

**ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY  
INSTITUTE OF LANGUAGE STUDIES  
DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES AND  
LITERATURE  
(GRADUATE PROGRAM)**

**THE EFFECT OF INTERACTION STRATEGY TRAINING  
ON STUDENTS' PARTICIPATION IN SMALL GROUP  
DISCUSSIONS: THE CASE OF AWASSA COLLEGE OF  
TEACHER EDUCATION**

**BY  
ABIY ZEWDU**

**JUNE 2008  
ADDIS ABABA**

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TRAINING ON STUDENTS' PARTICIPATION IN  
SMALL GROUP DISCUSSIONS: THE CASE OF  
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**BY  
ABIY ZEWDU**

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## **DEFINITION OF OPERATIONAL TERMS**

**Strategy Training** \_ a direct intervention program aimed at focusing students' attention on specific strategies and providing practice on such strategies

**Group Interaction** – verbal participation made by students in group discussion activities

**Interaction Strategies** - ways used to maintain communication flow and repair gaps in group discussion.

**Interactive Participation**- interacting in group discussion activities using interaction strategies.

**Non-interactive Participation** - interacting in group discussion activities with out using interaction strategies.

**Overall Participation** – all sort of verbal participations; interactive or non- interactive in group discussion activities.

## **ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THE STUDY**

<b>ESL</b>	English as a Second Language
<b>EFL</b>	English as a Foreign Language
<b>L1</b>	First language (mother tongue)
<b>L2</b>	Second Language
<b>ELT</b>	English Language Teaching
<b>LS</b>	Learning Strategies
<b>Cs</b>	Communication Strategies
<b>Ecs</b>	Experimental class student
<b>Ccs</b>	Control class student

## **ABSTRACT**

*This research project was designed and conducted to provide students with strategy training in order to ensure more effective communicative interaction during group work carried out in the language classroom. The assumption is that appropriate classroom organization and detailed task definition, although imperative, are not always sufficient for achieving successful interaction. One way to improve the quality of communicative interaction in the class room is increase students' use of interaction strategies. The concern of this study is to show how training in such strategies improves interaction in small group discussions. Forty two 3<sup>rd</sup> year diploma language stream students in to two classes at Awassa College of Teacher Education participated in this study. The classes were randomly assigned as an experimental group and a control group. Both groups were involved in similar cooperative group work activities, but the experimental group underwent special training in the use of interaction strategies. Each group was video recorded before the six week experiment and at the end of this period. The finding indicates that as a result of the training in the use of interaction strategies, the experimental group used more interaction strategies than the control group. The increased use of interaction strategies improved the students' communicative interaction and decreased their non-interactive participations in the small group discussions.*

# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. Background of the Study

Language is fundamentally a social phenomenon. This makes the teaching of it an interactive and communicative process. Studies in second and foreign language learning pedagogy (for example, Tsui 1995, Pica 1983, Gass and Varonis 1985) advocate the value of group interaction in second or foreign language classes as significant so long as language learning calls for the learners' involvement in meaningful communication. Studying the differences between teacher-fronted interaction and small group-interaction in foreign language classes, Long and Porter (1985) report that small group interaction allows more and greater variety of talk for each of the students than the teacher-fronted interaction. The quantity of talk, on the part of the learners, increase as learners spend more time negotiating and checking on meanings in small groups and appear not to correct each other more or less than the teacher does in the teacher fronted situations. In addition, mistakes are no more frequent in small group than in teacher fronted interaction. In related idea Brown (1994) notes that small group interaction gives students opportunities for the practice of negotiation of meaning, conversation exchange and face to face give and take that would not be possible in other types of activities. Further, Brumfit (1994:77) summarizes the importance of small group interaction as follows:

*Small group provides grater intensity of involvement, so that the quality of language practice is increased, and the opportunities for feedback and monitoring also, given adequate guidance and preparation by the teacher. The setting is more natural than that of the full class, for the size of the group resembles that of normal conversational groupings. Because of this, the stress which*

*accompanies 'public' performance in the classroom should be reduced. Experience also suggests that placing students in small group assists individualization, for each group, being limited by its own capacities, determines its own appropriate level of working in lock-step with its large number.*

In numerous occasions as Martine (2004) and Han (2007) note, such a reality fails to work. The justification for this failure is connected with such factors as previous experiences of learners in classroom activities involving group discussion, language proficiency level, cultural background, and subject knowledge. However, the argument sounds in-exhaustive in any case for it neglects the value of other factors which possibly hinder students' active participation in small group discussions.

Studies on students' small group interaction made a much considerate attempt to explore the role of skills and strategies in enhancing the quantity and quality of learners' interaction in language classrooms. The list of studies include: Bejarano et al (1997), Cohen (1988), Lam and Wong (2000), Johnson and Johnson (1987) and others. The studies argue that effective group interaction is difficult in the absence of sets of interaction and negotiation skills necessary for active participation in small group discussions. They advocate that such skills are necessary prerequisites for carrying out learning tasks in the small group setting.

Bayget (1987) takes interaction skills as skills of using basic motor-perception skills to achieve communication. They involve making decisions about communication such as: what to say, how to say it and whether to develop it in accordance with ones intention while maintaining the desired relations with others. A reasonable treatment of interaction skills in classrooms also involve a broader range of classroom communication problems which mostly occur in spoken exchanges among learners. Regarding Bayget's (1987) explanation, negotiation skills are skills that enable speakers to make themselves clearly understood whatever the

interaction and to deal with communication problems that may occur during discussion. Without the use of these interaction and negotiation skills, according to the justifications made by the above mentioned studies, even the most appropriate classroom organization and task do not assure language interaction in small groups and that for this purpose the students have to be trained in using interaction strategies skillfully.

The concept of strategy, over the last three decades, has gained a much broader treatment by different scholars. It has extended its meaning and application to the context of language classrooms as a strategy training approach. Strategy training has been described as a method of developing the skills learners need for taking actions on their own. Authorities, (Brown1994, Cohen 1998, Williams and Burden1997) claim it as an approach that aims to raise learners' awareness of learning and communication strategies and provide them with systematic practice, reinforcement and self monitoring of their strategy use while attending to language learning activities.

The approach entails a cluster of such sub-strategies as learning strategies and communication strategies. These sub-strategies function within a framework of underlying assumptions in which learners come to a point where they can independently explore 'how,' 'when' and 'why' they employ the strategies as means to experience, monitor, evaluate and advance their own learning. Learners can take a more active role processing their learning and as partakers they become more efficient and positive in their approach to learning (Hedge1993).

A comprehensive analysis and experimentation of realizing strategy training approach in a language classroom includes among others a critical and detailed embodiment of communicative strategies and learning strategies. Such an analysis is beyond the scope of the present work. The

main concern of this study, thus, would be exploring learner's acquisition of communication strategies through direct intervention course works structured along the line of strategy training principles.

Considering two of the widely accepted definitions of the concept of communication strategies helps to delimit further the scope of this study. Both definitions reflect communication strategies as problem solving tools. Bayget (1987:42) defines communication strategies as "... ways learners deal with communication problems." And according to Dornyei (1990:95) "Communication strategies are techniques which help students to overcome difficulties in communication that are due to their limited L2 proficiency".

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

By virtue of being a professional teacher educator, the writer of this paper has experienced a lot about classroom realities connected to learners' ill-performances and corresponding achievements. However, he could recall seeing very little evidence of concern with any magnitude of focus given to strategies mainly responsible for enhancing students' own learning of the language. The average student expects every bits of task to be told and instructed by the classroom teacher. Unless the student exploits the situation to perform well in tests, the various activities and tasks have ceased to have any meaning and concern of use. The explorative and investigative domestic claims, to date, confirm the reality. Alemayehu (2006), Getu (2006), Workineh (2006), Abdi (2005 ) explored that English language students, regardless of levels and different language skills, failed using strategies at the rate required to sustain their communicative threshold. Workineh (2006), on his part, attempted to explore the language learning strategy uses of students in secondary schools and found that students use limited cognitive and meta-cognitive learning strategies.

Further, in her explorative study Almaz Wasse (2007) confirmed that female students in her research area realize and use very few communication strategies while maintaining communication in the target language.

In spite of the predominant changing perspectives in English language teacher education and consequent teachers' orientation towards the role of strategies in language learning/teaching in the curriculum of the country, findings by Abdi (2005) disclosed a rather surface understanding of the concept of strategy training by teachers. He found lack of focused strategy oriented intervention and neglect, perhaps out of helplessness, to the approach on the part of teachers as a factor for hindering the process.

As a matter of fact, the trainability of strategies has actually been a subject of dispute among language pedagogues. There has been inconsistency in understanding the role of direct instructions in developing language learning strategies in students. The theoretical assumptions and perspectives around the subject have inspired contemporary educators and researchers all around the globe to focus on assessing the process, impact and effectiveness of strategy training for enhancing students' competence and performance on specific language skills. In conclusion to their experimentations on the trainability of strategies and encouraging outcomes, Griffith and Parr (2001), Mariani (1994) commend on the significance of designing such a program as a means to promote the level of students' engagement in communicative interactions.

The depth of works made locally on the subject of language learning as well as communication strategies have undoubtedly narrowed the gap of knowledge in the area and served as sources to trace the base line situation. None, however, tried to provide students with strategy training

to enhance their specific language skills and attempted to evaluate the effect of the training. Therefore, it seems that strategy training research is overlooked in our context and the question that whether strategy training would result in improvement in Ethiopian EFL learners is left unanswered. To further treat the issue at a much closer distance, this study attempted to design and assess the impact of a direct intervention program the subject of which is interaction strategy training.

Considering the classroom as a social setting for learning English, in fact, the only social setting for Ethiopian learners where there is no other immediate environment to be exposed, classroom research on students' participation in small group activities should not only focus on how groups need to be constructed, tasks should be designed and students could be handled to promote optimal participation but they should also need to focus on how to minimize students' non interactive participation in such activities. These are among the major points that have initiated this research project.

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

The primary aim of this study was to examine how interaction strategy training affects the students' participation and use of interaction strategies in small group EFL classroom discussions. To achieve the main objective, the study focused on the following specific objectives.

1. To explore to what extent such training would alter the students' interaction behavior in EFL small group discussions.
2. To see the amount (quantity) of such interaction strategies used by the learners after training.

## **1.4 The Research Questions**

The study addressed the following basic questions.

1. Does special training in interaction strategies affect the overall participations of students in EFL small group discussions?
2. Does special training in interaction strategies bring difference in students' non-interactive participation behavior in EFL small group discussions?
3. Does special training in interaction strategies affect the amount of use of interaction strategies in EFL small group discussions?

## **1.5 Significance of the Study**

Strategy training is now considered as an instructional paradigm in language teaching pedagogy and noted to be integrated to every teacher's language teaching program. Teachers and material developers need to prepare and provide students with sections which help them become aware of why specific strategies are important; how they work and when they may come in use and also provide them with opportunities to practice the strategies in guided activities (Kinoshita 2003). Therefore, the present study is expected to have the following significances.

1. Since the study is experimental and practical in essence, it can bridge the gap between knowledge and action so far as the effect of strategy training is concerned. It can also sharpen language teachers' and teacher educators' awareness on the correlation between strategy training and students' participations in EFL small group discussions.
2. Apart from teaching language, it is the teachers' task to look for and investigate ways and means of setting the best possible climate in the classroom for learners to learn. Findings of such a

study provide language teachers and teacher educators' ways and techniques of enhancing students' participation in group discussion activities.

3. Often local studies on language strategies seem to focus on exploring and identifying the students' use of language learning as well as communication strategies while learning a language. How about strategy training? It could be interesting to look into the role of strategy training on students' language performance and add something to the literature regarding Ethiopian EFL learners' strategy training experiences.

## **1.6 Scope of the Study**

The term strategy training has been used interchangeably with other terms such as strategy instruction, learner training, and learning-to-learn training. Researchers have attempted to prove the teachability of language learning and communication strategies by training students in using them to learn and improve a specific language skill and then investigating the effect of the training on acquiring strategy use and/or improving such skill.

Accordingly, the current study focused on evaluating the effect of interaction strategy training on students' participation in EFL small group discussions. Its' conceptual scope was confined to assessing whether interaction strategy training affects students' participation and use of interaction strategies in EFL small group discussion.

