carrying out meaningful tasks.

The task- based syllabus, according to Cunningsworth (1995), is concerned with the classroom processes which simulate learning. It, therefore, differs from other kinds of syllabuses in which their focus is on the linguistic items that students will learn or the communication skills that they will be able to display as a result of instruction. Hence, the task- based syllabus consists, not of a list of items determined through some form of linguistic analysis, nor of a description of what learners will be able to do at the end of a course of study, but of the specification of the tasks and activities that learners will engage in the classroom (Nunan, 1988; Robinson, 1991; Cunningsworth, 1995).

Latest syllabus types are described on a continuum ranging from product or goal- oriented syllabuses to that of process or means- oriented ones. Structural/grammatical syllabus, situational syllabus, and

notional- functional syllabuses are product- oriented ones. They expect their learners to learn the collection of formal or functional units they stored in them. Task- based syllabus, on the other hand, is process-oriented syllabus. It consists of a set of tasks or activities which are not mechanistic but cognitive in nature ((Widdowson, 1981; Robinson, 1991).

2.3. The Concept of Curriculum Implementation

Different scholars perceive curriculum implementation differently. For instance, Yalden (1987) state that, curriculum implementation involves the actual teaching of the material and interaction with students. Others such as Shiundu and Omulandu (1992) suggest that, curriculum implementation is the process of effecting the new curriculum. It is the systematic process of ensuring that the new curriculum reaches the immediate beneficiaries-the learners. These educators went further to say that the process of implementing the new curriculum is the stage when many people come into interaction with the new curriculum. These may include teachers, student parents, administrators, and the lay public.

According to Marew (2000), some educators assume curriculum implementation as part of (step in) curriculum planning process and expect to proceed from design stage to the actual implementation stage. While others believe curriculum implementation to be a separate component in the curriculum action cycle.

Both, in one or another way, portray basically putting the developed curriculum into practice at the mission center-classroom where the students and teacher interact.

However, the statement of good behavioral objectives, selection and organization of valuable contents and learning experiences, suggesting a variety of media materials and a number of evaluation mechanisms have

no guarantee unless appropriately implemented. Supporting this idea, Ornstein and Hunkins (1998) say that, the most appropriate and valued school curriculum remains futile, if it is left on the shelves after designing it. Similarly, Pratt (1980) reveals that, the success of the developed curriculum is highly determined by the degree to which it is workable in practice – its implementation. Therefore, implementation is the important part of curriculum development process (cycle) which may lead us to the essence of curriculum implementation.

The process of implementing a new curriculum is highly complex one and therefore, requires an extremely skillful assortment of participants and relevant content for effective results. And the task of curriculum implementation can be said to involve two main processes:

- a. *Changing attitudes of people, policy makers, administer, teachers, teacher trainers, school supervisors, parents the lay public and ultimately the learners themselves*
- b. *Providing the materials and the administrative means to make the process possible (Shiundu and Omulando, 1992:176).*

This is to mean that, the concerned people must be persuaded the worth while of the innovation, and facilities (materials) and personnel supports have to be delivered, if the implementation is to be realized. Ornstein and Hunkins (1998) in a similar way note curriculum implementation as an interaction process between those who have created the program and those who are changed to deliver it.

However, as Fullan (1991) and Hord (1995) suggest, curriculum designers limit their horizons to the development of curriculum, paying little consideration to the implementation process; and consequently the staffs have not been trained, implementation effects of many countries have not been successful. They further explain that, effective implementation requires designers and implementers to grasp the

context in which the new curriculum is to be introduced – the structure of organization, sacred tradition, power relationships, and how members define themselves and their roles. The behavior of all players in the curriculum game needs to be defined. Curriculum designers, administrators, teachers, supervisors and also students and parents must be clear about the purposes and intents of the program-feel part of the process (Anderson, 1990; Early and Rahage, 1990; Shiundu and Omulando, 1992). Thus, it is a common belief that success in implementation depends largely on how well those who have planned its development and implementation perceive the needs of students, teachers, and the school.

Johnson (1994), and Dubin and Olshtain (1986) depict three important strategies, in this respect, to effect successful implementation: changing ideas about the curriculum, changing the human dynamics, and resource support. That is, for effective implementation, an in-service training, making aware of the clear intentions of the change among stakeholders, and provision of materials – are pre requisites

Regarding the nature of curriculum implementation, Ornstein and Hunkins (1998) further state that, although experienced leaders of curriculum activities have realized that implementation is an essential aspect of curriculum development, only in the last 15 to 20 years has implementation become a major educational concern.

Such interest has evolved partly because many curriculum innovations designed and developed have not been succeeded. In this connection, Ornstein and Hunkins (1998) suggest that, there are numerous reasons for the failure of innovative curricula to be implemented successfully. Perhaps, the key reason is one advanced by Seymour Sarason. He posits that much educational reform has failed because those in charge of the

efforts had little or a distorted understanding of the culture of the school (Sarson, in Ornestein and Hunkins, 1998:192).

The Preceding assertion entails that in addition to the above points, the degree of communication between the curriculum planner and implementer as well as the knowledge of the school conditions may impede the effective implementations of the curriculum.

Fullan and Pomfret, (1977) provide some comments on this issue. They say that, effective implementation of innovations requires time, personal interaction and contacts, in- service training and other forms of people based support. Research has shown time and again that there is no substitute for the primacy of personal contact among implementers and planners (consultants), if the difficult process of unlearning old roles and learning new ones is to occur. Hence for effective implementation, all concerned bodies and facilitating inputs must be addressed. .

It is apparent that successful implementation of the curriculum results from careful planning. As indicated by some educators, recently, on top of careful planning, vision building is becoming crucial for effective implementation. For instance, Mattew Miles and Karen Lewis, in Ornstein and Hunkins (1998), state that for planning to occur there must be vision building. In their research they found that, those schools successful in implementing change and improving their programs had staff, which passionately held similar images of what the school should become. As revealed in the preceding pages, the process of curriculum development is continuous and the planned curriculum has to be implemented.

Emphasizing the nature of curriculum implementation in developing countries, Dereje Cited in IER (2002) suggests that, curriculum implementation is a formidable and complex task in most countries,

where planning and leadership capabilities are at the lowest stage. As part of developing countries, African countries in general and Ethiopia in particular share similar educational changes highlighted above.

Bao Saliak(1989) after contrasting centralized and decentralized curriculum in Africa summarized that, unlike centralized curriculum changes as it is in such countries like Sierra Leone, Ghana, Kenya, and Nigeria; decentralized curriculum change, planning and development take place at various local levels. Research into the effects of both centralized and decentralized methods in learning and educational development in Africa could provide an insight into which type should be adopted. It is argued that decentralized curriculum change seems more effective especially for rural children, because it is easier to relate the curriculum to the needs and culture of the community at local than national level.

This complies with the Ethiopian situation. The country is undertaking decentralized education system including curriculum issues. To this end, the 1994 Education and Training Policy envisages that, teachers professions and beneficiaries will be made to participate in the preparation, implementation, and evaluation of the curriculum (TGE, 1994:12).

Though the policy has addressed the curriculum development and implementation in the country; the design and development of good curriculum alone will not guarantee, goal attainment of the school; unless implemented effectively. According to Anberber (1985) Ethiopia's educational system is challenged by a number of unsolved difficulties. Due to this, there has been an increasing criticism about the declining quality of education in Ethiopia. Hence, from the above preceding discussions one can conclude that of many unsolved educational

problems of the country, ineffective implementation of the curriculum is among the major ones.

2.4. Factors Influencing Curriculum Implementation

Educational innovation is not a simple event; rather it is a change process which involves new ideas and practices. The process of initiating these new ideas and practices can be affected by many variables. The source of most problems or factors affecting the realization or implementation is usually lack of emphasis given to implementation by policy makers. As to Ornstein and Hunkins (1998), policy makers rarely develop a process for implementation of their formulations. They expect people on the receiving end of the policy to make it simply work in practice. It seems that usually policy makers tend to act on the assumption that change is an event, not a process. As the study made by Herman and Stringfield, as cited in Fullan (1999:19) indicates that in difference negative climate, neglect of implementation training and support, such as program specified, staff development and failure to build-in system and time for coordination and problem solving could kill implementation of any curriculum. Similarly, Bishop, G. states that any process of innovation involves the following major factors:

- *The change agent; the innovator, the person or group (e.g. the headmaster, or individual teacher, or local authority, or national government), that decides upon and initiates the innovation or educational change*
- *The innovation or change itself; (e.g. a new integrated approach to teaching-learning, or 'new mathematics in place of old; or a comprehensive system of education as against the more traditional tripartite system of grammar school etc).*
- *The users system; the person or group at which the innovation is directed or targeted. (Bishop, G. 1986:3)*

According to him, ignoring or underestimating the importance of any one of these key factors would be courting trouble. It is important to bear in mind, too, that these three factors interact with, change and are changed by each other during the process of innovation.

In line with this, Fullan (1991) after reviewing a number of studies that have examined curriculum implementation as a change process, reveals that three major factors; (the nature of the change, change agents' role and the organization) which facilitate or hinder the implementation of new curriculum. Others also identify various variables, which influence the implementation process. For instance, Goodlad (1984) explains that, there is no single variable to limit curriculum implementation. He argues that the circumstances under which teaching-learning occurs such as student-teacher ratio, number of hours students pass in the classroom, administrative controls... etc, are some of the factors affecting implementation process. On the other hand, Majasan (1995), suggests that the teacher, the pupil, the subject being taught, and the environment in which it takes place as determining curriculum implementation. Dressel (1976), also considers factors that determine curriculum implementation as range characteristics of facilities and equipments, institutional characteristics and people interaction in the environment in the implementation process.

