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**COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES, LANGUAGE STUDIES,
JOURNALISM AND COMMUNICATIONS**

DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES AND LITERATURE

**AN EVALUATION OF SPEAKING TASKS: FOCUS ON GRADE EIGHT
ENGLISH TEXTBOOK**

BY: ZERIHUN ADERAW

**A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES
OF ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY FOR PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS OF DEGREE OF MASTERS OF ARTS IN
ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING**

ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA

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ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES

**DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES AND
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DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE
TEACHING (ELT)**

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DECLARATIONS

This is to certify that the thesis prepared by Zerihun Aderaw entitled on “**AN EVALUATION OF SPEAKING TASKS: FOCUS ON GRADE EIGHT ENGLISH TEXTBOOK**” is Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in English Language Teaching (ELT) compiles with the regulations of the university and meets the accepted standards with respect to originality and quality.

Name: Zerihun Aderaw

Place: Addis Ababa University

Date of submission: March, 2021 G.C

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

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

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SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES

**DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES AND
LITERATURE**

**AN EVALUATION OF THE SPEAKING TASKS: GRADE 8 ENGLISH
TEXTBOOK IN FOCUS**

BY:
ZERIHUN ADERAW

APPROVED BY EXAMINING BOARD

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Abstract

The target of this study was to evaluate speaking tasks presented in Grade Eight Ethiopian English textbook whether they are designed based on Nunan's (1989) components of communicative tasks and quality of effective speaking tasks or not. The study was evaluative research design and employed both qualitative and quantitative methods. The researcher used content analysis as (a main tool), questionnaire and interview. The data were collected from grade 8 textbook, teacher's guide and syllabus, particularly speaking tasks. Besides, 4 teachers and 70 students participated from Eshet and Dejeazmach Geneme Primary Schools in Addis Ketema Sub City in Addis Ababa to find out the attitude of teachers and students towards speaking tasks. Simple random sampling and available sampling were employed to select students and teachers respectively. Additionally, to get valid information about the tasks, task designers participated in this study. The finding revealed that the goals of the speaking tasks were not clearly stated in students' textbook, but mentioned in teacher's guide. Most of inputs of speaking tasks were inauthentic, and most of the input forms were verbal. Activities seem to be closely related to the communicative goals of the task and the input of the tasks. All speaking tasks were designed to be practiced in the form of pair work or group work. The roles of students and teachers were mentioned in text book, and teacher's guide. In short, tasks don't fulfill some of the relevant criteria of Nunan's (1989) components of communicative tasks. Regarding goodness of speaking tasks, the activities were motivating, meaningful, purposeful, productive, and suitable for pair or group work. However, the tasks do not fulfill stages of tasks. Both students and teachers have positive attitude towards the speaking tasks. Based on the findings, it is recommended that task designers need to develop tasks through incorporating the six basic components of communicative tasks in the learner's textbook when preparing the materials. Hence, some activities need modification in order to be more applicable to the goal and input of tasks. Material designers need to consider different ways of presenting speaking tasks while designing.

Abbreviations

AKSC—Addis Ketema Sub City

CBLT-competency Based Language Teaching

CLT-Communicative Language Teaching

EFL-English as Foreign Language

EGPS-Eshet and Geneme Primary School

ELT-English Language Teaching

ESL/L2-English as Second Language

FL-Foreign Language

MLC- Minimum Learning Competence

MoE- Minister of Education

SD-Standard Deviation

SL- Second Language

SLA- Second Language Acquisition

TBLT-Task Based Language Teaching

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents background of the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, research questions, significance of the study, scope of the study, limitation of the study.

1.1 Background of the Study

Speaking is one of the most important language skills that every speaker of a particular language wishes to develop (Howarth, 2001). Howarth also defines Speaking as “a two-way process involving a true communication of ideas, information and feelings.” The ability to speak English is needed to create common understanding among different speakers. According to Nunan, (1999), the ability to carry out a conversation in the (target) language measures the success of language learning.

The researcher believes that speaking is essential language skill because most of everyday activities are performed through it. Amazingly, we frequently hear that people ask “Do you speak English/ Spanish/ Amharic?” But it is rare to hear “Do you write/ listen/read English/ Spanish/Amharic?” to know whether someone understands a language or not. This shows speaking ability in FLL /SLL is linked to being proficient in that language. Therefore, the mastery of speaking skills in English is a priority for many second-language or foreign-language learners (Richards 2008; Florez, 1999).