## **1.7 Limitations of the Study**

It was difficult to control the effect of intrinsic and/or extrinsic individual differences that the trainees (sample students) and the trainers (the teachers) have which can be compounded with other variables in each class (in the experimental as well as control classes) to create differences in each case.

Moreover, being observed or investigated could be a stressful situation to say the least. In this regard, the students in each class are closely observed and recorded. Hence the presence of the observer could cause a certain amount of limitation to the study.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

#### **2.1 Background of Strategy Researches in ELT**

Strategy researches in language teaching pedagogy are recent phenomenon of the 1970s and beyond. They have emerged out of the shift of interest within the field of language learning and teaching environment over the last twenty years with greater emphasis being put on learners and learning rather than teachers and teaching. In parallel to this new shift of interest, how learners process new information and what kinds of strategies they employ to understand, learn or remember the information has been the primary concern of the researchers dealing with the area of foreign and second language learning. Much of the researches done on language learning strategies were influenced by developments in cognitive psychology (Hedge 1993, Williams and Burden 1997, Grenfell 2005). In the cognitive approach, “. . . the learner is seen as an active participant in the learning process, using various mental strategies in order to sort out the system of the language to be learned” (Williams and Burden 1997:13). In most of the researches the primary concern has been on “... identifying what good language learners report they do to learn a second or foreign language, or in some cases, are observed doing while learning a second or foreign language” (Rubin and Wenden 1987:19).

Over the years, different theories, approaches and methods to the teaching of a language, each with its own underlying theoretical basis have come and gone. As reviewed by Richard and Rogers (1986), the

structure based grammar translation method had depended heavily on teaching grammar and practicing translation as its main teaching and learning activities. The major focus of this method tended to be on reading and writing, with relatively little attention paid to speaking and listening. Consideration of what students might do to promote their own learning had little or no place in grammar translation theory which tended to assume that if students simply followed the method, learning would result as a matter of course (Brown 1994, Griffiths and Parr 2001).

Around 1940s and 50s, the language teaching and learning context was dominated by the philosophical assumption of the behavioral psychology and the audio-lingual method emerged partly as a reaction against the limitations of the grammar translation method, and partly because of urgent wartime demand for fluent speakers of other languages (Richards and Rogers 1986). The audio-lingual method depends heavily on drills, repetition and substitution exercises. These were justified according to behaviorist theories, where by language was seen as a system of system of habit with response /reinforcement basis. This method tended to view the learner as passive entity waiting to be programmed.

Later on, the behaviorist view was challenged by different scholars, among them Chomsky was the prominent. Chomsky came up with a theory which considers the learner as a generator of rules than a mere object to be programmed. According to Chomsky, students learn language by exploring their innate potential knowledge of language, what he calls 'Linguistic Competence' and produce as infinite language outputs as possible (Chomsky 1972). This notion, Chomsky's Competence-Performance, was taken up by Corder (1967) and served as a base for his argument against the theory of Contrastive Analysis. Corder argued that language errors made by students are indications of

their development of underlying linguistic competence, and reflections of their attempts to organize linguistic input but not merely signs of wrong transfers of native language rules.

This assumption had paved the way to the shift of interest of researchers in the field of language teaching and learning from emphasis on teachers and teaching to learners and the process of learning. Following this, in 1986 Aaron Carton published his study entitled “The Method of Inference in Foreign Language Study” which was the first attempt on learner strategies. After Carton Rubin aimed at discovering how learners employ language learning strategies to actively promote their own learning and stated that, once identified, such strategies could be made available to less successful learners (Rubin 1987, Hismanoglu 2007).

However, the Chomskian concept of linguistics-competence (principles, parameters and deep structures) had been itself questioned by such writers as Hymes (1972) who sought to reintroduce such social and communicative dimensions as the feasibility, possibility, potentiality and appropriacy of linguistic utterances into linguistics. Having hold on this assumption, finally, Hymes came up with the idea of ‘Communicative Competence’ (Brumfit and Johnson 1979, Tarone 1980). According to Stern (1991), the term communicative competence was first used by Hymes in deliberate contrast to Chomsky’s notion of linguistic competence. It encompasses the knowledge of language structure and language function or communication. Following this, Canale and Swain (1980) proposed a model of communicative competence which consists of three components: grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence and strategic competence. In other words they extended Chomsky’s linguistics competence to three sub categories.

In Tarone (1980), and Skehan (1995) extracts, grammatical competence consists of knowledge of linguistic structures; socio-linguistic competence is the knowledge of what is acceptable usage with the speech community. These two are essentially in agreement with Chomsky's linguistic competence in that they denote the language users' knowledge of social context and rules of discourse that enable him/her to select and put into use the appropriate elements of the language. The third component, strategic competence, consists of the ability to employ strategies of language use in the attempt to reach communication goals. Strategic competence, in this sense, is an underlying knowledge about how to overcome problems that speakers may encounter in the process of communication. Therefore, it is because of this movement that communication strategy had come to language teaching and learning pedagogy.

## **2.2. Types of Strategies in Second or Foreign Language Learning**

In a helpful survey article, Weinstein and Mayer (1986:315) defined learning strategies broadly as "behaviors and thoughts that a learner engages in during learning" which are "intended to influence the learner's encoding process." Later Mayer (1988:11) more specifically defined strategies as "behaviors of a learner that are intended to influence how the learner processes information." These early definitions from the educational literature reflect the roots of learning strategies in cognitive science, with its essential assumptions that human beings process information and that learning involves such information processing. Clearly, learning strategies are involved in all learning, regardless of the content and context. Learning strategies are, thus, used in learning and teaching Math, Science, History, Languages and other subjects, both in

classroom settings and more informal learning environments (Lessard-Cluston 1997).

According to Cohen (1990:1) in language pedagogy, strategies can be categorized as either language learning strategies or language use strategies. Language learning strategies are conscious thoughts and behaviors used by learners with the explicit goal of improving their knowledge and understanding of the target language. Language use strategies help learners use the language they have already learned and thus considered as strategies that indirectly enhance learning. Further, Backman (1990) cited in Skehan (1995) notes that language use strategies are mediatory skills among linguistic, social, prior schematic knowledge and situational context of the communication in that they help the participant to plan, determine communicative goals, assess serviceable resources, and then execute the communication act during the real time process-hence implying meta-cognitive strategies. Regarding McDonough's (1995) discussion, language use strategies include strategies for retrieving information about the language already stored in memory, rehearsing target language utterances and communicating in the language despite gaps in the target language knowledge.

Similarly, Rubin (1987) who pioneered much of the works in the field of strategies makes an important distinction between what he called strategies which directly influence the language learning process and those enhance the process indirectly. According to Rubin, such strategies can be broadly categorized in to the following three main categories.

- Language learning strategies
- Communication strategies
- Social strategies

## **2.2.1 Language Learning Strategies**

Within second and foreign language learning education, a number of definitions of language learning strategies have been used by key figures in the field. Early on, Rubin (1987:22) wrote that language learning strategies "are strategies which contribute to the development of the language system which the learner constructs and affect learning directly." Williams and Burden (1997:145) also define learning strategy as "... the executive processes which manage and co-ordinate the skills." Wenden and Rubin (1987:8) say that learning strategy is "... any set of operations, steps, plans, routines used by the learner to facilitate the obtaining, storage retrieval and use of information". According to Cook (2001:126) learning strategy is "a choice that the learner makes while learning or using the second language that affects learning." All these definitions bear the same notion that language learning strategies are acts which learners use to process information and solve particular tasks while learning a language.

### **2.2.1.1. Taxonomies of Language Learning Strategies**

There are different classifications of language learning strategies made by different scholars of the area. The most widely known and used classifications are those proposed by O'Malley(1985), Wenden and Rubin (1987) and Oxford (1990). There is no basic difference among these categorizations made by the above mentioned scholars. Rather it can be said that one is the extension or expansions of the other with slight modifications. What follows is O'Malley's (1985) classification of language learning strategies which is relatively comprehensive. O'Malley (1985) divides language learning strategies into the following three main categories:

- cognitive strategies
- Meta-cognitive strategies
- Socio affective strategies.

Cognitive strategies are the mental strategies learners use to make sense of their learning. They are more limited to specific learning task and involve more direct manipulation of the learning material itself. Repetition, resourcing, translation, grouping, note taking, deduction, recombination, imaginary auditory representation, keyword, contextualization, elaboration, transfer, influencing are among the most important cognitive strategies. According to O'Malley (1985:24) "cognitive strategies are exemplified by inferencing, or guessing meaning from context, and elaboration, or relating new information to other concepts in memory."

Meta- cognitive is a term that expresses executive function, strategies which require planning for learning, thinking about the learning process as it is taking place of one's production or comprehension, and evaluating learning after an activity is completed. Therefore it is a strategy that helps learners to regulate their learning. Skehan (1995:106) states that Meta-cognitive strategy is "...the second language learners' consciousness of what she or he is doing." Above all Meta-cognitive strategies are reported to be more widely and frequently used strategies in foreign language learning (O'Malley 1985).

Socio-affective strategies are related with social mediating activities and transacting with others. Cohen (1999:62) states that "social strategies include the actions which learners choose to take part in order to interact with other learners and native speakers (example asking question for clarification and cooperating with other." Socio affective strategies imply the learners' determination, courage, willingness and

awareness to exploit the situational and the social contexts of communication (Brown 1994).

### **2.2.2 Communication Strategies**

Within communicative approaches to language teaching a key goal is for the learner to develop communicative competence in the target second or foreign language. After Canale and Swain's (1980) influential article recognized the importance of communication strategies as a key aspect of strategic (and thus communicative) competence, a number of works appeared about communication strategies in second or foreign language teaching. It is therefore very important to draw distinction between communication and language learning strategies at this point. Communication strategies are used by speakers intentionally and consciously in order to cope with difficulties in communicating in a second or foreign language (Bialystok 1990).

The definition of communication strategy has been a point of debate for scholars for a wider range of time. According to Ellis (1994), due to lack of consensus on the basic concepts of the notion, different definitions have been forwarded by scholars which reflect their entire views of communication strategy. Tarone (1980:20) for example, define the term as, "communication strategies are mutual attempts of two inter-locutors to agree on a meaning in situation where the required meaning structures do not seem to be shared." However, Faerch and Kasper in Ellis (1994) note that there are several difficulties with this definition.

First, it is difficult to apply this idea to monologue (eg. writing), where the learner, interlocutor, is not present. Second the application of communicative strategies without this becoming manifested in interaction. Therefore, to minimize the point of departures and draw a

comprehensive definition of communicative strategy, Ellis (1994) proposes that the definition should emanate from the basic concepts of communication strategy that are consciousness and problem oriented. Communication strategies are concisely employed by learners in order to reduce or replace some elements of meaning or form in the initial plan. However, still Farech and Kasper in Ellis (1994) show their dissatisfaction with the concept of consciousness and claim that “learners may not always be aware of their use of communication strategies; a better definition is to refer to them as ‘potentially’ conscious.”

Communication strategies are problem oriented. They come to play when speakers faced with some difficulties due to the fact that their communication ends out run their communication means or when confronted with miss understanding by a co-speaker (Rubin 1987, Ellis 1994, Tarone 1980).

In light of the foregoing discussion, Ellis (1994:182) defines communication strategies as;

*Communication strategies are psycholinguistic plans which exist as part of the language user’s communicative competence. They are potentially conscious and serve as substitutes for production plans which the learner is unable to implement.*

Therefore, it can be concluded that communication strategies are individuals’ knowledge and abilities of coping with communication problems while maintaining communications.

#### **2.2.2.1. Communication Strategies and Language Learning**

There are two groups of thoughts in ELT regarding the relationship between communication strategies and language learning. Scholars like

Oxford (1990), Ehrman (1995) and Mc Donugh (1995) advocate that communication strategies of any kind aid learning. Because according to these scholars, each instance of language learning that demands the use communication strategies creates an opportunity for more second or foreign language learning. Therefore, communication strategies have significantly direct relation with second or foreign language learning and proficiency.

On the other hand, scholars like Rubin (1987), Cohen (1998), Tarone (1980) and Corden (1987) note that communication strategies are less directly related to language learning since their main focus is on the process of participating in conversation and getting meaning across or clarifying what the speaker intended. Thus communication strategies are intended only for language use and must not be considered to be language learning strategies. Further, Tarone (1980), points out that some times learners may use an avoidance strategy (which is part of communication strategy) in production avoiding words, phrases or topics with which they may be uncomfortable and using other instead to remain in a conversation. Such strategies may promote communication but are not directly related to learning. Mriani (1994) summarizes the foregoing argument in the following four points.

