

DOMINANCE IN SMALL GROUP TASKS DURING STUDENTS'  
ENGAGEMENT IN COLLABORATIVE LEARNING

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ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY  
FACULTY OF LANGUAGE STUDIES  
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ENGAGEMENT IN COLLABORATIVE LEARNING  
IN THE CASE OF DAGMAWI MENELIK PREPARATORY SCHOOL  
GRADE 11<sup>26</sup>

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## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate students' collaboration and dominance in small group tasks. The study was conducted in Dagmawi Minilik Preparatory school in Addis Ababa in the academic year 2010/11 grade 11<sup>26</sup> was in focus and two small groups in the section were taken as subjects for the study.

Three data gathering instruments, observation as a principal tool, student's diary and teacher's interview, as supportive tools were used to collect the data, seeking for an in-depth data two groups in the section were observed six times i.e. three times each, continuously with the help of audio recorder and observation checklist. The checklist contained different activities like the extent and patterns of learners' collaboration and individual dominance in small group tasks. In order to get additional data and seeking for some clarification on the observed phenomenon, the two groups of participants i.e. ten students were requested to develop their own diary in English lesson period and four teachers using available sampling techniques were interviewed. In order to analyze the data gathered from those instruments descriptive research method was employed.

Results of the data analysis show that students were learning collaboratively in all English period. Consequently, the extents of learners' collaboration in the classroom were very high and were student-student patterns of interaction. During learners interaction in small groups the extents of individuals' dominance were very high. The classroom direct observation, the student's diary and the teachers interview revealed that, as far as learners come up with different characteristics, experience, background and personality, individuals' dominance in small groups were persistent. Dominance related to academic competitiveness, personality and procedure were the major patterns of dominance.

# Unit One

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Background of the study

The primary aim of learning a language is to use it in communication in its spoken or written forms. Classroom interaction is a key to reach that goal. It is the collaborative exchange of thoughts, feelings or ideas between two or more people, leading to mutual effect on each other. River explains it that through interaction that students increase their language store as they listen to or read authentic linguistic material or even out put of their follow student, in discussions, skits, joint problem-solving tasks, or dialogue of journals. In interaction, students' can use all they possess in the language all they have learned or causally absorbed in real life exchanges (1987).

Learners in the language class not only learn to make grammatical correct sentences, but also to develop the ability in using the language they have learnt for various communication purposes (Byrne, 1986: Harmer, 2001). According to Tomlinson (2004), communication involves interpretation, expression, and negotiation of meaning.

Moreover, many scholars have emphasized that language learning environment that can encourages the students to interact or converse in pragmatic authentic and functional use of the language for meaningful purposes can certainly develop and enrich students' interactive or communicative proficiency (Johnson 1995: All Wright and Bailey 1991).

Thus, language teachers are expected to create suitable classroom environment that can stimulate and sustain learners' interest and motivation to engage in genuine collaboration and interactions.

Similarly, Brown (1994) explains, the classroom activities/ tasks should have dynamic effect to motivate the students from predetermined text book tasks to a lively interactive, reflective, or expressive behaviour where students get more chance to practice English in its actual use independently of the teacher. This provides the students with not only the opportunity to practically explore their knowledge of the language and use it to express their own thoughts, but also to help them gain better progressive experience of their personal values such as: developing self confidence, social interactive skills, the sense of risk taking for their own learning, and the

ability to adjust one's speech in accordance with the audience, the point in focus and the context. On the other hand, boosting collaborative work in a language classroom is the other worth method of enhancing learners' communicative skills. Learning collaboratively or learning in small group has been suggested by many as an educational innovation that can transform students learning experience. Policy makers and researchers see peer learning/ small group work as a way to improve attitudes toward school, foster achievement, develop thinking skills, and promote interpersonal and inter-group relation (Joseph, 2010).

When a group of people work for the same aim, their different wisdom level, knowledge structure, cognition style can become a huge energy by mutual complementation which makes success possible. Furthermore, the mutual dependence and collaboration can also provide dynamic for the individuals in the group. It also can create mutual encouragement, mutual help and mutual love in all relationships. (Brown, 2000). Small group activities may also provide students with opportunities to practise team building skills, gain leadership and management skills and simulate real life collaborative situations. When they are working in collaboration, students must negotiate agendas and priorities, choose roles for their group members, manage their work load, and collaborate with each other in solving problems and accomplishing their tasks. (Bossert, 1989).

Regarding to the situation of Ethiopia, students in Ethiopia have learned several years of English as a subject starting from grade one and as a medium of instruction from then junior secondary level, but which is now called second cycle, up to the higher educational level. Though many educators, scholars and researchers advocate collaborative learning, cooperative learning, or group work as a means of enhancing learners' communicative skills they believe that it gives better opportunities to make learners use the language in various contexts. It is observed that learners are incompetent to use the language communicatively.

Different researchers and scholars state that there are various factors that have caused the problems mentioned above. Fawzia (2002) explains, the problems may lie on student factors (like students perception, attitudes, language factors, learning styles, back ground of students, and personal affective factors), social factors (include the gender of students in class and nature community feelings in a group), and educational factors (the lecture, the course and the topic which are all related to pedagogical factors). According to Tater, classroom interaction is

influenced by the factors: learners' lack of language skills as well as in adequate content knowledge, avoiding making mistakes in front of the teacher as well as their friends, and avoiding any embarrassing situations that can make them lose their face. Therefore, learners' silence is an effective face-saving strategy (2005).

Fassinger, on the other hand, identifies three main factors that traits to interactions/collaborations. These are class traits (include interaction norms and emotional climate. They are pressures from other students in class such as discouragement, attention, and supportiveness), student traits (these traits come from students themselves such as lack of confidence, pre-preparation, organization skills as well as communication apprehension and fear of offending), and teacher traits (which are the supportiveness, the attention, and the evaluation from the teacher) (1995).

These and other similar factors make researchers and educators restless. As a result, they have been tried to conduct a research seeking for solution for the problems and come up with a decisive solution. However, none of the researchers attempted to see the Dominance in small group tasks during students' engagement collaborative learning.. And this is another incomplete research area that needs the gap to be filled.

## **1.2 Statement of the problem**

Collaboration in the classroom is one of the most challenging things in the practical classroom setting. Students may be unwilling to speak, or because some students dominate the group discussion or because some students may want to speak out but feel inhibited to get their messages across, or because there may be in some case, lack motivation, lack preparation, anxiety, lack confidence and/or some other related factors (Allwright and Bailey, 1991).

According to Teshome (1988), because students have got low language experience due to lack of enough exposure they may not actively participate and interact in the classroom as they are expected. Persuasively, it could be a great challenge for students to express, discuss or converse about a topic effectively if they lack experience, confident and good language proficiency.

In relation to the idea mentioned above, recent researchers indicate that students are unable to share, communicate, and converse their messages using the language due to various factors. For example, Badimaw (2008) conducted his research to examine the application of communicative

language teaching in classroom learning English via plasma TV in two government schools. The result of his investigation reveals that communicative language teaching is not properly implemented due to various factors like the value given to self-concept in the social classroom, linguistic competence, and communicative or interactive competence. Fisseha (2006), who conducted his research on the determinants of classroom oral interactions and their effects on students' participation, identified pedagogical factors, psychological factors, social factors, some teachers' and students' personal value or aspects, fear of criticism as major determinants for classroom interaction. Getachew(2008), on the other hand, assessed some factors that affect students' verbal participation in group work activities of EFL class through Satellite TV. In his conclusion he identified personal factors like low self-esteem, language anxiety, low English ability, culture, the way students are brought up and others.

And finally, Alamirew (1992), who conducted a research on the application of group work, proposed the application of new approach instead of the traditional one towards improving the low proficiency of students. In his research, he indicated that the application of communicative language teaching, which aims to make communicative as a real life situation, the goal of language teaching would be a solution to the deficiency. For these and other similar reasons, therefore, it is believed, the problem of practicing and learning the language collaboratively in EFL classroom as well as using it in various contexts effectively and efficiently is still prevalence in high schools.

It is true that many researchers have conducted research to investigate factors that affect the applicability of group work, the application of communicative language teaching in EFL classrooms, determinants of classroom oral interactions and their effects on students' participation, factors that affect students' verbal participation in group work activities and the likes. Though many current researchers suggest ways in order to foster interaction in the EFL classrooms, the extents of dominance in small group tasks during students' engagement in collaborative learning is another research area that calls researchers.

Hence, the researcher in this research paper sets out to investigate the extent of domination and collaboration of students in small group tasks which has not been taken up before

## **1.3 Objectives of the research**

### **1.3.1 General Objective**

The major objective of this research was investigating the extents and patterns of dominance and collaboration in small group tasks during students' engagement in collaborative learning..

### **1.3.2 Specific objectives**

The research also examined the following specific issues

1. Identified the extents of teachers' and students role in collaborative learning.
2. Explained the extents of opportunities and challenges that collaborative learning has.
3. Examine the extents of students' readiness to collaborate with each others.

## **1.4 Research questions.**

In investigating dominance in small group tasks during students' engagement in collaborative learning, the research attempted to answer or address the following basic questions.

1. What are the extents of dominance and collaboration in small group tasks during students' engagement in collaborative learning?
2. What are the patterns of dominance and collaboration in small group tasks look like during students' engagement in collaborative learning?

## **1.5 Significance of the study**

The result of the study can give information for different group of people on how students collaborate and eliminate dominance in order to make sound learning and interactive classroom.

Hence, the result of the study will be of some help to the following bodies:

1. For the teachers: the results of the study will give ample information to the teachers when students would like to collaborate and when the dominance of some group of students arise/occur and how the teacher controls this domination that hinders others from interaction.
2. For syllabus designers and material writers: Since there is no end to syllabus designing, the investigation of the study may help designers to incorporate significant elements, facts, and procedures of tasks on collaboration. In addition, the study will also point out where adjustments

are to be made to create conducive collaborative learning environment and better learning opportunities for the students and

3. For the coming researchers: the study may also serve as an initial point for researchers who would like to carry out further study in this area.

### **1.6 Scope of the study**

Dagmawi-Minilik preparatory school, which is found in Addis Ababa city, was selected as a research area purposefully for the following two main reasons. For one reason it is the only preparatory school which is found in Arada sub-city and one of the nearest school for the researcher's living area. For the other reason it is the oldest school not only in the sub-city but also in Addis Ababa. Hence, the researcher believed the school administrators and the teachers are experienced and familiar with different researchers. So, they might fully cooperate the researcher in any matters that is he wanted for his study.

### **1.7 Limitations of the Study**

The main short comings of the research are inadequacy of time and scarcity of money to exploit all possible means so as to carry out a thorough/ detailed research including all the sections and the target population.

### **1.8. Organisations of the thesis**

The thesis consists of 5 chapters and bibliography section followed by a list of appendixes which shows observation checklist, student's diary and semi-structured interview of the teachers'. Unit one deals with back ground of the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, significance of the study, limitations of the study and organizations of the thesis. Unit two attempt to centre the discussion on review of related literature. Through this important points that magnify group work behaviours in EFL classes be discussed from the perspectives of teachers, learners, challenges and benefits of collaborative learning. Unit three out lines the research methodology, the research design, the research setting and respondents, data collection methods, data collection procedures, procedures of data analysis. This is followed by unit four which tries to present findings and discussion and implications of the study by relating to the views and works of the scholars discussed in the review of related literature section. Finally, unit five tries to sum up the research by providing a concise summary, conclusion and recommendation based

on the results of the study in order to have important information on the students' collaboration and individual dominance in small group work situations and on the ways of eliminating the persistent of individual dominance.

## Unit Two

### 2. Review of Related Literature

#### 2.1. Introduction

In this section of the study the main ideas will be raised. The concepts and definitions of collaborative learning, theoretical frame work of collaborative learning, characteristics of collaborative learning, elements of collaborative learning, patterns of collaboration, the impact of individual's in collaborative learning, the role of the teacher and students, opportunities and challenges of collaborative learning, and strategies for generating collaboration in the class room are the major ones.

#### 2.2. The Concepts and Definitions of Collaborative learning

The contemporary concept of collaborative learning began to interest educators in the West after theories of personality development, group dynamics and social cognitive mechanisms began a fresh thought process into learning mechanisms and classroom techniques. Though there is no one point of origin that can be attributed to the process of collaborative learning, one can find many related ideas that have helped the formation of this teaching tool. Dewey's (1938) explorations into the social nature of learning and his advocacy of teaching through discussion and through hands-on problem solving; Lewin's (1935), social inter-dependence concepts and Deutsh's (2000) ideas on cooperation and competition can be seen as early seeds of the Collaborative Learning process. Allport (1954) described interdependence among members as he studied Group Dynamics and social psychology and wrote about the reasons behind the success and failure of groups. Piaget (1967) talked about intellectual development as something that was fostered by social interaction. Vygotsky (1978) supported the idea of learning as a social process. According to his socio-cultural theory, we learn first from our interactions on the social level and then carry that learning to our individual selves. Loosely speaking, these thought processes can be bundled under the theory of Constructivism, which serves as the foundation of the structure we call Collaborative Learning. At the core of Constructivism is the idea that we learn from our own experiences; that learning is active; that we make meaning of the world around us from what we see, feel, hear, smell etc and by asking questions, exploring new ideas and evaluating our existing knowledge. Every time we have a new experience, we try and fit it into what we already

know. The new experience can either add to our knowledge of the world as we already know it or it can modify our perspective or give us a fresh belief. According to the constructivist, we are not passive absorbers of knowledge given to us by others. We are, on the contrary, active contributors to the learning process. This learning process is affected by the context of the experiences from which it began. Thus, learning is a social process, enhanced by our interpersonal relations and encounters. Collaborative learning, then, began with the educator's attempt to bring Constructivist theories into practice in the classroom. Following this, then, what do we mean by collaborative learning?

