

ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES

**CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES OF TEACHING
SIGNED AFAN OROMO IN CASE OF SEBETA SPECIAL
NEEDS EDUCATION TEACHERS' COLLEGE**

BY:

FIKRTE SHIFERAW

JUNE, 2014

ADDIS ABABA

ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES OF TEACHING
SIGNED AFAN OROMO IN CASE SEBETA SPECIAL NEEDS
EDUCATION TEACHERS' COLLEGE

BY:

FIKRTE SHIFERAW

This thesis is submitted to the Department of Special Needs
Education in partial fulfillment of the requirements for MA Degree
in Special Needs Education

June, 2014

Addis Ababa

ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES

**CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES OF TEACHING
SIGNED AFAN OROMO AT SEBETA SPECIAL NEEDS
EDUCATION TEACHERS' COLLEGE**

BY:

FIKRTE SHIFERAW

Approval of the Board of Examiners

1. Advisor

Name _____ Signature _____ Date _____

2. Internal Examiner

Name _____ Signature _____ Date _____

3. External Examiner _____ Signature _____ Date _____

Name _____ Signature _____ Date _____

Acknowledgements

First of all, I would like to thank the almighty God. Then, my deep appreciation and heartfelt thanks go to my advisor, Dr. Tilahun Achaw, who has given me the insight into my research work and showed me the direction to carry it on. I also like to thank him for his unreserved critical and constructive support throughout the research process.

I thank SSNETC for its material support.

I thank members of Eth SL departments, especially Ato Pawlos Kasu and Ato Kidane Admasu, for their invaluable contribution during the preparation of this research.

I am appreciative to Ato Tewodros Taddese, and Wondesen Ayinalem who helped me on the class room observation and data collection.

I also thanks to my friends and all participants in both the pilot and the main research for their full participation and support during data collection,

Moreover, would like to thank Ato Jamal A/Qadir and Teshome Negasa who had gave me constructive idea during this study.

My special and biggest thank go to my family, without their support, encouragement and patience that this thesis would not have been completed

Finally, sincere gratitude goes to my husband Ato Mulugeta Hayile who encouraged me continuously in my studies.

Table of content

Contents	Page
Acknowledgment	i
Table of content	ii
List of figure	v
Acronyms and Abbreviation	vi
Abstract	vii
Chapter One	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Introduction.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
1.1 Background of the Study	Error! Bookmark not defined.
1.2 Statement of the problem	Error! Bookmark not defined.
1.3 Objectives of the study.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
1.3 Significance of the Study	Error! Bookmark not defined.
1.4. The Scope of the Study	Error! Bookmark not defined.
1.5 Limitations of the Study.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
1.6 Organization of the Thesis	Error! Bookmark not defined.
1.7. Definition of key terms	Error! Bookmark not defined.
CHAPTER TWO	Error! Bookmark not defined.
REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE	Error! Bookmark not defined.
2. Introduction.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
2.1. History of Sign Language	Error! Bookmark not defined.
2.2. History of Ethiopian Sign Language (EthSL).....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
2.3. Methods of communication in the Education of Deaf Children	Error! Bookmark not defined.
2.3.1 Auditory-Oral Methods.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
2.3.2 Total Communication Methods	Error! Bookmark not defined.

2.3.3 Bilingual by cultural Communication	Error! Bookmark not defined.
2.3.4. Signed Spoken Language.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
2.3.5. Home Sign	Error! Bookmark not defined.
2.4. Components of Sign Language (SL).....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
2.4.1. Spatial Grammar and Simultaneity	Error! Bookmark not defined.
2.4.2. Classifiers.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
2.4.3. Non manual Features	Error! Bookmark not defined.
2.4.4. Manual Signs	Error! Bookmark not defined.
2.4.5. Fingerspelling	Error! Bookmark not defined.
2.5. Variation in Sign Language	Error! Bookmark not defined.
2.6. Challenge of Teaching Sign Language	Error! Bookmark not defined.
2.6.1. Effective ways of Teaching and Learning Sign Language	Error! Bookmark not defined.
2.6.2. Teacher’s Qualifications and Responsibilities	Error! Bookmark not defined.
2.6.3. Assistive technology and Material availability	Error! Bookmark not defined.
2.6.4. Classroom Organizations	Error! Bookmark not defined.
2.6.5. Teaching Sign Languages as a Second Language.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
2.7. Opportunities of Teaching Ethiopian Sign Language.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
2.7.1. Accessibility.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
2.7.2. Interpreting	Error! Bookmark not defined.
CHAPTER THREE	Error! Bookmark not defined.
METHOD	Error! Bookmark not defined.
3.1 Participants of the Study	Error! Bookmark not defined.
3.2 Instruments.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
3.4 Ethical consideration.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
3.5 Procedures of Data Collection	Error! Bookmark not defined.
3.6 Method of Data Analysis	Error! Bookmark not defined.

ChapterFour	Error! Bookmark not defined.
4. Findings.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
4.1 General information	Error! Bookmark not defined.
4.2 Challenges related to teaching EthSL at SSNETC	Error! Bookmark not defined.
4.3 Challenges related to learning EthSL.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
4.4. Challenges related to curriculum of EthSL.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
4.5. Challenges related with teachinglearning materials.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
4.6 Challenges related to method of communication used to teach EthSL	Error! Bookmark not defined.
4.6 Opportunities related to learning EthSL	Error! Bookmark not defined.
4.8 Some suggestions given from EthSL instructors and student respondents to improve.....	Error!
Bookmark not defined.	
Chapter 5	Error! Bookmark not defined.
5. Discussion	Error! Bookmark not defined.
5.1 Overall Situation	Error! Bookmark not defined.
5.2 The major challenges related to teaching of EthSL at SSNETC.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
5.3 Major challenges related to learning of EthSL at SSNETC	Error! Bookmark not defined.
5.4Major challenges related to curriculum of EthSL at SSNETC	Error! Bookmark not defined.
5.5. Major challenges related to availability of materials at SSNETC	Error! Bookmark not defined.
5.6Available opportunitiesto learn EthSL at SSNETC	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Chapter six	Error! Bookmark not defined.
6. Summary Conclusion and recommendation	Error! Bookmark not defined.
6.1 Summary.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
6.2 Conclusion	Error! Bookmark not defined.
6.3 Recommendations	Error! Bookmark not defined.

Reference

Appendix

list of figures

Fig. 1 Shows Change in hand movement and placement that change signs' meanings.....	16
Fig.2 Variation in Sign but the same representation.....	20
Figure 3. Demonstrations of Sign language class room	26
Fig.5. Illustrates Sign language class room when students learn from a film (Keith & Cagle, 2011).....	27
Fig. 4. Demonstrations of Sign language class room during pair work.....	28

List of Tables

Table 1: Challenges related to learning SAO	Error! Bookmark not defined.	1
Table 2: Relevance of SL modules used in the college Curriculum at SSNETC		44
Table 3: Availability of materials for teaching SAO at the college....	Error! Bookmark not defined.	5
Table 4: Availability of materials for teaching SAO at the college.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.	7
Table 5: Opportunities given to the trainees to participate in SAO in different activities.....	Error!	

Bookmark not defined.

Acronyms and Abbreviations

AA	Addis Ababa University
ASL	American Sign Language
BS	British Sign Language
CRP	Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities
Eth SL	Ethiopian sign language
EFA	Education for All
ENAD	Ethiopian National Association of Deaf
HI	Hearing Impaired
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
SAO	Signed Afan Oromo
SL	Sign Language
SSNETC	Sebeta Special Needs Education Teachers college
SNE	Special Needs Education
TV	Television
UN	United Nation
WFD	World Federation of the Deaf

Abstract

Sign Language is a natural language used as a method of communication for deaf people in their day to day activities; Signed Spoken Language is also the other method of communication commonly used in our country to teach children with hearing impairment. The purpose of this study was to investigate the challenges and opportunities of teaching Signed Afan Oromo in the case of SSNETC. To carry out the study, relevant literature review was made, and four tools of data gathering were employed. These were questionnaire for 3rd year SNE students, interview for SAO instructors, SL class observation and document analysis. The results of the study indicate that the teaching-learning of SAO in the college has been hindered by serious challenges, the opening of the college, enrolment of deaf trainees are the main opportunity to learn SAO. Based on the findings it is possible to conclude that if the trainees couldn't communicate effectively using Sign Language, it is difficult to them to give quality education and necessary support for deaf children at the grassroots level. Sebeta Special Needs Education Teachers' College should give attention to SL teaching and facilitate training for all SL instructors.

Chapter One

Introduction

1.1 Background of the Study

Sign language is a language without speech; it involves the signers to use all possible body movements, including facial expressions and movements of the hands. As Endale (2005:19) observed Sign Language (SL) is the most structured and complex natural human language'. It emerges wherever there is a community of communicators. SL has its own grammar independent from that of spoken language.

Because of difference in culture, there are many different Sign Languages used by Deaf Communities throughout the world. This includes American Sign Language (ASL), British Sign Language (BSL), Ethiopian Sign Language (EthSL) and so on. Sign Language (EthSL) is used for communication by members of Deaf communities. SL users can discuss wide range of topics like the users of spoken languages. They make signs by gesturing, with their fingers, hands and arms (Endale, 2005).

As to its development, Fitsum (2011) noted that, with the exception of some regions, EthSL is a rapidly developing language in Deaf community in Ethiopia. The existence of more sign language users and more sign communities is being recognized, for its vital role in educational, political, economic and social life of the Deaf community. Endale (2005) further stated that nowadays SL is accepted as a medium of communication for the deaf at regular classroom and for daily communication.

Like other languages, having national standard, EthSL has been using at primary level since 1956 in Ethiopia (ENAD, 2008, Eyasu, 2012). Currently, teachers' colleges such as Adwa, Debre Birihan, Sebeta and Hosana offer the signed spoken language as a course. Especially, Sebeta Special Needs Education Teachers College offers Signed Afan Oromo (SAO) for all of its trainees taking Special Needs Education course as major or minor field of study. On top of this, Addis Ababa University tries to offer EthSL in BA program. Currently, there is an interpreter of signed language at the forum of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia House of Representatives. In addition, the Ethiopian Television has currently included the EthSL service in its program. Members of Ethiopian Deaf community consider this development as a recognition given to their identity. But there are still challenges that need special attention in the process of training SA.

1.2 Statement of the problem

According to UNESCO, 2000; Solomon, 2005; Pawlos, 2008 children especially who were born with severe or profound deafness from non-signing hearing parents lag behind in developing language skills. These children need teachers with relevant knowledge and skills of SL. Because it is helpful to teach and communicate with deaf students in SL.

Sebeta Special Needs Education Teachers College is offering SAO as a course of study for all trainees. It is assumed that trainees who take SAO as a course at the college, can teach sign language and can be an interpreter to deaf students in an inclusive classroom. The trainees receive the SAO course for three consecutive semesters in two credits. It is believed that they could develop the language, understand culture, diversity, and talents of Deaf community and would have opportunities to be a teacher of children with hearing impairment.

However, from the researcher's little observation it seems that the trainees are not competent enough to communicate properly in the language. The researcher observed this problem while she is working in the college. Accordingly, this research attempts to investigate the existing challenges and opportunities of teaching SAO and recommend possible solutions that can help to improve SAO teaching learning process at Sebeta Special Needs Education Teachers' College. The study, therefore, sought answers to the following research questions:

1. What are the major challenges related to teaching – learning of SAO at SSNETS?
2. What are the major challenges related to curriculum of SAO at SSNETC?
3. What are the opportunities to learn SAO?

1.3 Objectives of the study

The general objective of this study was to investigate the challenges and opportunities of teaching SAO at Sebeta Special Needs Education Teachers' College.

1.3 Significance of the Study

This study attempted to investigate the prevailing challenges in the teaching and learning process of SAO. It is expected that such kind of study provides some insights which might have good implications for improvement of SAO at SSNETC. Accordingly, this study would contribute significant information on the following issues. First of all, it provides some insights in an attempt to identify the factors considered in improving SAO in the college. Also, the findings would contribute some information for alleviating challenges in SAO areas; and the finding might stimulate further investigation in the area.