The main goal of all English language teaching should be to give learners the ability to use English effectively, accurately in communication (Davies and Pearse, 2000).Nevertheless, not all language learners after many years of studying English can communicate effectively because of different reasons. Deport cited in Meseret, (2015), and Abebew, (2012),the causes include: lack of motivation and encouragement, low quality of teaching material, lack of support, lack of facilities, use of inappropriate methodology, and sufficient time for learning and difficulties in finding authentic situations to motivate the students to communicate in the foreign language. The researcher believes that low quality of materials could be one of the main causes.

Evaluation according to Lynch (1996:2) defined as “the systematic attempt to gather information in order to make judgment or decisions”. According to Sheldon (1988), textbooks need to be evaluated for two reasons. First, the teachers or program developers are beneficiaries in making decisions on selecting the appropriate textbook. Additionally, evaluation of the merits and demerits of a textbook will enable teachers to make appropriate adaptations to the material in their future instruction. Secondly, evaluation helps the teacher to explore the weaknesses or strengths of the textbook while it is being used. To help students develop their speaking, communicative tasks are expected to be motivating, meaningful, authentic, goal-oriented, and the interest and needs of students (Nunan, 1989; Willis and Willis, 2007 and Ellis 2003).

There are many scholars who set criteria for evaluating textbooks such as Lazar, (1993); Mukundan and Ahour (2011), and McDonough & Shaw, 2003; Garinger, 2002; Richards, 2001; Cunningsworth, 1995; Harmer, 1991; Sheldon, 1988; Breen & Candlin, 1987; as cited in Mukundan and Ahour (2011); the above scholars set criteria for textbook evaluation, however, the researcher is interested in evaluating speaking tasks separately. To do so, the researcher has got Nunan’s criteria of evaluating communicative tasks. Thus, the researcher evaluated speaking tasks based on Nunan’s (1989) components of communicative tasks.

The purpose of this paper is to evaluate speaking tasks presented in grade eight new Ethiopian English textbook based on Nunan (1989) communicative task checklists. These include goals, input, activity, roles (teacher’ role and learner’s role) and setting. Besides, criteria of good speaking of tasks such as motivation, meaningfulness, purposefulness, and productivity, availability of tasks for pair or group work and stages of tasks are evaluated. Thus, the researcher wants to carry out a study on evaluation of speaking tasks presented in the current use of new grade eight Ethiopian English textbook.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Speaking is one of the most dominant skills that we practice in our everyday activities to perform our needs. It plays an important role in the students’ learning process because people who know a language are referred to as “speakers” of that language Ur,(1996).Additionally, it can also support other language skills and equally other skills can reinforce speaking skill. Recent researchers have believed that oral interaction plays an important factor in shaping learner’s developing language (Gass & Varionis, 1994). For example, it was proved that learning speaking can help the development of listening skills (Regina, 1997), the

development of writing (Trachsel & Severino, 2004) and the development of reading competence (Hilferty, 2005). Classroom activities that develop learners' ability to express themselves through speech would therefore seem an important component of a language course.

Abebew (2012) assured that teachers' performance, quality of teaching materials and learners' performance and effective teaching methods and procedures teachers employed are causes of students' low proficiency of English. According to Abebew, the researcher's assumption is that students' difficulty of speaking may be from ELT materials. Thus, designing speaking tasks based on principles of SL/FL acquisition is the main concern teaching speaking. To develop students speaking skill, a communicative task is very important. A communication task is a piece of classroom work that relates to real world activities (Willis and Willis, 2007).

Local researches have been conducted in different language tasks. For example, Abdulatif (2011) conducted a study on speaking tasks in grade 12 English textbook in line with CLT. The main goal of his research was to analyze the level to which the tasks' organization and structure encourage the speaking skills. The finding showed that the nature and organization of tasks and activities in grade 12 English textbook are not compatible with the criteria stated by Nunan (1989). Similarly, Meseret (2013) analyzed the speaking tasks of grade nine English textbook. And the finding of her study reveals that the tasks lack authenticity and the stages of tasks are not fulfilled. In line with this, Abebaw (2012) conducted a study on evaluating listening tasks presented in Grade 12 English Textbook. The result of his study showed that most of the tasks are designed fulfilling the relevant criteria of Nunan (1989) checklists.

What makes this research different from Tesfaye (2009), Abdulatif (2011), and Meseret (2013) is that Tesfaye's paper focused on evaluation of speaking tasks in spoken course at college level; Abdulatif's paper analyzed the extent to which task organization and structure promote the speaking skills in grade 12. Meseret's paper is the only paper which has a similar topic selection with this paper. Nevertheless, she did her research on analyzing the speaking tasks of grade nine English textbook. Besides, all conducted researches except Tesfaye's paper did at secondary and preparatory levels. Finally, this research is different from others is that it was conducted at primary schools focus in Grade 8 New English Textbook.