Although these are various factors, which influence curriculum implementation, identified in the literature above, the human factors and organizational factors will be discussed in the following section.

2.4.1. The Human Factors

Curriculum workers hold different views on what constitutes the curriculum and consequently on what determines the problems of changing into practice. Those who define the curriculum as, the experience, which learners have under the direction of school, believe

that implementing a new curriculum involves people. For instance, Mackenzie and Lawter (1948) reveal that, implementing the curriculum is highly affected by people who implement it. They further argue that, peoples value of the innovation must be modified because change in materials in the school bring about nothing unless they are changed in their value, attitude and knowledge. Similarly, Pratt (1980) states that, any attempt at change required people playing key roles.

2.4.1.1. The Teacher

The teacher is the important human factor, which strongly affect curriculum implementation. Regarding the vital roles played by teachers in curriculum implementation, Shiundu and Omulando (1992: 213) suggest that, "in curriculum implementation various personnel are involved, but perhaps the one whose role is most important in seeing that the programs are successfully implemented is the teacher."

But, the extent to which teachers are capable of transforming knowledge required by the program is also important in translating the planned curriculum. In this regard Ornstein and Hunkins (1998) say that, teachers with knowledge and competence are and must continue to be central to any curriculum activities. Thus, there is no doubt that teachers' role in teaching-learning activities influence students' learning, and better teachers bring about better learners.

In relation to this, Widdowson, H.G (1990) says that, in language classrooms, it is the teacher who makes learners to use the language for communicative purpose. However, as to him, many students, who have received several years of formal English teaching, frequently deficient in the ability to use the language. The reason of students' failure to use the language, as to Brumfit and Johnson, (1979) is their language teachers. They suggest that, language teachers do not do their job properly. In

other words, they don't follow the approach to English teaching, which is taught to them in training colleges, and which is embedded in the prescribed textbooks.

Besides, teachers' role in curricular activities is not limited to implementation. The teachers' participation in curriculum development also remains significant which consequently facilitate successful implementation. To this end, Dorthick (1953) in Shiundu and Omulando (1992: 220 - 1) argues that, the teachers' role is not only in effecting the planned curriculum, but they should also play a significant role in developing the curriculum plan. Similarly, Gross and his associate (1971) describe that, participation of teachers in curriculum development activity would have great impact on the degree to which a curriculum is successfully implemented.

Though the importance of teachers' participation in curriculum development is unquestionable, it is unrealistic to involve each and every teacher in the curriculum development process, but their views and opinions can be incorporated in the curriculum by any available means like conducting workshops, seminars, and any other means.

Generally, it can be observed from the above reviewed literature that, teachers' roles in curriculum activities are central and will remain crucial. In addition, the teachers' knowledge and competence are found to be the important aspect of teachers' quality for the successful implementation of curriculum.

2.4.1.2. The School Principal

School human resources and material resources are very important for effective implementation of the curriculum. However, without good management on the part of school principals, these human and organizational resources would not bring any important change. It is

obvious that even the best designed program, which is supposed to be practiced in a resourceful environment, brings about nothing; if it is not supported by a good leadership. In this regard, Snyder, et al. (1992:417) states that, "the greater the active support of the principal the greater the degree of implementation."

Educators have different views on the role of school principal during curriculum implementation. For example, Hughes and Ubben (1970) view principal's role as an initiator of educational innovation. When a new program is introduced, there seems to exist resistance among those who are directly involved in the implementation process. Therefore, the role of school principals in initiating the program is vital. Regarding this, Gross and his associates (1971) indicate that, the school principal above all others has the responsibility to persuade teachers in line with the requirements of the innovation. On the other hand, some educators view the role of the principal as a facilitator and decision maker or leader of the innovation. For instance, Fullan (1992: 161) expresses his view as, "the principal's role is shaping the environment and facilitating the implementation process." Similarly, Snyder, et al. (1992) explain that, the principal's role in initiation, facilitating or decision-making is vital for effective implementation of the curriculum.

The intimate relation between the principal and the teacher is one important factor for effective implementation. In this regard, Stuart (1923), as cited in Hull and Dodds (1957: 121) argues by saying: "If a teacher fails, the principal fails; if the teacher succeeds, the principal succeeds." This implies that, the requirement of existence of strong relationship between principals and teachers to bring about effective implementation of the planned curriculum.

In general, this section, for effective implementation of the planned curriculum, the role of the school principal in either initiating or

promoting the program and facilitating or making decision, when required is crucial.

2.4.2. Organizational Factors

Although there are numerous organizational aspects, those aspects of organization that are directly related to implementation process are identified by educators, such as Dressel (1976), Seytern as cited in Hughes and Ubben (1970), and Pratt (1980). They reveal that, the quality and quantity of staff development programs, compatibility of schools for the innovation, the communication channels that would allow continuous flow of information among people involved in the implementation, and the availability and use of instructional materials are some of the factors to be considered.

The type and nature of administrative support for staff development programs, as stated above, could be considered as the major variables during implementation process. Administrative support starts with commitment on the part of the people responsible for facilitating and making decisions. Pratt (1980) states that, unequivocal commitment to the innovation by administrators is an essential form of support to school personnel. He further explains that, any curriculum implementation requires full hearted administrators. The support provided by administrators is shown by provision of required resources, moral and training programs etc. Pratt, strengthened his view, says that, if teachers are not provided by materials and are not supported by in-service training, they will be likely to continue doing what they have done in the past with at most few surface change. Similarly, Goodlad (1984) after questioning students, teachers, and observing several classrooms, concluded conditions such as sensitive leadership and availability of help tended to be associated with greater enthusiasm and professionalism on

the part of the teachers. Generally, it can be concluded that, genuine administrative support will always bring about effective implementation.

Compatibility of the school organization is also one of the organizational factors determining curriculum implementation. The school organization encompasses the infrastructure of the school, such as: classrooms, laboratories, libraries, and school pedagogical centers. Since classrooms are places where children are motivated to grow physically, intellectually and emotionally, they should be appropriate and conducive for the teaching-learning activities. Regarding this, Majasan (1995) suggests that, for an effective teaching-learning to occur, classrooms should be organized properly; because whatever clever the teacher may be, if the classroom is disorganized or over crowded, effective teaching will be hampered. Supporting this idea, Goodlad (1984) says that, over crowdedness of classrooms is one of the factors affecting curriculum implementation. He further argues that, the over crowdedness of classrooms results in frustration on the part of the teachers in their effort to perform their teaching roles.

The type and nature of communication channels existing among teachers, students and school principals, is also an important organizational factor influencing the implementation of the planned curriculum. Snyder, et al (1992) state that, the greater the quality and quantity of sustained interaction among people involved in curricular activities, the greater the degree of implementation. Accordingly, Fullan (1991) reveals that, the most collegiality, trust and interaction between teachers, the greater in the degree of implementation. This implies that, frequent discussions about a new program among teachers, principals and curriculum workers are crucial for successful implementation of the curriculum.

The other aspect of organizational factor influencing curriculum implementation is the availability and usage of instructional materials. With the growth of science and technology, and the corresponding effect of its development on educational activities call for the appropriate selection and usage of instructional materials for successful implementation of the curriculum. The need for educational technology to facilitate learning is asserted in the New Education and Training Policy of Ethiopia (1994). Many educators underline the importance of instructional materials in curriculum implementation. For example, Richardson and Bernard (1984) reveal that, the use of materials familiar to the pupil is advantageous in transforming concrete knowledge to the pupils.

Instructional materials also constitute curricular materials, such as textbooks. Callahn (1966) defines the textbook as, a systematic arrangement of subject matter to assist teachers teaching particular content to students at specific grade level. Together with textbooks, curriculum guides are also important for curriculum implementation. Posner (1995) says that, the syllabus includes the goals or rationale for the course, topics covered, resources used, assignments given and evaluation strategies recommended. Therefore, curricular materials are useful in curriculum implementation for they provide guidance for the teaching – learning process.

2.5. Communicative Language Teaching Methodology

The aim of communicative approach to language teaching, according to Richards and Rodgers (1986), is making communicative competence the goal of language teaching and developing procedures for the teaching of the four macro skills that acknowledge the interdependence of language and communication. Thus, the emerging of this approach has changed the whole trend of foreign language pedagogy. Unlike the former

methods, this approach is founded on many various views of language and language learning (Richards and Rodgers, 1986; Nunan, 1988; Cunningsworth, 1995).

According to Dubin and Olshtain , the communicative language teaching approach makes use of educational philosophies through humanistic psychology. Some of the guiding principles of humanistic curriculum, as to these educators are:

1. *Great emphasis is placed on meaningful communication from the learner point of view, texts should be authentic, tasks should be communicative, and outcomes should be negotiated and not predetermined.*
2. *The learner is the focal point of this approach and the respect for individuals is highly valued.*
3. *The teacher is a facilitator who is more concerned with classroom atmosphere than with the adherence to the syllabus or the materials in use*
4. *The first language of the learner is viewed as useful aid when it is necessary for understanding and for formulating hypothesis about the target language particularly in the early stages (Dubin and Olshtain, 1986:76).*

Generally, humanism in communicative language teaching addresses participatory learning in which learners actively involve and make trial and error hypothesis from the data available at their disposal. Cooperation between teacher and learners is acknowledged in this approach from the premises that anxiety free atmosphere promotes learning (Dubin and Olshtain, 1986; Nunan, 1992).

There are three general theoretical principles which communicative approach to language learning advocates, as Richards and Rodgers maintain. These, according to them, are "the communication principle ... the task principle ... the meaningfulness principle" (1986:72). These principles address more of methodological aspects than syllabus (course) designs. In terms of communication principle, the teachings in which learners involve in real-life communication are presumed to promote

learning. Similarly, the task principle advances the idea of learners' participation in activities which require language use. The third meaningfulness principle also suggests the importance of activities or practices that are meaningful to learners.