1.4. The Scope of the Study

The scope of the study was limited to Sebeta Special Needs Education Teachers' College. It was also limited to identifying the challenges and available opportunities in training SAO at the college. The study did not cover the linguistic and the structural part of the Ethiopian Sign Language.

1.5 Organization of the Thesis

The study is organized into five chapters. Chapter one is the introductory part which includes background of the study, statement of the problem, objectives, significance of the study, limitation and delimitation of the study. Chapter two provides literature review on the acquisition and training of SAO. The methodology of the study is presented in three. Chapter four presents the data analysis and findings while chapter five summarizes the major findings, conclusions and recommendation of the study.

1.6. Definition of key terms

Bilingualism: is an approach to education of deaf children which uses both sign language of the Deaf community and the written spoken language of hearing community (Ladd, 2003).

Curriculum: Curriculum in this study it indicates that the course catalog and modules used to Teach SAO course in the college curriculum.

Deaf Community: comprises those deaf and hard of hearing individuals who share a common experience and values, and common way of interacting with each other, and with hearing peoples

Deaf Culture: Includes many deaf and hearing people who have made their spot in the deaf and hard of hearing community.

Ethiopian Sign Language: the natural language used by members of Ethiopian Deaf community, a language that has developed naturally over time among a community of users and that exhibits all features of a language (ENAD, 2008).

Home Sign: According to Marschark (1997) is a central concern for families who have children with deaf and hard of hearing.

Opportunities: in this study the term opportunities is used to show a chance or a situations given to students at SSNETC to learn and improve their SAO communication skill at the college.

Oral method: an educational system imposed on Deaf communities' worldwide during the last 120 years which removed Deaf educators, Deaf communities and their sign languages from the Deaf Education system (Ladd, 2003).

Resource room: in this study resource room is a separate, remedial classroom in which SL Trainees got additional assistance as an individuals or in groups.

Signed Afan Oromo: is the manual representation of Afan Oromo word for word, using signs following Afan Oromo grammar.

Total communication method: is a philosophy which encouraged the use of which ever forms of Communication where deemed appropriate for the individual Deaf child (Ladd, 2003).

In the literature and throughout this study and literature it is common to use the lower case “**deaf**” to refer the audio logical condition of not hearing and the upper case “**Deaf**” to refer to the particular group of deaf people who share a language (SL) and a culture.

Throughout this research the researcher used the words ‘**teacher**’ and ‘**instructor**’; ‘**trainee**’ and ‘**students**’ interchangeably because the words in each group are synonyms.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2. Introduction

This chapter provides a review of literature that serves as a foundation for this study. It addresses and describes issues like, history of sign language in the world and in Ethiopia, methods of communication in the Education of Deaf Children; Components of Sign Language, variation in sign language, Challenges and opportunities of teaching SL.

2.1. History of Sign Language

The origin of SL is parallel with the origin of human languages that are likely to have been the first true language. This view fits within a general frame work that has been called the gestural theory of the origin of language (Hyltenstam, 1994; Spencer, 2003 & Hollis, 2011). Signed language is the natural form of language for Deaf people throughout the world. Language and deaf people it dates back 5000 years. Signed languages develop and become standardized as separate and distinct languages of the Deaf Community. These indigenous Sign Languages are neither derivative nor dependent on the spoken languages of their respective countries (Greenstein, 2004).

The first public school for the Deaf was established by the Abbé de l'Epée in Paris in 1755. The Educational approach used in this school is SL. The Abbé de l'Epées School has become foundation for Western education. Most of the signed languages in the western today, including

ASL, trace their roots back to old French Signed Language (FSL) and it gradually spread across the western world. Abbe de l 'Epee founded the first school for Deaf children in Paris, and Edward Miner Gallaudet founded a school for the Deaf in 1857 in USA, which in 1864 became the National Deaf – Mute College. Currently, called Gallaudet University, it is still the only Liberal Arts University for the Deaf People in the World (Marchark, 1997; Sander & Lillo - Martin, 2001).

2.2. History of Ethiopian Sign Language (EthSL)

Different educators noted that, EthSL began to be used formally after 1960's. Americans and Nordic Missionaries opened the first school for the Deaf in Addis Ababa. They brought with them the SL which was in use in their own country. The influence was clearly seen in the development of the Ethiopian Sign Language (Endale, 2005; ENAD, 2008 & Fitsum, 2011).

The first Ethiopian Sign Language dictionary was printed in 1976 by Ethiopian National Association of the Deaf (ENAD) with the collaboration of deaf schools (Mekannisa School of the deaf, Alpha School of the deaf) and Ministry of Education. The dictionary was titled “Ha Metshaf” has 1009 signs. The next dictionary was published in 2008 by ENAD with the cooperation of Finnish Association of the Deaf, Deaf schools, Ministry of Labor and Social Affair and other relevant bodies. The dictionary used as evidence of Ethiopian having its own SL.

EthSL has its own grammar and used in different Deaf communities such as schools, churches, recreational areas, clubs etc. EthSL is an emerging language with some regional variations. The language has a national standard, and the deaf community also used the language as a marker of their identity, because it is the main factor for the improvement of the life of deaf people. Even though, there are only two sign language books in Ethiopia that is Ha matsaf and

EthSL Dictionary (Alemayehu, 2003) ENAD should try to develop Sign language all over Ethiopia.

2.3. Methods of communication in the Education of Deaf Children

2.3.1 Auditory-Oral Methods

According to Alemayehu (2003) the auditory-Oral methods is verbal communication. A deaf student receives idea through speech reading or lip reading. This means the students want to practice spoken language and develop lip reading. Though there is difference by the degree of deafness, most profoundly deaf children could not succeed very well with this method.

2.3.2 Total Communication Methods

Total Communication methods does offer a solution to the problem of Auditory-Oral approach (Alemayehu, 2003). Total communication is a combination of many means of communications such as Sign Language, Voice, Finger Spelling, Lip reading, writing, Gesture, and Visual imaginary (Endale, 2005 & Pawlos, 2008) and others acknowledge that, total communication methods can ensure that a person has access to some means of communication. For example, a deaf child with residual hearing through hearing aid and speech and one who cannot communicate well orally gets the additional support of sign language.

Most schools for the deaf in our country adopted the total communication approach. However, total communication is not effective in teaching deaf pupils because the effort to sign and speak at the same time results in a poorer quality of sign language. Not only that, some people

believe that total communication results in deaf children failing to develop fluency in either spoken or sign language because of the imperfect use of both (Alemayehu, 2003 & Endale, 2005).

2.3.3 Bilingual by cultural Communication

According to Hualand and Allen (2009) bilingual education started at the end of 20th century. Bilingualism comes from limitation of both Auditory-Oral and Total methods. Bilingualism challenges the terms Auditory-Oral and Total communication. Its belief is that it is morally wrong to offer deaf children oral language as first language. Bilingualists say deaf children have the right to “their own language” i.e. sign language used by Deaf people within their own community.

They also believe sign language users are not disable and they think as they can hear by their eye and speak by their hand and body movement (Alemayehu, 2003). Bilingualists are using SL as a language of instruction in all subjects for Deaf children. It is the most effective and recommended method of language learning and communication for Deaf people, with parallel strong emphasis on teaching reading and writing of the language used in the country they live in will give Deaf children a good basis for direct and independent communication in all settings (Endale, 2005 & WFD, 2013). This approach is becoming more popular in many countries. Moreover Scandinavian countries have pioneered its use as a national policy; elsewhere its introduction has been more ad hoc.

The limited number of Deaf teachers and head teachers, the limited signing skills and bilingual bi-cultural training of hearing teachers, and the very limited understanding of Deaf culture, all indicate that the bilingual bicultural method is still far from a truly Deaf – centered educational practice (Ladd, 2003).

2.3.4. Signed Spoken Language

These systems are not naturally occurring languages and may or may not be closely related to the signs used by Deaf people. Alemayehu (2003) and Hollis (2011) believe that this signed spoken language system does not appear to lead deaf children to fluency in either SL or Spoken Language. They have all been constructed for a particular purpose, usually for educational and are often aimed at producing better spoken or written language of the user local language. Signed English, Signed Amharic and, Signed Afan Oromo are such system. Signed English is the manual representation of the English language, word for word, using signs, both natural and artificial, following the English grammatical system. It is sometimes used in educational settings to teach Deaf people the local language of their country. While all Signed English, Signed Amharic and, Signed Afan Oromo share many similar signs, they follow their own grammatical orders.

2.3.5. Home Sign

Communication is the central concern for families who have children with deaf and hard of hearing. Because of this, parents struggle to establish effective communication. This way of communication is called Home Sign. According to Marschark (1997), home signs are used in much the same ways as some special words and names are used in hearing families. Both are most common in homes with small children often originating from mispronunciations or missing. He further stated Home sign is not a full language, but closer to a dialect. Home sign is unstructured and generally idiosyncratic to a particular family, where a deaf child does not have contact with deaf children and is not educated in sign. Such sign systems does not passed from one generation to next generation.

2.4. Components of Sign Language (SL)

SL is, the most beautiful and expressive language, for which, in their interaction with each other and is a means of easily and quickly reaching the minds of the deaf, neither nature nor art has given them a suitable substitute; it is also in the hands of its masters (Sacks, 1990). SL is used all over the world as a primary means of communication by deaf people. It is a natural language that arises spontaneously where ever there is a Deaf community SL effectively fulfills all the social functions of spoken language. It means that wherever Deaf people have opportunity to gather and interact regularly, SL is born. SL is effectively fulfilling all the social functions of spoken languages and it is acquired without instruction by children, given normal exposure and interaction (David, nd; Marschark, 1997, & UNESCO, 2000).

Different scholars stated SL is a system of symbolic communication, evolved over generations of Deaf people. And every sign has been formed into a natural languages, this SL has the potential to full access to the visually observable context of language.

SL is a means of communication and is the natural language of Deaf communities. SL is a visual gestural language which uses various components. These are: finger spelling, special grammar and simultaneity, place of articulation, Non manual features, and Hand shapes. All components of SL has different types of function with the structure of the language and are an extremely important aspect of sign language (Marschark, 1997; Greensten, 2004; Kelly, 2010; Hollis, 2011; & Sandler n.d.).

2.4.1. Spatial Grammar and Simultaneity

Unlike to oral language, SL exploit the unique features of the visual medium. This means spoken language is linear. Only one sound can be made or received at a time. Sign language is visual; Visual perception allows process of simultaneous information; hence a whole section can

be taken in at once. Hollis (2011) investigated that information can be loaded into several channels and expressed simultaneously. Simultaneity in sign languages has the ability to make sign (produce and receive) more than one word simultaneously. These features can help SL to express wide ideas in a very short way.

For example; in Amharic, if we want to say “Ejun bebila qoretew”. By contrast in EthSL it can be expressed by moving or showing the action of cutting to refer both the instrument and the action can be expressed simultaneously.

One way in which many SLs take advantage of the special nature of the language is through the use of classifiers. Classifiers allow a signer to spatially show a referent’s type, size, shape, movement, or extent (Lane, Pillard, & Hedberg, 2011).

2.4.2. Classifiers

Many sign languages have common linguistic features called classifiers. Classifiers are another way of word formation in SL; it is highly productive. Classifiers are highly iconic and used to indicate a verb of motion or location; a classifier functions roughly as an anaphoric pronoun, to coin new words like laptops, palm tops are the most iconic elements of SL (Marschark, 1997).

2.4.3. Non manual Features

In SL hands play an important role in the articulation of signed words (Marschark, 2003). However other articulators, the body, the head, and parts of the face are just important. All linguistically significant elements that are not expressed by the hands are referred to as non-manual makers (Baker, 2010).

Non manual features are actions produced by any part of the body other than the hands. They include actions of the eye, mouth, cheeks, face, head, shoulders and torso (Aran, 2008 & Hollis, 2011). Linguistically Signers may use movement of their eyes, mouth, hands, face and body to clarify some thing. This is known as non-manual signs. Meaning cannot be transferred only through the hands, for better communication, while spoken languages use the rise and fall of the pitch of the voice, volume, and pause, sign languages employ non-manual signs (Marschark, 2003). Since pronunciation is the beauty of any language, if a person can't pronounce correctly, the language may not attractive; moreover, it may become meaningless. So it is important to the signer to know non-manual signs that convey meaning. Without non-manual signs, Manual signs or signs made by the hands may become meaningless.