The main question to be answered in this study is: “To what extent are the speaking tasks presented in grade 8 new English for Ethiopia Textbook designed in the way that meet Nunan’s (1989) communicative tasks criteria and qualities of good speaking tasks?”

1.3 Objectives of the Study

1.3.1 General Objective

The main objective of the study was to evaluate speaking tasks of Grade Eight Ethiopian English textbook based on Nunan’s (1989) components of tasks and criteria of good speaking tasks.

1.3.2 Specific Objectives

The specific objectives of the study were to:

- evaluate speaking tasks presented in grade 8 English textbook in light of Nunan’s (1989) component communicative tasks.
- determine to what extent speaking tasks fulfill qualities of good speaking tasks according to (Nunan, 1989; Thornbury, 2005 and Richards, 2006).
- find out students and teachers’ attitude towards speaking tasks presented in Grade 8 English Textbook.

1.4 Research Questions of the Study

In order to achieve the above stated objectives effectively, this investigation attempted to address the following specific research questions.

- To what extent are speaking tasks designed in light of Nunan’s (1989) component communicative tasks?
- To what extent are speaking tasks fulfilled criteria’s of qualities good speaking tasks set by (Nunan, 1989; Thornbury, 2005 and Richards, 2006)?
- What are students and teachers’ attitude towards the designed speaking tasks in grade 8 Ethiopian English Text book?

1.5 Significance of the Study

The overall research is assumed to have the following importance after the attainment of this study. First, it may help language syllabus designers and textbook writers to design tasks by making them understand the strength and weakness of designed speaking tasks, and make essential adjustments on designing communicative tasks. Second, it may help English teachers to evaluate their current practice in relation to handling and managing speaking tasks. Additionally, students may benefit in improving their performance of English and the way they practice speaking activities. Third, other researchers who want to study this area can use it as a reference.

1.6 Scope of the Study

An evaluation of speaking tasks found in Ethiopian English Textbook for Grade eight at EGPS was the main focus of this study. The evaluation was made based on Nunan's (1989) framework, and qualities of good speaking tasks set by (Nunan, 1989; Thornbury, 2005 and Richards, 2006). In order to study the issue thoroughly and effectively, the researcher chose only Grade eight among the different grade levels and speaking among different tasks. The researcher is interested in evaluating speaking tasks in the textbook. Speaking tasks are selected because the success of people's language is measured through speaking yet many students at EGPS are unable to communicate using target language (Nunan, 1999).

1.7 Limitation of the study

A group of language experts are needed to evaluate tasks in a textbook for critical analysis of every task. This would be possibly done with available resources and time. Nevertheless, as a result of shortage of resources and time, the researcher did not involve experts in the detail analysis of every task in every unit of the English for Ethiopia grade 8 students' textbook. Therefore, this study was limited to the evaluation of speaking tasks presented in the new grade 8 English textbook depending on the checklist to evaluate speaking tasks using Nunan's (1989) framework of the current theories of communicative tasks.

CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter focuses on reviewing literature and the contents of the chapter are treated under the following sub-headings. These contents include: the concept of speaking, teaching speaking, CLT, and concepts of task, communicative tasks, and components of communicative tasks, authenticity, and criteria's to identify a good task and evaluation of tasks.

2.1 Concept of Speaking

There are various definitions of "*speaking*" available in the literature. Speaking is "the process of building and sharing meaning through the use of verbal and non-verbal symbols, in a variety of contexts" (Chaney, 1998:13). According to Burns & Joyce, (1997), speaking is defined as an interactive process of constructing meaning that involves producing, receiving and processing information. Its form and meaning are dependent on the context in which it occurs, the participants, and the purposes of speaking. According to Thornbury (2005), Speaking "is interactive and requires the ability to co-operate in the management of speaking turns. It is typical takes place in real time, with little time for detailed planning."

From the definition given above, it is possibly to understand that speaking is the means through which learners can communicate with others to achieve certain goals or to express their opinions, intentions, hopes and viewpoints. It is the interaction among people aiming at creating genuine communication for their immediate purpose in real context. When someone speaks, there is at least somebody who listens to the speaker ideas or thoughts. Therefore, we, people, normally speak, when we need someone to instruct, inform, persuade or express our information gap so that he or she could perform something in real communication for immediate purpose.