Different scholars define the term collaborative learning differently. For example, for Bruner (1991), collaborative learning can be defined as a process to reach goals that can not be achieved by one single agent. And it includes: Jointly developing and agreeing on a set of common goals and directions, Sharing responsibility for obtaining those goals, Working together to achieve those goals, using expertise and resources of each collaborator. According to this writer, collaboration stresses sharing risks and responsibilities towards a jointly defined goal.

According to Hemmelman (1995), collaborative learning can be defined as mutual engagement of participants in a coordinated effort to solve the problem together.

By its very definition, collaborative learning, takes the power away from the teacher as "guru" and distributes that power among the students as self-sustaining, motivated "learners" who take ownership and responsibility of the entire process of leaning in an interactive, talking-to-each-other and engaged manner. The teacher becomes merely a facilitator, an expert designer of a student's intellectual process and a mid-wife of a more emergent learning process (Smith, and MacGregor, 1992).

The American heritage dictionary of the English language (1991), on the other hand, defines collaborative learning as the act of creating something by working jointly with another or others. Collaborative learning for Dillenbourg (1999), on the other hand, is a situation in which two or more people learn or attempt to learn something together. More specifically, collaborative learning is based on the model that knowledge can be created within a population where members actively interact by sharing experiences and take on asymmetry roles. Put differently, collaborative learning refers to methodologies and environments in which learners engage in a common task where each individual depends on and is accountable to each other.

Though the term collaborative learning defined differently, most of the explanations acknowledge one form or another of sharing and imparting ideas and enhancing each other's capacity, mutual benefit, getting in to group for the sake of accomplishing certain tasks to achieve a common goal.

Hence, for the sake of common understanding this definition will use throughout this research work. Otherwise it is difficult to have one best definition.

### **2.3. Theoretical frame work of collaborative learning**

In order to conduct a research on collaborative issues, it is essential to discuss the theories that have direct relationship with the word. Collaborative learning makes its base on cognitive approach, social constructivism approach, and the motivational theories approach. The cognitive approach states that learners to retain and comprehend knowledge, it must be placed in a conceptual framework (Cooper et al, 1997; slavin1995). In the small group setting, the learner has the opportunity to rehearse their understanding with others and to be exposed to other conceptual constructs. According to social constructivist's knowledge to be internalized and a framework established, a social discourse must first take place. It is this discourse that leads to the conceptual framework in which to relate the new knowledge (Bruffee, 1992). As MacGregor (1990) states that knowledge is shaped over time by successive conversations and by ever-changing social and political environment. Finally, the motivational theorists believe that the inherent structure of cooperative learning creates an environment which motivates learning. For instance, if group and individual performances are components of the final assessment, individuals are motivated not only to learn the material but also to encourage all group members to understand the basic underpinnings of the knowledge. Hence, there is a driving force to foster positive interdependent relationships between group members.

### **2.4 Characteristics of collaborative learning**

As any of teaching learning methods, collaborative learning has its own distinct characteristics.

According to Johnson et al (1986), collaborative learning classroom has the following four characteristics:

**1. Shared knowledge among teachers and students;** as it is known in traditional classrooms the teacher is the dominant figure. He is considered as information giver; knowledge flows only one way from teacher to students. He has vital knowledge about content, skills, and instruction, and still provides that information to students. However, collaborative teachers also value and build up on the knowledge, personal experiences, language, strategies, and culture that students bring to the learning situation, for example if the daily lesson is about insect eating plants, few students, and perhaps few teachers, are likely to have direct knowledge about such plants. Thus, when those students who do have relevant experiences are given an opportunity to share them, the whole class is enriched.

Moreover, when students see that their experiences and knowledge are valued, they are motivated to listen and learn in new ways, and they are their experiences and knowledge are valued, they are motivated to listen and learn in new ways, and they are more likely to make important connections between their own likely to make important connections between their own learning, and school learning. Hence, in the collaborative classrooms there is no one way of information and knowledge flows.

**2. Shared authority among teachers and students;** Teachers, in collaborative classrooms, share authority with students in very specific ways. In most traditional classrooms, the teacher is largely, if not exclusively, responsible for setting goals, designing learning tasks, and assessing what is learned. Collaborative teachers differ in that they invite students to set specific goals within the frame work of what is being taught, provide options for activities and assignments that capture different student interests and goals, and encourage students to assess what they learn. Collaborative teachers encourage students' use of their own knowledge, ensure that students share their knowledge and their learning strategies, treat each other respectfully, and focus high levels of understanding.

They help students listen to diverse opinions, support knowledge claims with evidence, engage in critical and creative thinking, and participate in open and meaningful dialogue.

**3. Teachers as mediators:** as knowledge and authority are shared among teachers and students, the role of the teacher increasingly emphasizes mediated learning (Zhang, 2010). Successful mediation helps students connect new information to their experiences and to learning in other

areas, helps students figure out what to do when they are in dilemma, and helps them learn how to learn.

**Heterogeneous groupings of students;** the experiences and back grounds of all students are important for enriching learning in the classroom. In collaborative classrooms where students are engaged in a thinking curriculum, every one learns from every one else, and no student is deprived of this opportunity for making contributions and appreciating the contribution of others. As a result of these, a critical characteristics of collaborative classrooms, is that students are not segregated according to supposed ability, achievement, interest, or any other characteristic. Segregation seriously weakens collaboration and impoverishes the classroom by depriving all students of opportunities to learn from and with each other. Students who are labelled unsuccessful in a traditional classroom learn from “brighter” students, but more importantly, the so-called brighter students have just as much to learn from their more average peers. Thus, shared knowledge and authority, mediated learning and heterogeneous groups of students are essential characteristics of collaborative classrooms. More over, collaborative classroom has the following characteristics, too. Equality; students bring a similar level of knowledge and skills Mutuality; students work together to answer the same question. Meaning; students work together and with each other to create understanding.

According to Webb and Palinscar (1996), students learn more by explaining material to others and by receiving explanations from other students. Multiple approaches; in solving the problem multiple approaches are encouraged. There is no single “right” way to solve most problems, and all reasonable solutions or answers to the problem are honoured; Individual students have an opportunity to explain and discuss their suggested solutions as well as their misconceptions; New understandings are developed by the individual, by the team, and, finally, by the whole class (Dillenbourg et al 1995).

Having said these much about the characteristics of collaborative classroom, let’s see the Elements of collaborative learning.

## 2.5 Elements of Collaborative Learning

Over the past few years, collaborative learning has emerged as the new approach to classroom instruction. It has a great impact on students communication by increasing participation, by creating positive interdependence, and by making students engage in a critical and creative thinking (Tinzman et al, 1990).

To be successful in setting up and having students complete group tasks within a collaborative learning frame work, a number of essential elements or requirements must be met. According to Hamm, Mary and Dennis, the following are some of the essential elements of collaborative learning;

**1. Positive Interdependence:** In collaborative learning the success of one person is bound up with the success of others. This is referred to as positive interdependence. There are many ways to ensure positive interdependence. Goal sharing is one way. This might include shared subject matter, a particular assessment; join problem solving or creating and discovering something of value. Another way is role sharing. This occurs when each group member is given a specific role that gives a person specific responsibilities. The role describes what group activities that person might take and the contribution to the overall task. For example, one person might be given responsibility for checking the accuracy of information, another to make links between theory and practice, whilst another has responsibility for summarizing information for the group. Resource information contributes to positive interdependence and exists when each group member has only part of the information, cases, material or other resources necessary for the group to achieve its task. Finally task interdependence is structured by creating a division of labour so that the actions of one group member have to be completed before the next member can complete their tasks (Hamm, Mary, and Dannis 1992; Gillies, 2007).

**2. Interaction:** individual students are encouraged to assist others in the group to complete tasks in order to reach the groups goal. In other words, there is an expectation that students will help each other so that common goals can be achieved (Noreen, M. Webb 1997; Hill, 1994; Gillies, 2007; Wilden, 2006

**3. Individual accountability and personal responsibility:** every one is expected to do their fair share of work and it is important for all group members to know that they can not 'free ride'. Fair sharing of work can be achieved by, Keeping the group small: the smaller the group, the greater

the individual accountability (Wilkie and Meertens 1994), Testing every student, Observing the group and recording the frequency, with which each member contributes to the group's work (Gillies, 2007).

**4. Equal Opportunity for Success,** Every student must believe that he/she has an equal chance of learning the content and abilities, and earning the group rewards for academic success, regardless of the group he/she is in. in other words, students must not feel penalized academically by being placed in a particular group.

**5. Group Processing:** Group work is effective when group participant reflect on how well they function as a group. This reflection assists members to maintain good working relation ships. Reflection may focus on such things as relation ships between people, facilitation of collaborative skill, rewarding of positive behaviour and the celebration of success (Gillies, 2007).

**6. Social skills:** refers to interpersonal and small group skills such as effective communication which are needed to collaborate successfully. Interpersonal skills are important. In order to achieve these goals students must get to know and trust each other, communicate clearly, provide and accept support, and Resolve conflict constructively (Gillies, 2007).

The ideas that are mentioned above are some of the major elements of collaborative learning classroom.

## **2.6 Patterns of Collaboration**

In communicative approach of language teaching, classroom interaction became an important feature of second language pedagogy. It can occur between the teacher and learners, and/or between learners themselves, either collectively or individually. According to Angelo (1993), classroom interaction comprises teacher- learner and learner -learner interaction which is one of the ten principles of effective teaching: “ create an active learning environment; focus attention; connect knowledge; help students organize their knowledge; provide timely feedback; demand quality; balance high expectations with student support; enhance motivation to learn; encourage faculty student and student- student interaction and communication; and help students to productively manage their time”. Learners will get more knowledge from the lessons when they actively participate in their learning.

However, for the sake of this research, let's see the three different patterns of classroom interaction which is recommended by many scholars though the last one can be included within the others two.

### **2.6.1 Teacher- Student Interaction**

As to All Wright and Bailey (1991), many research findings on classroom teacher talk consistently show that teachers' talk covers between one half and three quarters of the talking done in the class rooms. Most of the time, a teacher's talk is limited to structuring, soliciting, and reacting. As indicated by All Wright and Bailey, the remaining time is left for responding, which is typically given as the students' roles. Teacher role is surely important to address the instructional behaviours clearly, to manage the classroom discipline and to show common objectives, direction and understanding of the learning process. But this does not mean by and means imply that the teacher should handle more of the class room talk.

Richards and Lock hart (1994) have noted that many studies have been conducted to discover patterns of teacher student's interaction, particularly in teacher led whole class activities. Accordingly, Chaudron (1988):cited in Richards and Lock hart (1999:48), pointed that the findings of his study on teacher led whole class activities shows 75% of class room time is taken by the teacher talking or asking questions. For Richards and Lock hart (1994), the advantage may be (a) it helps the teacher to teach larger number of students in a class; (b) students with different back ground (social, language abilities, cultural differences, etc do feel that they get equal treatments with others; and (c) it can be take as a step to wards working with individual oriented task. However, the disadvantages are; (a) it becomes more of teacher dominated, which leaves little opportunity for active students involvement (b) teaches may not reach and help students with individual differences; (c) it creates the feeling that all students have the same learning style, interests, backgrounds, etc; and move at the same learning pace. As a result, slow learners may be ignored and that brighter or more able students may be held back; and (d) it provides little opportunity to individual language practice, negotiation of meanings, and to express one's own opinions or feelings freely.

### 2.6.2 Student- student's interaction

More than other forms of classroom interactions, student-student interaction is reported to be more efficient and effective (Johnson 1995; Celec-Murcia, 1991); Richards and Lockhart 1994; Hedge 2000). Some scholars recommend pair work partly because each member gets better opportunity to speak in the target language; and partly because it creates meaningful context to exchange opinions or ideas in a low anxiety situation; and partly because there may be less conflicting ideas as compared to larger group works.

For Richards and Lockhart (1994: 152), through interacting with other students in pair students can be given the opportunity on their linguistic resources in a non-threatening situation and use them to complete different kinds of tasks. In the words of Hatch (1978): cited in Richards and Lockhart (1994:152), one learns how to do conversations, one learns how to interact verbally, and out of this interaction syntactic structures are developed.

### 2.6.3 Small or Large Group interaction

People develop their oral production abilities such as how to converse, discuss or negotiate by conversing, discussing and negotiating ideas with others (Goodman, 1986:75). Allowing students to work in a variety of forms, sometimes in pairs or in small groups or in large groups, and some times together cooperatively as a whole class, will expose the students to various learning opportunities. Thus, students can develop varied oral abilities such as how to relate the point in focus to what they already know, how to get their message across to their interlocutor, how to manage conversations and how to vary one's ideas according to the context.