First, according to Mariano communication strategies are indirect learning strategies: they help learners to remain in conversation, and so provide them with more input, more opportunities for checking and validating their hypotheses, and therefore more chances to develop their inter-language systems. Besides, communication strategies may lead to more successful performance, and, as we know, the content of successful performance gets stored more easily in memory, and thus has a positive impact on learning.

Second, by allowing learners to remain in conversation, communication strategies help them, on the productive side, to get some useful feedback on their own performance, and on the receptive side, to exercise some kind of control over their intake, for example, by enabling them to prompt their interlocutor to modify his or her utterances. In other words, strategic competence promotes learners' self-monitoring function or executive control.

Third, communication strategies train learners in the flexibility they need to cope with the unexpected and the unpredictable. At the same time, they help students get used to non-exact communication, which is perhaps the real nature of all communication. In this way, they help to bridge the gap between the classroom and the outside reality, between formal and informal learning.

Finally, communication strategies encourage risk-taking and individual initiative and this is certainly a step towards linguistic and cognitive autonomy.

The point worth considering in discussions above is the dual nature of communication strategies featured as means as well as ends by themselves. Success in employing a communication strategy affects the quality of communication and, in fact, the acquisition of that particular strategy.

#### **2.2.2.2. Major and Sub-categories of Communication Strategies**

Because of the problem of definition, there is no generally agreed classification of communicative strategies (Ellis1994). But the classifications made by majority of scholars reflect more or less the same ideas with few modifications. What follows is Dorny's (1990) classification of communication strategies which is relatively comprehensive and recent and this study makes use of.

Basically, we could say that in oral interaction, we have some kind of communicative goal. We set out to make a plan and execute it. If we meet a problem, that is, if our command of the linguistic and socio-cultural code is not adequate, we have two basic choices. On one hand, we can avoid the problem by adopting a reduction strategy: in other words, we keep our message within our communicative resources, we avoid the risk, we adjust our ends to our means in this way we change our goal. On the other hand, we can decide to keep our goal but develop an alternative plan, we adopt an achievement strategy, we take the risk and expand our communicative resources, and we adjust our means to our ends (Bayget 1987, Tarone 1980, Mc Dounogh 1995). Therefore, communication strategy is categorized in to two major categories. These are Avoidance or Reduction strategies and Achievement or Compensatory strategies.

#### **2.2.2.2.1 Avoidance or Reduction Strategies**

- **Message abandonment:** This occurs when the learner begins to talk about concept but is unable to continue due to lack of meaning structure and felt that this may going to involve him/her in all sort of communication problems.
- **Topic avoidance:** Students are all familiar with the essential strategy of avoiding a topic they do not fell confident to talk. Topic avoidance occurs when the learners simply do not have sufficient knowledge about the topic they are going to talk about and lack the vocabulary or other meaning structure to express the concept.
- **Message replacement:** When learners fell that the communication will lead them to problems with grammar or vocabulary, they round it quickly and substitute the original message with a new one and this is called message replacement. The reason why a non

native speaker can some times sound vague is possibly the fact that he or she is replacing the original goal with a simpler message.

Reduction or avoidance strategies are difficult to spot and are an obvious and essential part of the learners' instinctive repertoire. However students are encouraged to widen their recourses to take risks, to actively expand their competences, so we shall probably more interested in the achievement or expansion strategies.

#### **2.2.2.2.2. Achievement or Compensatory Strategies**

One useful first distinction we would like to make here is between strategies at the *word* or *sentence* level, and strategies at the *discourse* level. It is important to make this distinction because when considering achievement strategies, one almost automatically thinks of, for example, ways of expressing the meaning of a word when the exact term is not available. In fact, as we shall see, some of the most interesting things happen in the actual interaction that goes on between people.

##### **2.2.2.2.2.1 Achievement or compensatory strategies at word level**

- **Circumlocution:** This is the way students describe or exemplify the target word they cannot remember its exact name.

Eg. *'The thing you open bottles with'* for *'corkscrew.'*

- **Approximation:** This is using an alternative term which expresses the meaning of the word the students can not remember as closely as possible. It can be done by using general words, superordinates, synonyms and antonyms like *'not deep'* to mean *'shallow'*.
- **Use of all purpose words:** Extending a general 'empty' lexical item to contexts where specific words are lacking.

Eg. the use of *'thing;*, *'stuff;* *'make;* *'do'* as well as using words like *'what-do-you-call-it;* *'what's his name'*, etc..

- **Word-coinage:** This is creating a non-existing word by word based on a supposed rule of the language.

Eg. *'Vegetarianism'* for *'vegetarian'*

- **Use of non-linguistic means:** This is the use of non linguistic mode of communication such as; mime, gesture, facial expression or sound imitation.
- **Literal translation:** It is the way of translating literally a lexical item, an idiom or a compound word or structure from L1 to L2.
- **Foreignising:** This is using L1 word by adjusting it to L2 phonologically (with an L2 pronunciation) and /or morphologically.

Eg. Adding to a word an L2 suffixes.

#### **2.2.2.2.2 Achievement or Compensatory Strategies at Discourse Level**

Achievement strategies at discourse level are strategies which usually performed in situations that require interactions and collaborative communication. The widely used strategies for this category can be subsumed under the following achievement strategy.

##### **2.2.2.2.2.1 Interactional Strategies**

The problems that learners can meet at the discourse level are possibly endless, since they cover the general ability to manage the interaction. Moreover, as we know, managing interactions is a very complex affair which calls into play not just strategic and pragmatic skills, but sociolinguistic and socio-cultural conventions as well. Let us consider, for instance, negotiating meanings and intentions. Here we find a whole range of strategies which are sometimes called cooperative strategies

because they involve not just the speaker on his or her own (as was the case with the strategies we examined in the previous paragraphs), but a joint effort between two or more people. In other words, the participants in an interaction share an attempt to agree on a meaning in situations where they cannot share the same level of knowledge and skill. This, of course, is an alternative interpretation of communication strategies, a sociolinguistic, rather than psycholinguistic view. The following are some of the interaction strategies that help learners to interact each other and negotiate meaning effectively in group discussion activities.

- **Turn taking:** This is the way that speakers take a turn to speak in a discussion and let other speakers have a turn. This strategy helps participants to have equal participation in the discussion and protect the discussion not to be dominated by few members.
- **Appeal for help:** Turning to the conversation pattern for help either directly or indirectly

Eg. *'What do you call?'*

This enables participants to recruit help from other members of the group in order to express themselves more effectively in the target language. Target language deficiency underlies the need for this strategy.

- **Asking for repetition:** This is requesting repetition by listeners when not hearing or understanding something said properly.

Eg. *'Sorry', 'pardon'*

- **Asking for clarification:** This is requesting explanation of an unfamiliar meaning structure, idea or concept.

Eg. *What do you mean; 'The what?'*

- **Asking for confirmation:** It is requesting confirmation that one heard or understood something correctly

Eg. *'You mean?' Do you means?'*

- **Expressing non-understanding:** This is the way of expressing that one did not understand some thing properly either verbally or non-verbally.

*Eg. Sorry, I don't understand; 'I think I've lost the thread*

- **Paraphrasing:** It is clarifying the previous speaker's contribution by restating it in ones own words.
- **Seeking information or an opinion;** Asking for the speaker's opinion or seeking relevant or more detailed information.
- **Responding:** This is the way that the participant responds to content-related questions asked by a member of the group. Such responses can include clarification, repetition and confirmation of ideas and expiration of opinion, agreement or disagreement.

### **2.3 The Role of Oral Interaction in Second or Foreign Language Learning**

Language classrooms can be seen as sociolinguistic environments and discourse communities in which interaction is believed to contribute to learners' language development. According to a review of studies in the area of classroom interaction and language learning presented by Hall and Verplaetse (2000), interactive processes are not strictly individual or equivalent across learners and situations; language learning is a social enterprise, jointly constructed, and intrinsically linked to learners' repeated and regular participation in classroom activities. The authors state that the role of interaction in additional language learning is especially important. It is in their interactions with each other that teachers and students work together to create the intellectual and practical activities that shape both the form and the content of the target language as well as the processes and outcomes of individual development (Hall and Verplaetse, 2000). According to Allwright's

(1984:158) claims on the importance of classroom interaction in language learning, in FL lessons it is “inherent in the very notion of classroom pedagogy itself”. This view of teaching as interaction is in line with arguments put forward by other authors (for example, Boyd and Maloof 2000; Ellis, 1994; Tsui, 1995; Wong-Fillmore 1985) which support the belief that the quality of observable interactive patterns of student participation in classroom discourse correlate with learning outcomes.

Long’s Interaction Hypothesis (1985) argues that negotiation of meaning in verbal interactions contributes to the generation of input favorable for second language development, and several studies have built upon the effect of negotiation of meaning on second language acquisition ( Mackey and Philip, 1998; Pica, 1988,1994). Student participation in classroom oral interaction is seen here also based on Allwright’s (1984:160-161) three types of oral engagement language lessons. In the most frequent type, called ‘compliance’, students’ utterances are very much dependent on the teacher’s management of classroom communication, for example, when they reply to the teacher’s questions. In the second type, known as ‘navigation’, learners take the initiative to overcome communication breakdowns, as in requests for clarification of what has been said. This may be seen as a simpler type of negotiation of meaning that can help comprehension and may contribute to language development. The less frequent type is ‘negotiation’, and when it occurs, the teacher’s and the students’ roles may become less asymmetrical, and interlocutors attempt to reach decision making by consensus.

#### **2.4. The Essence of Communication Strategy Training in ELT**

Following the observation that some students are more successful than others and the hypothesis that some of this success may be as a result of

more effective strategies, it is further assumed that the strategies employed by the more successful students may be learnt by those who are less successful (Girtiths and parr 2001). This teachability feature of strategies made many scholars think that regardless of their language learning experiences, language learners will need strategy training in 'how' and 'when' to use strategies effectively as a way to improve their language learning performances (Brown 1994,Hedge 1993, William and Burden 1997).

By "training" in this case we mean focusing the students' attention on specific strategies, making them aware of why they are important, how they work and when they may come in useful, and also asking the students to practice the strategies in guided activities. The underlying assumption of strategy training is that, if learners explore 'how,' 'when' and 'why' to use language learning and communication strategies and evaluate and monitor their own learning then they can take a more active role in language learning process. In becoming active participants in the learning process, learners can become more efficient and positive in their approach to learning (Hedge1993).

Quite a number of studies have been conducted to see the effect of strategy training on improving specific language skills of students across different time and scenarios though not many of them focus on communication strategy training. Cohen and Apehek (1990) in Ellis (1994) for example trained learners of Hebrew in how to recall new words by using 'paired associations' and found that better performance in recall tasks. In a training project to develop self evaluation and monitoring strategies, Wenden (1987), reports that providing students with a check list of criteria to self evaluate their oral production resulted in successful use of self evaluation as a learning strategy. Few of the attempts on communication strategy training were made by Cohen (1998), Bejarano

etal (1997), Lam and Wong (2000). In their studies these scholars contend that the negotiation process in a group discussion can be facilitated by training learners in the use of interaction strategies.

Of course not all communication strategies may be worth bringing to the students' attention. We have already made the point that achievement, not avoidance, strategies can favor hypothesis formation and therefore learning: in other words, if learners stretch their resources to their fullest potential in order to reach their goal, their inter-language can profit from being put to the test of real performance. However, once again, not all achievement strategies can be singled out for analysis and practice in the same way. It is relatively easy to teach ways of asking for clarification or keeping a conversation going and turn-taking but it is not so easy to teach topic-change procedures; it is even more difficult to teach ways of restructuring one's utterances or using paraphrase to describe a difficult concept. So scholars like Mariani (1994) suggest that not all areas of strategic competence lend themselves equally well to specific practice in guided activities, and some are therefore perhaps best left to the students own initiative, as they happen to need them in free interaction tasks.

## **2.5 Approaches to Strategy Training**

Various approaches (models) for strategy training have been proposed by scholars across time in ELT. Some are concerned with teaching strategies separately as a lesson in their own right which is referred as direct instruction approach, and others by integrating strategy lessons with other tasks which is usually termed as indirect or integrated instruction (William and Burden 1997).