Accordingly, Cunningsworth (1995) after examining the methodologies used in current course materials such as Formula one (White and Williams 1989), The New Cambridge English Course (Swan and Walter 1990), Connect (Revell 1990), and Grapevine (Viney, P. and K. 1990), summarizes some of the principles related to language teaching methodology. Some of these principles are:

- *there should be controlled presentation of language,*
- *there should be a balance of accuracy and fluency*
- *skills need to be learned both separately and in an integrated way,*
- *communicative practice should resemble real-life language use,*
- *learning and acquisition each have their place,*
- *learners should be actively and fully involved in lessons,*
- *learners should use language creatively and activities should be personalized where possible (Cunningsworth, 1995: 98-9).*

These principles seem to be the reflections of communicative methodology suggested by Finocchiaro and Brumfit (1983). Therefore, they can be used as references for communicative language teaching and they address the teaching-learning activities, and the interaction that goes on between teachers and learners in the classroom.

2.5.1 Teaching-Learning Activities

As it is mentioned in the previous section, there are three interrelated principles that guide the communicative language teaching approach. These are the meaningfulness principle, the task principle and the communication principle. As a result, the teaching-learning activities are to follow these principles. That means, the tasks or activities through

which the learners practice the target language need to be meaningful and communicative. Similarly, the wide variety of activities and tasks that are ranging from meaningful and communicative drills through psuedo-Communicative (conversation and cued dialogues), information-gap, problem-solving to high levels of simulations and improvisation activities that approximate real-life communication have been realized to be in use (Byrne, 1986; Rivers, 1983; Littlewood, 1981; Wills, 1990). This continuum, then, indicated the presence of two distinct approaches in either side of the extremes, i.e., accuracy and fluency distinction.

Littlewood (1981), attempts to provide activities which fall in this continuum. His methodological framework can best show the distinction between accuracy Vs fluency-focused activities. The first category is pre-communicative activity, which is intended to lead the learners to the future communication. "Whenever pre-communicative activities occur, their essential function is a subordinate one: they serve to prepare for later communication" (Littlewood, 1981:87).

In Littlewood's suggestion, the pre-communicative activity is intended to develop learners' linguistic knowledge, i.e. accuracy. He further splits this category into two sub-categories: structural and quasi-communicative activities. Littlewood, includes the structural part only to show the limited role of manipulating mechanical activities. Widdowson (1978) calls this type of activities, "usage". Both Littlewood and Widdowson agree that acquiring the skill to form or to construct a correct sentence is important. And yet, they argue that, composing correct sentences alone is not enough to promote learning, unless it is related to various meanings of the sentence. Therefore, when it is suggested that accuracy is important in language learning, it does not mean the mere arrangement of words to form a correct sentence. That correct sentence

is expected to be meaningful to the learners (Widdowson, 1978; Littlewood, 1981; Richards and Rodgers, 1986).

Moreover, it is suggested that, if the learners are expected to use the target language, they need to practice it with little or no conscious awareness about that language learning or acquisition. For instance, Finocchiaro and Brumfit (1983:96), say that, "we would not consider that a student has learned an item unless it can be used appropriately without conscious thought, and we all know that presentation, drilling, practice do not lead to that happy position". And it is for this that fluency activities, which Littlewood (1981) recommended in his second main category, i.e. communicative activities are proposed to be used in language courses. In this respect, the language learning activities that offer the natural language learning situation in classroom setting, then, are information-gap, problem-solving, language games, group discussions, role-plays or simulations and so on (Littlewood, 1981; Willis, 1990, Nunan, 1989). According to Willis (1990), for example, "a communicative methodology" is defined as the methodology that makes use of "replication activities". Willis calls such activities as replication "because they replicate within the classroom aspect of communication in real world" (1990:58).

In the literature of communicative language teaching approach, it is consistently raised that the teaching-learning activities should not only be cognitive and communicative, but they should also be purposeful. The central focus of communicative language teaching is the learner (Nunan, 1988; Finocchiaro and Brumfit 1983; Cunningsworth, 1995). The aim of language teaching "in a learner-centered" or communicative approach, as to Cunningsworth (1995:16), is "to bring learners to a point where they reach a degree of autonomy and able to use the language themselves in a real-situations outside the classroom." Therefore, the language teaching-

learning activities, in this respect, need to appeal to the interest of the learners. That means, it should be purposeful. Supporting this view, Richards (1985) suggests that, purposeful activities are more transferable in a real-world communication than less purposeful.

In general as it is seen in the above discussions, the main goal of communicative language teaching is promoting the communicative abilities of the learners. This is, as it is already mentioned earlier, possible when the learners practice the target language in a meaningful, communicative, and purposeful way.

2.5.2 Classroom Organization

One aspect of classroom methodology that attracted the attention of current educators and researchers in the field of second or foreign language education is group organization. Traditionally, language classroom interaction was dominated by whole class teacher-led instructional system (Long and Porter, 1985; Richards and Lockhart, 1994).

Current researchers in the field of second or foreign language acquisition, inter-language development, and classroom interaction, however, argue that though it may be needed to some extent, the sole dependence on whole class teaching is disadvantageous. Long and Porter note that, "one of the reasons for the low achievement by many classroom SL(Second Language) learners is simply that they do not have enough time to practice the new language" (1985:208). Learners lack the opportunity to practice the new language because, as they maintain, "the predominant mode of instruction is what might be termed the lock-step" (Ibid.), and it naturally restricts the learners' chance to practice the new language. Richards and Lockhart, on their part, mention a number of

reasons why the whole class teaching is criticized. Among these are:

- *such instruction is teacher-dominated, with little opportunity for active participation.*
- *teachers tend to interact with only a small number of students in the class, as is seen from studies of teacher action zones. (Richards and Lockhart, 1994:148)*

On the other hand, various researchers who deal with second language acquisition, inter-language development, and classroom interaction justify that organizing the whole class into small groups of different sizes provides many advantages. For instance, Doff (1988:141) states that, "teaching in groups encourages students to be more involved and to concentrate on task." Similarly, Harmer (1991) says that, group work helps students to exhibit a degree of self-reliance, that simply is not possible when the teacher is acting as a controller. Besides, citing Long (1985) and Krashen (1985), Richards and Lockhart (1994) rationalize that, when learners share information in pairs on meaningful task, each learner gets the chance to receive:

- a. comprehensible input from his or her conversational partner,*
- b. a chance to ask for clarification as well as feed-back on his or her output,*
- c. adjustment of the input to match the level of the learner's comprehension, and*
- d. the opportunity to develop new structures and conversational patterns through this process of interaction (1994:152).*

Moreover, Brumfit (1984), citing researches done by Abercrombie (1970), Schmuck and Schmuck (1971), Johnson and Johnson (1975), reveals that, "group co-operative rather than individual competitive procedures are held by these researchers to reduce anxiety, increase awareness of possible solutions to problems, and increase commitment to learning" (Ibid. 75).

All these tend to justify that as long as group work is found to be advantageous in promoting language learning, the language course that claims to be communicative needs to incorporate such issues. And language teachers, in-turn, make use of this mode of instruction (pair/group work) in their classrooms.

CHAPTER THREE

3. METHODS AND PROCEDURES OF THE STUDY

3.1 Methods

As mentioned earlier, the main aim of this study is to investigate the implementation of grade eight English syllabus in the classrooms. To this end, a descriptive survey method was used. The use of this method is well supported by Seliger and Shohmy (1989), and McDonough and McDonough (1997), when the researcher is interested to see events in their settings. Besides, Kerlinger (1990) suggests that a descriptive research method is useful when the study aims at examining an issue in relatively manageable number of samples taken out from a large population. Thus, the study employed this research method to explore the implementation of grade eight English syllabus.

3.2 Subjects of the Study

The subjects of this study were 10 grade eight English teachers, 300 students and 6 directors of the schools from which the teachers and the students were selected.

As it has been stated in the scope of the study this paper focuses on grade eighth classrooms. This particular grade was preferred because of two main reasons. First, since it is the transitional grade from elementary to secondary school, the students' communicative abilities should be developed at this level before entering to high school. Second, the study aims at assessing students' exposure to the teaching-learning activities in the classroom, which requires a certain extent of mental maturity to give genuine information regarding this issue. Hence, students of grade eight would be the appropriate choice as compared to the lower grade levels.

3.3 Sampling Techniques

The universe of the study includes all government primary schools (from grade 5-8) in Borena Zone. According to the statistical information obtained from Borena Zone Education Desk, a total of 43 primary schools (grade eight inclusive) are functioning in 2005/6 academic year. The Desk also mentioned that, there are 51 teachers who teach English in grade eight and a total of 4,192 students are enrolled in grade eight within these schools.

There are eight Woredas in Borena Zone. Namely: Abbaya, Arero, Bule-Hora, Dirre, Gelana, Moyale, Teltele, and Yabello. From these woredas of the Zone, three woredas were selected by random sampling technique. These woredas were Abbaya, Bule-Hora, and Yabello. Out of nineteen elementary schools in these woredas, six schools (two from each woreda) were selected on the basis of their accessibility and proximity to the researcher. These schools were Abayi, Birbirsa, Gerba, Sebo, Shara, and Yabello elementary schools. All grade eight English teachers (10) and directors (6) in these schools were taken as subjects by available sampling technique. Besides, from 1,517 grade eight students of the sampled schools, 300 students (nearly 20% of the total population) were selected through systematic random sampling by using their role numbers. The random sampling technique was preferred because many writers like Kothari, 1985; Koul, 1984; Seliger and Shohamy, 1989 advice that it reduces sampling bias.

3.4 Data Collection Instruments

In order to gather the desired information, two basic instruments were employed. These were the questionnaire and classroom observation.