Littlwood (1992), explains that creating conducive environment to students to engage in different/ varied patterns of classroom interaction benefits more of the students than anybody else. He mentioned some of the advantages as: it provides the learners with better learning opportunities, it creates access to exchange opinions or information with other partners who may have different background knowledge or experiences, it helps them to learn how to cooperate with each other or solve problems or tasks through negotiation of ideas, it provides them with the power to determine what is important and what is not in their discussion by creating their own safer working environment, it enables them to develop and broaden their own conversational skills, and preferred styles of interacting with others; and it helps them to gain the confidence and the feeling that the interaction is initiated and managed by themselves.

Furthermore, according to Richards and Lockhart (1994), to experience frequent success in pair or group work interactions, teachers should make the necessary decision on the group size, purpose of the activities and the roles to be assigned to each member of a group. In order to allow the students to benefit, it is crucial to determine the group size; depending on the nature of the task, time, objectives, working behaviours and roles each has to play. Hence, to ensure the effectiveness as well as the efficiency of the group as a whole, each member must participate. If not Hill says that 'a group in which only a few members participate is obviously not a good group (1994:27). Prodromou (1992), similarly pointed out that, badly planned and pair work can backfire, which can highly affect the success of collaboration. Nonetheless, if handled and managed properly group and pair work does not only reduce teacher talking time, converting the teacher's role into that of coordinator, facilitator, and advisor. Moreover, it can activate slower students to get more chance not only to move at their own pace, but to try their best to test out the little they know and to benefit from others' performances.

## **2.7 The impact of Individual's in collaborative learning**

One of the core problems in learning collaboratively is the persistence of difference creating individuals in the group. These kinds of learners can negatively affect the collaborative learning situation in the following ways or the dominance of some individuals can be determined by:

### **2.7.11. Being Authoritarian in Nature**

Authoritarians believe that it is right and proper to make a power and status distinction among different individuals. They believe that some persons occupy a more powerful position. Authoritarians become powerful, demanding, directive, and controlling in their relations with other group members or with those less powerful than themselves (Davies 1994b).

### **2.7.2. Assertiveness**

Individuals have their own designer in the extent to which they wish to be prominent in group situations, the degree to which they wish to assert themselves as individuals, and the extent to which they wish to dominate others (Birhanu 2000). Birhanu explains this idea in the following manner:

*"It is claimed that individuals who participate more actively in group also attempt leadership, and are believed leaders, promote group cohesiveness, influence group decisions, conform to norms, and are*

*popular. They also tend to be dissatisfied with the leader when the leader is some one else (2000:44-45)".*

### **2.7.3. Being Extrovert**

These types of learners are sociable, talkative, need to have people to talk to, have many friends, need excitement, take chances, and often stick their neck out. As a result of being easy going and sociable, other learners feel frustration and keep silent. Hence, in one way or the other, they dominate the rest (Eysenck and Eysenck's, 1963 : cited in Birhanu, 2000).

## **2.8 The Role of Teachers' and Students'**

### **2.8.1 Teacher's Roles**

According to Zhang (2010), teachers are expected to perform the following major roles in collaborative classrooms: A. An organizer: Since collaborative learning group is not simply a recreational group or friend group, the purpose of learning in collaboration is to fulfil the common task with joint efforts. In order to achieve the stated purpose the teacher should organize students in to small group; though the number of participants in a group is not fixed generally 4-6 students can make a group. The number of students in a group actually depends up on the size of the class and the students' condition .Before the classification of the class, further more, the teachers should be clear about each student's character, interest, language level and learning ability because groups of different types can promote the motivation of the students in learning English. As to Dilleabourg et al (1995: cited in P. Dilleabourg, 1999), the shy or less advanced students will participate in the activity with the help of the advanced students, while the top students can gain a sense of achievement in helping the weaker ones. Hence, the teacher is expected to play an organizer role for these reasons.

B. Designer: After the groups are formed, the teacher will play the role of a designer, designing activities for the groups, while designing the activities, the teacher should keep in mind the following three major points in the arrangement. Text related: It is the teacher who is expected to design appropriate activity to fit in with his own syllabus or text book. If the activity has nothing to do with the text in class, it will contribute nothing to students understanding of the content of the text. On the other hand, the activity should be helpful to the student's application of the language points in the text. In order to create a relaxed atmosphere for the sake of acquiring learning efficiency, the teacher is considered to design some questions which are connected with

the contents of the text and closely related to the student's life. Of moderate difficulty: In designing the activities teachers should examine the difficulty level of activities to mean, activities should be neither too difficult nor too easy. If the activities are too difficult, it may cause tension in the students, the members will be frustrated and even keep silent, some students will turn in to the mother tongue in their interactions. On the other hand, if the activities are too easy, the students will lose patience in the activities. Therefore, the design of the topic should be based on the students' level of proficiency in English. Interesting: While designing activities, they should address the interest of the students'. If the topics are closely related to the life of the students, they will be highly motivated to participate in the group activity. In that case, it will be fun for the students to have such activities. It is necessary for the teacher to vary the type of activity organized to suit students as well as to relieve their boredom. C. Guide: According to Zhang (2010), in the collaborative learning approach, the role of the teacher has to shift from a knowledge giver to a guide, guiding students in their acquisition of language skills as well as communicative skills by means of group activities in the classroom situation. In order to maximize students own and each other's learning the teacher must tell them collaborative is the instructional use of small groups before the activities and he (the teacher) is advised to explain the meaning and purpose of collaboration to the whole class.

The other important point in the collaborative learning situation is, there is a positive interdependence among the students' goal attainments, students should be guided to develop the idea that they can reach their goals only if the other students in the group also fulfil their task. As a result of this, students will gradually develop the sense of responsibility for themselves, for each other and for the whole group, since they are in the same boat, sharing the common fate. Therefore, the students will learn to adapt themselves to the new group, exerting greats to communicate and cooperate with each other. In order to make students active participant in the discussion teachers should design the activities in the way that make the students believe they succeed or fail together.

Each group member has a unique contribution to the joint effort because of his role and responsibilities. In exerting his efforts to the group success, the member will develop his own self-esteem and self-confidence as well. Each member, therefore, will develop a stronger individual in his right, which is also one of the aims of collaborative learning. (Joseph, K. 2010:37-40).

In general, with the guidance of the teacher, the students have a clear idea on what to do, how to organize information and share ideas, and what to achieve in their communication, which will gain smoothness and efficiency for the group activity.

D. Facilitator: According to Cohen (1986), facilitating involves creating rich environments and activities for linking new information to prior knowledge, providing opportunities for collaborative work and problem solving, and offering students a multiplicity of authentic learning tasks.

While the activities are in progress, the task of the teacher is to move around the class, listen to them, and find out how the students are getting on, and whether each student is taking his role and using English. When confronted with the passive groups, the teacher can take part in their activity, and play a role of helping the students find out and analyze their problems (Zhang, 2010; Venkateswaran 1995).

In order to do these, the teacher is not expected to offer his hand immediately, what he should do is to encourage the students to find out the answer by themselves.

E. Assessor: When all the group activity is over, the teacher is desired to give a comment on the performance of the students, i.e. the feedback (Ibid). By comparing the reports from each group, the teacher is to offer comment on each group, giving positive and honest praise, every group even every student will receive a proper comment on their performance, in which they will feel they are unique in their contribution to the group success.

Accordingly, Prodromou (1992:35) stated the roles of an interactive teacher as, A. Manager; manages the classroom interaction in order not to deviate from the central focus of the lesson, and does this by some time participating in the topic with the students in a group; B. Model; the teacher acts as a participant and guider or director in the process of interaction, and encourages the students to model him in commenting and contributing their roles in the learning process; C. Counsellor; he gives help and advise whenever the need arises; D. Friend: he should try to establish a good rapport with his students and sees every student as the potential sources of classroom interactive process. Because it is this point that makes him different from a traditional teacher. As mentioned earlier in a traditional classroom, the teacher may be seen as an authorized body, dominator, initiator, corrector, judger, leader etc (Harmer 1983, Littlewood, 1984 Prodromou, 1992).

## 2.8.2 The Role of Students

In a collaborative classroom, as a teacher, the students have their own roles to play. Their major roles are: collaborator and active participator. It is useful to think how these roles influence the processes and activities students conduct before, during, and after learning (Tinzman et al, 1990).

Before learning, for example, students set goals and plan learning tasks; during learning, they work together to accomplish tasks and monitor their progress; and after learning, they assess their performance and plan for future learning.

In addition, Hill states the following important roles that every student should know to ensure their group's effectiveness.

Encourager: the ability to praise or appreciate others' efforts and contributions, compromiser the ability to accept one's mistakes or misunderstandings and try to compensate that by restating, paraphrasing or raising negotiable ideas; observer; being able to record or take short notes of the group's discussion, and giving feed back or correction when it is necessary; follower; he/she attends each point raised in the discussion and moves according to the group's pace of learning by accepting the groups decision, by registering the key points raised the final mutual understanding of the whole members (1994:34-42). By doing so, every member of a group play his/her role in order to ensure the continuity of the discussion and learning opportunities that is being created because of their contribution (of Wright 1987: Nunan 1988).

Moreover, students are expected to perform: Designing learning tasks and monitoring: while teachers plan general learning tasks, students assume much more responsibility for planning, their own learning activates. Ideally, these plans drive in part from goals students set for themselves. Thoughtful planning by the teacher ensures that students can work together to attain their own goals and capitalize on their own abilities, knowledge, and strategies within the parameters set by the teacher. Students are more likely to engage in these tasks with more purpose and interest than in traditional classrooms and; Assessor: self assessment is intimately related to on going monitoring of one's progress toward achievement of learning goals. Thus, the other responsibility of the students is self assessment, a capability that is fostered as students assess group work.

Collaborative class rooms are natural places in which to learn self assessment. And because decisions about materials and group performance are shared, students feel freer to express doubts, fillings of success, remaining questions, and uncertainties than when they are evaluated only by a teacher. Further more, the sense of cooperation that is fostered in collaborative work makes assessment less threatening than in a more traditional assessment situation. Ideally, students learn to evaluate their own learning from their experiences with group evaluation. (Johnson, Davidew and Johnson Frank. P. 1999).

When we talk about collaborative learning, scholars have raised different ideas. Some argues and others support. In order to avoid the blurred visions it is very significant to see some of the ideas raised by different scholars about the challenges and opportunities of this instructional method.

## **2.9. Opportunities and challenges of collaborative learning**

### **2.9.1 Opportunities**

Numerous studies show that collaborative learning, as compared to working independently, results in deeper information processing and more meaningful psychological connections among the participants (Johnson, Johnson, and Smith 1998), the goal of collaboration is to create new insights during discussions (Kaye 1992) and to move students closer to an understanding of alternate perspectives. While working together, students build new understanding by challenging others' ideas and defending their own. When they are successful, it creates a product that is different from what any individual could produce alone (Ingram and Hathorn 2004). The following are some of the major benefits of collaborative learning.

#### **2.9.1.1 Builds self esteem in students**

Collaborative efforts among students result in a higher degree of accomplishment by all participant as opposed to individual, competitive systems in which many students are left behind (Johnson and Johnson 1989). Competition fosters a win- lose situation where superior students reap all rewards and recognition and low-achieving students reap none. In contrast every one benefits from a collaborative environment.

### **2.9.1.2. Increase the amount of talking time:**

Pair and group work immediately increase the amount of student talking time; it provides the students with the opportunity to communicate with each other to share suggestions, hypothesis, insights, feedback, successes, and failures (Harmer 1998).

### **2.9.1.3. Working together**

Students working together can build on each other's ideas to construct new knowledge, skills, and understanding that they did not have prior to group work. (Damon and Phelps, 1989 as cited in Noreen M. Webb 1997) working together will have beneficial effects on individual performance. It can help students learn, help them produce a high quality product, and provide a window on students team work skills.

As Joseph Krajcik (2010) states, working together is a way to improve attitudes towards school, foster achievement develop thinking skills, and promote interpersonal and inter group relations.

Learning is enhanced when it is more like a team effort than a solo race. Good learning, like good work, is collaborative and social, not competitive and isolated. Sharing one's ideas and responding to others' improves thinking and deepens understanding. (Gerdy, 1998).

### **2.9.1.4. Equality of Participation**

Although it is possible for students to learn simply by watching others, most learning theorists maintain that students learn most by participating actively in group work. Students do not always have equal opportunities for involvement and participation in group work, however. Bandura (1986); Schunk (1987): cited in Noreen Webb (1997), some students especially those who are extroverted, outgoing, domineering, friendly, or energetic are likely to be the most talkative, active and influential members of the group.

Activity and influence in the group may also be related to an individual's status in the group.

Status may be based on students' perceptions of each others' attractiveness, popularity, or academic competence, or may be related to other characteristics of students such as ethnic background, race, and gender (Cohen, 1994).

According to Dembo and McAuliffe (1987) : cited in Noreen Webb (1997), high status students are often more active, and influential than low status individuals, while low status individuals

may be less assertive and more anxious, talk less, give fewer suggestions and less information, and be less successful at obtaining help than high status individuals. Status is typically relative, such as being more academically competent than other students, rather than absolute, and may be based more on students' perceptions of each other than on reality (Ibid).