2.4.4. Manual Signs

2.4.4.1. Place of Articulation

Place of articulation refers to the orientation of the palm in relation to the body. Most of the time sign is formed around the chest and also around the head, and the natural space in front of the body. When a deaf person is signing, he/she may point or indicate spaces to define any object situated on that area. This could take place with signers, eyes, head or body.

2.4.4.2. Hand shapes

There are numerous hand shapes that are individually categorized in SL. Groups of hand shapes known as classifiers' which incorporate specific details of the referent by the hand shape itself.

Aran (2008) argues that, analysis of hand shape is a very challenging task as a result of high degree of freedom of the hand and due to interpersonal difference. A single hand shape can have different meaning if change in location, movement and orientation is made.

For example the sign for “name” and “egg” are expressed with an “H” shown by hand shape.

However, due to an additional change in movement, the meaning can be changed to

“egg”. The sign for “father” can be changed to “mother” due to change in orientation.

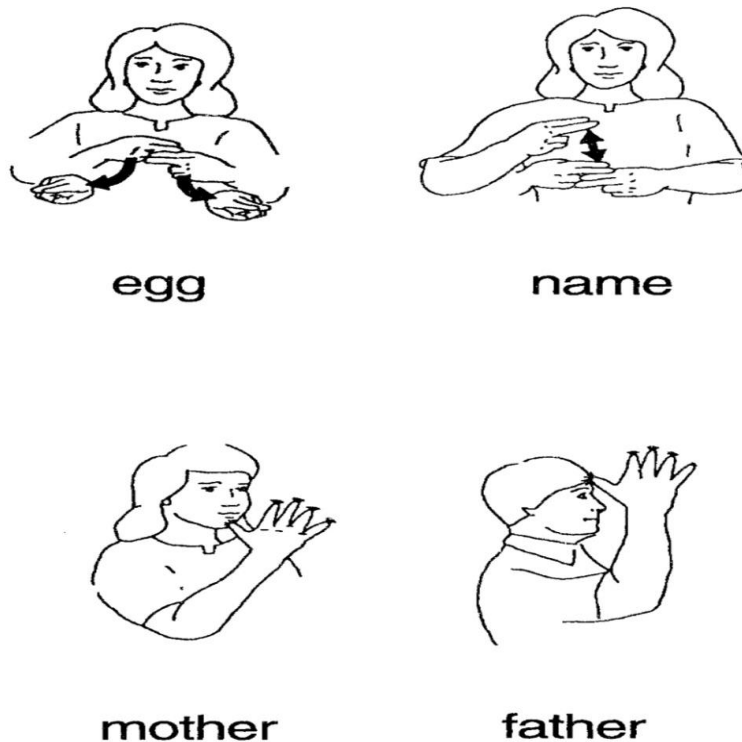


Figure 3-4 Changes in hand movement and placement that change signs' meanings

Fig. 1 Shows Change in hand movement and placement that change signs' meanings

2.4.4.3. Movement of the Hands

Each sign language is made with movement. This movement has meaning; changes in one of these characteristics normally will change the meaning on a sign. However signs can be inflected to indicate number, tense or mood. In general movement is divided into five

- **type:** the movement of sign can be straight line, zigzag line, countered, etc. for example continue, thunder, yes, valley, hear as a result it is difficult to illustrate these words in picture. Therefore it is difficult to learn sign language from books.
- **Orientation:** words like help, send, swear, advise, play, if orientation is changed, the meaning of the word is also changed.
- **Repetition:** Just as English words can be inflected by adding certain letters to words. For example, dog becomes dogs, tree becomes trees, some signs are changed to plural when repeated. Tree becomes trees, when repeated, it becomes forest or trees.
- **Vigor:** as sign has different meanings if shown with vigor, for example, rude becomes very rude, bad becomes worst, good becomes very good
- **Extent:** words like small becomes big, very big is shown with a distance between hands.

2.4.5. Fingerspelling

Finger spelling is one of the oldest forms of manual communication. It is not a language, but can be used in different ways to represent the letters of the local language alphabet. For example, ASL Fingerspelling is made up of twenty-six letter with one to one correspondence with English language letters. In finger spelling, the hand is held in front of the chest and letters are represented by different hand configuration palm orientation is also in to the person looking (Ahlgren & Hyltenstam, 1994; Moores, 1996; Wendy & Diane, 2001; Pawlos, 2004).

Indeed, finger spelling is typically used in conjunction with signing and is often used for spelling proper nouns, such as place names and people's names or technical terms that do not have a signed equivalent. However, communication through finger spelling alone would not be part of SL. In ASL, native signers use finger spelling for their sign discourse, depending on the topic (Pawlos, 2004 & Sharon, 2010). Therefore, using finger spelling in day to day conversation is not necessary because finger spelling normally does not replace sign but may also be used as a supplement to lip-reading by signing one or more appropriate letters during a spoken conversation to convey words from spoken language which have no sign equivalent, or for emphasis, clarification to someone in to the subject being discussed. As Vali and Lucas cited by Pawlos (2004) and Getahun (2011) some signer will finger spell a word to stress the importance of a word. For example, a signer may sign the word "DIRTY" and then finger spell DIRTY to emphasize that something was very dirty. Eth SL and ASL use a one handed manual alphabet system. Whereas British Sign Language (BSL) uses two handed manual alphabet.

Speed and clarity of finger spelling also varies between different signing communities. For example, mostly younger people are faster than older ones (Hollis, 2011). When one fluent sign language and can hear by his eyes read finger spelling, they don't look at the signers' hands', but maintain eye contact and look at the face of signers. During this time a person can grasp the whole idea of the signers.

He further stated, when someone learning finger spelling often find it impossible to understand. By using just his or her peripheral vision and end up looking at the person's hand rather than the signers face. Because of this it is not recommended teaching finger spelling when they start learning SL or at the beginning of the first lessons (Pawlos, 2004). However, looking

directly at the person's face and lip pattern will gradually find it easier to understand and communicate.

2.5. Variation in Sign Language

Variation in language means the different user of a language has different ways of saying the same thing. It is a normal part of all language communities. Variation can occur in vocabulary of the language or in grammar.

There are a number of causes of variation. Each sign language has also different varieties and dialects, in the same way that spoken languages vary according to factors such as age, geographical region, in education or ethnicity. The other cause of variation is variation in culture, and background.

Different countries do have their own sign languages. For example, the sign language used in different countries (American Sign Language (ASL), Austrian Sign Language (Au SL), British Sign Language (BSL), South African Sign Language (SASL), and Ethiopian Sign Language (Eth SL) each sign language has its own grammar, rules, accents, dialects, and unique vocabulary. With common property they are all visually perceived (Moores, 1996; UNESCO, 2000; Endale, 2005; & Michael, 2008).

Dialectical variation affects the production of signs and the use of vocabulary. An older deaf person may use a sign language dialect that has different items of vocabulary from the dialect of a Deaf child. Signs may vary from time to time (change over time), from region to region. But it does not mean that the sign use is wrong; it just mean that there is a variety out of there and we are choosing to add to our vocabulary.

The other is regional variation, Signers in one region may use different signs from signers in another region and also exist in EthSL. Particular signs may be limited to particular regions,

schools or even families. For example, Getahun (2011) states that there is regional variation on the use of SL and EthSL has its own regional difference on the use of vocabularies, initial letters; it is different from place to place and from region to region in the country. A sign used to label one thing in one place is quite different from the sign which is used in another place. According to Getahun (2011), in Ethiopia, there are well known regional variation of signs known as Hosaina signs (Hosaina residential Deaf school), Makanisa signs (Deaf School), Adigrat Signs (Addigrat Deaf school) and so on.

Even though there is little variation among sign languages used in different parts of the country, there is what is known as Ethiopian Sign Language (EthSL) (Getahun, 2011). EthSL, as any other sign languages, although different in form, serves the same function as a spoken language for the Ethiopian Deaf community.

There is also personal variation signing (that is differences between the way men and women sign, old man and young or children sign is different). However, the grammar of all dialects of SL is the same, regardless of users' age, sex, ethnicity or geographical region education. For example, when we see the different signs "d" there are difference in signs but the same representation.

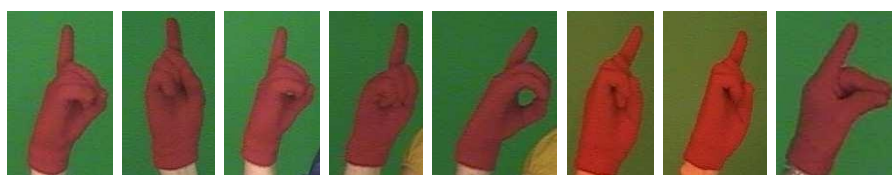


Fig.2 Variation in Sign but the same representation

According to Kelly (2010), the clear difference in sign performance that we see from the picture is due to interpersonal difference. This illustrates the difficulty in the problem of user independence and hand posture recognition. Despite all this variation, fluent signers have little trouble communicating with each other (Lucas, 2003).

2.6. Challenge of Teaching Sign Language

2.6.1. Effective ways of Teaching and Learning Sign Language

Learning a language requires an understanding and appreciation for the culture of the people who use that language in their daily lives. Like any other language, the study of SL necessarily includes exposure to the cultural values, beliefs, and practices of Deaf people (Pawlos, 2004). This means attending any of the several Deaf clubs, theatrical production, social gatherings, and events where Deaf people get together. The other is using the target language. As Cathy cited in Getahun (2011), the first and the main way of learning sign language needs using the target language, and practice and report the signs again and again to get them in learners mind. Since there is no short cut way to learn the signs, it needs to have patience.

Learning SL is quite different experience than learning a spoken language. That is to understand someone who is using SL primary asks listening by eyes. Most hearing people don't have a lot of experience at this, because they are dominated by ears to receive information. Secondly, to communicate in sign language, one has to use one's eyes, face, hands, and body in ways which are not required in spoken language (Pawlos, 2008).

Since SL is a visual language, the best way that we can learn it is to see it in action and watch the positions of the hands and the facial expressions. Pawlos (2004), Getahun (2011), and Burton (2013) also acknowledged that, teaching SL both hearing and Deaf requires a variety of

ways. These ways were chosen from existing research and theoretical applications. For instance, the students used to practice in the video or mirror in order to see themselves when signing, Show videos of someone signing, books about Deaf people or watching the signers facial expressions on TV and Language DVD, different SL on line program, and practicing with a friend are very helpful because the more they practice, the easier it became and provide feedback in a resource room.

Tatrica, (2003) and Burton (2013) further showed that adaptive presentation of vocabulary during training periods has a higher likelihood, of optimal learning and better retention of ASL. These results suggest the importance of a system that is adaptive to the user's responses. For instance, the content could shift in response to the changes in the user's skill level.

2.6.2. Teacher's Qualifications and Responsibilities

As stated by Solomon (2005) and Pawlos (2008) any degree of deafness may cause significant educational and social problems. Children who are born severely or profoundly deaf need skilled teaching to develop language and communication skills (including speech and sign language as appropriate). A teacher who teaches children with hearing impaired (HI) must be qualified and trained how to teach SL. Tilahun (2002) and Bathod (as cited in Solomon, 2005) Children with HI are taught by appropriately qualified specialist teachers. For example, the teacher of the deaf who have to obtain the specialist qualification within three years of beginning their work with deaf peoples.

For instance in American Sign Language teachers Association (ASLTA) certifies sign language teachers. Their website has information on the certification levels and requirements, plus an application form. Some states have certification requirements for ASL teachers, particularly those who teach in public schools. Jamie (2009) and also investigated those teachers who teach SL employed by their certification. Gallaudet University offers a Bachelor of Arts in Sign Language

that prepares students to teach ASL. One of the courses offered is "Methods of Teaching Sign Communication." Sign language teachers and prospective sign language teachers can discuss teaching ASL on the Teach ASL discussion list. Another discussion list that addresses sign language teaching though teaching sign is not the primary focus of the list is the teaching list. The teachers share experience, discuss on their challenges and improve their communication skills too.