2.2 Teaching Speaking

Teaching speaking might be thought as traditional and communicative approaches. There are different traditional methods, but the dominant were Audio lingual and grammar translation methods. For example, for many years teachers taught speaking by having students repeat sentences and recite memorized textbook dialogue in audio-lingual method. On the other hand, in grammar translation method, little emphasis was given for teaching speaking. However, communicative approach targets to develop students' communicative competence.

In TBLT perspective, the general idea is that “a language is best learned through using it, rather than learned and then used” (Thornbury 2007: 119; Freeman, 2000:142). In second or foreign language, students learn to speak through “interaction” as many linguists agreed. To achieve this goal, CLT and collaborative learning serve best. CLT is based on real-life situations that require real communication. By applying this method, students will have the opportunity of making conversation with each other in the target language. In short, ESL/EFL teachers should create a classroom situation where students have real-life communication, authentic activities, and meaningful tasks that promote oral language. This can happen when students work together in groups to achieve a goal or to complete a task.

If the aim of speaking is communication, it may not require perfect English. For example, we can see girls who go to foreign countries for the sake of serving as servants, preparing food, taking care of babies. These girls even may not construct correct sentences, but they can communicate with their employers. While teaching speaking, teachers need to encourage students to practice the target language focusing on the message what is said. This helps learners to break the silence and get students communicating with whatever English they can use, correct or not and selectively address errors.

2.3 Communicative Language Teaching

According to Richard and Theodore (2001), Communicative language teaching (CLT) emerged from the British language teaching tradition since late 1960s and it is best considered as an approach rather than a method. Communicative language teaching is a set of principle that reflects a communicative view of language and language learning and that can be used to support a wide variety of classroom procedure. It is characterized by both functional and structural aspect of language. Some of the characteristics of communicative view of language are:

1. Language is a system for the expression of meaning.
2. The main purpose of language is for interaction and communication.
3. The structure of language reflects its functional and communicative uses.
4. The primary units of language are namely its grammatical and structured features, but categories of functional and communicative meaning exemplified in discourse (Richard and Theodore, 2001)

The goal of ELT is to develop communicative competence. According to Hymes (1972, 1967) cited in Brown, (2007:219) defined communicative competence as that of “aspect of our competence that enables us to convey and interpret messages and to negotiate meaning interpersonally with in specific context.” CLT has following principles which have been described by (Richards and Theodore, 2001): These are:

- Learners learn a language through using it to communicate.
- The goal of classroom activities should be automatic and meaningful communication.
- Fluency is an important dimension of communication.
- Communication involves the integration of different language skills.
- Learning is a process of creative construction and involves trial and error.

In short, authenticity, student-centered learning, interaction, task-based activities, and communication for real-world, meaningful purposes are the main focus of CLT as an approach to language teaching methodology.

2.4 Concept of tasks

The concept of task has been defined by different scholars and educators in a variety of ways. First of all, Prabhu (1987) really deserves credit for originating TBLT, based on the notion that effective learning occurs when students are fully engaged in a language task, rather than just learning *about* language. According to him, (1987:17) a task is “an activity which required learners to arrive at an outcome from given information through some process of thought, and which allowed teachers to control and regulate that process.” According to Richards and Rodgers (2001), a task is an activity which is developed by learners, in which they have to solve a problem, like buying something, searching a street, writing a letter or making a telephone call using real world communication.

Lee (2000) defines a task is “(1) a classroom activity that has: (a) an objective obtainable only by interaction among participants, (b) a mechanism for structuring and sequencing interaction, and (c) an emphasis on exchange of meaning; (2) in order to attempt a language learning, it requires learners to understand, manipulate, and produce the target language as they perform some sets of work plans”.

As Willis & Willis (2009:4), a task has a number of defining characteristics, among them: does it engage the learners' interest; is there a primary focus on meaning; is success measured in terms of non-linguistic result rather than accurate use of language forms; and does it relate to real world activities? The more confidently answer yes to each of these questions, the more task like the activity. Skehan (1996), drawing on a number of other writers, puts forward four key characteristics of a task in a pedagogical aspect: (1) meaning is primary, (2) there is some sort of association with comparable real-world activities, (3) task completion has some priority, and (4) the assessment of the task is in terms of outcome.

What is common in all above mentioned definitions of task is that a task is an activity that learners perform using their language resources and leading to a real outcome in their everyday life. The task should be designed in a way that students interact with their peers communicatively and should have meaning, objective or outcome (non-linguistic), interest, pedagogic or real and interaction among students. The researcher is more interested to Willis and Willis (2009), and Skehan (1996) whose explanations' of task seem inclusive to the rest of other definitions.