### **2.5.1 Direct Strategy Training**

Direct instruction approach informs learners of the value and purposes of the strategy and helps learners to use identify and develop communication strategies in systematic way as they learn the target language. In the direct approach to strategy instruction the teacher raises learners' awareness of the purposes and rationale for strategy use, identifies the specific strategy being used, and systematically provides opportunities for practice and self evaluation (Wenden 1987). Through this direct approach to strategy instruction, learners become reactive learners as they increase their awareness, practice, use and monitoring of the strategies they are using while learning a foreign language. The learner out come is an efficient learner who has developed the skills to successfully organize and conduct their own learning event (Wenden 1987). This study makes use of this approach.

### **2.5.2. Indirect Strategy Training**

In indirect strategy approach students work through materials and activities designed to elicit the use of specific strategies, but they are not informed of the name, purpose or value of the specific strategy (O'Malley and Chamot 1985).The most common form of indirect instruction are text book rubric. Language text books are filled with rubrics such as 'Read the text, are any of your ideas mentions?' 'Close your book, can you remember the device?' 'In pairs, practice the shop dialogue. 'These rubrics assume that learners will identify and use the appropriate meta-cognitive, memory and social strategies (O'Malley & Chamot 1985, Cohen 1990). The assumptions underlying in indirect strategy instruction is learners will learn to use to the language learning strategy cued by the material and activities presented in textbook rubrics (O'Malley & Chamot 1985). However, pedagogically speaking, there are three weaknesses with

this assumption. First, of all there is the reality that not all learners will be linguistically proficient to understand instructions that have been written in the target language. Secondly, not all learners will have an awareness of the specific strategy being cued. And thirdly, without a meta-cognitive awareness about language learning strategy use and purpose, learners will lose opportunities to increase their strategy repertoire, to successfully transfer strategies to new tasks, and to maintain efficient and long term strategy use (Wenden 1987).

## **2.6 Frameworks for Strategy Training**

Although no empirical evidence has yet been provided to determine single best method for conducting strategy training at least three different instructional frame works have been identified (Cohen 1990).

One frame work proposed by Pearson and Dole (1987) in Cohen (1990) with reference to first language learning but applicable to the study of second / foreign language as well targets isolated strategies by including explicit modeling and explanation of the benefits of applying a specific strategy extensive functional practice with the strategy and an opportunity to transfer the strategy to new learning context. In the second frame work Oxford etal (1990) out line a useful sequence for the introduction of strategies that emphasizes explicit strategy awareness, discussion of the benefit of strategy use functional and contextualized practice with the strategies, self evaluation and monitoring of language performance and suggestions for or demonstration the transferability of the strategies to new tasks.

The third frame work which this study uses for the training, developed by Chamot and O'Malley (1985), has a cyclic nature which would basically alternate experience and observation. Students could start from

a receptive stage: they could be exposed to actual examples of language use in which communication strategies play a clear and significant role. Then they could be led to become aware of the use of strategies through a stage of exploration and discussion. This would be followed by a stage of practice and performance, where students could try out the strategies for themselves. And finally, they could discuss their own performance, evaluate their strategic use, and possibly compare it with a native speaker's. This would set the whole cycle in motion again.

The sequences of steps in the above frame work are:-

1. Assess strategy use with
  - Think aloud
  - Interviews
  - Questionnaire
2. Explain Strategy by
  - Naming it
  - Telling how to use it , step by step
3. Model strategy by
  - Demonstrating it
  - Verbalizing own thought process while doing task
4. Scaffold instruction by
  - Providing support while students practice
  - Adjusting support to student need
  - Phasing out support to encourage autonomous strategy use
5. Develop motivation by
  - Providing successful experience
  - Relating strategy use to improved performance

## **2.7. Tasks in Interaction Strategy Training**

According to Johnson and Johnson (1987), tasks in interaction strategy training should focus on meaning negotiation. This is because research has shown that negotiation for meaning makes input more comprehensible. In negotiated interaction the participant practice interaction strategies for requesting clarification and /or confirmation and signaling difficulty. Dealing with the impact of negotiated interaction on the level of comprehension, Pica (1991), states that this interaction and negotiation tasks must be frequently carried out in the EFL/ESL class room.

The implication of negotiated interaction is that the learner put in a task performing situation in collaboration with other, adopts a role of voluntary participant, learners to tolerate ambiguity and develops confidence to ask for clarification of what troubles him/her. Therefore, tasks which promote learners interaction skills /strategies better treated in groups assisting one another, conceding interests and opinions, sharing responsibly and joy of success in communication. Ur (1981), states that in order for a discussion to be successful a purpose is needed. This purpose is manifested through a task which should involve “thinking”, “interaction”, “result” and “interest”. Also Brown and Yule (1983b:118) refer to task based activates as creating “situations in which the speaker has to produce extended chunks of speech.”

## **2.8. The Role of the Teacher in Interaction Strategy Training**

The language teacher aiming at training students in using different interaction strategies should learn about their interests, motivation and learning styles. The teacher can learn what strategies students already

appear to be using, observe their behavior in class. Do they ask for clarification, verification or correction? Do they cooperate with their peers? Besides observing their behavior in class the teacher also can prepare a short questionnaire to describe themselves their language learning experience. Thus the teacher can learn about the purpose of their language learning, their favorite/least favorite classroom activities. It is the fact that each learner within the same class may have different language learning styles and varied awareness of the use of strategies. The teacher cannot attribute importance to only one group. All these help the teacher prepare activities for the training which can meet the needs and expectations of the trainees/students/ possessing different learning styles, motivations strategy preferences (Hall 1997, Leasared-Clouston 1997).

In the actual training session the teacher is advised to be at periphery of the activity. This is to say that he/she should not play the role of source of knowledge rather he/she should play the role of pace maker, interventionist role or mediating role in which the learners interact each other in collaborative manner. To help learners practice the suggested interaction strategies well and improve group discussion skills, teachers in general should carry out the following duties in classes. They must:

1. Encourage the students to actively engaged in the activities
2. Create supportive and motivating classroom atmosphere in order to help the students overcome anxiety, fear or panicking.
3. Handel the interaction properly, determines the amount and quality of the input.
4. Provide formative feed back to the students' performance.
5. Clearly state and negotiate on the group and curricular goals with the students (Dornyei 1990, Murphy 1991).

## **2.9 Some Constraints on the Effectiveness of Strategy Training**

The literature and studies on strategy training have highlighted some factors that may hinder teaching language strategies effectively. These factors are related to the learner, the teacher, and the methodology and materials used.

### **2.9.1 Learner's Characteristics**

Learner's characteristics that can influence the effectiveness of strategy instruction include learning style, age, language proficiency, motivation, gender, cultural background, learning experience, and aptitude. Strategies reflect the student's learning style which can make him/her have the aptitude to acquire one type of strategies rather than another; this is also the case with his cultural background and previous learning experience (Chamot 1985). Strategy instruction effectiveness depends also on learners' language proficiency. O'Malley and Chamot (1987) suggest that students of low second or foreign language proficiency levels may not be capable of understanding the language associated with strategy instruction easily. Some believe that strategy instruction is more effective with students of average language ability than those students of low or high ability (Chamot 1985). Gender might affect strategy instruction. Discussing the findings of some studies on sex differences in strategy use, Oxford (1990) concludes that women use more strategies than men, and that after strategy instruction both women and men demonstrate distinct strengths in strategy use.

Motivation is also a key factor for the success of communication strategy instruction. It may be the most important characteristic learners bring to the learning situation; that is why some researchers call for including a

motivational component in strategy instruction programmes. Students' cultural background and experience need also to be taken into account when training them in using strategies. Teaching specific strategies may be more effective in some cultural contexts than in others. Moreover, in some learning contexts where learner-centered approaches and materials are not implemented easily, integrating strategy instruction in the L2/FL curriculum might be difficult. Lessard-Cloustered (1997) includes readiness for language learning and for employing strategies taught effectively; however this aptitude should not be viewed as '*an innate trait but as a strategic ability that can be learned*' (O'Malley & Chamot, 1985: 162-63). For strategy instruction to be effective, it should take all these variables into account (Oxford & Crookall, 1989).

### **2.9.2 Teacher's Characteristics**

Some teachers may have negative attitudes to strategy instruction because it involves changing their roles. Such negative attitude can inhibit delivering strategies appropriately to learners. Moreover, some problems may arise due to the conflict between teacher's style and learner's style. Teaching language strategies also requires specific skills that many language teachers may not have such as the ability to incorporate strategy instruction in their classrooms, to assess students' strategy use appropriately, to mentally model the strategy taught, and, sometimes, to develop appropriate materials for teaching strategies. Effective strategy instruction depends on the teacher's experience. The more familiar the teacher is with strategy instruction, the more effective it is (Chamot 1994). In Addition, the second or foreign language strategy instructor has different roles to play. Discussing these roles, Cohen (1990) describes the L2/FL strategy instructor as a diagnostician, a language learner, a learner trainer, a coordinator, and a coach. All these issues reflect the crucial need for teacher training. O'Malley and Chamot

(1987) emphasize the need for convincing teachers of the effectiveness of strategy instruction, for training them in how to incorporate strategy instruction in their classrooms, and for developing their understanding and skills of how to deliver strategy instruction effectively to learners.

### **2.9.3 Methodology and Materials**

The effectiveness of strategy instruction is influenced by the type of instruction adopted (direct or embedded, integrated or separate). While direct or explicit strategy instruction involves informing learners about the value, purpose, importance and use of strategies taught, embedded strategy instruction encompasses guiding learners in the use of strategies which are embedded in the activities and materials but not instructing them in the rationale for strategy use and instruction (Chen 2005). Strategy instruction can also be separate, i.e. focusing only on teaching strategies, or integrated with the language classroom instructional activities and curriculum content. Most research supports the explicit integrated strategy instruction. Several frameworks have been suggested for strategy instruction.

The success of strategy instruction depends greatly on the availability of appropriate materials. Teaching second or foreign language strategies become more difficult if teachers lack the materials appropriate to their classrooms (O'Malley & Chamot 1987). The issue of which language to use in explaining strategies are also problematic. Using the second or foreign language to explain strategies at the early stages of teaching them may not be appropriate, but explaining them in students' native language can be detrimental to acquiring the target language (Chamot 1994). Problematic also is the number of strategies to be taught because learners might find difficulty in learning and employing a large number of

strategies but at the same time they need to be trained in various strategies to develop their strategic repertoire (Chamot 1994).

Further, the duration of the strategy instruction may have an impact on its effectiveness; many researchers attribute the ineffectiveness of their strategy instruction programmes to time constraints. Estimating the required amount of time required for having students ready for independently employing the strategies they have been taught is an issue that needs to be decided on an individual basis (Chamot 1994).

Tasks that teachers use for having learners practice strategy use need also to be taken into account because learners respond to the different tasks using different strategies and some strategies are useful only for certain tasks (Oxford 1990). Therefore, teachers need to determine the specifications of the tasks used and the time required for performing them depending on learners' language proficiency levels and the skill areas of strategy instruction. Finally, teachers need to have valid and reliable instruments for measuring strategy use and the language skill.

# **CHAPTER THREE**

## **THE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **3.1 The Study**

The assumption of this study was that foreign language learners need to be able to use various interaction strategies skillfully in order to interact effectively in communicative group discussion activities. For this, they have to undergo training in the use of interaction strategies. The purposes of the research were to ascertain if such training would alter the learners' interaction behavior in small group discussions and examine the amount of interaction strategies used after the training.

The basic questions that this study addressed were, does special training of students in interaction strategies alters participations and use of interaction strategies of students in communicative group discussions activities in EFL classes. In order to answer these questions, an experimental research design was developed in which two similar groups of students were compared as they carried out identical group activities. One group consisted the experimental class which under went training in interaction strategies and the other served as a control class which did not receive special training in interaction strategies.

### **3.2 Subjects and the Research Design**

The subjects of the study were 42 third year language stream diploma students in two EFL classes at Awassa College of Teacher Education. The two classes were randomly assigned as (a) an experimental group which received training in interaction strategies and (b) a control group which

did not get training on interaction strategies. The students in each class were assigned to groups of four to five students for their group activities on the basis of mixed sex grouping.