3.4 1. The Questionnaire

Three sets of questionnaires were prepared and used to obtain information from the three groups of respondents: teachers, school directors and students.

I. The questionnaire for teachers

Teachers' questionnaire contains three parts. The first part consists of 38 open-ended and close-ended questions. It was prepared to obtain information about teachers' activities, availability and utility of instructional materials, the communication existing between teachers and teachers, teachers and department heads, teachers and school directors, and the major problems that have been affecting the process of English syllabus implementation. The second part of the questionnaire was prepared to get information about the major factors which influence the implementation of English syllabus. In this part a set of possible factors were randomly listed and respondent teachers were asked to rank these possible factors according to their priority of influence. The third part of the questionnaire was prepared to obtain information on the availability of classroom facilities (See Appendix A).

The draft of the questionnaire for the teachers was first administered to three English teachers of grade eight in two elementary schools selected for the pilot study, (Finchiwha and Kilensso-Mekonissa primary Schools), in Bule-Hora Woreda. After it was filled in by the teachers, it was analyzed item by item to detect ambiguous, redundant and unclear statements. The final version of the questionnaire was administered for the sampled teachers directly by the researcher.

II. The questionnaire for school directors

In this questionnaire, both close and open-ended types of questions, which consists of 27 items was prepared and administered for the sampled school directors. The purpose of this questionnaire is to elicit

information from the directors about the implementation of the English syllabus in their schools. It mainly focuses on information about the communication existing between teachers and directors, the availability of instructional resources, the condition of their schools against the requirements of grade eight English syllabus implementation, the support the school provides for the teachers for the implementation process, and average class size and average number of students' desks available in the classroom.

The draft of the questionnaire for the directors was also first administered to two directors of the two primary schools selected for the pilot study. After it has been filled in by the directors, it was examined item by item and some ambiguous, too general and vague items were refined for the final use.

III. The questionnaire for students

This questionnaire incorporates 15 close-ended types of questions. Its purpose is to get information about students' feelings regarding the teaching learning activities of English, students and teachers communication system during English instruction in the classroom, and the attitude they developed towards learning English.

The questionnaire was first prepared in English and translated to Afan Oromo by taking note of the proficiency level of the students. It was translated in to Afan Oromo because it is the medium of instruction in Oromiya Regional State. The translation of the questionnaire was done by second year post graduate student of Afan Oromo language department in Addis Ababa University, together with the researcher.

Three hundred (300) copies of the questionnaire were distributed to the respective number of the sampled grade eight students. From the 300 copies of the distributed questionnaires, 296 copies (98.7%) were

returned back to the researcher. And, these responses were tallied, tabulated and their percentages were computed.

3.4.2 Classroom Observation

The other instrument used in this study was a classroom observation. The observation checklist was prepared by the investigator to see whether the mentioned items were used by English teachers in their actual classroom situations. With the help of the checklist, the researcher together with a co-observer was observed the sampled English teachers in their classrooms. The items of the observation checklist were developed by thoroughly examining grade eight English syllabus and teacher's guide, and identifying the guidelines and instructional activities, which are critical to the implementation of grade eight English syllabus (See Appendix D).

The observation checklist was pre-tested in four classroom sessions of the schools selected for the pilot study by the investigator and the assistant observer. The assistant observer, who is an English teacher with a BA degree, was introduced in how to use the checklist before entering to the classroom for observation. Based on the feedback obtained during the pre-testing of the checklist, the items which were redundant and unclear or ambiguous were revised for the final use. Then, each sampled teacher was observed twice in different classrooms. Hence, a total of twenty English sessions were observed to gather data for this study.

3.5 Methods of Data Analysis

Depending on the nature of the research questions and the data collected, different statistical techniques were employed to analyze the obtained data.

For the first research question, the data obtained through classroom observations were organized on the bases of the items of the checklist. The checklist was prepared with a two point scale (Yes, No) to indicate the occurrence of the teaching-learning activities in the classrooms. The values given for each activity during the classroom observation were tallied into one of the two scales and expressed in terms of percentage.

Regarding the second research question, the data obtained through questionnaire for both teachers and school directors were analyzed by using percentages to make the figure easily understandable.

The third research question was mainly answered through the analysis of the data collected from the students' questionnaire and the classroom observation. The obtained data were analyzed by making tables and by using percentage.

Finally, the data collected through teachers' questionnaire were thoroughly analyzed to answer the last basic question. Here, the collected data was summarized by using a rank-order. First the mean rank of each factor was computed by multiplying the frequency of respondents with the rank value given to it, then summing the products and dividing it by the total number of respondents. Then, rank was assigned to each of the mean-ranks; with the lowest mean-rank having the first rank, and the highest mean-rank getting the last rank. In this case, the upper high ranks (1st, 2nd, 3rd,...) could indicate the major factors which hampered the effective implementation of the English syllabus.

CHAPTER FOUR

4. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF THE DATA

In this chapter the data collected through different questionnaires and classroom observation are presented with the help of tables followed by descriptive statements for analysis to give answers to the four basic questions raised in the study. In most of the tables more than five items were placed according to the relations they have in particular sub-topic for collective discussion following the tables.

4.1 Teachers' Classroom Instructional Performances

Classrooms are places where most of instructional activities take place. One of the indicators of whether what is intended in the syllabus is implemented or not is teachers' classroom performances. To this end, the actual classroom instructional performances of teachers with respect to the prescribed activities were observed on a rating form showing the frequency of observations for each teaching-learning activity suggested in the syllabus. The forthcoming table depicts the teachers' classroom instructional performances.

Table 1: Observed Frequency of Teaching-Learning Activities Occurred in the Classrooms

No	Teaching-Learning Activities	No. of Observations					
		Yes		NO		Total	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1.	The students work in pairs/groups	3	15	17	85	20	100
2.	The students play role of others/role-play/	-	0	20	100	20	100
3.	The students play language games	-	0	20	100	20	100
4.	The students make oral presentation	-	0	20	100	20	100
5.	The students converse with each other/dialogue/	5	25	15	75	20	100
6.	The students make drama	-	0	20	100	20	100
7.	The students read a reading passage silently	7	35	13	65	20	100

8.	The students skim and scan from a reading passage	2	10	18	90	20	100
9.	The students infer the meaning of new words from a context	4	20	16	80	20	100
10.	The students listen and take notes	5	25	15	75	20	100
11.	The students construct and write sentences	3	15	17	85	20	100
12.	The teacher explaining/lecturing	18	90	2	10	20	100
13.	The teacher asks questions and the students give answers	16	80	4	20	20	100
14.	The teacher uses visual aids	1	5	19	95	20	100
	Average (mean) percentage		23		77		100

As can be deduced from table 1, out of the class sessions observed, in majority of them, the dominant teaching-learning activity was explaining/lecturing. In 90% of the classrooms the teachers were observed while explaining/lecturing.

In 80% and 35% of the classrooms, the frequent activities observed were teachers asking questions-students answering and students reading silently a textbook respectively. Of the teaching-learning activities suggested in the syllabus, pair/group work, dialogue, skimming and scanning, inferring, listening and note taking, and constructing sentences seem to be given less regard. For instance, dialogue and listening and note taking were appeared in similar ways rarely in 25% of the classrooms observed. And both activities, pair/group work and constructing sentences, were occurred very rarely in 15% of the observed classrooms.

Moreover, among the teaching-learning activities suggested in the syllabus, some activities are not used at all. These include: role-play, language games, oral presentation, and dramatization. Regarding usage of visual aids, only 5% of the classrooms were observed using visual aids.

Nacaro Brown and his associates (1982) define teaching, as an attempt to help some one (students) acquire some skill, attitude, knowledge, ideas or

appreciation. Accordingly, the teachers' task is to create or influence desirable changes in behavior on the part of their students. To this end, as to Fullan (1992), teachers should provide opportunities or active involvement of their students by using a variety of teaching learning activities. Widdouson, (1990) in similar view states that, in language classrooms it is the teacher who makes learners to use the language for communicative purposes. However, teachers in these schools failed to do so. In most of the observed sessions they were found dominating the classrooms. They seem to be the traditional classrooms which are criticized by many language scholars. Long and Porter (1995), for instance, argue that, if the predominate mode of instruction in the classroom is the 'lock-step' one, learners lack the opportunity to practice the new language. It also hinders active participation of learners in the classroom.

As it can be seen in table 1 only 15% of the classrooms were observed students working in pairs/groups. This shows that teachers of the schools gave less attention to this mode of instruction.

This finding is also confirmed with that of Brumfit and Johnson suggestions. They say that, most language teachers do not follow the approaches to English language teaching, which is taught to them in training colleges, and which is embedded in the prescribed textbooks (1979:117).

Thus, the data in table 1 above and the discussions that followed in general show the extent to which the teachers are applying roles and activities suggested in the syllabus and teacher's guide.

4.2 Compatibility of the School Organizations to Implement the Syllabus

In this study the presence of school physical facilities, the availability and usage of instructional resources, and the support provided for teachers are

identified as the major organizational factors determining the implementation of grade eight English syllabus. To this end, the following tables show data obtained from teachers and directors through the questionnaires.

4.2.1 Availability of School Physical Facilities.

Among the infrastructure of the school, the basic facilities such as school pedagogical centers, libraries, and classroom facilities and distributions of curricular materials are considered for this study. Thus, the data in the following tables show the availability of these facilities in the selected schools for the implementation of grade eight English syllabus.

Classrooms are places where learners are motivated to grow intellectually and emotionally. Because of this, these facilities should be sufficiently available and convenient for effective teaching learning process. In this regard, Majasan (1995) says that, if classrooms are overcrowded, effective teaching will be hampered.