2.5 Communicative tasks

Various scholars and authors define communicative task based on their point of view. For instance, according to Jane Willis (1996:34) a communicative task can be defined as "a goal oriented activity with clear purpose." Doing a communicative task involves achieving an outcome, creating an ultimate product that can be appreciated by others. Examples include compiling a list of reasons, features or thing that need doing under particular circumstances; comparing two pictures or texts to find differences; solving a problem or designing a brochure. In relation to this, Richards and Rogers (2001), it is also defined as "an activity or goal that is carried out using language, such as finding a solution to a puzzle, reading a map and giving directions, writing a letter, etc."

Nunan (1989:10) defines a communicative task as "a piece of classroom work which involves learners in comprehending, manipulating, producing or interacting in the target language while their attention is mainly focused on meaning rather than form." In different syllabuses, the communicative task is defined as "a kind of activity that involves learners in various activities or situations in which it is required to negotiate meaning and make choices in what, when and how to learn."

2.6 Component of communicative tasks

The definition of a language learning task requires specification of six components that are the goals, the input, and the activities/procedures derived from this input and finally supported by the roles (for teacher and learners) and setting. Nunan (1989) defines these components as follows:

2.6.1 Goals

Goals are the general purposes behind any given learning task. They may relate to a range of general outcomes (communicative, affective or cognitive) or may directly describe teacher or learner behavior Nunan (1989). Communicative activities with no goals cannot encourage learner's interest in language learning. When communication is with no goals, this activity is not a real task. It is worth nothing that the all projects sub categories of communicative goals in to three goals areas.

1. Establishing and maintaining interpersonal relationships and thoughts through exchanging information, ideas, opinions, attitudes and feelings is the overall goal of all communicative tasks.
2. The second goal is getting information from more or less public sources in the target language (e.g. newspapers, brochures, books, magazines, documents, films, written reports, etc.) and using this information in some way.
3. The third goal of communicative task is to listen to, read, appreciate, and respond to creative and imaginative uses of the target language (e.g. stories, poems, songs, rhymes, drama).

2.6.2 Input

Input refers to the source that helps the learners acquire the target language. 'It also means that the spoken, written and visual data that learners work with in the course of accomplishment a task (Nunan 1989). In line with this, input refers to students need constant exposure to the language otherwise they will not learn how to use it (Harmer, 2007: 56). Data can be given by a teacher, a textbook or some other sources, for example, diary, family tree, television account, article from magazine or newspaper, news, short stories and so on. Alternatively, the learners themselves can generate different inputs.

According to Ellis, (2005), successful instructed language learning requires extensive L2 input. It also requires opportunities for output. Furthermore, Tanaka (1996, in Ellis, 2003a) found that learners need to practice more with input than practice with output. Input practice tasks helped students understand better, and their ultimate production ability is just as strong with input practice tasks as with production practice tasks. Students may learn more effectively when their minds should be focused on the task, rather than on the language they are learning (Prabhu, 1987). In relation to this, Bygate (1987), recommends using pictures for communicative purposes in the design of spoken course materials.

Input should positively encourage the use of the target language (Ellis, 1999; Mishan 2005). Inputs of a language-learning task may take two forms: verbal or non-verbal. Spoken or written texts which are provided as an input for a language task is called verbal while materials such as pictures, photos, diagrams, charts, maps, etc. are called non-verbal input. What is more, input of task can also be categorized as authentic and inauthentic. Authentic input, which has not been specifically produced for the purpose of language teaching (Krashen, 1989). Mishan (2005), expresses the importance of using authentic or real-world materials as input especially in communicative tasks where students are required to rehearse real world activities in the classroom.

In short, it is possible to say that '*input*' refers any comprehensible part of a language or content, which participants have to deal with while performing a task. It is also meant to say the data that form the point of departure for the task. Input is a term used to mean the language that the students listen or read. The source of input may be from teachers, students or the material itself. Input can be classified as based on *forms* and *types*. When Forms of input are verbal and non-verbal, types of inputs would be authentic and non-authentic. In this paper, the researcher tried to analyze speaking tasks based on these characteristics.

2.6.3 Activities

Activities state what learners will really perform with the input which forms the point of departure for the learning task (Nunan 1989:59). Activities in a communicative task emphasize three characteristics (Richards and Rogers, 2001:223). Authenticity of the activities in terms of reflecting real-world tasks is the first characteristics. Second, the activities ought to arouse learners to relate recently acquired linguistic knowledge to genuine

communication. Lastly, the activities need to be planned to develop the accuracy and fluency of learners' target language. Several authors classify tasks into different categories based on current communicative approach. For example, Willis (1996) proposes six types of tasks as the basis for TBLT. These are: listing tasks, sorting and ordering, comparing, problem-solving, sharing personal experience and creative tasks.