Moreover he further stated, a teacher has to pass five steps these are as follows:
First of all, SL teachers work in a variety of settings, from public and private schools to community colleges and universities, and teach students of varying ages. For instance, in Gallaudet University, before beginning their careers, prospective sign language teachers should determine assigned what type of classes they want to teach, as well as who their desired audience is. So, at the beginning of the course the prospective teachers will know their students level and trained accordingly. Then, the SL training is need based.

Then, those who hope to teach sign language in public or private schools need to earn a minimum of a bachelor's degree in deaf education or American Sign Language (ASL). If a student pursues ASL as a major, he or she also might want to undertake a concentration or minor in education. For those who want to teach at a community college or university, a graduate degree in deaf education or a related field may be necessary (Jamie, 2009). Jamie further stated, the American Sign Language Teachers Association (ASLTA) encourages sign language teachers to pursue professional certification. Three levels of certification are available, including provisional certification, qualified certification and professional certification. Each level has different requirements for hours of experience working specifically with deaf students, as well as with those learning sign language as a second language.

Finally, to retain certification, sign language teachers typically must engage in continuing professional development. Sign language certification renewal can be completed through ASLTA by submitting various examples of professional development, including a written narrative of teaching history since certification, proof of teaching experience, and proof of professional development through things like professional workshops and mentorships. Requirements vary by state and level of certification. Continuing education also may be a viable method of career advancement for sign language teachers who want to advance to higher positions in academia, such as teaching at the university level. Here ASLTA plays a great role in training, certifying and qualifying sign language teachers (Jamie, 2009).

As stated earlier SL teacher should be qualified and certified; just as we need teachers of English or Afan Oromo to be fluent in English or Afan Oromo and also knows about the structure of the language rather than just knowing some English or Afan Oromo.

Pawlos (2004) also stated EthSL teachers have to have enough knowledge of the grammar of EthSL and linguistics of EthSL, how to teach SL (methodology), understanding of Deaf culture and history of SL and how the Deaf Community use the language to communicate to each other. EthSL teacher has to be a good role model to his students by using natural SL; unless otherwise the student's language learning will be limited.

However, in Ethiopia, people other than hearing impaired receive training as teacher for the Deaf. Without certification teachers who know Ethiopian Sign language (EthSL) could take on basic EthSL classes resulting in inadequate or even incorrect instruction Eyasu (2008).

According to Michael (2008), prospective teachers need supervised teaching experience and may be required to pass an exam in their subject area in order to be an instructor in public

schools. He also indicated that in Europe there have been specialist teachers of the Deaf and their support of other teachers are highly respected. More generally, teachers who may not have specialist qualifications need to be aware of how practice can be adapted to ensure the participation of deaf students. This includes providing visual support for learning such as class handouts, visual aids on what is being discussed and writing new vocabulary on the white or black board. Using this visual support the trainees practice and master the language.

2.6.3. Assistive technology and Material availability

Technology must be universal because it is an important source of entertainment and communication. Therefore, to integrate the natural aspects of accessibility of the SL assistive technology must be implemented. According to Jamie (2009) people have multiple resources for learning sign language. They can learn through classroom training, online training, video materials, and books. However, these are resources and are not a substitute for the best way to learn sign language. The best way to master sign language is by interacting with other sign language users.

Since learning SL from the book and teaching materials is not effective, the effective way is interacting and learning from the language user or Deaf (Jamie, 2009). Moreover, Tilahun (2002) and Burton (2013) describe that, in sign language classroom, it is important to have appropriate materials that support the teaching-learning process those are Videotapes, CD-ROMs or DVD and other visual materials containing sign language examples provide an alternate form of training materials, as the dynamic nature of a visual language is best shown using images.

According to Jamie, (2009) and Hollis (2011) using these sign language resources are also most easily accessed the basics of SL and will help to get even the high light SL. Learners often find it easier to learn from videos because visual nature is difficult to convey in a book moreover by using DVD, video visual materials students, Learn what SL is learn how to sign Amharic, English fingerspelling alphabet develop their receptive skills with fingerspelling learn how to sign basic numbers learn how to communicate with a Deaf person. In general using assistive technology is necessary for SL teaching in class and resource room, especially in SL resource room. Then the resource room facilitates for both group and individual study. And it should be equipped in PC and video viewing room. Deaf model SL teacher or qualified SL teacher should give additional support for students.

2.6.4. Classroom Organizations

As Keith and Cagle (2011) describe, since Deaf learners rely on visual input, the classroom should be arranged to facilitate all their visual requirements. Seating tends to be arranged in a semi-circle or "U" shape to facilitate visual communication between students and instructors (Donand, 1996).

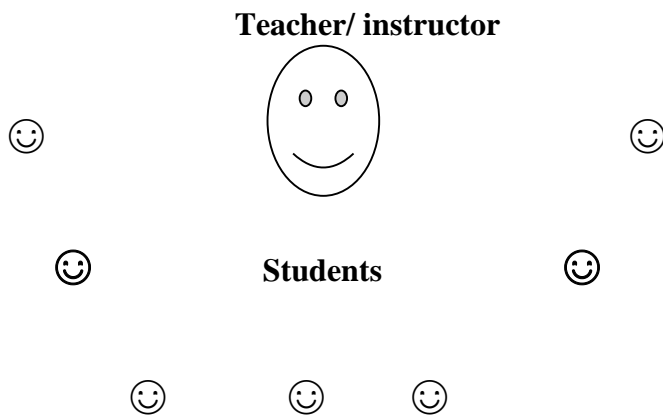


Figure 3. Demonstrations of Sign language class room

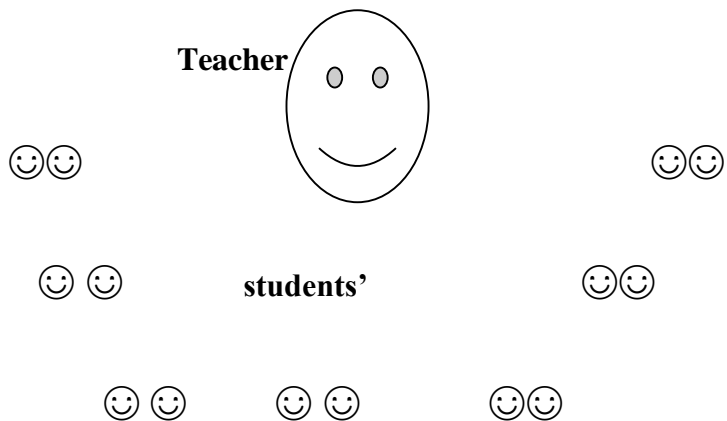


Fig. 4. Demonstrations of Sign language class room during pair work.

Therefore, students should be able to see clearly the signed presentation of the teacher, the signed contributions of all the other learners as well as any visual aids, such as blackboard, flipcharts, pictures, video materials, and so on. Keith and Cagle (2011) suggested that appropriate seating and lighting adjustments should be ensured in the classrooms. Good lightening is essential to be able to see the signs and facial expressions of the teacher properly. Also as shown in the above picture they suggested that the teacher stands in front of the students or within close proximity and avoid movement while teaching.

Communication can be affected by ‘visual noise’ such as dim lights, glare, dazzle, bold wall pattern and anything in the physical visual back ground that may be distracting (Hollis, 2011). This is the same as trying to have a spoken conversation as a loud motor bike roars past, or if you are in a group of people and everyone is talking at the same time. The lighting required varies for different classroom activities. For instance, watching a TV screen is easier when the room is

darkened, whereas watching live signing requires good lightning. Therefore, it is important to look at the adjustments in classrooms while using a sign language medium (Keith & Cagle, 2011).



Fig.5. Illustrates Sign language class room when students learn from a film (Keith & Cagle, 2011).

2.6.5. Teaching Sign Languages as a Second Language.

Students coming into an SL classroom for the first time face many challenges. Apart from linguistic differences, they also encounter cultural differences (Cooper, 1997; Feder, 2012, & Burton, 2013). SL instruction occurs in the target language, which can discourage students who have the common misunderstanding that it is possible to sign SL and speak English at the same time. Most of the time in SL classrooms students learn to express and receive language in a physical modality rather than using aural and oral channels. As stated earlier fluent SL requires the use of the hands, eyes, face, and body. Burton (2013) further stated, the differences between studying SL and spoken languages can be profound for students, and go beyond the obvious difference of a signed versus a spoken language.

In teaching ASL, one of the initial steps of a language learning technology is to help the learners develop at least a basic vocabulary of ASL. Most of the time the students' exposure to SL is nonexistent. Some exposure to natural SL is more beneficial in their environment than no exposure.

Thus, it is appropriate that a language learning system focus on integrating basic knowledge of ASL (Burton, 2013). A fundamental component of studying SL is learning how to communicate spatially, rather than relying on arranging words sequentially into sentences. Language features like the use of space, classifiers, illustrating verbs, and movie like techniques to highlight specific details within a setting will likely be foreign to most students.

Furthermore, ASL grammar is conveyed through specific markers produced on the face, such as grammatical markers made with the eyebrows and tilting the head. Another significant difference for students is the use of mouth movements that provide adverbial or adjectival information that co-occurs with and modifies the meaning of signs being produced by the hands. Since SL uses the hands, face and body to express ideas. EthSL students will be challenged to change from the linear nature of spoken language to the simultaneous expression of complex units of meaning (Fitsum, 2011).

Accordingly, they use manually coded English or Afan Oromo or the local language of spoken language and SL is influenced by the local language of spoken language.

Lacus (as cited in Fitsum, 2011) and Nosiphiwo, (2012) Pedagogical challenges are the same challenges faced by instructors. In fact, the reception of finger spelling is one of the hardest aspects of ASL for an English speaking second learner master.

Language cannot be separated from culture. Both are always boundary in the community. SL teacher ought to provide insight into the nature of language sensitivity to Deaf culture, its

values, customs, and traditions, and foster a sense of humanity and friendship. If culture is ignored it is likely that learners will never reach the point of using the language in the way intended when embarking upon the course of study.

Lacus (as cited in Fitsum, 2011) non-native teachers will not intuitively provide authentic pragmatic responses; the student will not be properly prepared for authentic instructional communication with native speakers. The instructional process simply loses validity if it is not geared to genuine intercultural communication. The other challenge of teaching SL is instructional material or absence of resource. As stated earlier appropriate materials are important to support the teaching learning process. Therefore absence of these instructional materials have a great influence in teaching learning process.

According to Marschark (2003) ASL does not have a written form, even simple things like taking notes can give the impression that there is a direct correspondence between English words and grammar, and ASL. Besides the linguistic characteristics of SLs are different from those of spoken languages due to the existence of several components affecting the context such as the use of facial expression head movements in addition to the hand movement. Due to this fact natural SL is dominated artificial method of communication.

According to Pawlos (2004) for successful Eth SL teaching the following points must be taken in to consideration and plan on

- Eth SL training given at any level (weather short or long term training) should start from deaf culture or should give parallel to Eth SL training. Because the students should be interested when they know the culture the students have good knowhow

of the language and should make efforts to learn the language and also understand the language.

- Understand the opportunities of learning EthSL
- Understand characteristics of EthSL, similarities and difference from the other language. For example hearing by eye
- Teach the language from simple to complex and so on.

Further there should be Deaf model EthSL teacher; Deaf SL teacher is the best to teach SL because SL is natural and mother tongue for such persons. Uses the languages to communicate with other people teach about the culture, community, and the native language of Deaf people. Students of Deaf SL teacher would get opportunity to practice and communicate in SL with their teacher; and the teacher can easily detect mistake of teachers who are not Deaf and correct them.

2.7. Opportunities of Teaching Sign Language

The universal Declaration of Human Right would be protecting every one. For example the Universal Declaration of Human Right developed by the UN in 1948: enumerates the rights of all people including the right to receive proper health care and regular education, employment or to access information, work, proper health care and education (Article 23, 25, 26).

Ethiopia also ratified various international conventions, laws that some are being implemented. The Ethiopian constitution accepts the international declarations and states educations as a human rights. In line with the international declarations, conventions and policies, our country establishes the universal rights to education and emphasizes the need to allocate resources and provide assistance to disadvantaged groups.

The UN also sponsored the countries that ratified the law and provides enforceable obligations on the equal opportunities for disabled persons' (UNICEF, 2003)

In order to ensure protection and competence, Ethiopia also ratified convention for the rights of people with disability (CRPD) that was developed and adopted by UN.