Table 2: Number of Students in a Class, Syllabus: Teacher ratio, Teacher's guide: Teacher ratio, and textbook: Student ratio.

No.	School	Class: Student ratio	Syllabus: Teacher ratio	Teacher's guide: Teacher ratio	Textbook: Student ratio
1.	Abayi	1:100	-	-	1:2
2.	Birbirsa	1:82	1:1	1:1	1:10
3.	Gerba	1:110	-	1:2	1:18
4.	Sebo	1:85	-	-	1:16
5.	Shara	1:96	-	-	1:12
6.	Yabello	1:80	-	-	1:15
	Average	1:92.2	-	-	1:12.2

As table 2 above depicts, the average class: student ratio is 1: 92.2, which is inconvenient for proper classroom management and effective teaching

learning activities in the classroom. Regarding this, Goodlad (1984) notes that, overcrowdedness of the classroom is one of the factor that inhibits curriculum implementation.

As can be seen from the table above, there are shortages of curricular materials in the schools. Particularly, according to the data displayed, inadequacy of the syllabus and teacher's guide is apparent. That is, there is no syllabus at the schools, except one school, and as shown in the table there is complete absence of teacher's guide in the majority of the schools. Textbook: student ratio seems to be relatively fair; however, there is still storage of textbooks in all schools.

In general, at all schools, the shortages of curricular materials are severe problems to implement the curriculum effectively.

Table3: The Condition of School Infrastructures

No.	School	Is there school pedagogical center?		Is there library?	
		Yes	No	yes	No
1.	Abayi		√		√
2.	Birbirsa	√		√	
3.	Gerba	√			√
4.	Sebo		√		√
5.	Shara	√			√
6.	Yabello	√		√	

As shown in table 3, the majority of the schools and only two schools have school pedagogical centers and libraries respectively. However, curriculum implementation requires the availability of adequate instructional resources in the school pedagogical center and libraries. The following two tables (4 and 5) show the data obtained from both teachers and directors on the availability of instructional resources.

Table 4: The Availability of Instructional Resources in the Schools as Rated by Teachers.

Items	Alternatives	Teacher respondents	
		No.	%
What is your opinion on the number of reference materials (books) in the library when seen against the number of students that would like to use the materials?	A. More than adequate	-	0
	B. Adequate	-	0
	C. Not adequate	4	100
	Total	4	100
Does your school have sufficient number of instructional materials in the school pedagogical center (SPC) relevant to teaching grade eight English?	A. yes	-	0
	B. No	6	100
	Total	6	100

Table 5: The Availability of Instructional Resources in the Schools as Rated by Directors.

Items	Alternatives	Director respondents	
		No.	%
How do you rate the availability of English reference materials in your school library?	A. Excess	-	0
	B. Adequate	-	0
	C. Not adequate	2	100
	D. Non-exist	-	-
	Total	2	100
How do you rate the availability of English instructional materials in your school pedagogical center (SPC)?	A. Excess	-	0
	B. Adequate	1	25
	C. Not adequate	3	75
	D. Non-exist	-	-
	Total	4	100

As it can be seen in tables 4 and 5 above, all teacher respondents (100%) and all director respondents (100%) reported that the availability of relevant English reference materials in their school libraries is not adequate enough.

Similarly, all teacher respondents (100%) and 75% of director respondents responded that the amount of relevant English instructional materials in their school pedagogical centers is not adequate; only 25% of director respondents reported that, there is adequate instructional materials in their schools.

The observed inadequacy of reference books and instructional materials seems to have a significant effect on the level of the success of the implantation of English curriculum in the context of this study. In this regard, it was asserted in the New Education and Training Policy (NETP) (1994) of Ethiopia that, the growth of science and technology and the corresponding effect of its development on educational activities call for the appropriate selection and usage of instructional materials for successful implementation of the curriculum.

4.2.2 The Support Provided for Teachers

The amount and type of stationary materials provided for teachers have a great impact on the implementation of the curriculum. The data presented in table 6 below shows the support provided for grade eighth English teachers in the schools.

Table 6: Stationery Materials Provided for Teachers

Item	Alternatives	Teacher respondents	
		No.	%
To what extent does your school provides you with the stationary materials, such as: exercise books, paper, and pens?	A. To a very great extent	-	0
	B. To a great extent	-	0
	C. To some extent	10	100
	D. Not at all	-	0
	Total	10	100

As the data in table 6 indicates, the teachers are not sufficiently provided with the stationary materials, which could help them for effective teaching-learning activities. It can be seen from the table that all teacher respondents (100%) reported that, they are provided with stationery materials sometimes (to some extent). This shows that there is insufficient support for the teachers to implement grade eight English syllabus. Regarding this, Pratt (1983) states that, if teachers are not provided with materials and are not supported by in-service training, they will be likely to do what they have done in the past. He further explains that, any curriculum implementation requires a full-hearted administrative support. It is obvious that genuine administrative support brings about effective implementation of the syllabus. It also increases teachers' interests in teaching. According to Goodlad (1984), good leadership and availability of administrative support will bring greater enthusiasm and professionalism on the part of teachers.

4.2.3. The Condition and Availability of Internal Facilities of Classrooms.

The availability and condition of internal facilities of classrooms have a great impact on the teaching-learning activities. If classroom facilities like desks, tables, chalkboard, notice board, etc are not adequately available and are in poor condition, they obviously hinder the effective implementation of the curriculum.

Table 7: The Availability of Classroom Facilities (as obtained from Teachers Responses).

Classroom Facilities	Level of Availability						Total	
	Adequate		Inadequate		Non existence			
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Chairs and tables (desks) for students	2	20	8	80	-	0	10	100
Teacher's chair and table	1	10	7	70	2	20	10	100
Blackboard	8	80	2	20	-	0	10	100
Notice board	-	0	-	0	10	100	10	100
Chalk	6	60	4	40	-	0	10	100
Duster	4	40	4	40	2	20	10	100

As it is indicated in the above table, 80% and 60% of teachers responded that, there are adequate amount of blackboard and chalk in the classroom respectively. All other classroom facilities are found to be inadequate or non-existent. For instance, the non existent of notice boards, and teachers' chairs and tables is reported by 100% and 20% of the teacher respondents respectively. In this regard, Majasan (1995) reveals that, for an effective teaching-learning activity to occur, classroom should be organized properly; because whatever clever the teacher may be if the classroom is disorganized, effective teaching will be hampered.

4.2.4 The Nature of Communication among School Community Members

The type and nature of communication that exists among people involved in curriculum implementation in general, and among those who have a day-to-day attachment to the curriculum (teachers, students, school directors, etc.) in particular, is very crucial for effective curriculum implementation.

The data presented in the following two tables (table 8 & 9) show the nature of communication that exists among teachers themselves, teachers and department heads, and teachers and school directors.

Table 8: The Type and Nature of Communication in the Schools Related to English Syllabus Implementation.

Items	Alternatives	Teachers' responses	
		No.	%
How often do you hold department meeting?	A. Once in a semester	7	70
	B. Once in a month	2	20
	C. More than once in a month	-	0
	D. Not at all	1	10
	Total	10	100

How often does your department head supervise your classroom?	A. Once in one academic year	1	10
	B. Once in a month	-	0
	C. Once in a semester	6	60
	D. Not at all	3	30
	Total	10	100
How often do you meet your department head to discuss issues related to the implementation of grade eight English Syllabus?	A. Once in a semester	-	0
	B. Once in a year	-	0
	C. After each supervision period	7	70
	D. Not at all	3	30
	Total	10	100
How often does your school director or vice-director supervise your classroom?	A. Once in a semester	1	10
	B. Once in a year	9	90
	C. More than once in a semester	-	0
	D. Not at all	-	0
	Total	10	100
How often does your school director or vice director discuss matters related to the implementation of grade eight English syllabus with you?	A. Frequently	-	0
	B. Sometimes	6	60
	C. Rarely	-	0
	Not at all	4	40
	Total	10	100

As the data in table 8 indicates, the communication that exists among teachers and other personnel in the process of curriculum implementation is not adequate. For instance, 70% of teachers replied that, they meet to discuss issues related to the implementation process only once in a semester. However, if effective implementation of a given curriculum is wished, teachers teaching the same subject (department members) should frequently meet to discuss issues of implementation.

Similarly, 60% of teacher respondents said that their department heads supervise their classrooms only once in a semester and 90% of them responded that their director also supervise their classroom only once in a semester. Moreover, 40% of teachers responded that their director or vice-director never discuss matters related to the implementation of grade eight English syllabus with them. From the teachers responses to

the questions related to the type and nature of the communication existing in their schools, it can be understood that the communication system is not adequate enough to enhance the implementation of grade eight English syllabus.

Regarding this Snyder et.al. (1992) suggests that, the greater the quality and quantity of sustained interaction among people involved in the curricular activities, the greater the degree of implementation.

Moreover, the data obtained from the directors also depicts that there exists a poor communication system in the schools included in this study (see table 9 below).

Table 9: The Communication Existing in the Schools. (as Obtained from Directors Responses)

Items	Alternatives	Directors' responses	
		No.	%
Have you ever visited English teachers of grade eight in their classrooms while they are teaching?	A. Yes	5	83.3
	B. No	1	16.7
	Total	6	100
Have you observed any instructional problems the teachers had during your visit?	A. Yes	5	100
	B No	-	0
	Total	5	100
Have you ever discussed with English teachers, issues related to the implementation of grade eight English syllabus?	A. Yes	1	16.7
	B. No	5	83.3
	Total	6	100

The data in table 9 above shows that, 83.3% of the directors replied that they have visited English teaches in their classrooms; however, the same percent of directors (83.3) responded that they have never discussed issues related to the implementation of grade eight English syllabus with grade eight English teachers. This shows that there is lack of communication between teachers and school directors.