### **3.3. Methods and Procedures of Data Collection**

The main data gathering instrument of this study was systematic observation method. Since it would be difficult to analyze interaction behaviors on the spot while students have group discussion activities, the writer video recorded all groups with in the experiment and control classes twice, once at the outset of the experiment (the pre-observation) and six weeks later after completion of the treatment in the experimental group (the post observation). For both the pre and post observations, each group within the two classes was carry out a discussion task lasts for 15 minutes. The experimental and control groups were given the same topics which were different for the pre and post observations in order to avoid a rehearsed discussion. The topics were selected by the students prior to experiment from the 10 suggestion given to them (refer Appendix 1).

### **3.4 The Training Procedures**

#### **3.4.1. Training the Teacher**

It was decided to use two different teachers (the researcher and another teacher from the staff) rather than the same teacher to train students in the use of interaction strategies in order to avoid any unintentional overflow of interaction strategies in to the control class. Therefore, a teacher from the English department of the college was selected to handle the control group while the experimental group was taken up by the researcher. The teacher who taught the control class participating in this study was an English language teacher who had been teaching at

the college for the same number of years as the researcher. He was of similar age and had comparable professional backgrounds and experience with the researcher. Both the teacher and the researcher were trained in using active learning methods in foreign language classrooms. In order to ensure similar activation of both classes, the teacher was asked to submit detailed lesson plans which had to be compared with the researcher's lesson plan of the experiment group and held discussions on the points and made necessary adjustments prior to the lesson.

### **3.4.2 Training the Students**

Both the experiment and control classes had three 60 minutes lessons per week of the total class time 30 % was devoted to group work and the rest to conventional teacher-fronted instruction. The teacher-fronted instruction focused on explanation of the way how to use , where to use and why to use the strategy to be practiced, and the language back up that is needed to use the strategy effectively. The group work activities were identical in the two groups. The experimental group however received the extra training program in the use of interaction strategies. Four interaction strategies were selected for the training. These are

- Turn taking strategies
- Participating through asking for clarification, repetition and confirmation
- Responding in discussions (include clarifying one self, expressing agreement, disagreement and opinion etc.).
- Directing interaction by asking for opinion, agreement and disagreements

Specifically designed activities to train students in the use of interaction strategies were adapted from Bejairano et al (1997) and Beyget (1987) and etal integrated with in the small group tasks of the experiment class. Apart form adapting, designing and integrating the activities, the drafted lesson was given to the advisor and two experts in the filed of foreign language teaching for comments. After receiving the necessary comments, modifications were made on the activities. Two examples of the activities are described below (see the others on Appendix 2).

- 1. Name of the Activity:** Coins
- Strategy:** Participation, Turn taking
- Aim:** The purpose of this activity is to help students become aware of their own participation in the group and that of other member of the group. This is done by using a coin to represent each time they talk when a member participates in the group discussion.

The class is divided in to groups of four to five students. Each group is given a bag of 20 coins. The students are told to put a coin in the middle of the table each time they talk when a member of the group has used up all his/her coins the discussion stops. Group members' names are listed on the tally sheet together with the number of coins each student was left with. The teacher discusses the result on the tally sheet with each group focusing on questions such as "why are some students left with only a few coins while others have most of their coins over?" and " what could be done in order to allow for a more equal use of coins?"

Bearing in mid the points brought up in the discussion with the teacher, the group holds another discussion, using the same procedure as described above. The students are told to pay attention to how many

coins each member is using. The group members, together with the teacher compare the tallies of the two discussions and the difference in the results. The teacher then elicits explanation of these differences and attempts to heighten students' awareness of the fact that when there was a more equal use of the coins, the group discussion was more coherent and cohesive.

### ***Follow-up Discussion***

With the entire class, the teacher discusses the importance of the awareness of letting all member of the group participate:

Dominant members (those whose coins were used up first) have to become aware of the need to let others participate and to learn skills to help encourage others to participate in the discussion. The students who hardly talked (those who had almost all of their 20 coins left) need to be aware that they are in fact not contributing to the group activity. They need to learn skills which will help them to participate in the discussion. In order for them to be meaningful communication in the group, students need to learn how to interact with one another to promote maximum and equal participation there by enabling them to carry out the group task successfully.

- |                             |  |
|-----------------------------|--|
| <b>2. Name of activity:</b> | Red cards  |
| Strategy:                   | Asking for repetition, clarification and confirmation  |
| Aim:                        | To help students practice participation in group activities effectively. The activity requires attentive listening from the members who are not talking and have to try to ask for repetition, clarification and confirmation when even they come across |

ideas, concepts, words, expressions or sentences which are not made clear by the speaker.

The teacher introduces the phrases below to students and tells them that they can use the phrases whenever they do not hear properly or understand what has been said by the speaker during discussions. Brainstorms for other phrases the students have used or come across. Explains each phrase to students, request students to write them out and say it out loud with the correct intonation. Emphasize the importance of peer support and cooperative behavior.

*Seeking clarification, repetition and confirmation*

- Do you mean that....
- So you are saying that.....
- You think that....
- Sorry, but I don't quite understand
- Sorry, could you repeat that please?
- Sorry could you say that again, please?

Two pairs of students sit around a desk students 1 and 2 are given red cards students 3 and 4 are given a role play situation to act out. While students 3 and 4 act out their role play, students 1 and 2 listen when ever student 1 or 2 hear something not clear, he/she holds up the red card. This signifies to students 3 and 4 to stop talking students 1 or 2 then ask for clarification, repetition or confirmation. When students 3 and 4 have completed the role play, the pairs switch talks and student 1 and 2 acts out a new role play and students 3 and 4 become the listeners.

### ***Follow –up Discussion***

With the entire class, the teacher discusses the importance of participating in discussion through asking repetition, clarification and confirmation.

## **3.5 Ways of Data Analysis**

### **3.5.1 Measurement**

There were two dependent variables measured in this study

#### **1. Participation**

- A. ***Overall participation:*** defined by number of turns taken by the members of the group during group discussions.
- B. ***Non- interactive participation:*** defined by the number of participation turns where no interaction strategies were used.

- 2. Use of Interaction Strategies:** defined by the number of interaction strategies used

To measure these variables, an observation tally form was developed by adapting the FLInt (Foreign language Interaction Analysis) which was produced by Flanders (1970). Though FLInt is originally designed to analysis teacher-student interactions in the foreign language classrooms, the format was taken as a model to develop an observation checklist to analyze students' participation behaviors in the pre and post training discussions of the training.

The instrument has three main categories these are; Category 1 Non-interactive Participation. Category 2, Interactive Participation (this includes the use of such interaction strategies as; participating in the discussion through asking for clarification, repletion and confirmation;

directing interaction by asking for opinion, agreement and disagreement; responding by clarifying, repeating, confirming and by expressing opinion, agreement, disagreement). Category 3, Overall Participation. This is the sum of category 1 and 2.

The drafted format was given to two experts in the field of foreign language teaching methodology in order that they could comment on the appropriateness of the checklist if it measure the target objective of the study. Furthermore, after receiving their comments and suggestions and after the advisor's rigorous comment, the instrument was reshaped.

Two independent rates were selected from the English department of the collage and trained to use the instrument. Because having the same person to record and also to rate the data would leave room open for personal biases to be reflected in the rating process. The assumption is that a person who has not observed the sample classroom interaction is likely to rate each interaction event as objectively as possible and this would augment the reliability of the study. They were given brief explanation about the rationally of the study and their contributions and how to use the instrument.

This instrument was next piloted using video-taped discussions of the two groups participating in the study but on a different topic from those used in the study. The two raters view the video records of the two groups and use the observation tally form to rate them. Inter-raters reliability was computed on the obtained results using Cronbach alpha formula. Accordingly, 0.76 reliability coefficient was obtained for the non-interactive participation category and 0.74 for the interactive participation category. According to Cronbach alpha formula this confirmed that the raters rated the observation in nearly similar way since the results for both categories are near to 1.

The fifteen minutes records from each group, all the pre and post observations, were categorized into the above mentioned categories. That is, each verbal interaction turn in the discussions was labeled as one of the categories. Each student within the experiment and control classes was given code number. Since there were 22 students within the experimental and 20 students within the control classes, the students in the experimental class were named from Ecs1 (to mean experimental class student 1) to 22 respectively and students in the control class were named from Ccs 1 (to represent Control class student 1) to 20.

The discussions, for both the pre and post training situations, made by each student within both groups were carefully watched by the two raters and categorized under the first two categories using a separate observation tally sheet; four separate sheets were prepared and used for this purpose, two for the pre and two for the post discussion observations. (see Appendix4). The total of each category for each student could be obtained by adding up all the tallies across the row and the total of each category for each group could be obtained by adding up all the tallies down the row. Since there were two raters, the average results of the raters were used for the analysis.

Statistical analyses were made to analyze the results presented on these tables. Since the number of participants in the two classes were unequal (22 and 20), and since the dependent variables might be sensitive to the number of participants, a correlation was done on the results of the observations by multiplying each observation result by its weight factor. The weight factor was calculated by dividing half of the total population ( $N=21$ ) by the number of students in each class. Thus the weight factor for the experiment class was 0.9 ( $21/22$ ) and for the control class 1.05 ( $21/20$ ). This is artificially equivalent to the use of equal size of 21 students.

T-tests were performed on these data to determine the significance of difference between the variables (non-interactive participation, overall participation and the use of interaction strategies) in the pre-and post treatment observations of the two groups.

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## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

In this chapter, data gathered from the records of the pre and post-discussion observations in the experimental and control groups will be presented and discussed. The purposes of the study were to examine the effect of interaction strategy training on the overall participation, non-interactive participation and use of interaction strategies of students in EFL group discussion tasks. The results from the data, therefore, are discussed in the light of these three variables.

#### **4.1 Results**

##### **4.1.1. Frequency of Participations and Use of Interaction Strategies**

The records of the pre and post observations discussions of the experimental and control groups were carefully watched and each verbal interaction turn is assigned into its corresponding category: non-interactive participation (category 1), interactive participation (category 2) and overall participation (category 3). Accordingly, Table 1 and 2 below presents the result.

##### **4.1.1.1 Frequency of Participations and Use of Interaction Strategies in the Experimental Group**

Table1 below illustrates the participative performance and corresponding variations of students in the experimental group among categories of participation and use of interaction strategies in the two observation sessions.

**Table 1. Frequencies of participations and use of interaction strategies in the experimental group.**

Group	Observation	Participations (in number of events)		Interaction Strategy (in number of events)
		Overall Participation	Non- interactive Participation	
Experimental	Pre	57	47	10
	Post	87	7	80
	^	30	-40	70

Table 1 above shows a total of 57 interaction events during the pre-observation discussion and a total of 87 during the post discussion observation. Non-interactive participation (category 1) comprised the highest amount (47) in the pre-training observation. Interactive participation (category 2) took the highest number (80) in the post-training observation. Interaction strategies took the smallest coverage (10) in the pre observation discussion and it is the non-interactive participation, category (category 1) that scored the least amount (7) in the post-training discussion observation.

Concerning the difference of participations and use of interaction strategies in this group between the two observations, the data depicts that there is a 30 frequency differences in the overall participation category and as for the non-interactive participation category the data indicates a -40 frequency differences. Besides, the data shows a 70 frequency differences for the use of interactive strategies between the pre and post training discussions.

#### **4.1.1.2 Frequency of Participations and Use of Interaction Strategies in the Control Group**

Table 2 below shows the participative performances and corresponding variations of students in the control group among categories of participations and use of interaction strategies in the two observation sessions.

***Table 2. Frequencies of participations and use of interaction strategies in the control group.***

<b>Group</b>	<b>Observation</b>	<b>Participations (in number of events)</b>		<b>Interaction Strategy (in number of events)</b>
		<b>Overall Participation</b>	<b>Non- interactive Participation</b>	
Control	Pre	58	51	8
	Post	91	82	9
	^	33	32	1

The data presented in Table 2 above show a total of 58 interaction events in the pre-training observation session of the control class and 91 interaction events in the post-training observation. Non-interactive participation took the highest frequency (51) in the pre-training observation and the figure ascended to (82) in post-training discussion. Category 2 conversely scores the least proportion both in the pre as well as post discussion observations. (8 in the pre and 9 in post observations).

According to the data presented above, 33 frequency differences were observed between the two observation sessions of this class in the overall participations category. Besides, the difference obtained for the

non-interactive participation category is 32 while for the use of interaction strategies is 1.

In sum, at first glance, the data in the above two tables indicate an increase in the overall participation and use of interaction strategies by the experiment group. On the other hand, increase in the overall participation and use of interaction strategies in the control group. Furthermore, non-interactive participation decreased in the experimental group, but not in the control group. However, this data does not guarantee us to conclude whether the obtained differences (in each group for each category) are significant or not. Therefore, to see the significances of the differences, independent sample t-test was performed on the data and the results are presented in the following sections.