Whatever the case is, if the tasks or activities that do not have clear cut procedures or answers, it can not be solved or completed successfully by only one person and require contributions from multiple group members. In this case participants have equal opportunities in participating in the group.

Tinzam et al, (1990), in general sum up the benefits of collaborative learning in the following way. Collaborative learning is becoming an essential component in academia and industry. Students who work in small groups tend to achieve relatively higher levels of academic outcomes and are more likely to develop the skills needed for a successful career. The many benefits students derive from working in small groups include: increasing participation and collaboration, developing communication, Providing students with feedback, improving elaboration and retention, supporting learner's independence and control, evolving motivation and understanding, stimulating curiosity and elaboration and determination for closure.

Furthermore, collaborative learning Allows assignment of more challenging tasks without making the work load unreasonable; Provides weaker students with extensive one-on-one tutoring; and Provides stronger students with the deeper understanding that comes only from teaching material (Ibid).

Finally, Dillenbourg et al (1995) explain the opportunities of collaborative learning as collaboration works better than individual learning. Continuing their explanation, collaboration almost always works better than individual learning because 1. Multiple zones of proximal development are created among students that help scaffold learning; 2. It positively affects achievement, problem solving, and understanding; 3. The cognitive load is spread among students; 4. It promotes autonomous, motivated learning; 5. Anxiety about learning is reduced; 6. Groups traditionally left behind in science are more likely to be included and 7. Real life skills are developed.

In conclusion, the benefit and advantages of collaborative learning are so many and the above ones are only to mention few.

### **2.9.2 Challenges of Collaborative Learning**

Creating a collaborative classroom can be a wonderfully rewarding opportunity but it is also full of challenges and dilemmas. Challenges to collaborative learning at the classroom level are compounded by the traditional structures and culture of the academy, which continue to perpetuate the teacher-centred, transmission-of-information model of teaching and learning. For example, as some researches report that, the top students complain that they have to teach the weaker and do most of the work for the whole team, which is a burden to them. So me times team conflicts occur due to the different characters and personalities of the group members. Some students even claim they would like to learn on their own rather than cooperate with others because they are not well-motivated in the group activities (Zhang, 2010).

Also, learning from peers in cooperative or collaborative groups is complex and difficult to achieve when practised in an uninformed manner, it can stigmatize low achievers, exacerbate status differences and create dysfunctional interactions among students (Joseph.K.2010).

According to Fawzia (2002), there are many irresistible challenges that hinder learners to collaborate in the classroom. As to this researcher, these challenges are students' perception, attitudes, language competence, learning styles, background of students, personal affective factors, the pedagogical factors (the lecture, the course, and the topic).

In addition, Tater (2005) explains the challenges in the classroom as learner's lack of language skills as well as inadequate content knowledge, avoiding making mistakes in front of the teacher as well as their friends, and avoiding any embarrassing situations that can make them lose their face.

Fassinger (1995), on the other hand, identifies three major challenges of collaborative learning these are: class traits: which include interaction norms and emotional climate. They are pressures from other students in class such as discouragement, attention, and supportiveness. Student traits: Come from themselves such as lack of confidence pre-preparation, organization skills as well as communication apprehension and fear of offending. The teacher traits: these are the supportiveness, the attention and the evaluation from the teacher.

Before concluding this part, let's see how Vicki (1999) explains the draw backs of collaborative learning. "The many benefits of collaborative learning some times blind us to its draw backs". And she summarizes the drawbacks as: making members of the group responsible for each other's learning. In mixed ability groups, the result is often that stronger students are left to teach weaker students and do most of the work and encouraging only low-level thinking and ignoring the strategies necessary for the inclusion of critical or higher level thought. In small groups, there are some times only enough time to focus on the task at its most basic level.

Also Dillenboure et al (1995) comprehend the challenges of collaborative learning. According to them, the major challenges are: lack of collaborative skills, the fear of being duped and the dominating of others, status differential, diversity, social induced in competence, a belief in the "right answer", lack of support from parents, colleagues, administrators and/or teachers.

## **2.10. Strategies for generating collaboration in the class room**

Collaborative learning has been suggested by many as an educational innovation that can transform student's learning experiences (Joseph, 2010).

Dillenboure et al (1995), state that collaboration almost always works better than individual learning. In addition, students perform better in classroom collaboration when they are sure that they clearly know what to do, why and how to carry out activities should have direct correspondence to their learning experiences that can stimulate better participation and feelings of success in their completion of them. By taking these in to consideration, teachers can use the following strategies, which have the power to maximize learning opportunities in the collaborative classrooms.

### **2.10.1. Create Learning Opportunity**

According to Kumaravadivelu (1993), this concept is taken from the popular view that one can not teach the language, but he/she creates a situation or creates a suitable classroom atmosphere for learning to happen (cf Van Humbolat: cited in Celec-Murcia 1991, Byrne 1987). The assumption for this Wegerif, Mercer, and Daws(1999) describe the conditions that are required for collaborative interaction as follows.

1. All information is shared;
2. The members seek to reach agreement
3. The members take responsibility for decision;
4. Reasons are expected;
5. Challenges are expected
- 6.

Alternatives are discussed before a decision is taken, and 7. All the group members are encouraged to speak by other group members.

This implies that genuine collaborative classroom should not totally depend on lock step text book activities, nor should solely the teacher determine the extent and amount of negotiation of meanings

#### **2.10.2. Utilize learning opportunities.**

As All Wright and Bailey 1991: cited in Fisseha 2006, and Little Wood have clearly described, students come to school with potentially rich resources of Language teaching and learning. So the teacher should see each of his students of the centre of learning process. He ought to be able to exploit the opportunities emerged as the result of the students' unpredictable contributions. The teacher values this idea because he is not seen as the only source of knowledge, rather as one of the participants who is expected to play his role as others (Hedge 2000; Harmer 1991).

#### **2.10.3. Facilitate Negotiated Collaboration between Participants**

The dominant notion of collaboration is to encourage students to make sense of the authentic ideas or meaning while dealing with a given activities as the central reason is to generate better participation and exchange of meanings between the participants, there should be teacher student, student, though the latter is more meaningful and appreciated by some scholars (Celec-Murcia 1991), classroom interaction. In the process of negotiating meanings, students develop the skills of how to ask for repetition, clarification or modification of ideas to clearly understand and respond does not only mean to understand and to be understood to other's, but also to gain the freedom to initiate ideas and collaborate with others rather than simply reply to what the teacher says (Kumaravadivelu 1993).

#### **2.10.4. Activate the Intuitive Heuristic of the Learner.**

The last strategy, but not the least, is initiating learners intuitive Heuristic. In part the central point is that students can discover the language forms and use it subconsciously once they are exposed to contextualized language items (Probhu 1987; Harmer 1987). In order to do this, provide enough data so that the learners can infer and internalize underlying rules from their use in varied communication context (kumaravadivelu. 1993).

## **Chapter 3**

### **3. Research Methodology**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

In this chapter the methodology that was employed in carrying out this study are described. The research design, the research setting and respondents, instruments of data collection, procedures of data collection, and methods of data analysis are the main points that are discussed.

#### **3.2. Research Design**

In investigating students' collaborative learning in English classrooms descriptive research method was used. Descriptive research describes data and characteristics about the population or phenomenon being studied. It answers the question who, what, where, when, and how (Herbert, Seliger and Shohamy, 1989). This research method was used since it enabled the researcher to collect appropriate information in specific areas within short periods of time and within limited budget.

#### **3.3. Sources of Data**

The target population for the study was Dagmawi-Minilik grade 11 students and their English teachers. The total population of grade 11, students on which the study mainly focused, was only two groups of the 47 students from one section. As the target population was assigned in to 29 sections the research applied simple random sampling techniques to select the section. Consequently, grade 11 section 26 was selected randomly. This grade level was preferred because the researcher assumed that it is at this level learners give high consideration to their own learning and start doing things in collaboration and cooperation. Moreover, the researcher believed that the problems of working collaboratively by students of this grade level may have a long lasting effect on their future achievements.

#### **3.4. Data collection Methods**

To obtain data about the extents and patterns of students' collaboration and dominance for the study, observation was employed as a principal tool (together with recording material and observation checklist). To substantiate the data obtained through observation and to get

clarification on some issues, issues which are raised before, semi-structured interview was also used. In order to get real and true feelings of the students, student's diary was utilized as one of the three data gathering instruments. Procedures follow in designing these tools, their content, and the way in which they were used is discussed below.

#### **3.4.1. Observation**

To gather first hand information and sense the real situation of the actual English classrooms, non-participant observation, was employed. Seeking for an in depth data, two groups in the aforementioned section were observed continuously. The groups were selected randomly. A checklist that shows the different activities of learners was designed. To catch up and write everything while students are working in collaboration is very difficult. Hence, audio recorder/audio-taped was used to gather data. The main purpose of observation was to observe students' verbal behavior, turn taking and maintaining behaviors, initiation taking behaviors and general participation. The observation checklist contained elements/ activities like the extent and patterns of learners' collaboration and individual dominance in small group tasks. In addition to the observation checklist, any important and relevant issues that substantiate the research during observation were also taken as a note.

#### **3.4.2. Student's Diary**

Diary is a kind of instrument i.e. writable document that serves as a research tool though it is not usual.

In order to investigate students learning in small group situation, it is important that students are given the chance to reflect their own ideas and assess their learning with regard to a specific lesson. Believing that diary can serve this purpose well the researcher requested the subjects i.e. the two groups of ten students (there were ten groups with different number of participants), to keep a diary of their English lesson for a week i.e. three days for each group. This was done after participants were given an explanation about what was to be included and what was to be written. Of course, the student's diary was not chosen to be used as a research tool at the beginning. But the situations of the school did not allow the researcher to conduct an interview with the subjects, he shifted his instrument in to student's diary. Because the diary was an open kind and it allows learners to assess and reflect on their learning, students were encouraged to put whatever idea that they considered relevant in to the open diary and they were oriented that the idea they were

gong to write need to have a link with collaborative learning and individual dominance in small group tasks.

In order to identify who said what, code number was given in the distributed before they write the final diary. The teacher would allow the subjects to finish their discussion a bit early and write their diary at the final observation day. The diaries were collected at the end of the lesson.

### **3.4.3. Interviews**

For the sake of obtaining additional data about students' collaboration and individual dominance in small group tasks, semi structured-interview was applied. A semi-structured interview, which is highly favored for its flexibility (Ranjit, 1996), has been used for the study in order to have some clarification on the issues that were raised. Then the interview questions for the teachers were developed by translating the research questions and research objective in to interview questions. The interview questions were given to two TEFL graduates and then modifications were made based on the suggestions and comments given. Then it was given to the research advisor for final suggestions and comments. There were twelve teachers who were teaching grade 11 out of which four teachers were selected by using available sampling technique.

## **3.5. Data collection Procedures**

To elicit adequate data from the subject of the study, the following procedures are employed: first the section was selected for observation. Then classroom observation was conducted in Dagnawi Menelik preparatory school. For the sake of in depth data two groups from section 26 of grade 11 were identified randomly. Each was observed three times. In the first two days both groups were observed with out recording but observation checklist was used and put "√" for activities that were done in the groups and "x" for which were not applied. Field notes were taken to record events related to issues of the study. In the next four days students were observed not only using observation checklist but also the lesson was being recorded while they were working in groups. The selected groups were observed for a week i.e. each group was observed three times (the composition of the groups were similar up to the end of the classroom observation).

Second, in the first day of the observation students were told and oriented to record their own diary about what they felt when they discussed, to what extents did they participate in their groups, who took much of the given time for the groups, if they were , why? If others, why? And

their general comments about group work. Then, in the final day of the observation students were given a loose paper to write down what they were recording. Before the beginning of the period, the teacher was informed in order to finish her lesson before ten minutes for the sake of students got time to write. Then, student's diary was collected at the end of the period.

Third, to get more and additional information, four English teachers were randomly selected and interviewed. The interviewed teachers were informed ahead of a day of their interview after an explanation was given on the purposes of the interview. The teachers' interviews were held in face-to-face situation and were audio- taped and transcribed for interpretations and analysis.

### **3.6. Procedures of Data analysis**

After the collection of data from observation checklist and audio- taped, teachers' interview and student's diary were transcribed and described descriptively. In order to do this, during the classroom observation, time was recorded with the support of audio-recorder while individuals speak to identify who took or who speak much of the time given. Beside the audio-recorder and observation checklist field notes were taken in every period. In order to substantiate the above instrument student's diary and teachers' interview were employed. The data obtained from student's diary was translated, organized and discussed integrated with other results. The results obtained from interviewed teachers were also refined and selected, organized, transcribed and discussed in the same way as the student's diary has been done. Finally, the findings obtained by the use of these three instruments were refined, summarized and concluded. Recommendations were also given on the basis of the conclusions that were drawn.

## Unit Four

### 4. Findings and Discussions of Data

#### 4.1 Introduction

In this section of the study the findings from classroom observation, teachers' interview and students' diary are identified as the major findings for the study that are related to students' collaboration and dominance and the results will be discussed simultaneously.