For this study, the researcher took Prabhu (1987) and Brumfit. According to Prabhu, the task types in TBLT are information-gap activity, reasoning-gap activity and opinion-gap activity. According to Brumfit, cited in Nunan (1989), generally characterizes activities in to rehearsal for the real-world (authenticity)/pedagogic; skill getting/skill using; and fluency/accuracy.

2.6.4 Setting

'Settings' is the classroom arrangements specified or implied in the task. Whether the task is to be performed wholly or partly outside the classroom or not is also requires consideration of it. Additionally, it involves the instructional setting where pedagogical situations are treated (Nunan, 1989).

2.6.5 Roles

A role in language teaching is meant to refer the part that learners and teachers are expected to play in doing learning tasks as well as the social and interpersonal relationships between the participants (Nunan, 1989). Teacher roles and learner roles are complementary (two sides of a coin). Giving the learners a more active role in the classroom requires the teacher to adapt a different role.

I. Teachers' roles

Several roles are supposed for the teachers in CLT, the importance of particular roles being determined by the view of CLT adopted. There are diverse roles of teachers(controller, prompter, participant, resource, tutor, organizing students and students, performer, rapport, recognizing students, listening students, respecting students and as a teaching aid).However, during different speaking activities, three have particular relevance if we are trying to get students to speak fluently (Harmer, 2007).

- **Prompter:** In the middle of speaking, students may get lost, and can't think of what to say next or in other way they lose the fluency we expect of them. Thus, teachers need to encourage them to produce the target language as much as possible.

- **Participant:** teachers should be good animators when asking students to produce language. Sometimes, this can be achieved by setting up an activity clearly and with enthusiasm.
- **Feedback provider:** the annoyed question of when and how to provide feedback in speaking activities is replied by considering cautiously the effect of possible different approaches.

A crucial part of the teacher's role when organizing speaking activities is to make sure that the students understand exactly what they are supposed to do. This consists of giving clear instructions and, where appropriate, demonstrating the activity with a student or students so that no one can be in any doubt about what they should be doing.

II. Learners' roles

The main focus of CLT is not mastery of language forms, but on the process of communication leads to different roles for learners from those found in more traditional second language classroom. Breen and Candlin (1980) cited in (Richards and Rogers, 2001) describe learners' role in the following ways: the role of learner as negotiator – between the self, the learning process, and within the group and within the classroom procedures and activities which the group undertakes. The implication for the learner is that he should contribute as much as he gains, and thereby learn an interdependent way.

According to them “A number of specific roles are supposed in current proposals of TBLT. Some of these overlap with the general roles assumed for learners in CLT while others are created by focus on completion as a central learning tasks.” these include:

1. **Group participant:** students are expected to do tasks in pairs/small groups. In such cases, they are required to contribute or share ideas and receive information from others.
2. **Monitor:** Tasks are used so as to facilitate learning. Class activities must be designed so that students will have the chance to perceive how language is used in communication. “Learners themselves need to focus both the communication in the task and the form in which such messages normally come packed”.
3. **Risk-taker and innovator:** many tasks will demand learners to generate and understand messages for which they lack full linguistic resources and previous experience. Practice in restating, paraphrasing using paralinguistic signals will often needed (Richards and Rogers, 2001).

2.7 Authenticity

The term 'authenticity' has no absolute concept, but is related meaning with truthfulness, realness, genuineness, validity, reliability, legitimacy and etc. "It is a principle stressing real-world, meaningful language used for genuine communicative purposes," (Brown, 2007). According to Richards and Schmidt (2002), *authenticity* is the degree to which language teaching materials have the qualities of natural speech or writing. In language teaching, a distinction is made between materials that have been specially prepared to illustrate or practice specific teaching points (such as reading passages, listening texts, and those that have been taken from real-world sources. Authentic materials are taken from newspapers, magazines, tapes of natural speech taken from ordinary radio or television programs, and etc. It is recommended that these are preferred classroom resources since they demonstrate authentic language use Celce Murcia and Olshtain cited in Hinkel (2005:759); Freeman (2000:134), Nunan, (1989), but this doesn't work for students having lower proficiency.

2.8 Criteria to identify qualities of a good Speaking task

Effective Speaking tasks have to be designed for second or foreign language learners in a way that could help them to use the language for real life communication. Looking at different sources (Nunan, 1989; Thornbury, 2005 and Richards, 2006), the researcher has extracted the following criteria of good speaking tasks.