4.2.5 Teachers' Involvement in Curriculum Activities

The participation of teachers in curriculum activities throughout the different stages of curriculum is very much helpful for effective implementation of the curriculum. With regard to this, the following table shows the nature of teachers' involvement in curriculum activities.

Table 10: Teachers' Involvement in Curriculum Activities

Items	Alternatives	Teachers' responses	
		No.	%
Do you have any access to grade eight English syllabus?	A. Yes	2	20
	B. No	8	80
	Total	10	100
Have you participated in workshops, seminars or in any form of training that helps you to implement the syllabus effectively?	A. yes	4	40
	B No	6	60
	Total	10	100

As the data in table 10 indicates, 80% of the teacher respondents reported that they do not have any access to grade eight English syllabus, and 60% of the teachers replied that they did not participate in workshops, seminars or in any form of training which helps them to implement the syllabus effectively. From this one can understand that the teachers in the sampled schools lack in-service trainings, and they do not have sufficient knowledge about the syllabus. However, educators in the filed of curriculum argue that, teachers' role is not only implementing the planned curriculum, but also playing a significant role in developing the curriculum. Besides, participation of teachers in curriculum development activities is very important to bring successful implementation of the planned curriculum (Dorthick, 1953 in Shunidu and Omulando, 1992; Gross, et. al. 1971).

In fact it may not be possible to involve each teacher in the curriculum development process. But their views and opinions, can be incorporated in the curriculum by participating teachers in workshops, seminars ... etc. However, as the data in table 10 revealed, teachers in the sampled schools did not get this opportunities. (Dorthick, 1953 in Shunidu and Omulando, 1992:220-21).

4.3 An Assessment of Students' Attitude towards Learning English and Their Exposure to the Teaching-Learning Activities

The data in the following table shows students' responses regarding their attitude towards learning English and their exposure to the teaching-learning activities in the classroom.

Table 11: Students' Responses on their Attitude towards Learning English and their Exposure to the Activities

No.	Items	Alternatives	Student respondents	
			No.	%
1	How much is your interest to learn English?	A. High	252	85.1
		B. Moderately	44	14.9
		C. Low	-	0
		Total	296	100
2	How often do you attend your English class?	A. Always	261	88.2
		B Frequently	29	9.8
		C. Rarely	6	2
		D. Not at all	-	0
		Total	296	100
3	How often do you bring your textbook in to the classroom?	A. Always	31	10.5
		B Frequently	142	48
		C. Rarely	69	23.3
		D. Not at all	54	18.2
		Total	296	100
4	How often do you take part in asking and answering questions in your English class?	A. Always	64	21.6
		B Frequently	151	51
		C. Rarely	58	19.6
		D. Not at all	23	7.8
		Total	296	100
5	How much do you like activities you do in the classroom?	A. Very much	222	75
		B. Moderately	63	21.3
		C. Not at all	11	3.7
		Total	296	100

6	Does your English teacher tell you the purpose of each activity before starting to do?	A. Yes	33	11.1
		B. No	263	88.9
		Total	296	100
7	Does your English teacher encourage you to participate in the classroom?	A. Yes	69	23.3
		B. No	227	76.7
		Total	296	100
8	How often does your English teacher let you to do activities in pairs or groups?	A. Always	-	0
		B. Frequently	5	1.7
		C. Rarely	56	18.9
		D. Not at all	235	79.4
		Total	296	100
9	Does your English teacher make you to work all activities that are presented in the textbook?	A. Yes	23	7.8
		B. No	273	92.2
		Total	296	100
10	How often does your English teacher use visual aids in the classroom?	A. Always	-	0
		B. Frequently	9	3
		C. Rarely	41	13.9
		D. Not at all	246	83.1
		Total	296	100

As it can be seen in the table above (11), students' interest to learn English language seems to be very high. Because, the absolute majority of the student respondents (85.1%) reported that they have very high interest to learn English. Regarding class attendance, 88.2% of students responded that they always attend English classes 9.8% of them said that they attend frequently, and only 2% of the respondents reported that they attend rarely. Besides, 10.5% and 48% of the total respondents said that they always and frequently bring their textbook to the classroom respectively. Where as, 23.3% of the students mentioned that they bring their textbook rarely, and 18.2% of them said that they don't bring at all. As far as classroom participation is concerned, 21.6% of the student respondents reported that they always take part in answering and asking questions, 51% frequently, 19.6% rarely, and 7.8% of the students said that they don't take part at all. Moreover, 75% of the total respondents mentioned that they very much like the activities they do in the classroom, while 21.3% said that they like moderately, and 3.7% of them responded that they don't like at all.

Part of the success or failure of foreign language learning, as Bygate, M. (1987) reveals, depends on the way students perceive the use of the language. This is to mean that favorable interest and positive attitude of students towards the language is indispensable for the success of language learning. From the above table (11) and the analysis that followed, one can understand that students have high interest to learn the language, and this can show that how the students bring themselves into the learning activities. However, their teachers don't take this advantage and provide a variety of activities to them. The analysis below is evidence for this.

As table 11 depicts, the absolute majority of student respondents (92.2%) reported that their teachers don't make them to work all activities that are presented in the textbook. Besides, 88.9% of the total students said that their teachers do not tell them the purpose of the activities before starting to do. Out of the total population, 76.7% and 79.4% of students reported that their teachers do not encourage them to participate in the classrooms and do not let them to do activities in pairs or groups respectively. Moreover, the majority of the students (83.1%) responded that their English teachers do not use visual aids (learning aids), while teaching the language.

From the above, analysis it is understood that students of the sampled schools do not exposed to a variety of teaching-learning activities in the classroom. However, Atkins, J. et al. (1995) suggest that, exposing learners to a variety of learning activities is crucial. They say that, a genuine way of developing learners' language skill is engaging learners in various activities, which give them an opportunity to use the language in meaningful and purposeful way.

4.4 Factors Influencing the Implementation of the Syllabus

The data summarized below shows the extent to which the factors selected affect the implementation of grade eight English syllabus.

Table 12: Possible Factors that Affect the Implementation of the Syllabus as Ranked by Respondent Teachers.

No.	Possible Factors	Mean	Rank	Teacher Respondents
1	Poor supply of materials, such as: textbook, teacher's guide, and syllabus.	4.6	4	10
2	Students' poor background knowledge and language skills	5.0	5	10
3	Absence or Inadequacy of in-service training on how to implement the syllabus effectively	3.8	2	10
4	Difficulty of roles and activities incorporated in the textbook	5.9	6	10
5	Shortage of instructional materials (teaching aids)	6.7	7	10
6	Large number of students in a class	3.5	1	10
7	Inadequacy of the periods allotted to cover the portion	4.2	3	10
8	Lack of interest towards teaching profession on the part of teachers	6.9	8	10
9	Poor supply of facilities such as chairs, desks, and blackboard	7.4	10	10
10	Lack of support from school directions on how to implement the syllabus	7.0	9	10

As it can be seen in table 12 above, large class size, absence or inadequacy of in-service training, inadequacy of the periods allotted to cover the portion, poor supply of materials (textbook, teacher's guide, and syllabus), and students' poor background knowledge and language skills took the first five ranks among the factors that influence the implementation of grade eight English syllabus.

The size of the classroom is also observed as a major factor that influences the teaching-learning activities during the classroom observation sessions. Besides, the school principals were asked to list some of the major problems encountered during the implementation of grade eight English syllabus. The most widely mentioned problems by the school principals were over crowdedness of the classrooms and lack of training for teachers on how the new curriculum could be implemented.

In this regard, Goodlad (1984) suggests that, over crowdedness of the classrooms is one of the major factors affecting curriculum implementation. In relation to this, Byrne (1986) notes that, it is not easy to provide effective teaching-learning activities in large classrooms.

In addition to this, the size of the class is directly related with motivation. For Harmer (1991), large size classroom has a de-motivating effect on the part of students as well as the teacher. Moreover, students face various problems in large classes, such as: frustration, fear of ridicule from other, and overall negative self-image (Atkins, J. et al. 1995:212).

Absence or inadequacy of in-service training and inadequacy of the periods allotted to cover the syllabus were raised by teachers as the major problems in the implementation of the syllabus. In connection to this, Hord (1995:97) says that, "implementation efforts stall and fail because staffs have not been trained in new skills. This leads to frustration and undercuts the implementation plan." According to Byrne (1986), among the various factors that affect the implementation of language syllabus, the number of hours available for teaching the language is significant one.

Further more, poor supply of curricular materials, and students' background knowledge and language skills were also reported by the teachers as major barriers in the implantation of the syllabus.

Supporting this, Posner (1995) underlined the crucial role students' possession of required academic skills and knowledge play in the implementation of the syllabus. Curricular materials, as to Callahan (1966), are very useful in curriculum implementation for they provide guidance for the teaching-learning process.

Table 13: An Assessment of classroom implementation barriers with respect to time allotment, teaching load, student-class ratio, and organizational factors

Items	Alternatives	Teacher respondents	
		No.	%
Are you able to complete the textbook within the allotted time?	A. Yes	3	30
	B. No	7	70
	Total	10	100
Do you think the number of periods you teach in a day or in a week has any impact on your teaching effectiveness?	A. yes	8	80
	B No	2	20
	Total	10	100
On average, how many students do you teach in one class?	A. 40	-	0
	B. 50	-	0
	C. 60	-	0
	D. 70	-	0
	E. 80	4	40
	F. 90 and above	6	60
	Total	10	100
Does the number of students affect what you do in the classroom?	A. yes	10	100
	B. No	-	0
	Total	10	100
What is your opinion about the effects of the current organizational structure (classrooms, library, and pedagogical centeretc) of your school on the implementation of the syllabus?	A. Convenient	4	40
	B. Not convenient	6	60
	Total	10	100

As the data in table 13 above depicts 70% of the teacher respondents reported that, they are not able to complete the textbook within the allotted time, and 80% of the teachers replied that the teaching load they

have has a great impact on their teaching effectiveness. Besides, all of the teacher respondents (100%) reported that the existing large class size (over crowdedness of the classrooms) affects the implementation of the syllabus in the classrooms. Moreover, teachers were asked to give their opinion about the effect of the current organizational structure of their schools on the implementation of grade eight English syllabus. As to the responses of the teachers, 60% of them replied that the school conditions are not convenient for effective implementation of the syllabus.