Reasons which are reported by students have given due attention during discussion because it is assumed that students expression is their true and real opinion and /or feeling.

#### 4.2. Findings and Discussions of Data.

The findings from direct classroom observation, teacher's interview and student's diary in relation to dominance in small group tasks during students engagement in collaborative learning will be illustrated in tables and be discussed descriptively in two categories i.e. collaboration in group work and dominance in group work.

#### 4.3. Collaboration in Group Work

Collaborative learning, as mentioned before, has been suggested by many as an educational innovation that can transform student's learning experience. Though there are/and there were certain problems in order to foster this learning technique, which will be discussed in the next section, the observed classroom students were engaged in collaboration with the persistent of the different problems.

Based on the observations made collaborative learning was utilized in the classroom. The teacher was facilitating the classroom for collaboration and student-student patterns of (student-centered) learning were applied.

The next tables (tables 4.1, 4.2 and 4.3) show learners collaboration in groups and the time distribution among participants during group discussion. The time written in front of each individual is the sum of each bits of speech made throughout the discussion in a given period.

In the first day of the observation students had been given fifteen minutes and they were working on comprehension questions. While they were working, care was taken to record time in order to

identify who speaks how much. As a result, the following minutes were used by members of the group, which were selected as subject of the study.

Table 4.1. Distribution of minutes among members of group one.

Name(code) of participants	Total minutes used by each participants
a1	7 minutes
a2	1 minutes
a3	4 minutes
a4	1 minutes

Observation day 1.

Note: letter “a” indicates group, which is group one, where as the numbers, 1-4, indicate students who were in the group discussion.

Table 4.2 Distribution of minutes among members of group two

Name (code) of participants	Total minutes used by each participants
b1	30 seconds
b2	1 minutes
b3	2 minutes and 30 seconds
b4	7 minutes
b5	0 minutes
b6	2 minutes

Observation day 2

Note: letter b indicates group, which is group two, where as the numbers, 1-6, indicate students who were in the same group.

Key: T1=Teacher one.

Table 3 Distribution of minutes among members of group one

Name (code) of participants	Total minutes used by each participant
a1	10 minutes
a2	10 seconds
a3	4 minutes
a4	3 minutes

Observation day 3

In this period learners were given twenty minutes. Though there was no fair distribution of time among participants, students were working in small groups as shown in the tables 4.1, 4.2 and 4.3.

According to the interviewed teachers, they utilized collaborative learning in the classroom believing it aids in better leaning and understanding of activities and any other tasks. More over, teachers used collaborative teaching and learning technique in the classroom thinking that it enhances students' critical thinking and improves learners speaking proficiency.

**4.3.1. Extents of collaboration**

If we look at the extent of students' collaboration in the classroom, depending on the researcher's continuous classroom observation, learners' collaboration was frequent and possible to say was very high. Believing collaborative learning enhances critical thinking, it aids better learning and improves learners speaking proficiency students were working activities in collaboration. Tables 4.1-4.3 which were discussed above and, the teachers' interview (See Appendix D) and results obtained from student's diary confirmed the discussion made above.

**4.3.2. Patterns of collaboration**

The patterns of collaboration, as mentioned above, were student-student patterns of collaboration during the group discussion. The patterns of collaboration in the group discussion were leading by some individuals who have high academic performance (please, see table 4.4 and 4.5 under point 4.4.2.1), extroverted (based on teachers' interview), by those who have developed good personality, and by good orators (according to the continuous classroom observation).

Regarding the participants, there were students who were active, want to work in group, dominant, extrovert and influential. Also some students were freely interacting with the group i.e. they were voluntarily participating in the group discussion. Beside, the teacher was motivating and encouraging learners to work in groups. In relation to the roles of the teacher, however, the teacher was not observed trying to make balance among participants in sharing of ideas by taking the given time in consideration. The teacher also was not observed trying to find out how the students were getting on and whether each student was taking his/her role and using the target language. When confronted with the passive groups the teacher should take part in their activity and expected to play a role of helping the students to find out and analyze their problems. Though the teacher confiscated as she always does this during her interview, she was not applying what is mentioned as confirmed in the classroom observation.

In the group discussion there were high risk takers and these students were seen influencing the group discussion. And it has also been found that high risk takers (those students who already develop courage, personality and have self esteem) actively participate in group discussions than do low risk takers (students who less develop personality, courage, motivation and confidence) (Wallach et al, 1964: cited in Birhanu, 2000).

Findings and discussions made above demonstrates that group members in a language classroom were working in collaboration. However, all participants were not participating equally in order to achieve their common goal. It is obvious that in a group discussion learners are expected to have better understanding about the lesson, experience, and sharing responsibility for obtaining those goals. However, things may not go as they are expected to be because of various reasons like personality factors, situational factors and others. People have different personalities in general though personality can be interpreted differently and it is impossible to describe it within definable limits (Brown 1984).

This is what learners faced in the classroom while attempting to learn in a group. In group discussion students have varied behavior, knowledge, attitude etc. As a result, there is inconsistency among group members trying to foster learning to happen.

Some dominates using their assertiveness, others use their personality, some dominate procedurally and still some others tend to dominate others using their academic performance.

Having this in mind, it is vital to discuss individual dominance in small group task based on the classroom observation made, the teachers' interview and student's diary.

#### **4.4. Dominance in group work**

Dominance in small group discussion can happen differently. The above results illustrated in the tables and will be illustrated in this section and the discussion that will be made on the basis of the observation checklist, the teachers' interview and student's diary explain the domination of individual exists in a varied way; and this negatively affect students learning in collaboration. Taking the idea learning is not finding out what other people already know but solving one's own problem for one's life into consideration, individual learn differently through different styles that refer to expression of individuality including qualities, activities and behaviors sustained over a period of time (Handy, 1994) and learners involve/react differently in group discussion. It is clear that in group discussion, as far as an individual brings the different attitude, behavior, knowledge and personality, in to the classroom, there can be dominating and dominated learners.

##### **4.4.1. Extents of individual dominance**

The extent of individual dominance was very high and similar individuals were observed while frequently dominating the others (refer from table 4.1-4.3 and tables 4.6-4.8 under point 4.4.2). Student a1 and student b4 in all the observed classes (periods) were completely dominating the group discussion. If we add up all the times used by these two students is greater than the total time used by the rest of all participants. This tells us how much the extents of individual dominance were high. In other saying, similar individuals' dominance through out the group discussion were prevalence and were very high. The teachers' interview reveals, students may not take part equally in group discussion. Teacher 1 stated this idea as,

*Students in group may not participate equally. Some times some of the participants kept silent. The reasons for this may be shyness, fear of committing mistakes or errors, unable to speak out ideas openly in public etc.*

#### 4.4.2 Patterns of individual dominance

Assertive, good academic achievers (according to students' first semester class rank and their first semester English subject result, (see table 4.4 and 4.5', data obtained from teachers' interview (see appendix D), and student's diary, (see all annexed diary of student's'), orators and have good personality, as it was explained (see 4.4.2.2 and 4.4.2.3) tended to dominate the group discussion. According to teacher 1, at the time of interview, he was asked whether all the students in the group discussion participate and share ideas equally.

Teacher1, *I don't think so because there is always some one who dominates the others.*

He added that,

*Especially those who are well experienced (have good back ground) on discussion, those who are fluent and good academic competences dominated usually.*

The behavior and characteristics of domination may not always be the same and may happen differently. The domination of individual's in the classroom was observed differently. Student's diary, teachers' interview and the continuous classroom observation pointed out the persistent of the following types of dominant behavior in the group discussion.

##### 4.4.2.1. Academic Competitiveness Related Dominance

Ademe and G/Meskel (1989-90), in their study of class activity and academic achievement, as a general view, pointed out that classroom in which there is a large percentage question asking, students responding and teachers reinforcing have significantly greater achievements than classroom in which these conditions are present to a lesser extent. Nonetheless, the result of their study indicated that no significant difference existed in the proportion of passes (50% and above) between the active and passive students.

This is not the final result and needs further investigation, however, the results obtained from continuous classroom observation, the teachers' interview and student's diary confirmed those who have competitive academic performance tended to dominate the group discussion.

Table 4.4 Group one's first semester class rank and their first semester English subject result.

Name (code) of members of group one	First semester class rank	First semester English subject result
a1	2/47	80
a2	41/47	40
a3	13/47	63
a4	19/47	58

Table 4.5 Group two's first semester class rank and their first semester English subject result

Name (code) of members of group two	First semester class rank	First semester English subject result
b1	32/47	48
b2	29/47	53
b3	23/47	56
b4	4/47	85
b5	46/47	40.5
b6	20/47	55

The above two tables indicate students' first semester class rank and their first semester English subject result.

As discussed previously in detail one of the major and deep rooted problems in group discussion is the domination of active and intelligent/competitors in their academic performance. All the four interviewed teachers agreed on this idea. As teacher 1 (see appendix D.1) explained, students, especially those who are passive participants, refrain from speaking or prefer keeping silence because there is always some one who dominates others (see table 4.2). The student's diaries also convey some participants, most of the time, keep silent because those who are intelligent tended to dominate them. According to student b5, those who are competitive in their academic subjects tended to speak much of the time without giving chance for others. As student

b6 pointed out there are students who can speak much. As a matter of fact, they wouldn't have time to express their feeling on the issues raised. According to student a3, (see appendix B-3) most of the time, he sat passively because some students use all the given time with out considering his fair share. He added that they consider themselves as "all knower" or "knowledgeable" and they don't worry for other students. Student a2 (see appendix A-2) also stated that when some one consider himself/herself as all knower and he/she is every thing in different circumstances he/she tended to dominate and even ignore others definitely. Even if they have wonderful thought that substantiate the view raised, they, the dominating students, don't want to give them their attention. Hence they keep silent.

“...ሌሎች በቋንቋ ከእኔ ስለሚሻሉ ያወራሉ ለኛ ጊዜም አይሠጡንም። አንዳንዴ ያናድዱኛል። በአማርኛ ስናገር እንኳን የራሳቸውን እንጂ የእኔን መልስ ልክ እንኳን ብሆን አያዳምጡኝም። አስተማሪዎም ስም ጠርታ እንዲመልሱላት የምታደርገው መናገር የሚችሉትንና ኅበዝ የሆኑትን ስለሆነ እኛን ይረሱናል። ስለዚህ አልናገርም። ስማቸው ተጠርቶ እንዲመልሱ ስለሚደረጉ ሁሉንም ያወቁ ይመስላቸዋል መሠለኝ አንተ የምትለውን አይሠሙህም/አያዳምጡህም። student a2”

The English version of the above Amharic quotation is as follows:

“... because others are better than us in language they talk continuously without giving us time. Even when I speak in Amharic though my answer is correct they don't listen me. The teacher her self by calling the name of the so-called clever students let answers questions. As a result, they forget us. Hence, we don't speak. Students the so-called cleaver, on the other hand, because the teacher make them answer questions by calling their names, they consider them selves as they know every thing. Consequently they don't listen why you say.”

**4.4.2.2. Personality Related Dominance**

The classroom observation (see tables 4.1-4.3 under 4.3) reveals that there were no fair distributions of minutes among participants. The reasons for these, according to the interviewed teachers and student's diary, students' have varied personalities. Some are shy, some fear peer criticism, some fear making errors, some hesitate to shoulder responsibility on behalf of the group and some others fall shortage of vocabularies/ words. As a result, those courageous ones, who have word power and good language input tended to dominate the group discussion. In other words, those learners who developed good personality always need to be the center of attention.

It is possible to say all the students agree on the idea mentioned above (see appendices A1-A10). As they stated, because they lack much of the behaviors i.e. confidence, shortage of words, fear etc, they tended to sit passively. Conversely, others in one way or the other dominate them.

Tables 4.3 and 4.4 depicts that student a1 used the time dominantly where as, student a2 kept silent. Generally, a1 used 10 minutes, a2 used 10 seconds, a3 and a4 used 4 minutes and 3 minutes with 20 seconds respectively. From group two, as indicated in table 4.4, Student b4 explaining the prevailing problem she faced said that she has to start every activity first as the rest always keep silent. Student b3 tried to explain the imaginary problem in Amharic. This problem was observed may be due to lack of words, lack of confidence to speak in English in front of his friends, fear of being laughed at by, or for some unknown reasons. However, it is easy to recognize his motivation and interest to share his opinions and ideas. But he had been speaking frequently in Amharic. He was observed sometimes while pushing other participants to speak in Amharic like him if not in English. On the other hand, others like student b1, b2 and b5 were in the group discussion only for the sake of attendance. On the contrary, student b4 was asking question and was answered by her self again. Thus b1 used 20 seconds, b2 32 seconds, while b3 used 4 minutes, b4 used surprisingly 10 minutes and 20 seconds, b5 used zero minutes and b6 used 3 minutes and 29 seconds in general. In those two days the topic was speaking and the lesson was "problem sharing". It was an interactive and interesting kind of activity. Such kind of activities help to identify who is who, who says what, who is frequently dominating, who has better language command and helps to identify who imposes his/her own views or ideas on others.

Furthermore, the interviewed teachers confirmed that most of the high school students are tied with the aforementioned problems. Because firstly they convinced them selves as others are better than them; secondly they didn't have the experience and background.