The convention is a major step toward improving opportunities for disabled people.

The aim of convention is to promote, protect and ensure the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by all persons with disability and promote respect for their inherent dignity (Art. 1, CRPD).

According to UNESCO (2007) Ethiopian government is committed to achieving the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) and Education for All (EFA) goal. The main focus is on providing primary education for all citizens by 2015. The Ministry of Education MOE (1994) also has recently developed strategy for special education with the final goal.

Based on this existence of Deaf Communities opens path to the possibilities of a more quality life. On the other hand Universities also play major role in the process of developing Special Needs Education, especially as regards research, evaluation, preparation of teacher trainees, and designing training programs and materials.

One of the most important priorities in the work of the world Federation Deaf WFD is to ensure human rights for deaf people all over the world, in every aspect of life. Human rights are universal and they belong to everyone regardless of sex, national or ethnic, color, religion language or any other status, such as disability or deafness. Thus deaf people are entitled or exercise civil, political, social, economic and cultural rights on an equal basis with everyone else (Haualand & Allen, 2009).

According to Haualand and Allen, (2009) for deaf people the major barrier was lack of recognition acceptance and use of sign language in all areas of life as well as lack of respect for Deaf people's cultural and linguistic identity.

With this focus, WFD advise the UN and its agencies on specific issues and policies which affect Deaf people. It represents the Deaf community with in the UN system and supports Deaf association and authorities throughout the world by providing consultancy, experts and advice.

Even though Deaf people have the same rights as everyone else, implementation of four basic factor is equivalent to the protection of the human right of Deaf people (WFD).

2.7.1. Accessibility

For Deaf people, barriers to access are rarely about physical obstacles. More often the barriers lie in lack of accessible information, weather this information comes through direct interaction with other people who do not use SL, or from other sources (Example, Mass media documents etc.) In direct interaction, accessibility often rests upon the availability of SL interpreters. In other information distribution, Deaf peoples right obtain information in SL should extend in to official documents (SL translations), mass media (SL news and programs) and many other issues in order to increase, Deaf people opportunities to make free and informed decisions.

Full inclusion of Deaf people is based on the recognition and respect for Deaf culture and identity everywhere in the world. Based on these in Addis Ababa University in the department of linguistics EthSL is started undergraduate program (Haualand & Allen, 2009).

2.7.2. Interpreting

A key factor for accessibility to government service or any other services run by institutions where the personnel do not use SL is the right to SL interpreter. Societies need to create a system for provision of and equal access to SL interpreters for all situations where they are requested. The Deaf person or association of the Deaf should not be responsible for the related expenses, instead, these services should be provided by the society without creating any costs or economic disadvantage to deaf individual or Deaf association (Haualand & Allen, 2009). SL interpreter is a

profession that serves both Deaf and hearing people, and profession requires training. Thus, all states need educational programs to train and quality SL interpreters.

Understanding the legal, policy and institutional arrangement allow the identification of opportunity and how affects the life of Deaf people in the social, economic and in all aspects of development. Throughout the world, children need and have a right to education. Hearing-impaired children share that need and right. For example, the Salamanca Frame work for Action (as cited in UNESCO, 2000) states that education policies should take full account of individual differences and situations. The importance of sign language as a medium of communication among the deaf, for example, should be recognized and provision should made to ensure that all hearing-impaired persons have access to education in their sign language.

In this regard the Ethiopian Education and Training Policy (MOE, 1994) outlines the principles of special needs education by stating that all children, including the disabled and the gifted children, learn in accordance with their full potentials and needs.

The educational programs for these children in local public schools have expanded in recent years, in response to legislation, improvements in hearing aids and other technology, and an increased demand by parents and deaf citizens for services at the local level. Salamanca statement (1994) further states Education policies should take full account of individual difference and situations. The importance of sign language as a medium of communication among the deaf, for example, should be recognized and provision made to ensure that all deaf persons have access to education in their signed language. Owing to the particular communication needs of deaf and deaf-blind persons, their education may be more suitably provided in special schools or special classes and units in mainstream schools (Haualand & Allen, 2009).

Deaf people have a right to use signed language and deaf children and young people have a right to education by and with sign language.

On the other hand, Araya and Gamboa (n.d.) stated technology is universal. It is an important source of entertainment and communication. The styles of communication differ from the traditional and standard forms especially among young people. Cavender, Bigham and Lander (2009) further stated as technology evolves and use of the internet becomes more wide spread on a global level. The opportunities of using technology as a language teaching tool for the deaf have increased. Technology may have the potential allow Deaf children from many back grounds to acquire proper language skills throughout child hood.

Technology can also be used as a tool to educate hearing parents of Deaf children and to encourage hearing parents to learn about Deaf community how to effectively help their child communicate and feel accepted. Technology has the capacity to use an arrangement of features to allow a Deaf with varies multiple intelligence and work techniques to learn effectively with the use of motion sensor, quality videos, animated characters, and fun and motivating tools, a Deaf child, parents, teachers and others who are interested to learn SL could be given optimal support for learning SL at home (Cavender, Bigham & Lander, 2009).

On the other hand there are a variety of opportunities depending on level and interest of the SL teacher. Knowing other language brings opportunities and extends us reach, know another's culture, and get better job. Likewise learning about other cultures will help us to expand our personal horizons and become a responsible person. For example a person who learn or know SL may be interested in building a career working with Deaf people or children. There are a variety of choices depending on the level of interest of the person (Cavender, Bigham & Lander, 2009).

And a person could work as a sign language interpreter, social worker, support worker, a teacher and similarly could work in a care home for Deaf people, in a special school, in a hospital, in an audiology department...the list is endless. The first most important thing is to become skilled at the language itself (Hollis, 2011). Like whatsoever, it will take dedication and practice. As Hollis (2011) stated in the UK, there is a governing body called Signature. It is a UK recognized awarding body and registered charity whose aim is to improve communication between Deaf and hearing people.

CHAPTER THREE

METHOD

This section briefly discusses the research methods, participants of the study, sampling techniques, instruments, and procedures of data collection and methods of data analysis.

3.1 Participants of the Study

The target population of this study was four SL instructors and 193 (110 female and 83 male) third year SNE students at SSNETC.

The instructors were selected due to the fact that they were more experienced in facing the challenges of teaching SAO than other non- SAO instructors. They were believed to provide reliable information on the challenges and opportunities of teaching SAO at SSNETS. In other words, these instructors were assumed to provide data about their own perceptions, the available resources, the techniques they applied, and students' observed difficulties in teaching-learning SAO at SSNETC.

Similarly, 3rd year SNE students were selected for this study because they have taken SL courses in three semesters, and were assumed to give relatively clearer, more reliable information for the success of the study than 2nd or 1st year Special Needs Education trainees.

According to Zickmund (2011) various Sampling techniques could be used depending on the type of research including, the probability sampling and nonprobability sampling particularly simple random sampling and purposive and availability sampling. In this regard, Zickmund (2011), further states that purposive sampling involves the use of the researcher's knowledge of population in terms of research goals. Purposive sampling can also be used to select participants based on their willingness to be studied on their own knowledge of particular topic.

The researcher selected and used the purposive and availability sampling technique to collect data from the instructors. The techniques were selected because there were so limited number of (3 male and 1 female) SL instructors at the College. Also selected simple random sampling method to collect data from students through the questionnaires. Among 193 3rd year SNE students, about 50% or (55 female and 40 male) were selected randomly to complete the questionnaires. The questionnaires distributed to 95 students out of which 83 of them were completed and returned properly.

3.2 Instruments

A. Questionnaire

Questionnaire was one of data collection instruments that was used to collect reliable data from a large sample size population (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2000). In order to get information on students' difficulties in SAO teaching close and open ended questions were developed by the researcher. Then, the pilot test question were conducted before the actual questionnaire was administered.

For the pilot study five Sebeta Special Needs Education fourth year extension students were involved because they have taken similar SAO courses they have the same experience in challenges and opportunities of learning SAO at SSNETC. The difference was their program; the participants of the main study were regular student whereas the participant of the pilot study were extension students.

The purpose of piloting the questionnaire was to check the appropriateness of the items in the instrument and to make necessary correction based on obtained feedback from respondents. The piloting also helped to correct awkward sequences of the items in the questionnaire. It was to make the instruction, words of the instrument clear and comprehensive for the respondents. The respondents who took part in the piloting were taken through simple random sampling method.

When providing the questionnaire the respondents were told to write down any unclear word, phrase or sentence at the end of the questioner. After they finish discussion was held with the respondents and many of them had expressed their positive opinion about the items and pointed out items that are not clear to them. Based on the respondents' feedback, some modification was made to the questionnaire.

Finally twelve close and open ended questionnaire was revised, edited and administered to third year regular Special Needs Education students at Sebeta Special Needs Education Teachers College.

B. Interview

Interview has a wide variety of forms and multiplicity of uses. It is useful for collecting in depth information by probing in the situations. In addition, it is more appropriate for complex situations and sensitive areas. The interviewer has the opportunity to prepare a respondent for his/her interview before asking the sensitive question and to explain complex ones to the respondents in person.

Accordingly, the researcher selected interviewing as her preferred method of data collection to supplement the data obtained from classroom observation. She used it to investigate human behavior that cannot be observed by other instruments. She also used to gather data about people's opinions, beliefs, perceptions and deep feelings in their own words and how people experience

and interpret the world around them (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2000). In this regard, the researcher interviewed the instructors to obtain their views, perceptions about SL challenges and opportunities in teaching SAO. For this purpose, six semi structured interview questions were used. Because the questions were thought out and carefully selected in advance, the interviewees got freedom to express their opinion by focusing on relevant issues.

C. Document analysis

To enrich the data obtained through questionnaire and interview, documents were analyzed, specially the three SL modules used in the college curriculum. Because the teaching learning of SL in the college is based on these materials as the college SL instructors had no any other manual.

D. Classroom observation

Classroom observation was conducted to see the real situation of the implementation of SL teaching learning at SSNETC. To do this, open and close ended check list was developed and used together with video and photo camera. Checklist was used to concentrate specifically on challenges of teaching and learning of SL, teaching materials used in SL class, students class setting, like sitting arrangement and lighting, communication method used, students' participation in different activities and their performance. Also, photo camera was used to vividly study the classroom situations in order to show the recorded video and photo to the SL students who fills the check list.

3.3 Procedures of Data Collection

The researcher passed through the following stages in collecting the data for the study. First, questionnaires were designed and piloted. Then 95 copies of questionnaires were distributed to the student respondents. Of these 95 copies of questionnaires, 83 (86.3%)

questionnaires were returned. As a result, the response was found to be adequate to draw interpretation for the study, and the required information was collected from the trainees; then, instructors were interviewed; classroom observation conducted with the help of video and camera. Finally the documents were analyzed, and the data obtained were organized.

3.4 Method of Data Analysis

The qualitative data collected through interview, class observation and document analysis were organized by using triangulation, compare and contrast and sequential methods, and presented by using narrative quotes according to the theme of the research question and interpreted. Whereas the quantitative data collected using the questionnaire were tabulated, described, and analyzed by percentage. In addition, the findings of the research were integrated and substantiated by using related review of literatures.

3.5 Ethical consideration

Before gathering the data from the respondents, the ethical aspect of the study was carefully considered. In this regard, the researcher promised in the instruction of the questionnaire, that the data obtained from the respondents remained confidential and used for the research purpose only and there was no any part that specific describing the name of respondent in it. As a result, the researcher got the consent of respondents'. Similarly before starting the interview session, the researcher disclosed the purpose of the research with the respondents, remind the participant confidentiality of her/her responses and they agreed to be interviewed.

Chapter Four

4. Findings

The purpose of this study was to investigate challenges and opportunities of teaching SAO at SSNETC. This chapter deals with data presentation and analyses essentially consisting of the sub-reports of data thoroughly. The chapter analyses the data secured from the selected sample population (respondents) and attempts have been made to examine opportunities and challenges surrounding SAO teaching in SSNETC in relation to the research questions as below:

1. What are the major challenges related to teaching learning of SAO at SSNETC?
2. What are the major challenges related to curriculum of SAO at the sample college?
3. What opportunities are there to learn SAO at SSNETC?