#### **4.1.2. Independent Sample t-test of the Pre-training Observations**

To see if there were differences amongst students of the experimental and control groups in their overall participation, non-interactive participation and the use of interaction strategies while performing small group discussion activities before the treatment, statistical analysis (t- tests) were performed on their pre-training observation result and the figures are presented in Table 3 and 4 below.

**Table 3. Means, S.D and t-values of participation) and the use of interaction strategies for the Pre-observation results of the experimental vs. control groups.**

Group	Participation				Use of Interaction Strategies	
	Overall Participation		Non- interactive Participation		X	SD
	X	SD	X	SD		
Experimental	2.53	2.13	2.25	1.79	0.69	0.12
Control	3.07	2.21	2.80	2.28	0.31	0.49
t	*0.86		**-1.09		***1.17	

\*p>0.5, \*\*p>0.05, \*\*\*p> 0.05

The value of t-table=2.098

To interpret the result obtained in Table 3 above, we have to rely on the assumption of t-test analysis. Accordingly, if the computed t-value is greater or equal to the table value with a given degree of freedom (fd), it is said that there is significant difference between achievements of the groups being compared. Moreover, if the t-computed is less than the value of t-critical, it can be said that there is no significant difference between the performances of the groups. Similarly, if the p-value is less than 0.05 (the standard limit of significance), it is said that there is significant difference between the average scores of the groups. However, if the p-value is greater than 0.05, the difference is said to be insignificant.

On the basis of this assumption, the result presented in Table 3 above depicts that the table value at 40 degree of freedom (tv=2.098) was found to be greater than the computed t-value for the overall participation category. Therefore, it can be concluded that there is no statistically significant difference between the experimental and control class students with regard to their overall participations in group discussion activities before the training.

Pertaining to the non-interactive participation of students, the data illustrates that at 40 degree of freedom the critical table value ( $t_v=2.098$ ) was again found to be greater than the calculated t-value, thus the difference is not significant. It means that the non-interactive participation of students prior to the intervention was nearly similar. Like wise, at 40 degree of freedom the critical t-table value was found greater than the computed t-value for the use of interaction strategies category. Hence it can be said that the pre-training result discloses negligible instances of differences of the use of interactive strategies in both groups.

In summary, the pre observation results of students in the experimental and control groups indicate that there were no statistically significant differences in the overall participation, non-interactive participation and use of interaction strategies among students of both groups. This means students' group participation behaviors were nearly similar before the experiment with respect to these three variables.

#### **4.1.3. Independent Sample t-test of the Post-training Observations**

The main purpose of the post training observation was to check whether students' (both in the experimental and control groups) overall participation, non-interactive participation and the use of interaction strategies have shown differences after the treatment. Therefore, to judge these, statistical analyses, t-tests were computed on the post training results of the two groups. The finding is presented in the following table.

**Table 4. Means, S.D and t-values of participation and the use of interaction strategies for the Post observation results of the experimental vs. control groups.**

Group	Participation				Use of Interaction Strategies	
	Overall Participation		Non- interactive Participation		X	SD
	X	SD	X	SD		
Experimental	3.96	1.53	0.28	0.42	3.68	1.68
Control	3.81	1.96	3.54	1.62	0.27	045
t	*-0.14		**-9.24		***8.02	

\*p>0.5, \*\*p<0.05, \*\*\*p< 0.05

The value of t-table=2.098

As seen from Table 4 above, the post observation results in the overall participation of students in both groups show a 0.14 absolute value of t-calculated which is less than the value of t-critical (tv=2.098) with 40 degree of freedom. Hence the difference is statistically insignificant. This implies that the training did not bring statistically significant difference between the two groups of students' performance with regard to the category of overall participation.

The result, however, reveals that the absolute value of t-calculated for the non-interactive participation category (9.24) is grater than the critical table value (tv=2.098) with 40 degree of freedom. Moreover the computed t-value for the use of interaction strategies category is found to be grater than the critical table value at 40 degree of freedom. Therefore it can be concluded that there were statistically significant difference between the two groups of students' performances in the non-interactive participation and use of interaction strategies. This indicates that the students' non-interactive participation and their use of interaction strategies underwent changes in the course of the training

We can infer from the data interpreted above is that there were no statistical significant changes noticed between the tow groups (the experimental and control groups) of students in instances of overall participation as the result of the training. However, there were significant differences observed in the non-interactive participation behaviors and their use of interaction strategies due to the treatment administered.

#### **4.1.4. Paired Sample t-tests**

The data presented and interpreted in the preceding section reveals that there were no statistically significant differences in all categories in the pre training group discussions. The result on the post training group discussions, on the other hand, confirms that there were significant differences on the students' non-interactive participations and use of interaction strategies while no significant differences observed in the overall participation of the students after the training. Though the data clearly tell us the differences in students' participations and use of interaction strategies in the pre and post-training group discussions, it seems ambiguous since it hardly depicts which group (the experiment or control group) brought the differences. Therefore, to avoid the ambiguity and arrive at sound judgments, intra-group t-tests were performed (see Tables 5 and 6 below) on the students' pre and post training group discussion results.

##### **4.1.4.1. Paired Sample t-test of the Experimental Class**

To examine how significant the differences of participations and use of interaction strategies between the pre and post observations' results of the experimental group, t-tests were performed on their pre-and post discussion results and the figure is presented in the table below.

**Table 5. Means, S.D, t-values of participation and use of interaction strategies of the pre and post observations of the experimental group.**

Group	Observation	Participation				Interaction Strategy	
		Overall Participation		Non-interactive Participation		X	SD
		X	SD	X	SD		
Experimental	Pre	2.53	2.13	2.25	1.79	0.60	0.12
	Post	3.96	1.53	0.28	0.42	3.68	1.68
	t	*2.00		**-4.75		***9.40	

\*p>0.5, \*\*p<0.05, \*\*\*p< 0.05

The value of t-table =2.08

Table 5 above indicates that the calculated t-value for the overall participation of students in the experimental class is 2.00 with 21 degree of freedom this value is less than the critical t-value (tv=2.08). Hence the change is not significant. This implies that the overall participations of students in the experimental group in the pre and post training discussions did not show significant change. In other words, the training has brought no statistically significant difference on the overall participation of students in the experimental group.

The data further depicts that the absolute value of t-calculated for the non- interactive participation category is grater than the critical t-value with the said degree of freedom. Hence, the difference was found to be significant. Furthermore, there is a -1.97 mean difference between the post and pre training discussion of the students in this category. Thus, it can be safely said that, the non-interactive participation of students in the experimental class was higher in the pre training discussion than it was in the post training discussion.

For the use of interaction strategies category, the value of t-calculated was found to be 9.40 with the mean difference of 3.08. Since the t-calculated is greater than the critical table value (2.08), the difference is statistically significant. This implies that the training improved students' use of interaction strategies in the experimental group.

#### 4.1.4.2. Paired Sample t-tests of the Control Class

To see if there were significant differences on students' participations and use of interaction strategies in the control class before and after the training, t-tests were made on the results of the pre and post training discussions. The figure is presented in the table below.

**Table 6. Means, S.D and t-values of participation and use of interaction strategies in the pre and post observations of the control group.**

Group	Observation	Participation				Interaction Strategy	
		Overall Participation		Non-interactive Participation		X	SD
		X	SD	X	SD		
Control	Pre	3.07	2.21	2.80	2.28	0.31	0.49
	Post	3.81	1.96	3.54	1.62	0.27	0.45
	t	*1.41		**2.41		***0.27	

\*p>0.05, \*\*p<0.05, \*\*\*p>0.05

The value of t-table =2.09

The statistical analysis computed for the control class in table 5 above show that the difference registered under the pre and post training discussions for the overall participation category is insignificant. The t-calculated was found to be 1.41 and the value of t-table is 2.08 with 19 degree of freedom. This implies that the overall participation of students in the control class did not go significant change after the training.

The mean difference for the non-interactive participation of students in this class between the pre and post training discussions is 1.01. The computed t-value is 2.41 and the value of t-critical is 2,08 with 19 degree of freedom. Based on this, it can be said that the difference for this category after the training is significant. Therefore the experiment did not decrease the non-interactive participation of students in the control class.

Concerning the use of interaction strategies in the control class, the data in table 6 indicates that the difference is statistically insignificant. The calculated t-value is 0.27 and the value of t-critical is 2.08 with 19 degree of freedom. This means that the training did not bring significant change on students' use of interaction strategies in the control group.

## **4.2 Discussion**

The purpose of this study was to investigate the effect of training in the use of interaction strategies and participations amongst foreign language learners working together in small groups.

Although the training did not yield a statistically significant effect on the overall participation, the change recorded for the experimental group was greater than that recorded for the control group (see table1). The training also yields a statistically significant effect on the decrease of non-interactive participation in the experimental group. This indicates the fact that the treatment brings change in the quality of participation in the experimental group. Meaning students did not participate merely for the sake of participating, but did so in response to and in relation to issues raised by their peers triggered by the interaction strategy-based inputs. This specific kind of responses turned the students into better interactants.

As in presented and interpreted in the foregoing section, the findings of the study show that the difference observed between pre and post treatment behavior in the experimental group was significant in the use of interaction strategies and the decrease in the non-interactive participation. In the control group, on the other hand, a significant difference was observed in the non-interactive participations but no significant difference was observed between pre-and post- treatment behavior in the overall participations and use of interaction strategies, as was expected since they received no training in the use of interaction strategies. The fact that there were no significant differences between pre-and post- treatment data in the control group indicates that working in small group will not of itself, result in an increase in the use of interaction strategies. In other words, although the control group was engaged in identical group activities as the experimental group, despite the approach being covert, for the same period and by equally competent teachers, the students in the control group who were not made overtly aware of the existence of interaction strategies and the importance of their use did not change their behavior in these aspects.

Therefore, based on the discussions made so far, it can be concluded that, after controlling for initial differences, there were no significant difference observed between the two groups in the amount of overall participations. However significant differences were observed in the number of interaction strategies used and amount of non-interactive participation in the experiential and control group. In other words, the effect of the training is significant with respect to these two variables.

# **CHAPTER FIVE**

## **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **5.1 Conclusions**

Based on the findings interpreted and discussed in the preceding chapter, the following conclusions are made.

- Contrary to what one might expect, there is no statistically significant link between interaction strategy training and students' overall participation in EFL group discussion activities. In other words, interaction strategy training doesn't increase the quantity of overall students' talk in EFL small group discussions.
- It would seem that interaction strategy training decreases the non-interactive participation of students in EFL small group discussions. This means that such training improves the quality of students' interaction in EFL small group discussions.
- Explicit/direct interaction strategy training improves students' awareness of the benefits of interaction strategies in small group discussions and increases their use in the context of interactive works.

### **5.2 Recommendations**

As reviewed earlier in the literature relevant to the current study, to date, strategy training is considered as an instructional paradigm in language teaching pedagogy and noted to be integrated to every teacher's language

teaching program. Strategy training helps learners to become aware of the existence of communication as well as language learning strategies and provide them the notion why to use, when to use and how to use them in the course of their language learning process.

Accordingly, the results of the study were significant as regards the increase in the use of interaction strategies and decrease in the state of non-interactive participation by students in the experimental group. This can be an indication that students can be trained to use these strategies, that such training can result in the increased awareness of the benefits such strategies can provide, hence, enhancing their use. The result of this study also confirms that interaction strategies need to be learned before work. This enables students to carry out interaction and negotiation of meaning, which will then enable them to share more comprehensible input.

Therefore, language teachers and teacher educators in our context need to be aware of the importance of strategy training as a way of facilitating language teaching process and take the initiatives to propose, design and provide interaction strategy training to their students in order to enable them to negotiate meaning more successfully and improve the quality and quantity of their interaction in the target language. The result of acquisition and use of these strategies will turn the students into better interactant in small group setting.