If we look at the problems mentioned above, for example, fear of making mistakes and face shortage of words are interrelated with lack of confidence to speak English in class and one could stimulate the other. In other words, it would be sound that students may lack self-confidence if they think that they may face shortage of words, partly because they are not confident in their language abilities; or partly because they feel uneasy during discussion in class.

Hence, in order to make students develop these personality teachers are expected to play a great role. It has been stated that the ability to produce sound like sentences, develop courage, eliminate fear and others can be enriched and developed through debates, lengthened discussion or dramatization (since it enhances internalizing the language to be used), role play, simulation, oral presentation, reporting, giving and taking comments, etc (Harmer, 1991, 1983; Byrne 1987; Shumin 1997).

#### 4.4.2.3. Oral Dominance

According to the observation held in both groups (as illustrated in the previous tables and presented below) only few students were running the group discussion. During the observation, the researcher realized that there are few orator students, relatively, in each groups. They were talking frequently, asking questions continuously, interrupting others speech seriously and attempt answering questions. The following three tables can tell us many things about what is discussed in this section.

. Table 4.6 Distribution of minutes among members of group Two

Name (code) of participants	Total minutes used by each participant
b1	20 seconds
b2	32 seconds
b3	4 minutes
b4	10 minutes and 20 seconds
b5	0minutes
b6	3 minutes and half seconds

Observation day 4

Based on the direct continuous classroom observation, student b4 was asking question and was answered by her self again. Thus, as can be seen above, of the given twenty minutes, b1 used 20 seconds, b2 used 32 seconds, b3 used 4 minutes, b4 used surprisingly 10 minutes and 20 seconds, b5 used zero minutes and b6 used 3 minutes and 29 seconds in general.

Table 4.7. Distribution of minutes among members of group one

Name (code) of participants	Total minutes used by each participant
a1	9 minutes
a2	0 minutes
a3	3 minutes
a4	2 minutes

Observation day 5.

Table, 4.7 indicates the time utilized by the participants of group one in the third day of the classroom observation.

As usual, the teacher wrote the daily lesson on the black board which was synonyms. She ordered them to sit in their group as they always do. Then, she let students first to identify the meaning of synonyms and then the difference and similarities of some of the words given for class work. In progress, student a1, who was frequently dominating the discussion, started to clarify the meaning of synonyms. And he used much of the time i.e. 9 minutes of the given fifteen minutes. Then, after student a3 threw her share, he (student a1) gave chances to the rest of the group participants to say some thing what they feel on the given topic. Most of the time three of the group members kept silent. As a result, he was expected to say some thing now and then; where as student a2 was given couple of chances to agree or disagree on the answers given, but repeatedly node her head to say simply “no”.

As shown in the table student a2 used zero minutes of the given time where as student a3 and a4 three minutes and two minutes respectively. During the feedback session only student a1 was busy in responding to each word until the end of the class work activities on behalf of his group.

Table 4.8 Distribution of minutes among members of group one

Name (code) of participants	Total minutes used by each participant
b1	1 minutes
b2	0 minutes
b3	1 minutes
b4	10 minutes
b5	0 minutes
b6	30 seconds

Observation day 6.

In the last day observations of group two no significant differences were observed as different from the observations made in the previous days. The dominant student was dominating the group discussion and the dominated students continued being dominated as usual. The different situation that was observed in the last day of the classroom observation was students (group members) were asking student b4 to shift the medium of instruction i.e. English in to Amharic. However, she was encouraging them to speak in English as far as the period was English; also she was guiding and motivating her group mates. The other thing that was observed in the group discussion, the participants continuously asked student b4 to tell them the meanings of the given words in Amharic. Generally, of the given fifteen minutes, b1 used 1 minutes, b2, 0 minutes, b3, 1 minutes, b4, 10 minutes, b5 , 0 minutes while b6 used 30 secondes.

As teacher 4 explained, some students make uninterrupted speech where as some, especially those who have low language input and tongue tied, tended to speaking but soon end up in fragments or unrelated ideas or shift the target language into their L1 or become silent without convey their ideas or opinions. As a result, students may not participate equally.

Teacher 2 also indicated that those who are more talkative are always tending to dominate the group discussion. Similarly teacher 3 shared this idea. Teacher 1 additionally elaborated as those who have good background on discussion or well-experienced in discussion, very talkative and those who have similarly behavior dominated the group discussions usually.

Students who participated in the discussion confiscated as those who consider themselves as clever tended to use much of the given time. According to student a4, they only use the time

which is left from those talkative students. Student a2 stated that as they i.e. those active students believe that they are better in speaking, they don't give others time to speak. Students b2, b3, b5 and b6 expressed that they are not given time by those active (talkative) students. Consequently, they prefer to keep silent.

Student a3, on the other hand, stated that there are students who want always to be listened.

The discussion made above indicates that oral dominance is one of the serious problems that prevent learners to run discussion in groups.

A study by Seime (1988), for example, has pointed out that if students have developed poor perception of their oral ability, they will tend to restrain their speech. Stated differently, when students lack confidence in their production skills, they are less likely to speak out or express their ideas or feelings in front of others. They usually hesitate or withdraw themselves from conversations or discussions or perhaps, become passive listeners. It is thus, important to emphasize that students need to be encouraged and supported to gain self-assurance in their verbal abilities by creating participatory pair/group discussion, extended oral activities through which students can process their prior related information or experiences, and by providing them with topics that can catch and hold their attention and interest to talk about.

In this sense, Charles (1989) argues that lack of confidence in one's skill can affect not only one's success but also behavior. To build up self confidence, for example, if teachers value every attempts students show to express their opinions or thoughts; and if students feel that they are really enjoying a lesson and showing progress in their performance, and if they are acknowledged for their efforts or changes revealed in their performances, they could improve their rate of participation and interaction during discussions.

Moreover, what should be stressed here is that teachers should be able to make sense of the actual classroom reality; and this can have dual purposes. Firstly, it helps the students to think that their ideas and opinions are accepted and valued in the process of learning. Through this, their expectations, needs and interests may be satisfied. Secondly, classroom interaction can create a genuine atmosphere when it is finished with students own ideas, opinions and experiences. Students get the opportunity to test out their own varied knowledge of the language; they can develop practical skills such as interpersonal, conversational, and norms of participation, which

intern can enhance student self-concept and confidence to use the language in various contexts (Prodromou, 1992; Day, 1986; Hedge, 2000: cited in Fisseha Motuma, 2006).

#### **4.4.2.4. Procedural Dominance**

Depending on the observation made and the experience that the research had some students need always to take over the group discussion. They may give a chance for their group mates to participate in the group discussion. However, they usually need to give direction, want to set procedures and rules. These kinds of learners are more active. Activist learners enjoy being the center of attention, whether chairing discussion or giving a presentation. They also benefit from the opportunity to develop ideas through discussion with others and they tend to solve problems intuitively, relying on others for information. Therefore, they are likely to learn most effectively through group work, discussion and seminars, programs of short activities etc (Tylor and Bonsall, 1997; Champan, 2004).

It seems for this reason that individuals were observed while controlling the discussion in the classroom. Especially the last two days observations show this. As stated in tables 4.5 and 4.6, a<sup>1</sup> and b<sup>4</sup> were observed while they were guiding others, directing and leading in to the answers. Student a<sup>1</sup>, especially, was trying to convince others to agree on the answers he gave, he was interrupting others speech frequently to correct their mistakes and/or bring them in to him. At the beginning, it was he who started the discussion, answered the questions asked and led the group. And it was student a<sup>1</sup> who set rules on which question should be addressed first and which one followed. Moreover, he was observed dictating his group mates.

The researcher believes that collaborative learning is not a person leading or an individual led learning. Instead, collaborative learning stresses sharing risks and responsibilities towards a jointly defined goal (Bruner, 1991) and it fosters equality, mutuality and creates understanding.

#### **4.4.2.5. Assertiveness**

Based on the observation, as explained and illustrated in the previous tables, one of the core problems in students' collaborative learning is the dominance of assertive learners.

As mentioned early in the review literature, assertive learners are influential in group decisions, conform to norms and are popular. The results illustrated in all the above tables showed (from table 4.1-4.8) that in both groups there are some assertive students who tended to dominate and

control every thing. During the classroom observation student a<sup>1</sup> was observed while he was demotivating others by saying “don’t say this and that” when students attempted to give answer with broken English.

The students’ feeling were congruent with this idea (see appendices B). Moreover, as student a<sup>1</sup> stated, classroom is the real place to develop students’ language skills and it gives an opportunity to practice and hence, he used much of time.

Generally speaking, assertive students, more or less, are extroverts, an out going, socially free, interested in variety and in working with people. They like talking, participating, organizing and socializing. They are people of action (Handerson, 2004); they usually prefer to communicate more by talking since talking helps their thoughts to be come clear and understand the subject by explaining it to themselves or others. Moreover, their attention will naturally flow towards external things and events, so that they learn by teach others (Clark, 2000; Harvey, 2004).

All what have been discussed are observed during the class room observation and what is shown in the tables is all the result of these. If we add up all the times used by only students a<sup>1</sup> and b<sup>4</sup> in their respected groups, a<sup>1</sup> used more than half of the total time in the three periods i.e. 26 minutes of the 50 minutes and also b<sup>4</sup> used much of the time given for the three periods i.e. 26 minutes and 20 seconds of the 50 minute. This tells us how much these two students are influential, assertive, extrovert and even authoritarian type of learners. As teacher 1 explained during her interview, students by no means share the given time equally because there is always some one who dominates the others. These students not only were observed while they were freely expressing their ideas and thoughts but also when they imposed their own ideas on others. Also they were busy in convincing their group mates on the answers they gave. Moreover, they were dictating their answers to their group members.

It seems for this reason that there was no individual accountability in the group discussion; there was no turn taking to share ideals, there was no equal participation among group participants. The domination of those assertive students was consistent.

In order to avoid these problems, i.e. students’ dominance, the interruption of teachers is very crucial. Teachers should see each of their students at the center of the learning process. They ought to be able to exploit the opportunities emerged as the result of the students’ unpredictable contributions. The teachers should value these ideas because only few assertive and authoritarian

learners are not the only source of knowledge next to the classroom teacher. The belief behind this idea is that students come to school with potentially rich resources of language teaching and learning (Hedge, 2000; Harmer, 1991). Furthermore, once students are exposed to contextualized language item, they can easily discover the language forms and use it subconsciously. Hence, teachers are expected to activate the intuitive heuristic of the learners and should create a suitable classroom atmosphere for learning to happen as stated in the review of related literature. And finally, if teachers assign roles for group members, more or less the problem will be minimized though it is impossible to avoid absolutely. As discussed above, some students dominance is confirmed.

In the previous discussion we said personality related dominance can be interpreted differently and it is impossible to describe within definable limits. However, we can state some common personality that accounted for human characteristics like shyness, fearfulness, lack of motivation, assertiveness, being orator, extroverted ness, introverted ness etc. All of these or some of the characteristics are expected to happen when learners attempt to learn in collaboration. So, the different types of group behavior that were stated like oral dominance and assertiveness can be included and discussed within personality related dominance. Hence, personality related dominance can be one of the aforementioned behaviors and those who have these behaviors tend to dominate those who don't have or who don't develop these behaviors while trying to learn in groups. Thus, taking all the discussions in to consideration about types of dominant behaviors, the types of group work dominant behaviors can be classified in to the following three specific dominant behaviors: academic competitiveness related dominance, personality related dominance and procedural dominance.

## UNIT FIVE

### 5. Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations

#### 5.1 Introduction

It is very challenging to investigate the characteristics of students' collaboration i.e. patterns and extent of all the observable dominate behaviors i.e. extent and patterns of dominance in small group discussion. However, a very influential and major problem that brings domination of individuals in collaborative learning were identified and attempted to deal in the study with a special reference of grade 11<sup>26</sup> students, at Dagmawi Menelik in Addis Ababa city Administration.

On the basis of the analysis and description of the data the researcher identified the following points as a summary and conclusions; and also recommendations were made accordingly.

#### 5.2 Summary of the study

In this research an effort has been made to find out the extents and patterns of students collaboration and the extents and patterns of students dominance in small group tasks. In gathering data for the study direct classroom observation, teachers' interview and student's diary were used. After the necessary data gathered, analyzed and interpreted, the following major results were found out.

##### 5.2.1 To what extents do students collaborate in small group tasks?

The results of data from direct classroom observation, teachers' interview and student's diary reveal that students were learning collaboratively in all the English lesson periods. This brings as to conclude the extents of learners' collaboration in the classroom were very high.

##### 5.2.2 What does the patterns of students collaboration look like in small group tasks?

As mentioned in 5.1.1 students were learning collaboratively. Hence, it was student- student patterns of collaboration.

### **5.2.3 To what extent do some groups of students dominate the other?**

As students were observed while they were engaged in small groups, and the teachers' interview and the student's diary indicated that the dominance of some group of students was very high and frequent.

### **5.2.4 What does the patterns of dominance in collaborative work look like?**

The classroom observation, the teachers' interview and students diary convey that those who have good academic performance, who developed good personality i.e. courageous, extroverts, have good language command and language input and were dominating the group discussion to a great extent.