4.1 General information

The instructors were asked to identify their qualifications and experience. Results were analyzed as a group and the overall results pointed out that their qualifications are 3(three) BA and 1(one) Master's degree SNE. Their work experience in teaching SAO in the college ranges from 4 to 7, and their total work experience is between 8 and 10 year. As to student respondents, 95 (45 male 50 female) senior students who have taken three SAO courses and they were assumed to provide relatively clearer, more accurate and better information than their junior.

4.2 Challenges related to teaching SAO at SSNETC

In the interview session, instructors were asked to mention the major challenges they might have faced in teaching SAO at SSNETC, and the following were found to be their real problems.

Since the courses are offered at the college for the first time and it is new to the trainees, as the instructors responded, the trainees found it difficult to learn. Moreover, the discussants justified that there are no signs for all words and concepts, so that instructors were forced to represent them by fingerspelling which were intern create confusion for the students to interpret.

Furthermore, translating the local regional language (Afan Oromo) into Sign Language, insufficient Credit hours allotted to each SL course, poor curriculum preparation that did not involve SAO language experts and researchers and ended up with least quality of SAO, absence of material resources, presence of unrevised and outdated modules, difficulty in changing words starting by finger spelling in to Afan Oromo and lack of consecutive SAO course offering, were mentioned as major challenges that the instructors encountered in teaching SAO at the college.

During the document analysis, the researcher also confirmed that the pictures and the descriptions given in the modules did not match each other and in most cases the meanings were not clear. Moreover during the classroom observation, it was also noticed that the communication method was dominantly signed Afaan Oromo. Therefore the instructors and students mostly rely on listening and speaking during instruction.

4.3 Challenges related to learning SAO

Table 1 Teachers qualification in SAO at SSNETC

In your opinion are your SAO teachers qualified in teaching SAO?	%
Yes	34.93
No	61.4
To some extent	3.6
Total	100

As indicated in the above table, students were asked to comment on whether their SAO teachers at SSNETC were skilled or not to teach SL. For this question, the majority of the respondents (61.4%) said that their SAO teachers were not skilled. However, 31 of them (37.3%) replied that their teachers were, of course, skilled. Still few of the students (13.2%) responded that their teachers are skilled to some extent. From the findings, one can possibly say that the majority of the respondents have the opinion that their teachers SAO skill are not up to their expectations in teaching SAO in the college.

On the other hand student respondents were asked if they had challenges in learning SAO in class, and all of them responded that they faced challenges in their learning. In the open ended part of the questionnaire, students were also asked to list the challenges they faced if any to learn SL and, they accordingly confirmed that: absence of teaching aid, shortage of time for practice, teachers' speed when they are teaching Fingerspelling, no mastery, hence unable to communicate with SL, variation in SL among teachers and the appearance of SL courses with extended time gap not consecutive were mentioned as the major one.

4.4. Challenges related to curriculum of SAO

Table 2 Relevance of SL modules used in the college Curriculum at SSNETC

Are the modules used in the college Curriculum at SSNETC relevant to develop your SL skill?	%
Yes	22.9
No	60.2
To some extent	16.4
Total	100

In response to indicate curriculum related to constraints, the students asked about the SL module used in the college. The majority 50 (60.2%) students replied that the module used in the college curriculum was not relevant enough to develop their SL understanding and skill. However, some of them (22.9%) said that it is relevant while the rest (16.4%) responded saying to some extent. This implies that the SL module used in the college is not relevant enough to equip the students with the basic knowledge and skills that the students need to acquire.

In the interview session, the instructors were also asked if the module used in the college curriculum could equip the trainees with basic knowledge and skills they need to acquire. All the instructors replied that the modules used in the college curriculum is not good enough to equip the students with the required knowledge and skills. On the top of this, they were asked to

mention the strengths and weakness of the used in the college curriculum, all of them claimed in general terms that the weakness of the used in the college curriculum outweighs its strengths.

Moreover, the researcher tried to analyze the curriculum (module one I, II, III and course catalogue) and found that the titles, and course numbers are not appropriately described. Besides, the contents of the used in the college curriculum not clearly organized, is not clear enough to understand and is not arranged from simple to complex. Some pictures and their descriptions do not match. Furthermore, the modules are not revised. This shows that the modules are not convenient and sufficient enough for the teaching and learning of SAO at this level.

4.5. Challenges related with teaching leaning materials

Table 3. Availability of materials for teaching SAO at the college

What materials are available for teaching SAO?	%
Reference books	57.8%
Toys	2.4%
No material at all	39.7%
Total	100

Student respondents were made to determine whether the list of materials mentioned in the table were available or not in their college. The data reveal that 48 (57.8%) students make use of reference books, whereas 33 (39.7%) responded that they use no material at all. Only 2(2.4%) trainees responded that they use toys to back up their classroom instruction.

The instructors were also asked regarding availability of materials in the college. First, they were asked what kinds of materials were available for teaching SAO. Regarding this

question, all (four) instructors witnessed that materials used to teach SAO are not enough, and they mentioned that mainly the course modules, which are full of repetitions and need to be revised, were available. They also said that some Amharic SL (ha metshaf) and the newly published EthSL dictionary are available. Accordingly, the researcher's observation confirms the same.

The instructors were also asked whether the materials used are relevant to impart and improve the knowledge and skills of students in SAO and all the instructors responded that it is difficult to say as there are sufficient and relevant reference books and other visual aid materials such as TV. DVD and so on.

As it can be understood both the instructors' and the students' response supplement each other in that, materials available to teach SL with and to learn from are very limited as there are only the modules, EthSL Dictionary and 'ha metshaf' in the college.

Students were made to decide whether their instructors used computer technologies or not, and all the students replied that their instructors did not use any in SL class room.

The instructors were also asked if they use computer technologies in their SL class room. All the respondents said 'no' and forwarded different comments. They added that they were interested to use that technology, but failed as there was no facility in the college. The other one also said that they have discussed on this issue on its value, especially to teach natural SL by showing different videos from internet, online SL class, but there was no access in the college to use computer technologies in SAO class room and the class room was not suitable for that purpose. The classroom observation also verified that there was no any computer technology used during SAO lesson.

4.6. Challenges related to method of communication used to teach SL

Table. 4. Method of communication used to teach SL at the college

What are the primary mode of communication do you use during SL class?"	%
Home sign	9.6
Manual sign	3.6
Signed Afaan Oromo	60.2
EthSL	7.2
Total communication	9.6
I don't know	9.6
Total	100

Student respondents were asked to determine the primary method of communication used in classroom. With regard to the method of communication used in classroom, most of the students 50 (60.2 %) mentioned that Signed Afan Oromo is used as method of communication in the class. Only 8 students (9.6%) said Home sign, and 8 students (9.6%) were unable to decide which method; probably they did not know and have no idea about the method of communication used in the class. According to the respondents, Signed Afan Oromo was the dominant method of communication for teaching SL and to communicate with each other during SL class.

In the interview session, instructors had different responses for the question “What are the primary methods of communication you use during SL class?” Two of the instructors said

Signed Afan Oromo whereas, one said Total Communication method, and the other said the Eth SL and Total communication methods. Hence, the instructors seems to use different methods of communication in classroom theoretically. During the observation time; however, they were seen using Signed Afan Oromo all in all.

The instructors together with the students were also asked if there is SL resource room in their college. For the above question, all the instructors responded that there was no such resource room at all in the college. The instructors further explained that SNE department was trying to open resource room for the three skills (Sign language, Braille and Orientation and Mobility) together which is organized by a person qualified in SNE and give support for students. The researcher also observed and confirmed that there is no resource room where students got additional support as an individual or group improve their rudimentary skill.

The other Challenge Which was forwarded to both instructors and students and affirmatively replied was the absence of model SL teacher in the college who can guide and support the students and instructors as well. However in their response to the necessity of Deaf model EthSL teacher in their college each group was astonished and raise the difficulty in communication between the Deaf teacher and student.

4.6 Opportunities related to learning SL

Table 5. Opportunities given to the trainees to participate in SAO in different activities

Are there any opportunities for the SL trainees of the college?	%
Yes	36
No	49.3
To some extent	3.6
Not respond	10.8
Total	100

Most student respondents 41 (49.3%) replied that they had no opportunities given to them by their teachers to participate in different activities for example teaching deaf children during independent teaching, online training, video materials; and 30 trainees (36%) responded that they had opportunities by their teachers to participate in different activities and mentioned these participation opportunity to as: participating SL friends during home and group works.

In the interview session, the instructors were asked if the trainees have opportunities to practice SAO. All of the instructors witnessed that the trainees were given such opportunities as discussing on SAO with very few deaf trainees who can guide them. Following this, the instructors were asked what the opportunities were given to them. They mentioned that there are very few deaf trainees who can guide the SL of the others; the trainees have opportunity to discuss with them. Also, they stressed that the opening of the SSNETC by itself is one opportunity because the SL course is given in the college as one of the SNE course. Moreover, they mentioned that the

availability of different policies, strategies and legal frame works, and the emergence of accessibility are main opportunities.

Regarding practical activities to develop SL skill of students in the college, the instructors were asked if there were any practical sessions to develop SL in the college and all the instructors said that there are some practical activities. Including group work, SL classroom activities, and homework activities as practical drills on SL source. Regarding trainees chance to communicate with the deaf. Almost half of the respondents 46 (55.3%) mentioned that they had communication access with deaf people, while 31 (37.2%) said 'no' but a few of them 8 (9.6%) agreed that they communicate with deaf people to some extent.

This shows that the trainees get a chance communicate when they try to help their collage mate deaf friends who. The students were asked about the required materials to realize opportunities of learning SL at the college. And responded that a revised and clear module, teaching materials. Unlike the trainees, the instructors wisely mentioned DVD, LCD, TV internet access and revised module as requirements to excel the opportunities of teaching SL at the college.

4.8 Some suggestions given from SL instructors and student respondents to improve

Current SL teaching at SSNETC

Suggestions, to improve SL in SSNETC, were collected from instructor and to this end, the following point of improvement were founded:

- SL should be standardized mean SL used in the country should be similar;
- The law and conventions that are ratified by Ethiopia should be implemented;
- The gap between Ethiopian Deaf Association and college should be minimized and they should better work in collaborative and have the same understanding about SL;

- The College should have formal curriculum that is prepared by sign language experts;
- Have resource room equipped with teaching materials;
- Support SL courses by Electronics materials, share experience with other Deaf Schools, college and university;
- The trainees also should teach in Deaf schools during teaching practice; and
- Better to start teaching SL from lower grade and the dictionaries should be prepared in all languages for example in Afan Oromo.

Similarly, the students were also asked on what should be done to improve the existing SL teaching in the college. They forwarded the following points:

- The time (credit hour) allotted to SAO course should increase;
- SL teachers should use the same (standardized) SL to avoid the confusion we have;
- Teachers have to slow down their speed especially when they use finger spelling;
- Teachers need to use teaching aid, give time and place to practice; and
- The pictures in the module should better to be clear.

In addition to the interview, questionnaire and document analysis, the researcher also employed lesson observation. To this end this was done to see the real situation of the implementation and challenges of teaching SAO at SSNETC video and photo cameras were used to record two SAO teachers who graduated in SAO and Deaf culture from AAU Department of linguistics and finally, the researcher filled the check list with the SL experts by watching the video.

It was further observed that due to large class size, it was difficult for the instructor to handle, follow up and assess more than 40 students in SAO class. The other problem was the lightning of the class. As the researcher observed and verified by video, it was difficult to say the

classes had enough light for SAO class. The wall is painted gray and there is no enough florescent light. Therefore, during cloudy day and at night, it might be difficult to teach SAO

In general, from the video recorded one can witnessed that, the instructor used Signed Afan Oromo dominantly and the students had not given due attention for the elements of Sign Language like facial expression, hand shape, palm orientation, hand movement and location.

Chapter 5

5. Discussion

5.1 Overall Situation

In this section, the findings are discussed in relation to the major research questions. As indicated in the earlier chapter, the purpose of this study was to investigate the challenges and available opportunities of teaching SAO and recommend possible solutions that help to improve SL teaching at Sebeta Special Needs Education Teachers' College. The chapter contains six sections in relation to the research questions. Below is the discussion of the findings visa-verse the research questions.

1. What are the major challenges related to teaching learning of SAO at SSNETC?
2. What are the major challenges related to curriculum of SAO at Sample College?
3. What opportunities are there to learn SAO?