A) Tasks should be Motivating

Motivation is some kind of internal drive which moves forward someone to do things to attain something Brown (2007). It is viewed as one of the most important factors contributing to language learning success. The word *task-motivation* is used when task characteristics are the focus of attention in motivation. It takes into consideration the aspects that influence students' engagement, persistence, performance and working qualities in doing a particular task. In line with this, according to Harmer (2007) students' motivation remains healthy if they are doing things they enjoy, and which they can see the point of different students have different styles and preferences.

B) Tasks or activities must be meaningful

According to Richard (2006), meaningful *activity* is an activity where language control is still provided but where students are required to make meaningful choices when carrying out practice. In meaningful activities, the language learners carry out tasks which require them to communicate meaningful information, but there is still a dear goal of instructing the learners in the language. Restate drills, which require the learner to listen to a statement and provide a rewording of the message, is an example of a meaningful activity. Therefore, language learning activities should be managed in a way that enables learners to engage in language use which is meaningful and authentic. If learners use language that is meaningful to them, they will be encouraged. In contrast, if learners merely learn language patterns that do not make meaning for them, they will be discouraged.

C) Tasks must have a Purpose beyond a Classroom Exercise

According to Merriam Webster dictionary 'purpose' is a reason why something is done or used. A task should be designed for teaching a language form and messages students encounter in their real-life. When students have intentions to perform or deliver a particular message, they should have a desire to communicate with others. Students perceive purposeful and task oriented activities accompanied by appropriate facilitation as more valuable. According to Thornbury (2005), speaking activity has a clear outcome, especially one which requires learners to work together to achieve a common purpose. It is suggested that the activity has some purposes and is worth doing. In addition, they should have a purpose for using the language, and this purpose should be the most important part of communication. Therefore, the main focus of students' should be centered on the information that is on what is being said or written, but not on the language form that is being used (Harmer, 1991).

D) Tasks should be Productive

In order to provide the best condition for autonomous language use, a speaking activity needs to be maximally language productive (Thornbury, (2005:90). In other words, students are expected to produce what they want to say using the target language as much as they can.

E) Tasks should preferably be fair for Pair /Group-work

Language should be taught interactively since it is viewed as an interactive tool. Speaking is a two-way process that encompasses a speaker and a listener. For some years, methodologies have been recommended the use of group work and pair work in FL/SL classrooms. They argue that carefully structured communication between students contributes to FL /SL acquisition. Pedagogical arguments have been applied to support this claim i.e. group work increases the quantity and quality of student talk, individualizes instruction, and promotes the student motivation Nunan, (1989).In line with this, according to Richards (2006). “Classroom tasks in CLT should be designed to be carried out in pairs or small groups.” Through completing activities in this way, it is argued, learners will get numerous benefits:

- When other members of the group speak out, students can learn from hearing the language.
- They will produce a greater amount of language than teacher-fronted activities.
- Their motivational level is likely to increase.
- They will have the chance to develop fluency.

F) The Task must include a Pre-Task, a While-Task and Post-Task

The speaking process includes activities that occur prior to, during, and after the real speaking practice (Richards, 2001).Input is introduced and discussed during the pre-task stage. Students are told what they should do while working on tasks. For example, before the real speaking activity happens, the speaker should realize the actual content of the message, how it should be presented, and what kind of listener will be hearing the message. Preparatory input activities are very important to activate learner attention and arouse interest (Skehan, 2002). While speaking, the speaker must follow things such as presenting a clear message, suitable vocabulary, tone of voice, the environment, possible responses and nonverbal gestures. By the end of the speaking activity, speakers may comment, answer questions, explain concepts, assess the process, summarize, and give feedback on the speaking topic.

According to Willis (1996) cited in Harmer (2007:71); (Richards and Rogers, 2001:239), suggests three basic stages of TBLT: the Pre-task (introduce to topic and task), the Task cycle (task, planning, report) and the Language focus (analysis, practice).

2.9 Evaluation of Tasks

Nunan (1989) points out a list of questions which can act as a guide in the evaluation of task. The list of questions can be used in a variety of ways. It may not be necessarily needed to answer all questions in task in evaluation.