## **5.3 Conclusions**

On the basis of the above findings, the research has arrived at the following conclusion.

- Teachers believe collaborative learning enhances students critical thinking, it aids better learning and improves learners speaking proficiency. To this effect they are applying collaborative learning in the classroom though they are reluctant in playing their expected roles.
- Learners, most of them if not all, want to learn collaboratively in that they believe collaborative learning creates a product that is different from what any individual could produce alone, increase the amount of talking time, builds self esteem in students; confirm equal participation among group members and collaboration almost always works better than individual learning. Consequently students' collaboration in the classroom was very high and was frequent.
- The patterns of collaborative learning in the class room were student-student patterns more often and teacher-student patterns to some extent.
- When students learn and work in groups there are always some individuals that dominate the group discussion. Hence, there was no equal participation among participants; there was no turn taking in the group discussion (instead, most of the time two of the students (students a1 and b4) were talking through out the periods), there was no individuals accountability.

- It is obvious that if students are not equal in everything, for example academic performance i.e. level of intelligent, language proficiency and level of understanding there learning atmosphere will be affected by the dominance of some individual's. Hence, the following are the summarized and major observable dominance behaviors:
- **Personality related dominance:** learners who develop courage, motivation, level of risk-taking, who always want to explain their idea openly in public will take over the group discussion and tend to dominate who developed less personality.
- **Procedural dominance:** when individuals in the group trying to learn, influential learners control the group. They tend to guide, i.e. where to begin, how to work and how to finish or conclude on the basis of their own feeling as their instinct lead them.
- **Academic Based dominance:** where there is remarkable academic gap between participates in the group, those high scorers always tend to dominate the low scorers. As a result, good academic achievers affect individual learning's in small group situation.

#### 5.4 Recommendations

Taking the conclusion into consideration, the following recommendations are made:

1. Teachers in the classroom should try to facilitate group discussion. Making learners form group and let them discuss on the given topic may not guarantee for students learning. Hence, it would be better if teachers facilitate, guide, supervise, and move around to help learners whenever they need support. This may ensure learning to happen in the collaborative classroom.
2. Learners' belief in collaborative learning is one important thing and coming with well preparation, motivation, self readiness to take part in the discussion and shoulder the group responsibility is another thing. So, teachers, in order to ensure equal participation, to make learning to happen, to get motivated and inspired learners, they assess learners attempt, correct their work, keep their motivation by rewarding, appreciating and by giving encouraging feedback for learners performance. At that time obtaining the intended goals may not be as such difficult.

3. It would be better if teachers try to assign students in a mixed ability groups as these helps to increase their participation in group work. And teachers should give due attention to different grouping techniques to get all students involved in the group discussion and avoid the prevalence of individual dominance. If teachers do all these, learners can manage and threw away all the observable dominance behaviors in the group discussion.
4. The concerned bodies, the school principals and Ministry of Education should support teachers in any case while teachers striving in ensuring the quality of education and the development of learners' cognitive skills. And it would be better if teachers prepare remedial classes for academically low achievers in language to bring them up and make them cope up with those academically intelligent learners.
5. Developing students' personality, improving learners' motivation towards learning English, enhancing students speaking proficiency and avoiding learners fear and shyness is another assignment waiting for the teachers. The researcher concludes his research that the teacher was too passive for much of the activities that help maximize learners' perception and participation in collaborative learning. However, the teacher intentionally did this or due to lack of knowledge and experience calls for additional research.

In conclusion, this study is not the final and absolutely completes research. Instead, it shows the way for further investigation on the collaboration and dominance of students' engagement in small group tasks.

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## Appendix A

### Appendix A-1 Observation Checklist (Day one)

No	Activities	Yes	No	No reaction at all	Remark
1	Learners have good/positive observable reaction while asked to work in collaboration.	✓			
2	All group members participate and share ideas equally.		X		
3	Some individuals take over the group.	✓			
4	Learners share ideas voluntarily.	✓			Only two of them
5	Learners share ideas when they are forced by their peers	✓			
6	Some participants participate only to disagree.		X		
7	Some participants participate to add some constructive and positive ideas.	✓			
8	Group members take turns to explain their opinion.	✓			
9	The pattern of some individual's dominance is consistent.	✓			
10	There is individual's accountability during group discussion.		X		
11	There are authoritarian students in the groups.	✓			
12	There is a frequent dominance of similar individuals.	✓			
13	The teacher organizes the group heterogeneously.	✓			
14	Most of the time some participants are passive listeners.	✓			

### Appendix A-2 Observation Checklist (Day two)

No	Activities	Yes	No	No reaction at all	Remark
1	Learners have good/positive observable reaction while asked to work in collaboration.	✓			
2	All group members participate and share ideas equally.		X		
3	Some individuals take over the group	✓			
4	Learners share ideas voluntarily	✓			Only active students (on voluntarily)
5	Learners share ideas when they are forced by their peers	✓			
6	Some participants participate only to disagree.		X		
7	Some participants participate to add some constructive and positive ideas.	✓			
8	Group members take turns to explain their opinion.		X		
9	The pattern of some individual's dominance is consistent.	✓			
10	There is individual's accountability during group discussion.		X		
11	There are authoritarian students in the groups.	✓			
12	There is a frequent dominance of similar individuals.	✓			
13	The teacher organizes the group heterogeneously.	✓			
14	Most of the time some participants are passive listeners.	✓			

### Appendix A-3 Observation Checklist (Day three)

No	Activities	Yes	No	No reaction at all	Remark
1	Learners have good/positive observable reaction while asked to work in collaboration.	✓			
2	All group members participate and share ideas equally.		X		
3	Some individuals take over the group.	✓			
4	Learners share ideas voluntarily.				Only those who are ready
5	Learners share ideas when they are forced by their peers		X		
6	Some participants participate only to disagree.		X		
7	Some participants participate to add some constructive and positive ideas.	✓			
8	Group members take turns to explain their opinion.		X		
9	The pattern of some individual's dominance is consistent.	✓			
10	There is individual's accountability during group discussion.		X		
11	There are authoritarian students in the groups.	✓			
12	There is a frequent dominance of similar individuals.	✓			
13	The teacher organizes the group heterogeneously.	✓			
14	Most of the time some participants are passive listeners.	✓			

### Appendix A-4 Observation Checklist (Day four)

No	Activities	Yes	No	No reaction at all	Remark
1	Learners have good/positive observable reaction while asked to work in collaboration.	✓			
2	All group members participate and share ideas equally.		X		
3	Some individuals take over the group.	✓			
4	Learners share ideas voluntarily.	✓			Only to of them
5	Learners share ideas when they are forced by their peers		X		
6	Some participants participate only to disagree.		X		
7	Some participants participate to add some constructive and positive ideas.	✓			
8	Group members take turns to explain their opinion.		X		
9	The pattern of some individual's dominance is consistent.	✓			
10	There is individual's accountability during group discussion.		X		
11	There are authoritarian students in the groups.		X		
12	There is a frequent dominance of similar individuals.	✓			
13	The teacher organizes the group heterogeneously.	✓			
14	Most of the time some participants are passive listeners.	✓			

### Appendix A-5 Observation Checklist (Day five)

No	Activities	Yes	No	No reaction at all	Remark
1	Learners have good/positive observable reaction while asked to work in collaboration.	✓			
2	All group members participate and share ideas equally.		X		
3	Some individuals take over the group.	✓			
4	Learners share ideas voluntarily.	✓			
5	Learners share ideas when they are forced by their peers	✓			
6	Some participants participate only to disagree.		X		
7	Some participants participate to add some constructive and positive ideas.	✓			
8	Group members take turns to explain their opinion.		X		
9	The pattern of some individual's dominance is consistent.	✓			
10	There is individual's accountability during group discussion.		X		
11	There are authoritarian students in the groups.	✓			
12	There is a frequent dominance of similar individuals.	✓			
13	The teacher organizes the group heterogeneously.	✓			
14	Most of the time some participants are passive listeners.	✓			

### Appendix A-6 Observation Checklist (Day six)

No	Activities	Yes	No	No reaction at all	Remark
1	Learners have good/positive observable reaction while asked to work in collaboration.	✓			
2	All group members participate and share ideas equally.		X		
3	Some individuals take over the group.	✓			
4	learners share ideas voluntarily.	✓			
5	Learners share ideas when they are forced by their peers		X		
6	Some participants participate only to disagree.		X		
7	Some participants participate to add some constructive and positive ideas.	✓			
8	Group members take turns to explain their opinion.		X		
9	The pattern of some individual's dominance is consistent.	✓			
10	There is individual's accountability during group discussion.		X		
11	There are authoritarian students in the groups.		X		
12	There is a frequent dominance of similar individuals.	✓			
13	The teacher organizes the group heterogeneously.	✓			
14	Most of the time some participants are passive listeners.	✓			









APPENDIX B5  
Student's diary

(b')

\* አልገሮም " ማንን ያቆም ለሌሎች ጠቅላይነት ያሉ ተጠባብሮቹ ስህተት ለማስወገድ።  
በግልጽ " ልክሉን ለገሮ" ለገ ማቆላጠፍ " ለገ ማቆላጠፍ ። ልክሉን ለገ ማቆላጠፍ  
ናቡ ለገ ማቆላጠፍ ጊዜ ለገ ማቆላጠፍ



APPENDIX-B7  
Student's diary

(6<sup>th</sup>)

መናገር ህንጻን ህጻን ብዙም አይደሉም።  
ምድባቸውም ደግሞ ለምሳሌ ሃላፊ። መናገር ይህን ልናገር ለል  
ለህንጻውም ምን ህንጻውን ለመገንባት ስትሰጡን ደግሞ  
ከህንጻው ያንኑ ብዬ ለመገንባት አልናገርም።  
አብዛኛውን ጊዜ በአምርቶ ለምሳሌ ደግሞ የህንጻውን  
ቃት ህንጻን ለመቀር ይጠቀሳል።  
አንዳንድ ጊዜ የተሰኘ ለመገንባት ለምን ጊዜ  
መናገር ለመገንባት ህንጻን ህንጻው ይጠቀሳል።



5)

APPENDIX B9  
Student's diary

65

እኔ ብናገር ምስ ካልናገርኩም ከብኻ ስብ ለውኑ  
 እገመገም እውነቱን ዳግጥ ንገራኝ ሃገርን ሃምሌና  
 ከጠጣ ገሰገሰ ይኸውልድ:: ጠቆሞ ለእንግሊዝ ተናገራ  
 ብገለጻ ለዓገ ጸመዋሁ? ሃገርን ስገራ  
 እገለጻለሁ ብሉገኛ:: ስከረኝ ንኣ ጠናገር ይገባኛል  
 ስገራን ንኣን ቁጥጥ ሃገርን ስብ ስገራ ገብራለሁ!!



## Appendix- C: Teachers Interview Guide

### Interviews Item for the teacher.

1. Can you explain how your students react whenever you ask them to work in groups?
2. Have you confronted any problem whenever you want your students work collaboratively? If yes, what? If not, why not?
3. In your opinion, do all the students participate and share ideas equally? If yes, how? If not, why not?
4. In your experience, are there any patterns of individual dominance among students during small group discussion? If yes, what kinds of students are dominating? If not, why not?
5. Do you have any additional points that you would like to say?

## Appendix D: Transcription of interviewed teachers' scripts

### D.1 Interview with Teacher one (T1)

I. (The researcher), First of all I would like to say thank you for your cooperation and for volunteering to give me an interview. I want to ask you few questions related to students' collaboration and dominance in small group tasks. To begin my questions I Can you explain how your students react whenever you ask them to work in groups?

T<sub>1</sub> Most of the time I can say most of the students react positively. But there are some students who give reaction negatively: when I say they react positively most of them are interested to do activities in group. But there are some students who are not voluntary to do activities in group or who are not interested in group work actually. There are some students who do not show any interest to work in group.

I. Some believes, students who positively react towards group work, it seems that they need to be free i.e. they do not work given activities or homework at all. So, to get sometimes and to discuss their own issues they need group work. To what extend do you agree?

T<sub>1</sub>. Ya, I agree with what you have said before. When I observed them, I get students discuss issues which are different from the issues which are given. Therefore I agree with this idea.

I. Have you confronted any problem whenever you what your students work collaboratively? If yes, what? If not, why not?

T<sub>1</sub>. Yes, I confronted some problems. Actually I tired to say something when you ask me the first question. When students are going to be given group works to do, most of the time and most of the students are talking this own issues or doing their own activities rather than doing activities which are given. Therefore, I say that yes, I confronted many problems. Among these, most of them do not have or do not show interest to participate or to make any reaction on what is given. Rather they are going to talk about any different issues which are not related with the issues given.

I. In your opinion, do all the students participate and share ideas equally? If yes, how? If not, why not?

T<sub>1</sub>. No. No

I. Why don't you think so?

T<sub>1</sub> Because, I think, as it is a language most of the students do not have the competence to the language. Instead of participating or instead of being active participant in the group work, they actually try to sit idea. Therefore, in my opinion, I can say that all students do not participate and share ideas equally. And I saw some dominance among students i.e. some students to say that all students participate and share ideas equally. And I saw some dominance among students i.e. some students dominate others. Therefore, it is impossible to say that all students participate and share ideas equally.