5.2 The major challenges related to teaching of SAO at SSNETC

The findings of the study revealed that in the teaching process the instructors of SL at SSNETEC had major challenges. Among others, the instructors of SL were found less effective in teaching SL. In other words, the SL teaching practice appears to be totally different from what the literature supports. For example, in prior studies, scholars: Pawlos, 2008 and Jamie, 2009 argue that successful teaching of SL requires both communicative and linguistic approaches to the subject matter that grounded in sound pedagogy and understanding of the characteristics of the learner. If there is a problem with teachers' quality in a subject area, it is difficult to say there is quality teaching. All of the instructors of SL at SSNETC had taken SL as a common course at

certificate level. Therefore, one can deduce that the instructors of SSNEC do not have deep knowledge about characteristics and linguistic of SL. Therefore absence of deep knowledge in subject area may affect the acquisition of SL of the trainee.

The other challenge is found to be SL modules used in the college curriculum lacked clarity, logical content arrangement and exclude Deaf culture. In relation to this, Pawlos (2004) justified that any SL teaching must start from Deaf culture or it should be given parallel to the SL training.

Large class size was the other observed challenge of teaching SAO. The classrooms was not arranged in a way to facilitate the teaching learning endeavors in SL class. Different scholars: Donand (1996); Pawlos (2004) Keith and Cagle (2011) argued that SL classroom rely on visual input, so the classroom should be arranged in such a way to facilitate all their visual requirements, Seating tends to be arranged in a semi-circle or "U" shape to facilitate visual communication between students and instructors.

In the college understudy during SL class communication can be affected by visual noise such as dim light, glare, bold wall patterns and anything in the physical visual background that may be distracting like trying to have a spoken conversation in a group of people and everyone is talking at the same time. Moreover, if teaching purpose of SL is for communication purpose the maximum number of students must be 10-12 (Pawlos, 2004). In the contrary, as observed from the photograph and recorded video, both large number of students and their sitting arrangements' could not facilitate in a way that they could communicate visually.

The communication method is also the other observed challenge. The present study finding showed the dominance of signed Afan Oromo in SL class. In previous studies, scholars: Alemayehu (2003); Pawlos (2008); Hollis (2011) and WFD (2013), however, noted that there are different methods of communication in the Education of Deaf Children, such as the auditory-Oral method, the total communication method, bilingual by cultural method, signed spoken language method, home sign language and natural sign language. Bilingual bicultural method forwarded as the most recommended and recent method of teaching deaf people. In contrast, as can be observed from the recorded video practicing listening by eye and practicing to communicate in Sign Language using their eyes, face, hands, and body was limited.

They were trying to speak equally, sign language and Afan Oromo language. This system do not appear to lead the trainees to fluency in natural SAO. Pawlos (2008), strongly argue that to understand someone who is using SL primarily asks listening by eyes and speaking by hands. SAO has its own structure sign order. For example to communicate in Sign Language one has to use his eyes, face, hands, and body in ways which are not required in spoken language. The teachers and students under study rely on spoken words that they speak as they sign. They speak and sign simultaneously and use the signs that correspond to the words that Afan Oromo. This method does not prepare trainees with proficient in SAO and fully acquired Deaf culture. As the scholars: Pawlos (2008) and Hollis (2011) treated SL instruction should occur in the target language. Therefore sign represent concepts not words, these makes understanding of the concept possible without specific sign for each word to describe the concept. In addition teaching SL requires variety of ways.

The teachers should use or apply in their SL class by choosing from existing research and theoretical applications. However the SL trainees of SSNEC were observed when they just say the word and show the sign parallel without application of different methods.

5.3 Major challenges related to learning of SAO at SSNETC

The finding of the current research showed that less effective in teaching SAO, the module used to teach SAO at the college curriculum lack clarity and problem with logical content arrangement, total absence of teaching materials, unorganized classroom, limited practice, class size were the main challenges in learning SAO. Moreover the methods of communication was the other noticed short coming and could not help students to develop fluency in natural SL usage.

Pawlos (2004) and Burton (2013) argued that exposure to cultural valued, beliefs, and practice of Deaf people, large practice, using the target language, organized class room, using visual aid materials are very helpful for SAO learning. Therefore, in the college understudy the teaching learning process of SAO had no facilities, the students had serious challenges in their learning of SAO. However as they are prospective teachers of Deaf children should be proficient in SAO and should have fully acquired deaf culture in order to teach deaf children and interpret in their regular class.

5.4 Major challenges related to curriculum of SAO at SSNETC

The study identified that the existing SAO modules used in the college curriculum lacks clarity and have problem of content organization from simple to complex and excludes Deaf culture. In this regard, literature shows that, any SL learning should include Deaf culture, more practice, and exposure to Deaf community, (Pawlos, 2004^{EC}). Indeed, learning language is learning the culture of that community. Learning a language requires an understanding and

appreciation for the culture of the people who use that language in their daily lives. Therefore, that the curriculum is not suitable and sufficient enough for SAO learning.

5.5. Major challenges related to availability of materials at SSNETC

The finding of the research under study shows shortage or total absence of teaching SL materials at the college. Many researchers: Jamie (2009); Hollis (2011) and Burton (2013) argue that SL teaching-learning must be supported by multiple resources. They mention flip chart, pictures, Video tapes, and mirror, CD-ROMs or DVD on line SL class that support the teaching-learning process. They further argue that absence of teaching materials limited the students' SL learning opportunity.

Now a day's there are variety of technological educational tools are available to teach SL. Using technology is becoming common and essential in language class. Because language class should be entertaining, useful to integrate the natural aspects of accessibility of the SL assistive technology must be implemented. This implies that total absence teaching material may result in inadequate language skill.

Using these resources could excel students' opportunity to improve their SL skill and will help to get the high light of SL. Model Deaf teacher or Deaf SL expert and resource room are the other opportunities to develop students SL. SL is an independent language, like English language improvement class (ELIC) SL should have a resource room. Furthermore as any other language the study of SL necessarily should include exposure to the cultural values, beliefs, and practices of Deaf people proficient more in SL mastery.

This means attending any of the several Deaf clubs, theatrical production, social gatherings, and events where Deaf people get together. Furthermore there should be resource room equipped

by necessary materials such as Videotapes, CD-ROMs or DVD and other visual materials which have sign language examples that provide an alternate form of training materials, mirror that the learner observe him/herself and see how to sign and how to improve the hand shape, facial expression, place of articulation, direction of hands and so on. Because sign without facial expression is certainly boring for deaf people; just someone speaking in a monotone can put a listener to sleep.

Besides these, the model Deaf teacher of SL or an expert should give remedial instruction, pre teaching or post teaching the content as well as tutoring the trainees. The Deaf teacher or expert is necessary because SL is his/her mother tongue so can be a model and shape the students.

Pawlos (2004) pointed out that like any other language, the study of SL necessarily includes exposure to the cultural values, beliefs, and practices of Deaf people. He further argues that any sign language teaching or training should start from deaf culture or it has to be given together. On top of this, the students should understand the opportunities of learning SL, characteristics of SL, similarities and difference of SL from the other language. For example hearing by eye, teach the language from simple to complex. However, in the college under study, none of the materials worth mentioned above and the chance for the students to practice SL and the Deaf people to get together were none existence.

5.6 Available opportunities to learn SAO at SSNETC

As we know in the rule of nature, under most circumstances opportunities always exist with challenges. In line with this, the Ethiopian constitution accepts the international declarations and states education as human rights. The international declarations, conventions and policies, our country has accepted the universal rights to education that our country was accept emphasize the need to allocate resources and provide assistance to disadvantaged groups. With this objective, SL course is given for its trainees in SSNETC.

The opening of the college by itself is one opportunity. It open the chance of communication between the deaf and other hearing trainees; SL students of the college had also an opportunity to communicate with the deaf trainees enrolled in the college and develop their rudimentary level of SL communication. Furthermore, in the ICT lab there is an internet access. Therefore students of SL could attend online SL class and have option for learning natural sign language.

The trainees are also learn SL interested in building their career working with deaf children. However, discussed previously SL is a recognized language and as such there are qualifications that needs to be met. Someone want to learn SL as a career choice, has to establish effective mode of communication. This effective mode of communication should start from rudimentary level of communication. While attending the college all most all the trainees have their first experiences of SL and may not have any idea about the Deaf culture at a time. In this circumstance the trainees should have to introduce and encouraged Deaf culture and participate with Deaf community. This is why while they are communicate and integrated with Deaf to Deaf culture they may be sensitive to Deaf culture and they identify themselves as part of Deaf culture or aware of what Deaf Culture is.

5.7 Summary

The purpose of the study was to investigate the prevailing challenges of teaching EthSL at Sebeta Special Needs Education Teachers' College (SSNET). To carry out the study, relevant literature review was made, and four data gathering tools were employed in order to obtain the data required data. These were questionnaire for 3rd year SNE focus students, interview for SL instructors and observation check list, and document analysis. This tools were administered accordingly. Then collected data was analyzed and equally the following summery was made.

The results of the study indicated that the SL instructors of SSNETC were not well qualified to teach SL. It was also found that the modules lack clarity and logical content arrangement. The finding further showed that there were no materials that could support the efforts of students to learn SL; the classrooms were not arranged in a way to facilitate the teaching learning endeavors of SL class. The method of communication was the other observed challenge to have fluency in natural SL. Furthermore, the findings showed that there was no SL resource room in the college. Finally, finding also indicated SL students of the college had limited opportunity to practice and develop their SL.

5.8 Conclusion

Based on the findings, the following conclusions can be drawn.

- The SL instructors of SSNETC were found to be less effective in teaching SL. To provide quality education for all primary schools, it is necessary to train prospective teachers properly. The main challenge of the trainees was inability to communicate effectively using SL; this may limit the trainees to address the needs of HI children at the grassroots level.
- It is also possible to conclude that the curriculum does not consider SL experts and embedded serious obstacles in the teaching-learning efforts as it lacks clarity and logical content arrangement. Therefore, special attention would have to be given by curriculum designers to make the curriculum clear and content arrangement.
- From the finding it appears that SL training requires more time, continuous practice and visual materials; this seems to demand curriculum adaptation according to literature and research.
- From the findings it is possible to conclude that there were no materials that can support the effort of students to learn SL in the college. This can have an impact on children with HI because the trainees may apply the way they learn.
- The chairs, class size, lighting were not convenient to teach SL. Large class size, windows were painted dim color, some of them were broken. According to the observation, the classroom became dark during rainy and foggy days and that was difficult to the teaching-learning process.
- The methods of communication had noticeable shortcomings and cannot help the students to have fluency in natural SL.

- Furthermore, that there was no SL resource room at SSNEC and model Deaf teachers.
- Similarly, students of SSNEC had limited opportunity to practice and develop their SL.

Therefore, based on the above serious challenges observed in the college, one would conclude that the teaching-learning of SL in the college has been hindered by serious challenges.

5.9 Recommendations

Depending on the findings and conclusions of the study, the following recommendations were made with the view that they would help to mitigate the challenges of learning and teaching SAO at SSNETC.

1. SSNETC should give due attention and facilitate training for SL instructor of the College in collaboration with SL department of AAU and Ethiopian Deaf Association.
2. The college and SL instructors should set for experience sharing with other SL instructors on how to overcome the challenges and excel the opportunities of teaching SAO at SSNETC.
3. The currently used modules in the college curriculum should be revised and updated by engaging SL experts in order to offer basic standardized SL to trainees.
4. As indicated in the finding of this study, the classroom, the windows were not convenient to teach SL. To make the classroom convenient for teaching – learning the College board must play a significant role in improving, organizing and adjusting the teaching learning environment conducive to teach SAO in the college.
5. In order to pose positive effect on teaching learning process materials and resource room are indispensable. Therefore the college and concerned agencies need to arrange some technological equipment such as video, TV, DVD, etc. with resource room. Because the materials have positive effect on teaching learning process.
6. In order to overcome the challenges at hand and to promote good communication skill and language development, SSNETC should employ model Deaf teacher or instructor or SAO expert or a person qualified in SAO who guide and give support for the instructors

And students in resource room.