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## **APPENDICES**

### ***APPENDIX I***

#### **Activities Provided for Students to Suggest their Interests for Pre- and Post Training Discussions**

1. The Federal Tourism Commission invites your group members to participate at a competition for one week visit at Bale mountain national park as guest visitor. If you like to be part of this exciting project, you have to decide on and submit a proposal which has at least five most important things that you are going to do during or after your visit.
2. Imagine that you have survived a plane crash in a desert with the following tools and limited survival rations; you must decide what to do.
  - Compass
  - Shoes
  - Clothes
  - books
  - Blanket
  - mobile phone
  - Camera
3. You will be given different pictures and your groups are to compare a story together and reach agreement.
4. Your College student council has recently managed to raise funds of 3000 birr for charity through the activities held during closing day of this academic semester. As a committee member of the council you are required to suggest ways on how to use the money wisely. Discuss which one of the following should benefit most from the funds rose.
  - HIV/AIDS infected people
  - An orphanage
  - Street children

- Old and retarded people
5. In your group you will find out the group members experience on his/her bad and good days.
  6. Assume that one of your group member want to start a campaign for the coming student council election. Discuss and list down very important points that the campaign should to focus on.
  7. In group think up a story about a robbery, or decide on a current news story that you would like to report. First make discuss and decide on and make a flow chart showing the sequence of events.
  8. Think what local people think about the idea of community discussion against HIV/ADIS and discuss what you would like to ask different individuals in the local community about HIV/AIDS if you were a reporter.
  9. You are a member of the local community council. The council is talking about environmental degradation and natural disasters. In your group suggest some ways on how individuals and local authorities can help to protect the environment.
  10. A new school is badly needed in your area. You are going prepare a speech on the subject. Discusses on the points that should be included in your speech.

\*\*Activity 4 is selected for the pre training discussion and activity 9 for post-training discussion.

## ***APPENDIX II***

### **Lessons Prepared for Interaction Strategy Training in the Experimental Group**

#### **Week one lesson one**

**Objectives:** raise students' awareness on the essence of interaction strategies.

#### **Week one lesson two:**

**Objectives:** reinforcing lesson one and conducting further discussion and reflections on the value of on interaction strategies.

#### **Week one lesson three**

**Topic:** training on participating, turn taking.

**Objectives:** dealing with the importance of turn taking in group discussion and practicing turn taking strategies.

#### ***Students' practice***

Name of the Activity:           Coins

Strategy:                           Participation, Turn taking

Aim:                                The purpose of this activity is to help students become aware of their own participation in the group and that of other member of the group. This is done by using a coin to represent each time they talk when a member participates in the group discussion.

The classis divided in to groups of five to six students. Each group is given a bag of 20 coins. The students are told to put a coin in the middle of the table each time they talk when a member of the group has used up all his/her coins the discussion stops. Group members' names are listed on the tally sheet together with the number of coins each student was left with.

### **Students' practice**

1. Work in group of four to five
2. Take 20 minutes to prepare for the topic below

*The national tourism commission invites group members to spend a week at Bale Mountain National Park. If you want to be part of this exciting journey you have to submit a detailed proposal which describes the whole thing that you want to do there and the benefit you expect to gain from the visit as a student.*

3. Discuss the topic in your groups. Remember that your group should try to reach a decision about what should be included in your group proposal

The teacher discusses the result on the tally sheet with each group focusing on questions such as “why are some students left with only a few coins while others have most of their coins over?” and “what could be done in order to allow for a more equal use of coins?”

### **Follow-up Discussion**

With the entire class, the teacher discusses the importance of the awareness of letting all member of the group participate:

Dominant members (those whose coins were used up first) have to become aware of the need to let others participate and to learn skills to help encourage others to participate in the discussion. The students who hardly talked (those who had almost all of their 20 coins left) need to be aware that they are in fact not contributing to the group activity. They need to learn skills which will help them to participate in the discussion. In order for them to be meaningful communication in the group, students need to learn how to interact with one another to promote maximum and equal participation there by enabling them to carry out the group task successfully.

### **Weeks two lesson four**

**Objectives:** student practice on turn taking strategy.

**Activity:** Bearing in mind the points brought up in the discussion in lesson three above with the teacher, the group holds another discussion activity, using the same procedure as described above. The students are told to pay attention to how many coins each member is using.

#### ***Students' practice***

1. Work in group of four to five
2. Take 20 minutes to prepare for the topic below

*A new school is badly needed in your area. You are going to prepare a speech on the subject.*

3. In your groups, discuss and decide on the point that should be included in your speech.

The group members, together with the teacher compare the tallies of the two discussions and the difference in the results. The teacher then elicits explanation of these differences and attempts to heighten students' awareness of the fact that when there was a more equal use of the coins, the group discussion was more coherent and cohesive.

### **Week two lesson five**

**Objectives;** student practice on turn taking strategies

**Activity:** arrange students in groups of four to five give them a topic and tell them discuss.

#### ***Students' practice***

1. Work in group of four to five
2. Take 20 minutes to prepare for the topic below

*In group think up a story about a robbery, or decide on a current news story that you would like to report. First discuss and decide on and make a flow chart showing the sequence of events.*

3. Discuss the activity in group. Remember that your group should reach to a decision on the flow of the story.

During the discussion, go round the class and check whether the students practice turn taking strategies and take notes on the performance of each group which will later help for the reflection session.

### **Week two lesson six**

**Objectives:** reinforcing lessons three, four and five and conducting further discussion and reflection on turn taking strategy and the students' performance on the previous activities.

**Activity:** explain the students that turn taking strategy is an important interaction strategy which help them take active participation in group discussion activities. Ask them to reflect what they have learned from the above activities and evaluate their turn taking strategy knowledge and practice after the training.

### **Week three lesson seven**

**Topic:** training on participating by asking for repletion, clarification and confirmation

**Objectives:** students practice on participation in group activities effectively by asking for clarification, confirmation and repletion

### ***Students' practice***

**Name of activity:**

**Red cards**

**Strategy:**

**Asking for repetition, clarification and confirmation**

**Aim:** To help students practice participation in group activities effectively. The activity requires attentive listening from the members who are not talking and have to try to ask for repetition, clarification and confirmation whenever they come across ideas, concepts, words, expressions or sentences which are not made clear by the speaker.

The teacher introduces the phrases below to students and tells them that they can use the phrases whenever they do not hear properly or understand what has been said by the speaker during discussions. Brainstorms for other phrases the students have used or come across. Explains each phrase to students, request students to write them out and say it out loud with the correct intonation. Emphasize the importance of peer support and cooperative behavior.

*Seeking clarification, repetition and confirmation*

- Do you mean that....
- So you are saying that.....
- You think that....
- Sorry, but I don't quite understand
- Sorry, could you repeat that please?
- Sorry could you say that again, please?

Two pairs of students sit around a desk students 1 and 2 are given red cards students 3 and 4 are given a role play situation to act out. While students 3 and 4 act out their role play, students 1 and 2 listen when ever student 1 or 2 hear something not clear, he/she holds up the red card. This signifies to students 3 and 4 to stop talking students 1 or 2 then ask for clarification, repetition or confirmation. When students 3 and 4 have completed the role play, the pairs switch talks and student 1 and 2 acts out a new role play and students 3 and 4 become the listeners.

### ***Students' practice***

1. Work in group of four to five
2. Take 20 minutes to prepare for the topic below

*In your group you are going to play a role and this table (students will be given a table to be filled with information gained from the role play). The activity will be done in pairs. Hence there will be two pairs in each group. In pairs one of you will talk about his/her good and bad days as an interviewee and the other student will complete the table. Finally you will exchange turns.*

### **Follow –up Discussion**

With the entire class, the teacher discusses the importance of participating in discussion through asking repetition, clarification and confirmation.

### **Week three lesson eight**

**Objectives:** practicing participation through asking for clarification, repetition and confirmation

**Activity:** provide students another role play situation and tell them to follow the same procedure described above

### ***Students' practice***

1. Work in group of four to five
2. Take 20 minutes to prepare for the topic below

*In your groups you will be given four information sheets about four different African countries (one for each student with in the group).and you will be also given another sheet to be completed in the activity. Then each of you will take 10 minutes and prepare a speech about the country described on n your sheet and introduce the country to your group members. While one*

*student presents the rest group members have to complete their sheets. Finally all members should do the same.*

### **Week three lesson nine**

**Topic:** reflection and self evaluation on participation through asking for clarification, repletion and confirmation strategy training.

**Objectives:** reinforcing lessons seven and eight conducting further discussion and reflection on participations through asking for clarification repletion and confirmation strategy and evaluate students' performance on the previous activities.

**Activity:** explain the students that this specific strategy is very important because it help them take active participation in group discussion activities. Ask them to reflect what they have learned in the activities and let them evaluate their performances on participation by asking for repletion, clarification and repetition strategies.

### **Week four lesson ten:**

**Topic:** training on directing interaction by asking for agreement and disagreement and asking for opinion.

#### **Name of the activity: Champion**

**Activity:** introduce the phrases below to students. Brainstorm for other phrases they have used or come across. Request students to write them out and say it out loud with the correct intonation.

#### *Directing interaction*

- What about you?
- What do you think?
- What is your opinion on this matter?
- How about you?
- Do you agree to this?

The purpose of this activity is to help students become aware of directing interaction in group discussion activities. The activity requires students to notice other members of the group who are not actively participating in the discussion and notice break downs.

### ***Students' practice***

*In their groups all members of the group are given papers with five boxes written on. The groups are then given a topic to discuss. During discussion each member within the group should take responsibility of directing interaction by asking for agreement, disagreement and opinion. Each time when a member asks for opinion, agreement and disagreement he/she puts 'X' mark on the box, when the discussion ends, the teacher adds up the crosses marked by each member in each group and write the results on the board and declares the group with high mark as champion of the class.*

### **Week four lesson eleven**

**Objective:** training on directing interaction

**Activity:** follow up discussion

With the entire class, the teacher discusses the importance of directing interaction in group discussion. Those groups which scored high marks in the previous discussion used more interaction directing strategies than those which scored less. This indicates that there were more interaction breaks in the groups with fewer marks. Hence, directing interaction helps them minimize the breaks in their group discussion and promote maximum participation.

Bearing in mind the above discussion, students perform another discussion following the same procedure.

## ***Students' practice***

1. Work in group of four to five
2. Take 20 minutes to prepare for the topic below

*Some people say that "Africa will stay poor for many years to come."*

3. Discusses on this point in your group and try to share your views

### **Week four lesson twelve:**

**Objectives:** reflection and further discussion on lesson ten and eleven

**Activity:** the teacher holds a discussion by comparing students' performances results of the previous two lessons on directing interaction. he asks questions like 'why the groups result did not show improvement?' 'what students should do to direct interaction?' then lets students reflect and evaluate their performances.

### **Week four lesson thirty**

**Objectives:** training on responding strategies

**Activity:** introduce the phrases below to students. Brainstorm for other phrases they have used or come across. Request students to write them out and say it out loud with the correct intonation.

#### ***Agreement***

- I agree with you
- Yes, that is a good idea
- Alright, I accept your suggestion
- your suggestion sounds good
- you're right

### ***Disagreement***

- I'm sorry, but I don't agree with that
- I'm sorry, I don't think that all work
- No, I'm afraid I don't see it your way
- No, I can't accept that
- I beg to differ

I think it could better if we tried something different.

### ***Students' practice***

The purpose of the following activity is to help students be aware of the importance of participating in discussion by giving appropriate responses. The activity requires students to be fully engaged in the discussion. The groups will be given a picture and asked to describe it together with ten pieces of rolled papers which has descriptive sentences inside a box. The box will be put at the middle of the table. Members then discuss and try to describe the picture for five minutes. After five minutes, they stop talking and one member takes one pieces from the box and reads it loud to one of the student in the group randomly, the student who is being asked should respond whether he/she agree on the description and takes a turn and picks up one pieces and ask any one in the group. The activity goes on in the same fashion.

### **Week five lesson fourteen:**

**Objectives:** training on responding strategies

**Activity:** follow up discussion

With the entire class the teacher discusses the importance of responding in discussions and the impact of the previous activity. Bearing in mind the above discussion students perform another discussion following the same procedure.

### ***Students' practice***

*One of your group members will act as a tourist guide and the rest three of you will play as visitors. The guide will be given pictures of the rock hewn churches of Lalibela. Ask him/her different questions about the site.*

#### **Week six lesson sixteen:**

**Objectives:** reflection and further discussion on lesson thirteen and fourteen

**Activity:** the teacher discusses the importance of responding in a discussion and lets students reflect on and evaluate their performances in the previous activities.