I. What do you do when some students dominate others?

T<sub>1</sub> Actually when I go around the classroom to watch what they are doing, when I can such kind of students. Usually, I'm going to ask those students who did not participate in such activities to make them participatory. I encourage them at least to participate in that group work.

I. Some say giving activities in the classroom to be done in group, teachers need or because they need to be free. Do you agree?

T<sub>1</sub> Actually most of the teachers may say like that. But to me or in my opinion, it is not to be free because I'm not free at that time. I should go around to see whether students doing that activity. Otherwise, if I give activities and simply sit down it is not going to be called the teacher should look the students while they are doing. Otherwise, if we simply sit down, it is possible to say that there is no learning of all.

I. In your experience, are there any patterns of individual dominance among students during small group discussion? If yes, what kind of students is dominant? If not, why not?

T<sub>1</sub> Yes, there s dominance. Actually I said it before. There are especially those students who are actually active participant in the teaching and learning process usually, they dominant the group. They are the one who speak through out the group discussion. Therefore, there is dominance. Those who are active participatory, those who are clever are usually dominant over others.

I There is a saying that those assertive and extrovert students are also dominate whether they are academically good achiever or not. What is your reaction?

T<sub>1</sub> Yes, I agree with this idea. They dominate and some times, let me say something, for example if the group going to be formed, if there is/are no clever student/s in that group, those who are going to dominate the group are those talkative or assertive and extrovert students. When

I say this, these students may not be clever but they are simply talkative. Therefore, such kinds of students also dominate others in the group discussion.

I. Have you seen any student in the group discussion who disagrees on others' idea, or simply participating to create conflict in the group?

T<sub>1</sub>. Yes, I have seen some students. Disagreement may be something good. Because an idea is going to be raised there and if somebody is going to say something about the idea there will be sharing of views. But instead of talking on the issues, if they simply create conflict on the basis of issues outside the class-room it is not going to be good. And I observed such type of things.

I. Why do you think some students keep silent while they are given activities to be done in the group?

T<sub>1</sub>. It may be lack of understanding the instruction or they may not understand what they are asked to do. I sometimes feel confused and I ask them the reason for their sitting idea. Then, I ask them whether they understand what to do. They may say yes we do not understand. This time I will translate some of the may keep silent after explanation.

I. Do you have any idea that you want to say about collaborative learning?

T<sub>1</sub>. Actually group work is a very good technique and it should be practiced by students. As students are allowed to do activities in group they are going to be beneficial because they are going to share ideas with their group or partner. Therefore, sharing ideas within a group is something good instead of sharing with the teachers. They are free to say anything they like. Hence, it is good for me.

## D.2 Interview with Teacher Two (T<sub>2</sub>)

I (the researcher), First of all I would like to say thank you for your cooperation and for volunteering to give me an interview. I want to ask you few questions related to students' collaboration and dominance in small group tasks. To begin my questions I Can you explain how your students react whenever you ask them to work in groups?

T<sub>2</sub>. I can't say they are happy when me give them a kind of group work.

I why?

T<sub>2</sub>. Because there are a lot of problems like lack of language and losing interest in their education. Because of this they are interested as such.

I. Have you confronted any problem whenever you want your students work collaboratively? If yes, what? If not, why not?

T<sub>2</sub>. Yes

I. What kind of problems did you confront?

T<sub>2</sub>. Like lack of language input and the classroom environment is not comfortable to work in groups. The other one is students did not properly attempt those given activities. They prefer talking about their personal issues than working on the given activities.

I. What about high academic performers and low ones, do they perform or work on activities equally?

T<sub>2</sub>. No, Never they did not most of the time low academic achievers (or loss competitive in their academic) do not work those activities properly because of so many problems. Where as, high competitors in their academic are interested to do what ever you give them. They attempt it properly with interest. The low academic competitors even do not give attention as such for the activities because they may feet a fear, a kind of shyness, and the likes. Hence, they are not comfortable in doing activities in group.

I. So, can we say all students do not share ideas equally?

T<sub>2</sub>. Yes, of course, we can.

I. As you have said students may not feet comfort because they may fear and more or less they lack the language competence. So, does this make them not to share their idea?

T<sub>2</sub>. The first thing, if they do not have the language input, they will not have interest and they will not be volunteer to share their ideas for the group because they do not have the language and the language input. If the input is aero the out put become also zero.

I. In your experience, are there any patterns of individual dominance among students during small group discussion? If yes, what kind of students are dominate? If not, why not?

T<sub>2</sub>. Yes, there are. There are dominant students who dominate others. Most of the time male students and high achievers in their academic

I. What is your strategy to make, those students, who are dominated by others, cope-up with others?

T<sub>2</sub>. I try to encourage, activate them and I do with them in order to make them create their own idea that help them share there opinion with others and to become equal participatory and competitive plus, to make them have their own contribution. In doing this, I ask them questions related with the issue raised in order to initiate and motivate them.

I. Do you have any additional thing about collaborative learning?

T<sub>2</sub>...Of course, group work as technique is a good way to develop students self initiative for learning. When they work activities in group they share ideas or they may try to participate in sharing ideas. When we come to our students context, some are dominated by others and those who are dominated by others do not have to interest to wards group learning. As a result, they become dependent on others to get only a kind of mark on behalf of the higher achievers.

### **D3. Interview with Teacher Three (T<sub>3</sub>)**

I. First of all I would like to say thank you for your cooperation and for volunteering to give me an interview. I want to ask you few questions related to students' collaboration and dominance in small group tasks. To begin my questions can you explain how your students react whenever you ask them to work in groups?

T<sub>3</sub>. In some groups I see only one or two students react positively for a given tasks and only these students dominantly engaged on activities which I already produce and the activities which are already presented in their text book.

I. Have you confronted any problem whenever you want your students work collaboratively? If yes, what? If not, why not?

T<sub>3</sub>. Exactly! According to me, I have comforted a lot of problems. For instance, students sitting desperately organized which is based on students' friendship rather than based on students' academic performance. As we know the pedagogy, students sitting arrangement has to be

heterogeneous; high, medium and low achieves composition. But when we say the general arrangement of all the students in every class is based on students' friendship. The second thing is, the total class size is too much which makes the group task is difficult/ thirdly students have different background knowledge on different subjects. And they should sit with students that have different performance in different subjects. In my opinion, there as to me if sitting should be based on subject matter difference. Someone may have good performance in English; the others need to have good performance in mathematics, chemistry and the likes in the groups because every body has different performance in different subject.

I. In your opinion, do all the students participate and share ideas equally? If yes, how? If not, why not?

T<sub>3</sub>. No-No No. I have never seen when students participating equally and equal way of sharing ideas. This is completely unthinkable because of the group composition which I have discussed before. I'm uncertain about individuals' member capacity. Therefore only few students participate in the group and dominating the others.

I. What do you do when some students dominate others?

T<sub>3</sub>. Some times I intercept the problems with rearranging students and encouraging the students (passive once) participate and to talk on in the group whether they are talking or speaking in to the point or wrongly answer the question I encourage them.

I. Do you think there might be some problems that hinder those students in participating?

T<sub>3</sub>. Ya, the dominance of some students can be explained in terms of forwarding answers to the questions whether they are right or wrong and speaking continuously within a group. The problem is from a very beginning when the homeroom teacher arranges the sitting of students, at the beginning of the semester, it should be arranged in a manner students can change their sits in all subject matter. Otherwise it will be a problem. The other one is teachers, including me, are not encouraging students because of the class size I discussed before.

I. In your experience, as you told me, you have been teaching here for many years. Are there any patterns of individual dominance among group members?

T<sub>3</sub>. Ya, I have already mentioned this and it can be explained like for warding answers continuously only few students are active in attending the lesson and giving responses for group or individually tasks as well. They speak continuously in a certain task and tend to

dominate the rest of the group members and other students feel shy; keep silent and unable to talk which and impaired their academic performance

I. So, can say that academically good students dominate others.

T<sub>3</sub>. Actually I'm not sure. Because they are students who have the habit of speaking and others may keep silent and perform well. Hence it is difficult to generalize the students who are dominating the group reform good and those who are not dominating performer low. There are extroverts, assertive students that dominate the group discussion.

I. Do you have anything to say about group work?

T<sub>3</sub>. Well, as we have said the teaching learning process the main goal of teaching is, students learning. The mission of the teacher is importing knowledge skills, and attitudes to the students and one of the method of doing this is through group work which is the present day of Agenda which is already in the policy. It is one of the means for assuring student-centered learning. Hence, recognizing its' important or the importance of group work is important to do the following things according to me. Reinforcing every action of students' response in the group with certain marks or hand clapping that reinforce or motivating students.

- identifying knowledge of a group who performs what within a group. For instance, there are high achievers, medium and low achievers. As a classroom teacher we have to see continuously who performs what and the next time when you came to the other activity you have to reshuffle their sitting arrangement
- Constant of flexible sitting arrangement some time, you seen some students may perform well in all subjects and some perform poor in one and good at another. So, depending on the local circumstances we have to arrange students' arrangement flexibly. When we come to class we have to rearrange the students sitting first.

#### **D.4 Interview with Teacher Three (T<sub>4</sub>)**

I. First of all I would like to say thank you for your cooperation and for volunteering to give me an interview. I want to ask you few questions related to students' collaboration and dominance in small group tasks. To begin my questions can you explain how your students react whenever you ask them to work in groups?

T<sub>4</sub>. Ok! Normally my students have good reaction when I ask them to work in groups. But there are some problems related to this reaction. When you ask them to work in group some of them could attempt the activity interestingly where as others do not do that. Even some of

them may switch the given topic and may come to their personal issues and my talk about their personal affairs.

I. Have you confronted any problem whenever you want your students work collaboratively? If yes, what? If not, why not?

T<sub>4</sub>. Definitely when you ask or leading students doing group work, it is common to face problems since you are leading group work. These groups of students have different characteristics and different interest. Os, to can say that yes, I do. Most of the students have the idea on the issue which is raised but are not interested to talk or speak out because of their poor language ability. As a result, they are not interested to commit mistake, they are not interested to talk in front of their friends and because of other similarly reason, there is a problem.

I. In your opinion, do all the students participate and share ideas equally? If yes, how? If not, why not?

T<sub>4</sub>. No

I. Why do you think so?

T<sub>4</sub>. In most cases, when I give my students to discuss a given topic some students may dominate others involvement. Because I mentioned earlier, students have different characteristics some like to speak others may want to keep silent. Some students may r could dominate the activity. However, I mostly try to give different responsibilities to the members like time keeper, reporter, group leader etc. during this time, this (silent) students may been forced to talk group responsibility in the group discussion and that they will be motivated to speak in the group.

I. Some teachers, however, claimed that though we encourage, though we motivate there to participate or to take part in the discussion, there are students we keep silent and say nothing. Have you every seen such kind of students in you class?

T<sub>4</sub>. Of course, I think that is the problems of perception students have different perception on group work. If the teacher understand as his students have different perception, he could design different initiative activities to make his/her students actively participate in that activity and the teacher should normally design activities that could motivate the students and ask randomly one of the group member to present what they have been discussing. At that time, the students may take care and keep working on the activities.

I. Beside the motivation, why do you think that some students keep silent?

T<sub>4</sub>. As I have told you before students have different personality. Hence, they may keep silent because of different reasons.

1. They may lack confidence to speak the language. 2. They may also assume that they will receive comments or criticisms from their friends or the teacher as well and 3. Some are unwilling to speak in front of their friends. So, these are some of the reasons.

I. In your experience, as you told me, you have been teaching here for many years. Are there any patterns of individual dominance among group members?

T<sub>4</sub>. Definitely! As I have told you students have different motivation and participation in a group. So, some are talkative some like to speak say their impression now and again and others are auditory, they want to listen what others say. So, there is dominance.

I. So, can we say those dominating students are good performer their academic.

T<sub>4</sub>. It is difficult to say. Actually, there are good or active students who would like to speak. However, it is difficult to say those dominating students are good or active students who would like to speak. However, it is difficult to say those dominating students are good or high achievers in their academic.

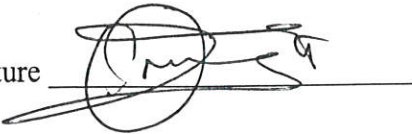
I. Do you have anything to say about group work?

T<sub>4</sub>. We teachers have different perception we teachers have different understanding and we teachers have different experience and practice of group work in our situation actually, it should vary based on the situation. Actually, it should vary based on the situation. However we should be clear about the principles collaborative work. In some cases I observe, even from my experience, we are reluctant to facilitate the principles of collaborative learning we should accurately understand what the principles of group work are. Then after, if we want to implement we know that we will reduce problems which are related to individual dominance and the pertinent problems of collaborative learning.

## Declaration

I the undersigned, declare that this thesis is my original work, has not been presented for a degree in any other university and that all sources of material used for this thesis have been duly acknowledged.

Name                      Mezemer Tekleab

Signature 

Date 13/05/2011

This thesis has been submitted for examination with my approval as a university advisor.

Name                      Kedir Assefa (Ass.Pro)

Signature 

Date 13/05/2011