Therefore, the information obtained in the previous section (the rank order in table 12) is substantiated with the information obtained in the teachers' questionnaire (table 13).

CHAPTER FIVE

5. SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary

The purpose of this study was to investigate the implementation of grade eight English syllabus in selected elementary schools of Borena Zone. To this end, the following basic questions were formulated.

1. Do grade eight English teachers apply the teaching-learning activities set in the syllabus or teacher's guide effectively in the classroom?
2. How conducive is the teaching-learning conditions in the schools for better and effective implementation of the syllabus?
3. What are the attitudes of grade eight students towards learning English?
4. What are the major factors which hinder the implementation of the syllabus?

Classroom observation and three sets of questionnaires were used to collect data from 10 teachers, 300 students, and 6 directors. The obtained data was analyzed by using percentages and mean values. The interpretations and analysis of the collected data are summarized as follows:

First, with regard to teachers' classroom instructional performances, the majority of the teachers, whose classes were observed, were found dominating the classroom. In 90% of the observed classrooms the teachers were observed, while explaining/lecturing. Besides, in 80% of the classrooms the frequent activity observed was teachers asking questions and students answering. The teachers were observed not giving adequate attention to all activities suggested in the syllabus. The classroom observation result showed that, teachers were given less regard to some activities, such as: pair/group work (15%), dialogue

(25%), Skimming and scanning (10%), inferring (20%), listening and note taking (25%), and constructing sentences (15%).

Moreover, teachers were observed not applying some teaching-learning activities at all. These were role-play, language games, oral presentation and dramatization. It was also observed that 95% of the teachers did not use visual aids (learning aids) in their classrooms. Generally, the highest percentage of teachers' classroom instructional performances (77%) showed that, they were not properly applied the teaching-learning activities suggested in the syllabus.

Second, with regard to suitability of school organizations, the average student-class ratio in the selected schools is found to be 1:92.2, which implies that the classrooms are over crowded. Besides, there are shortage of curricular materials, especially the syllabus and teacher's guide in these schools. For instance, there is no syllabus at the schools, except one school, and there is a complete absence of teacher's guide in the majority of the schools. Regarding to reference materials (books), all the teachers (100%) and all the directors (100%) reported that reference materials related to grade eight English are not adequately available in their school libraries. Similarly, 100% of the teachers and 75% of the directors reported that the availability of instructional materials related to English is not adequate in their school pedagogical centers. Moreover, the support provided for the teachers by the schools is observed to be inadequate. All teachers (100%) of the schools reported that, the stationary materials provided for them are not adequate. It was also observed that classroom internal facilities were not adequately available. For instance, the non-existence of notice boards, and teachers' chairs and tables in the classrooms are reported by 100% and 20% of the teacher respondents respectively. This problem was also observed during classroom observation.

As far as the type and nature of communication in the schools is concerned it was found that, there is a poor communication system in the schools. For instance, 70% of teachers reported that, they meet to discuss issues related to the implementation process only once in a semester. 60% and 90% of the teachers also reported that their department heads and their directors supervise their classes only once in a semester respectively. And 40% of the teachers replied that their directors or vice-directors never discuss matters related to the implementation of grade eight English syllabus with them. Similarly, 83.3% of the directors responded that, they had never discussed issues related to the implementation process with the teachers.

Regarding teachers' involvement in curriculum activates, the data obtained revealed that, 80% of the teachers do not have access to grade eight English syllabus. In addition, 60% of the teachers responded that, they have not participated in any form of training that help them to implement the syllabus effectively.

Third, as the data in section 4.3 revealed students have positive attitude and high interest towards learning English. Accordingly, the majority of the student respondents (85.1%) reported that they have high interest to learn English language; and 88.2% of the students said that they always attend English classes. Similarly, 21.6% and 51% of the student respondents reported that they always and frequently take part in answering and asking questions respectively. Moreover, 75% of the students responded that, they very much like the activities they do in the classroom.

In spite of their positive attitudes and high interest towards the learning activities, the students are not exposed to a variety of activities in the classroom. For instance, 92.2% of the student respondents For instance, 92.2% of the student respondents reported that, their teachers do not

make them to work all activities presented in the textbook. Similarly, 76.7% and 79.4% of the students agreed that their teachers do not encourage them to participate in the classroom and do not let them to do activities in pairs or groups respectively. Moreover, the majority of the students reported that their English teachers do not use visual aids (learning aids), when they teach the language.

Fourth, regarding the possible factors influencing the implementation of the syllabus, large class size, absence or inadequacy of in-service training, inadequacy of the periods allotted to cover the portion, poor supply of materials such as textbooks, teacher's guide and syllabus, and students' poor background knowledge and language skills were reported by the teachers as the five most hindering factors influencing the implementation of grade eight English syllabus.

Similarly, 70% and 80% of the teachers agreed that they are not able to complete the textbook within the allotted time and their teaching load has a great impact on their teaching effectiveness respectively. All of the teachers (100%) again confirmed that the existing large class size (over crowdedness of the classrooms) is the major implementation barrier. Moreover, it was reported by 60% of teacher respondents that, the existing school conditions are not convenient for successful implementation of the syllabus.

5.2 Conclusions

From the results of classroom observation, responses of the directors, teachers' responses, and students' responses, the following conclusions are made.

Most of the demands of grade eight English syllabus were not implemented as properly as they were intended to be implemented in the selected elementary schools of Borena Zone. This is apparent from actual classroom observation and students' responses. Teachers' extent of

implementation of the teaching-learning activities found to be low. Only those roles and activities that demand from them very little effort and which they are accustomed to use like explaining/lecturing, asking questions, making students read aloud and individual work tend to dominate the classrooms. The other teaching-learning activities such as: role-play, language games, dramatization, pair/group works...etc suggested in the syllabus were not realized as desired.

The absence of conducive teaching-learning conditions in the schools seems to have contribution to the ineffectiveness of the implementation process. The existence of ill-equipped classrooms with necessary facilities such as: furniture, shortage of instructional materials in general and in some cases a complete absence of syllabus and teacher's guide, poor communication system existing among the school community members may also have contribution to the limited success of the implementation process of the syllabus.

Students of the schools have favorable interest and positive attitude towards learning English language. However, they are not engaged in various activities, which give them opportunity to use the language.

Many factors were seen to affect the implementation of grade eight English syllabus. The major ones are: large class size, absence or inadequacy of in-service training, inadequacy of the periods allotted to cover the portion, poor supply of materials such as: textbook, teacher's guide, syllabus, and students' poor background knowledge and language skills.

5.3 Recommendations

On the bases of the above findings of the study, the following recommendations are forwarded.

1. It has been indicated in the study that the greater number of teachers assured that they have not attended in any kind of training that help them to implement grade eight English syllabus. Thus, to alleviate this problem, frequent and consistent trainings-workshops, seminars, etc. should be given for teachers by the concerned bodies, particularly the Woreda Education Office and Regional Education Bureau. Besides, the schools should make use of in-built supervisions to check whether the syllabus is implemented effectively and in-staff trainings to help teachers to implement the syllabus effectively.
2. It has also been revealed in this study that students of the schools have favorable interest and positive attitudes towards learning the language. Teachers should take this advantage and make efforts to provide a variety of activities, which give students opportunity to use the language and develop their language abilities.
3. Lack of curricular materials and late distribution of these materials has also been raised by teachers as one of the major factor affecting the implementation of grade eight English syllabus. Hence, due attention should be given to maintain adequate, proportional and timely distribution of the curricular materials (syllabus, Teacher's guide and Textbook) by the concerned educational officials at various levels. Besides, Educational Material Production and Distribution Agency should strive to supply curricular materials in sufficient quantities and at the appropriate time to schools. Principals of the schools should also take of the handing and utilization of these materials in their schools.
4. The inadequacy of communication among teachers and teachers and other school community members was also identified as another implementation barrier of grade eighth English syllabus. Therefore, the school directors, department heads, teachers and school community members collectively should devise a new

communication system which can facilitate the effective implementation of the syllabus. To this end, arranging regular monthly meetings to discuss issues related to syllabus implementation activities could be one of the mechanisms. Besides, inviting senior academicians on workshops, seminars and departmental meetings to share their experiences regarding the implementation of the syllabus could be the other means.

5. As the study revealed, there is a failure on the side of the teachers to implement the syllabus effectively, as planned. They are not providing all the teaching-learning activities to their students. Thus, the concerned bodies (the school administrators, supervisors at various levels) should follow whether teachers apply the syllabus effectively or not. They should also provide constant support service and encouragement for teachers that may improve the level of the implementation of the syllabus.
6. The large class size (over crowdedness of the classrooms) was found to be the major factor that hinders the implementation of grade eight English syllabus. Therefore, the concerned administrative bodies (school principals and Educational officials at various levels) and the community should devise mechanisms to build additional classrooms. In addition, as a short term plan teachers should pay full commitment to devise new teaching techniques, such as grouping students according to some criteria during teaching-learning of English to reduce the effect over crowdedness of the classrooms have on the teaching-learning activities.