7. The SSNETC should give opportunity for Students like teaching deaf children during independent teaching, to practice and develop their SL; build their career, and work with Deaf people or children.
8. Instructors of SL at SSNETS should give due attention to the training and this language and try to use locally available visual teaching materials
9. Finally, SL ENAD should take part and play their own role in teaching learning process SL preparation, design and development of teaching materials and permit Institutions, Colleges and Universities, conduct research; give continuous short term and long term training for SL teachers by raising fund from different NGOs'.

Addis Ababa University
School of Graduate Studies

Faculty of Education Department of Special Needs Education

Students' Questionnaire on the Challenges and Opportunities of Teaching Ethiopian Sign Language at Sebeta Special Needs Education Teachers' College.

This Questionnaire has been designed to gather information on the challenges and opportunities of teaching Ethiopian Sign Language at Sebeta Special Needs Education Teachers College.

To investigate the challenges and opportunities of teaching Ethiopian Sign Language at the College and recommend possible solutions, the researcher has taken 3rd year Special Needs Education regular students as a sample for the research. The outcome of this study will highly depend on genuine, sincere and timely responses of the students.

Hence, you are kindly requested to fill in the questionnaire and give relevant responses. Your response is confidential and will be used only for this research purpose.

Please note that!

For multiple choice items, you may choose more than one among the alternatives given and put a tick ('✓') mark in the box.

Thank you in advance!

I. Background information

SEX M F year ____ Dip. _____

How many EthSL courses you have taken in the college? _____

II. General information about the teaching learning:

1. Are the teachers qualified in ETHSL to teach EthSL at SSNETC?
Yes No I don't know To some extent
2. Are there model Deaf EthSL teachers in SSNETC? Yes No I don't know
3. Is there any challenges that you face while you are teaching EthSL in the class?
Yes no

3.1. For question number '3' if your answer is 'yes', what are these challenges?

4. What is the primary mode of communication do you and your teacher use during EthSL class?

- Home sign
- Signed Afaan Oromo and fingerspelling
- EthSL (Ethiopian Sign Language) and fingerspelling
- Total communication
- Bilingual Oral manual

5. Is the curriculum of EthSL used in the college relevant to develop the students EthSL skill?

- Yes No To some extent

6. **What should be done to improve the existing EthSL teaching at SSNETC?**

7. Is there ample opportunities given to you by your teacher to participate in EthSL activities? Yes No To some extent

7.1. For question number '7' if your answer is 'yes', **what** are these opportunities?

II. Supporting Factors:

8. What materials are available for learning EthSL at your college?

- flash card
- resource book
- electronics like: video, TV, DVD, Projector
- none others _____

9. Do your teacher use computer technologies to teach EthSL?

Yes No To some extent

9.1. For question number '8' if your answer is 'yes', how do you benefit from the use of this technologies?

10. Is there well-equipped EthSL resource room at SSNETC?

Yes No To some extent

10.1. For question number '9' if your answer is 'yes', what are these resources?

11. Do you have communication access with deaf people?

Yes No To some extent

11.1. For question number '10' if your answer is 'yes', who are they

- A. Teachers
- B. Friends
- C. Deaf friends 4. Others _____ specify

IV. Open ended questions

Please, give short answers to the following items.

12. Write some of the major challenges you encountered in developing EthSL.

13. Mention available opportunities relevant to develop EthSL.

13.1 What are those opportunities?

Addis Ababa University
School of Graduate Studies Faculty of Education
Department of Special Needs Education

Classroom Observation Checklist for Sebeta Special Needs Education Teachers' College
(SSNETC) Ethiopian Sign Language (EthSL) Class

The purpose of this Classroom observation checklist is to gather information on the Challenges and Opportunities of teaching EthSL at Sebeta Special Needs Education Teachers college.

This classroom observation checklist are prepared by MA student of Addis Abeba University Special Needs Education Department. The research is trying to investigate challenges and opportunities of teaching Ethiopian Sign Language at Sebeta Special Needs Education Teachers college.

Observer _____ Course _____

Date of observation _____

Direction:- Below is a list of instructors and students activity that may accomplish within EthSL class. Please use it as guide to making observations. When this lit is used, it is recommended that to respond to each statement using the following level:

Very High = 4 High =3 Medium =2 low =1

No	Presentation	4	3	2	1	Remark
	The trainees					
1	Use Signed Afaan Oromo					
2.	Use facial expression					
3	Use gesture					
4	Hand Shape					
5	Palm Orientation					
6	Hand Location (place of articulation)					
7	Hand Movement					
8	Encouraged on the discussion					
9	Class room facilities					
10	Has teaching materials					

What are the instructor's major strength as demonstrated in this observation_____

What are the students' major strength as demonstrated in this observation_____

What suggestion do you have for improving upon this instructor's skills?_____

What suggestion do you have for improving upon this students' skills?_____

Addis Ababa University
School of Graduate Studies Faculty of Education
Department of Special Needs Education

Interview Guide for Sebeta special Needs Education teachers' college (SSNETC) Ethiopian sign language instructors (EthSLI)

Dear respondent!

The purpose of this interview is to gather information on the challenges and opportunities of teaching EthSL at Sebeta Special Needs Education Teachers college.

Hence knowing that your response will be used only for MA research purpose. You are selected for this study because you could provide adequate information on the issues. Therefore, the success of this study undoubtedly depends on your response. It is my hope that you will be cooperative in giving clear and genuine responses to the questions raised during the interview.

Thank You in advance!

I. Major characteristics of the instructor

1. Your teaching experience at the college.
 2. How many years have you taught EthSL?
 3. Have you got any refreshment training or workshop on EthSL?
1. Are there any challenges in teaching EthSL in the class? What are these challenges?
 2. Are the EthSL modules you used in your college can equipped the trainees with the basic knowledge and skill? Can you mention strengths and weaknesses of the modules?
 3. What materials are available for teaching EthSL at your college? Are the materials relevant to improve the teaching learning process of EthSL?
 4. What are the primary mode of communication do you and your students use during EthSL class?
 5. Are there any opportunities for the Ethiopian SL trainees of the college? What are they?
 6. What do you suggest for the improvement of EthSL in the college?

Appendix D

Yuniiversitii Finfinnee

Qo'anno Giraajuweetii

Faakilitii Barumsaa Dippaartmentii Fedhii Addaa

Waraqaa Gaafii barreeffamaa barattootaan guuttamu

Ani barattu digree lammaffaa Yuniiversitii Finfinnee yammun ta'u,

Qo'annoo Mata duree Rakkoolee fi Carraalee Barnoota Aflattoo Itoophiyaa Kolleejjii Barsiisoota Barnoota Fedhii Addaa Sabbataa Keessatti Barsiissuu irrattan hojjadha.

Waraqaan gaafii Kun qo'annoo Rakkoolee fi Carraa Barnoota Aflattoo Itoophiyaa Kolleejjii Barsiisoota Barnoota Fedhii Addaa Sabbataa Keessatti Barsiissuu qo'achuu fi yaada furmaata ta'u danda'an dhiyeessuuf. Qo'annoon Kun akka eeddattootti barattoota 3^{ffaa} idilee Barnoota fedhii addaa waggaa xiyyefatan filateera.

Argannoon qo'annoo kanaa hedduummiinaan deebii dhugaa fi sirrii yeroon barattoonni kennan irratti hundaa'a. kanaafuu, deebiiwwan sirrii ta'an kennuun waraqaa gaaffii kana akka guuttan kabajaan isin gaafanna. Deebiin isin kennitan icciitiin kan eeggamuu fi qorannoo kana qofa ilaalchiseen faayidaa irraa kan oolu ta'a.

Yaadachiisa: Gaafilee fillannoo deebii tokkoon oli filachuu waan dandeessanif saanduuqa keessatti mallattoo '✓' agarsiisaa

Duraan Dursee Hirmaannaa keessanniif Galatoomaan jedha!

III. Odeeffannoo Dhunfaa

1. Saala Dhi Dha Wagga _____ Mummee _____
2. Kolleejji kana keessatt koorsii Aflattoo Meeqa Baratee? _____

IV. Odeeffanno wali galaa Adeemsa Baru Barsiisuu Ilaalchisee

1. Akka yaada keetti barsiisoonni Kolleejjii Barsiisoota Barnoota Fedhii Addaa Sabbataa keessatti Aflattoo si barsiisan gahumsa oggummaa Aflattoo Itoophiyaa gahaa ta'e qabu jettee yaaddaa?

Eyyee Lakki Hanga tokko

2. Aflattoo barachuu keessatti rakkoon si mudate jiraa?

Eyyee Lakki Hanga tokko

2.1 Gaafii lakkoofsa '2'f deebiin kee 'eyyee' yoo ta'ee, rakkooleen Kun maal faa dha?

3. Mojulli Barnootaa Aflattoo Itoophiyaa kolleejjii kessatti itti fayyadamtan ogummaa Aflattoo Itoophiyaa akka cimsattan kan isiin dandeessisuu dhaa?

Eyyee Lakki Hanga tokko

4. Kolleejjii keessan Aflattoo Itoophiyaa barachuuf Meeshaaleen jiran maal faa dha?

Kaardii lephisaa (flash kard)

Kitaaba waabii (reference book)

Meshaaalee Elektroniksii (video, TV, DVD, Projector)

Intalashee (Toys)

Homtu hin jiru (none) Kan biroo yoo jiraate _____

5. Barsiisaan keessan Aflattoo Itoophiyaa barsiisuuf teknolojii kompiwutaraa ni fayyadamaa?

Eyyee Lakki Hanga tokko

5.1. Gaafii lakkofsa ‘5’ deebiin kee ‘eyyee’ yoo ta’e, itti fayyadama teknolojiwwan kanneen irraa faayiidaa maalii argattee?

6. Wayiti Aflattoo Barsiisaan kee Aflattoo barsiisuuf yeroo baay’ee’ mallii itti fayyadamu mala kamii?

- Aflatto mana keessaa (home sign)
- Aflatto Afaan Oromoo fi qubee qubaa (signed Afan Oromo and fingerspelling)
- Aflatto Itoophiyaa fi qubee qubaa (Ethiopian Sign Language and fingerspelling)
- Waligaltee waligalaa (Total communication)
- Afaan lama (bilingual) Manualii Afoolaa (Oral manual)

7. Kolleejjii leenjii barsiisoota sabbataa keessattii wirtuun lecalloo Aflattoo Itoophiyaa barsiisuuf oolu ciminaan qindaaye jiraa?

Eyyee Lakki Hanga tokko

7.1. Gaaffii lakkofsa 7ffaaf deebiin kee ‘eyyee’ yoo ta’ee kutaan lecalloo kun maalfaa dha?

8. Kolleejjii Barsiisoota Sabbataa keessatti Barsiisan dhageettii gurraa hinqabne Aflattoo barsiisuun akka fakkenyaa kan isin fayyadu jiraa?

Eyyee Lakki Hanga tokko

9. Gochaalee Afaan Mallattoo Itoophiyaa irratti akka hirmaattu barsiisaan kee carraa gahaa siif kennaa?

Eyyee Lakki Hanga tokko

9.1. Gaaffii lakkofsa ‘9’ ilaalchisee deebiin kee ‘eyyee’ yoo ta’ee, carraaleen kunnin maal faa dha?

10. Namoota dhageetti gurraa hin qabne waliin carraa Aflattoon haasa’uu qabdaa?

Eyyee Lakki Hanga tokko

10.1. Gaaffii lakkoofsa 11ffaaf deebiin kee ‘eyyee’ yoota’ee eenyu fa’aa?

barsiisoota/teachers/

hiriyoota /friends/

Namoota gurraan hin dhageenye /Deafs/ Kan biraa yoo jiraate ibsi /others mention/ _

V. Gaafilee banaa

11. Aflattoo guddisuu keessatti rakkoo si mudate maalii?

12. Aflattoo Itophiyaa guddisuuf carraalee jiran tarressi

13. Adeemsa baru barsiisuu Aflattii Itoophiyaa fooyyeessuuf tarkaanfiin fudhatamuu qabu maalii jettee yaadda?

DECLARATION

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

Name Fikrte Shiferaw

Signature _____

Date _____

SUBMISSION OF APPROVAL SHEET

This thesis has been submitted for examination with my approval as a University Advisor

Name _____

Signature _____

Date _____