#### **Week six lesson seventeen:**

**Objectives:** enhancing revising and monitoring activities on interaction strategies

### ***Students' activities***

Two groups of students will be given a topic to discuss. The other two groups will be given an observation tally sheet. When group one members discuss the point, group two members will carefully follow the discussion and complete the observation tally sheet. At the end of the discussion, the teacher collects the tally sheets analyses the results and holds discussion with the students regarding the interaction strategies used and asks questions like which strategies were used in the discussion and which one would have been used better.

*Assume that one of your group member want to start a campaign for the coming student council election. Discuss and list dawn very important points that the campaign should to focus on.*

**Week six lesson eighteen:**

**Objectives:** enhancing, revising and monitoring students' use of interaction strategies

***Students' practice***

Will Follow the same procedures of lesson seventeen, the groups which observers now were become observed and visversal.

*What facilities does the English department in here need to upgrade the most? Discuss and forward ideas in your group*

## PENDIX 3

### Lessons Prepared for Interaction Strategy Training in the Control Class

#### Week one lesson one

**Topic:** Journey to Bale Mountain Nation Park

**Objectives:** students practice on turn taking strategy

**Activity:** arrange students in group of four to five give them a topic and tell them to discuss in group.

#### *Students' practice*

1. Work in group of four to five
2. Take 20 minutes to prepare for the topic below

*The national tourism commission invites group members to spend a week at Bale Mountain National Park. If you want to be part of this exciting journey you have to submit a detailed proposal which describes the whole thing that you want to do there and the benefit you expect to gain from the visit as a student.*

3. Discuss the topic in your groups. Remember that your group should try to reach a decision about what should be included in your group proposal.

#### Week one lesson two

**Topic:** discussion

**Objectives:** students' practice on turn taking strategy

**Activity:** arrange students in group of four to five give them a topic and tell them to discuss in group.

#### *Students' practice*

1. Work in group of four to five

2. Take 20 minutes to prepare for the topic below

*A new school is badly needed in your area. You are going to prepare a speech on the subject.*

3. In your groups, discuss and decide on the point that should be included in your speech.

### **Week one lesson three**

**Topic:** sequencing a story

**Objectives:** students' practice on turn taking strategy

**Activity:** arrange students in group of four to five give them a topic and tell them to discuss in group.

#### ***Students' practice***

1. Work in group of four to five
2. Take 20 minutes to prepare for the topic below

*In group think up a story about a robbery, or decide on a current news story that you would like to report. First discuss and decide on and make a flow chart showing the sequence of events.*

3. Discuss the activity in group. Remember that your group should reach to a decision on the flow of the story.

### **Week two lesson one**

**Topic:** Bad days and Good days

**Objectives:** students' practice on asking for clarification, repletion and confirmation

**Activity:** arrange students in group of four to five give them a topic and tell them to discuss in group.

### ***Students' practice***

1. Work in group of four to five
2. Take 20 minutes to prepare for the topic below

*In your group you are going to play a role and this table (students will be given a table to be filled with information gained from the role play). The activity will be done in pairs. Hence there will be two pairs in each group. In pairs one of you will talk about his/her good and bad days as an interviewee and the other student will complete the table. Finally you will exchange turns.*

### **Week two lesson two**

**Topic:** presentation

**Objectives:** students' practice on asking for clarification, repletion and confirmation

**Activity:** arrange students in group of four to five give them a topic and tell them to discuss in group.

### ***Students' practice***

1. Work in group of four to five
2. Take 20 minutes to prepare for the topic below

*In your groups you will be given four information sheets about four different African countries (one for each student with in the group).and you will be also given another sheet to be completed in the activity. Then each of you will take 10 minutes and prepare a speech about the country described on n your sheet and introduce the country to your group members. While one student presents the rest group members have to complete their sheets. Finally all members should do the same.*

### **Week two lesson three**

**Topic:** information exchange

**Objectives:** students' practice on asking for clarification, repletion and confirmation

**Activity:** arrange students in group of four to five give them a topic and tell them to discuss in group.

#### ***Students' practice***

1. Work in group of four to five
2. Take 20 minutes to prepare for the topic below

*Assume that you are in a plane and the flight coordinator reads you the entire flight program. You are given different missions to be completed at fixed time. Listen carefully and arrange your program accordingly.*

### **Week three lesson four**

**Topic:** discussion

**Objectives:** students' practice on directing interaction by asking for opinion, agreement and disagreement

**Activity:** arrange students in group of four to five give them a topic and tell them to discuss in group.

#### ***Students' practice***

1. Work in group of four to five
2. Take 20 minutes to prepare for the topic below

*Some people say that "Africa will stay poor for many years to come."*

3. Discusses on this point in your group and try to share your views.

**Week three lesson five****Topic:** discussion**Objectives:** students' practice on directing interaction by asking for opinion, agreement and disagreement**Activity:** arrange students in group of four to five give them a topic and tell them to discuss in group.***Students' practice***

1. Work in group of four to five
2. Take 20 minutes to prepare for the topic below  
*"Men are superior to women."*
3. What do you think about the above sentence? Discuss the point in your groups try to share ideas.

**Week three lesson six****Topic:** discussion**Objectives:** students' practice on directing interaction by asking for opinion, agreement and disagreement**Activity:** arrange students in group of four to five give them a topic and tell them to discuss in group.***Students' practice***

1. Work in group of four to five
2. Take 20 minutes to prepare for the topic below  
*"Good teaching skill is an inborn quality."*
3. What do you think about the above sentence? Discuss the point in your groups try to share ideas.

### **Week four lesson seven**

**Topic:** picture description

**Objectives:** students' practice on responding strategies

**Activity:** arrange students in group of four to five give them a topic and tell them to discuss in group.

#### ***Students' practice***

1. Work in group of four to five
2. Take 20 minutes to prepare for the topic below

*Look at this picture. It can be interpreted in to different ways. How do you describe it? Is your description similar with others? Have discussions.*

### **Week four lesson eight**

**Topic:** picture description

**Objectives:** students' practice on responding strategies

**Activity:** arrange students in group of four to five give them a topic and tell them to discuss in group.

#### ***Students' practice***

1. Work in group of four to five
2. Take 20 minutes to prepare for the topic below

*Look at this picture it can be described differently. Tell your description to the group ask different questions regarding your description and decide on one agreed description as of your group.*

### **Week four lesson nine**

**Topic:** role play

**Objectives:** students' practice on responding strategies

**Activity:** arrange students in group of four to five give them a topic and tell them to discuss in group.

### ***Students' practice***

1. Work in group of four to five
2. Take 20 minutes to prepare for the topic below

*One of your group members will act as a tourist guide and the rest three of you will play as visitors. The guide will be given pictures of the rock hewn churches of Lalibela. Ask him/her different questions about the site.*

### **Week five lesson ten**

**Topic:** discussion

**Objectives:** students' practice on group discussions

**Activity:** arrange students in group of four to five give them a topic and tell them to discuss in group.

### ***Students' practice***

1. Work in group of four to five
2. Take 20 minutes to prepare for the topic below

*What are the qualities of good teacher?*

3. Discuss the topic in your groups. Remember that your group should reach agreement on the qualities of good teacher.

### **Week five lesson eleven**

**Topic:** discussion

**Objectives:** students' practice on group discussions

**Activity:** arrange students in group of four to five give them a topic and tell them to discuss in group.

### ***Students' practice***

1. Work in group of four to five
2. Take 20 minutes to prepare for the topic below

*Imagine that you have survived a plane crash in a desert with the following tools and limited survival rations.*

- *Compass*
- *Clothes*
- *Lap top computer*
- *Blanket*
- *Camera*
- *mobile phone*
- *mobile phone*
- *shoes*

3. Discuss and decide what to do

### **Week five lesson twelve**

**Topic:** discussion

**Objectives:** students' practice on group discussions

**Activity:** arrange students in group of four to five give them a topic and tell them to discuss in group.

### ***Students' practice***

1. Work in group of four to five
2. Take 20 minutes to prepare for the topic below

*Assume that one of your group member want to start a campaign for the coming student council election. Discuss and list dawn very important points that the campaign should to focus on.*

**Week six lesson thirteen**

**Topic:** discussion

**Objectives:** students' practice on group discussions

**Activity:** arrange students in group of four to five give them a topic and tell them to discuss in group.

*What facilities does the English department in here need to upgrade the most? Discuss and forward ideas in your group*

**APPENDIX IV**

**An Observation Tally Sheet Prepared for Rating the Pre and Post Observation Records of the Experimental Control Classes.**

**Group** \_\_\_\_\_

**Observation session** \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Students' Code</b>	<b>Categories</b>			<b>O V E R A L L</b>
	Category 1 Non-interactive participation	Category 2 Interactive participation ( use of Interaction strategies)		
	Non-Interactive participation	Participating by asking for repletion, clarification or confirmation	Directing interaction by asking for opinion, agreement and disagreement	
Ecs/ Ccs 1				
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				
5.				
6.				
7.				
8.				
9.				
10.				
11.				
12.				
13.				
14.				
15.				
16.				
17.				
18.				
19.				
20.				
21.				
22.				
<b>Total</b>				

**APPENDIX V**

**Results of Pre and Post Observation Results of the Experimental and Control Groups**

**Table 1a and b: Experimental Group Results of Pre and Post Observations**

Student(Ecs)	a. Frequency of Pre-observation		
	Non interactive Par	Interactive Partic.	Overall Partic.
1	1.80	0	1.80
2	3.60	0.90	4.50
3	0	0	0
4	3.60	0.90	4.50
5	0	0.90	0.90
6	2.70	0	2.70
7	2.70	0.90	3.60
8	3.60	0	3.60
9	1.80	1.80	3.60
10	0	0	0
11	5.40	0	5.40
12	4.50	1.80	6.30
13	0.90	0	0.90
14	4.50	0	4.50
15	0	0.90	0.90
16	5.40	0	5.40
17	0	0	0
18	0.90	1.80	0
19	0.90	0	0
20	1.80	1.80	1.80
21	2.70	0	2.70
22	2.70	0	2.70
<b>Total F</b>	<b>47.1</b>	<b>9.9</b>	<b>57</b>
	<b>b. Frequency of post observation</b>		
1	0	1.80	1.80
2	0	4.50	4.50
3	0.90	4.50	5.40
4	0	3.60	3.60
5	0.90	3.60	4.50
6	0	4.50	4.50
7	0.90	1.80	2.70
8	0	3.60	3.60
9	0	5.40	5.40
10	0	3.60	3.60
11	0.90	0	0.90
12	0	5.40	5.40
13	0	0.90	0.90
14	0	6.30	6.30
15	0	3.60	3.60
16	0	3.60	3.60
17	0.90	4.50	5.40
18	0.90	2.70	4.50
19	0	6.30	6.30
20	0	5.40	1.80
21	0.90	1.80	2.70
22	0	3.60	3.60
<b>Total F</b>	<b>6.9</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>86.9</b>

**Table 2a and b: Control Group Results of Pre and Post Observations**

Student(Cs)	a. Frequency of Pre-observation		
	Non interactive Par	Interactive Partic.	Overall Partic.
1	2.10	0	2.10
2	4.20	0	4.20
3	3.15	1.50	4.20
4	1.05	0	1.05
5	1.05	1.50	2.10
6	0	2.10	2.10
7	3.15	0	3.15
8	4.20	0	4.20
9	3.15	0	3.15
10	5.25	0	5.25
11	1.05	0	1.05
12	3.15	0	3.15
13	2.10	0	2.10
14	4.20	0	4.20
15	0	0	0
16	8.90	0	8.90
17	0	1.05	1.05
18	4.20	0	4.20
19	5.25	0	5.25
20	0	2.10	2.10
<b>Total F</b>	<b>51.4</b>	<b>7.9</b>	<b>57.9</b>
	b. Frequency of post observation		
1	2.10	0	2.10
2	6.30	1.05	7.35
3	2.10	0	2.10
4	5.25	1.05	6.30
5	2.10	0	2.10
6	4.20	0	4.20
7	6.30	1.05	7.35
8	5.25	0	5.25
9	3.15	0	3.15
10	2.10	0	2.10
11	5.25	1.05	6.30
12	3.15	0	3.15
13	6.30	1.05	7.35
14	1.05	1.05	2.10
15	4.20	0	4.20
16	3.15	0	3.15
17	4.20	0	4.20
18	2.10	0	2.10
19	3.15	0	3.15
20	5.25	0	5.25
<b>Total F</b>	<b>81.9</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>90.9</b>