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APPENDIX –A
Addis Ababa University
School of Graduate Studies
Department of Curriculum and Instruction

Questionnaire for Teachers

Dear Colleague,

The purpose of this questionnaire is to collect information pertinent to an evaluation of the implementation of grade eight English syllabus. The information to be collected through the questionnaire will be used only for research purposes. Thus, you are kindly requested to provide genuine information for it highly determines the success of the study.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

General Information

Name of the School: _____

Woreda: _____

Grade and Section you teach: _____

Sex of the respondent: Male: _____ Female: _____ (mark with a tick (✓))

Qualification: 12 complete: _____ 12+(TTI) _____ 12+2 _____ If any other, _____

Year of experience: _____

Part One

Direction: Please respond to the following questions by circling the letter of Your choice, and fill the appropriate response, if the question requires written response.

1. How many periods do you teach per week?
a. Less than 10 b. 10-15 c. 16-20 d. 21-25 e. 26-30
2. Do you think the number of periods you teach in a day or in a week has an impact on your teaching effectiveness? a. Yes b. No

14. Have you participated in workshops, seminars or in any form of training that helps you to implement the syllabus effectively? a. Yes b. No
15. If your answer to question no. 14 is "yes", specify the content and the duration of the training. _____

16. Is there a library in your school? a. Yes b. No
17. If your answer to question no. 16 is "Yes", are there sufficient reference books for grade eight English in the library? a. Yes b. No
18. If your answer to question no 17 is "Yes", do you often suggest to students to read reference materials other than the textbook? a. Yes b. No
19. If your response to question no. 18 is "No", please explain the reason _____

20. Is there a pedagogical center in your school? a. Yes b. No
21. If your answer to question no. 20 is "Yes", does the center have sufficient amount of instructional materials relevant to teaching grade eight English?
a. Yes b. No
22. On average, how many students do you teach in one class?
a. 40 b. 50 c. 60 d. 70 e. 80 f. 90 and above
23. Does the number of students affect what to do in the class? a. Yes b. No
24. How often do you hold department meeting?
a. Once in a semester b. Once in a month c. More than one in a month d. Not at all
25. How often does your department head supervise your classroom?
a. Once in one academic year b. Once in a month
c. Once in a semester d. Not at all e) If any other, specify _____
26. If your response to question No. 25 is "a", "b", or "c" you know in advance the day/date of the department head's supervision of your classroom? a. Yes b. No
27. How often do you meet your department head to discuss issues related to the implementation of grade eight English? a. Once in a semester b. Once in a year
c. After each supervision period d. Not at all
e) If any other, specific _____
28. How often does your school director or vice-director supervise your classroom?
a. Once in one academic year b. Once in a semester
c. More than once in a semester d. Not at all

29. How often does your school director or vice- director discuss matters related to the implementation of grade eight English with you?
 a. Frequently b. Sometimes c. Rarely d. We never discuss the matter
30. To what extent does your school provides you with the stationary material. such as exercise books, paper and pens?
 a. To a very great extent b. To a great extent c. To some extent d. Not at all
31. What is your opinion about the effects of the current organizational structure (classrooms, library, pedagogical center...etc) of your school, on the implementation of the syllabus? a. Convenient b. Not convenient at all
32. Do you have a clear understanding of your role and relationship with the principal, teachers, and other parties in the school in relation to the New Education and raining Policy? a. Yes b. No
33. How do you rate your interest towards teaching profession?
 a. High b. Medium c. Low
34. If your answer is "medium" or "low", why? _____

35. How do you rate your satisfaction with the evaluation process and results which the school uses to judge your performance?
 a. High b. Medium c. Low
36. If your answer to question no. 35 above is "low" or "medium", what is the reason?

37. To what extent are you committed to implement the teaching activities identified in the teacher's guide and textbook?
 a. Very committed b. Committed c. Not committed
38. What are the major problems you faced during the implementation of grade eight English syllabus? _____

Part Two

Direction: Following is list of possible factors that influence the implementation of grade eight English syllabus. Give rank according to their level of influence on the implementation process. Note that, those factors with strong influence should take the upper ranks (1, 2, 3...), and those with minimal influence should take lower rank (...10, 11, 12)

No.	Possible factors	Rank order
1	Poor supply of materials, such as textbook, teacher's guide, syllabus	
2	Unclear syllabus objectives and teaching activities	
3	Students poor background knowledge and language skills	
4	Inadequacy of periods to cover syllabus objectives and contents	
5	Absence or inadequacy of in-service training on how to implement the syllabus effectively	
6	Difficulty of roles and activities incorporated in the textbook	
7	Shortage of instructional materials (teaching aids)	
8	Large number of students in a class	
9	Inadequacy of the periods allotted to cover the portion	
10	Lack of interest towards teaching profession on the part of teachers	
11	Poor supply of facilities such as chairs, desks, and blackboard	
12	Lack of support from school directors on how to implement the syllabus	

Part Three

Direction: Please indicate by tick (✓) whether the following classroom facilities are available or not, in the classrooms in which you are teaching.

No.	Classroom Facilities	Level of Availability		
		Adequate	Inadequate	Non Existence
1.	Chairs and tables (desks) for students			
2.	Teacher's chair and table			
3.	Blackboard			
4.	Notice board			
5.	Chalk			
6.	Duster			
7.	Students' textbook			

APPENDIX - C

Addis Ababa University

School of Graduate Studies

Department of Curriculum and Instruction

Questionnaire for Directors

Dear Director,

This questionnaire is designed to gather information for research purpose. It's objective is to assess the implementation of grade eight English syllabus. The information to be obtained through the questionnaire will be used only for research purpose. Therefore, you are kindly requested to give your genuine and relevant information for it highly determines the success of the study.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

General Information

Name of the school _____

Service year: as a teacher _____

Woreda _____

as unit leader _____

Qualification _____

as vice director _____

Sex _____

director _____

Direction: Please respond to the following questions by circling the letter of your choices; and write the appropriate response, if the question requires written response.

1. Do you have training on educational administration (Directors' course) ?

a. Yes b. No

2. If your answer is "a", describe the level of training _____

3. Are there the following English curricular materials at your school?

3.1. Syllabus a. Yes b. No

3.2. Teacher's guide a. Yes b. No

3.3. Textbooks a. Yes b. No

4. What is the level of adequacy and their distributions among teacher and students?

Syllabus: Teacher Ratio: _____

Teacher's Guide: Teacher Ratio: _____

Textbook: Student Ratio _____

5. Does your school receive textbooks on time? a/ Yes b/ No

6. If your answer to question No. 5 is "No.", what do you think might the reason for the delay be? a. Poor delivery system of educational bureau

b. Shortage of man power in the school c. Shortage of published textbooks

d. If any other, specify _____

7. Does your school have a pedagogical center? a/Yes b/ No

8. If your answer to question No. 7 is "Yes", how do you evaluate its organization and effectiveness? a/ Very good b/Good c/Poor

9. Does the school pedagogical center have budget? a/Yes b/ No

10. If your response to question No. 9 is "Yes", how do you judge the budget in the eyes of service SPC deliver? a/ Sufficient b/Not sufficient

11. How do you rate the participation of teachers at SPC in producing and borrowing instructional materials? a/ High b/ Medium c/Low d/ Do not participate

12. To what extent teachers use instructional (teaching) materials in their lessons?
a/ To a very great extent b/To a great extent c/ To some extent d/ Not at all

13. What is the average number of students per class? _____

14. Do students participate in SPC activity programs? a/ Yes b/No

15. Is there a library at your school? a/Yes b/No

16. If your answer to question No. 15 "yes", are there sufficient reference books relevant to English? a/ Yes b/No

17. Is there any in-staff training experience pertinent to English syllabus and teaching methods at your school? a/ Yes b/ No

18. Have you ever visited English teachers of grade eight in their classrooms while they are teaching? a/Yes b/ No

19. If your answer to question No. 18 is "Yes", how often do you visit (supervise) in their classrooms? a. Once in a semester b. Twice in a semester
c. Once in a month d. Once in a week e. If any other, specify _____

20. Have you observed any instructional problems the teachers had during your visit ?
a/ Yes b/ No

21. If your answer to question No. 20 is "Yes", please list, some of the common instructional problems you observed during your visit:

- a/ _____
- b/ _____
- c/ _____
- d/ _____

22. Have you ever discussed with English teachers (individually or in group) issues related to the implementation of grade eight English syllabus?
a/ Yes b/ No

23. If your response to question No. 22 is "Yes", please, specify some of the common implementation issues raised by the teachers:

- a/ _____
- b/ _____
- c/ _____
- d/ _____

24. What changes do you observe in the teaching techniques of teachers, as a result of the new approach (communicative approach) to language teaching?

25. Have you observed any problems been faced in your school in implementing grade eight English syllabus? a/ Yes b/ No

26. If your response to question No. 25 is "Yes", please list, the major problems observed in your school in implementing grade eight English syllabus:

- a/ _____
- b/ _____
- c/ _____
- d/ _____

27. What mechanism do you use to alleviate or minimize these problems?

APPENDIX - D

Addis Ababa University
School of Graduate Study

Department of Curriculum and Instruction

Observation checklist

Name of the School: _____ Date: _____

Name of teacher: _____ Period: _____

Observation number: _____ Section: _____

Topic of the Lesson : _____

No. of Students: M _____ F _____

No	Activities	Yes	No
1	The students work in pairs/ groups		
2	The students play role of others (role -play)		
3	The students play language games		
4	The students make oral presentation		
5.	The students converse with each other (dialogue)		
6	The students make drama		
7	The students read a reading passage silently		
8	The students skim and scan from a read passage		
9	The students infer the meaning of new words from a context		
10	The students listen and take notes		
11	The students construct and write sentences		
12	The teacher explaining/lecturing		
13	The teacher asks questions and students give answers		
14	The teacher uses visual aids		