Table 1: Checklist for Evaluating Communicative Tasks

| component of tasks | Questions |
|---------------------|--|
| Goals and rationale | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ To what extent is the goal or goals of the task obvious to you or to your students? ✓ Is the task appropriate to the learner's proficiency level? ✓ To what extent does the task reflect a real-world or pedagogic rationale? Is this appropriate? ✓ Does the task encourage learners to apply class room learning to the real world? ✓ What beliefs about the native of language and learning are inherent in the task? ✓ Is the task likely to be interesting and motivating to the students? |
| Input | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ What form does the input take? ✓ Is it authentic? ✓ If not, are they appropriate to the goal of task? |
| Activities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Are the activities appropriate to the communicative goals of the task ✓ If not, can they be modified to make them more appropriate? ✓ Is the task designed to stimulate students to use bottom-up or top-down processing skills? ✓ Is there an information gap or problem which might prompt as negotiation of meaning? ✓ Are the activities appropriate to the input data? ✓ Are the activities designed in a way which will allow learners to communicate and cooperate in groups? |
| Roles and settings | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ What learner and teacher roles are inherent in the task? ✓ Are they appropriate? ✓ What levels of complexity are there in the classroom organizations implicit in the task? ✓ Is the setting confined to the classroom? |

Source: Adopted from Nunan (1989)

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The main purpose of this study was to evaluate speaking tasks in grade 8 Ethiopian English Textbook. The research design, source of data, sampling techniques, data collection instruments and procedure, and methods of data analysis are stated here.

3.1 Research Design

According to Kothari (2004), a research design is the arrangement of conditions for collection and analysis of data in a manner that aims to combine the relevance to the research purpose with economy in procedure. Kothari adds that design is a backbone of a research and it constitutes the blue print for the collection, measurement and analysis of data.

Thus, the main objective of this study was to evaluate speaking tasks presented in grade 8 English for Ethiopia Text Book based on Nunan's (1989) criteria of communicative tasks and good speaking tasks. In order to achieve this objective, an evaluative-descriptive design was used. Although the study has more of a qualitative aspect i.e. evaluation of the tasks which was done typically in words based on components of communicative of tasks, Nunan's framework, quantitative research approach has been used. The quantitative approach was used to validate the qualitative information i.e. to express some data in tables in terms of number and percentage, mean and SD for interpretation. In evaluating the tasks in the textbook, it was indispensable to group (code, categorize, compare and conclude—drawing theoretical conclusions from speaking task. The data was mainly collected through content analysis form April 05 to July 02, 2020. Additionally, questionnaire and interview were used to find out students' and teachers attitude towards speaking tasks at EGPS around '*Autobus Tera*' from November 26 to December 22, 2020.

3.2 Sources of Data

The major source of data for this study was the grade 8 students' English textbook, particularly speaking tasks. Additionally, teacher's guide and the syllabus were other sources of data. This textbook was chosen because the researcher was motivated to evaluate if the tasks in the textbook are designed in a way that they help in promoting students' communicative skill or not. Besides, the researcher has been teaching grade 8 English Text Book.

3.3 Sampling Techniques

The main purpose of this study was to evaluate speaking tasks in grade 8 Ethiopian English Textbook. In this textbook, 30 speaking tasks/activities are presented, but the researcher didn't take all of them because of time consuming. Thus, 16 sample tasks were selected using simple random sampling for evaluation based on Nunan (1989) components of communicative tasks and criteria of good speaking tasks. Additionally, available sampling technique was employed to select English Teachers because they are only four and manageable. However, 8 sections containing 26 students in Eshet and 6 sections containing 27 students in Dejazmach Geneme Primary School, totally, 370 grade 8 students were attending. Out of 370 students, 70 (19%) students were selected using simple random sampling to fill out the questionnaire. In other words, 5 students in each class were selected by using simple random sampling to give equal chance and avoid bias.

3.4. Data Collection tools

As a result of being an evaluative research, the major tool of gathering data for this study was content analysis. Other instruments namely: questionnaire and interview were employed in this study.

3.4.1 Content Analysis

According to Kothari (2004), "Content-analysis consists of analyzing the contents of documentary materials such as books, magazines, newspapers and the contents of all other verbal materials which can be either spoken or printed." In a similar vein, Clark-Carter (2010); Richards & Schmidt (2010); Cohen et al. (2011); Fraenkel & Wallen (2009) cited in Tavakoli, (2012), content analysis:

Is a procedure which is used to convert written or spoken information into data that can be analyzed and interpreted. It is a qualitative research technique which is used to quantify aspects of written or spoken text. It is used for analyzing and tabulating the frequency of occurrence of themes, emotions topics, ideas, opinions and other aspects of the content of written and spoken communication.

Therefore, content analysis as a major instrument was used to collect data. It was carried out in order to evaluate speaking tasks presented in grade 8 Ethiopian English Textbook i.e. 30 speaking tasks in number. Basically, the study evaluated speaking tasks through considering Nunan (1989) components of communicative tasks(goal, input, activity, setting, teachers' role and students' role) and criteria's of quality of good speaking tasks(motivation,

meaningfulness, purposefulness, difficulty, suitability for pair/group work, and stages of tasks). Nevertheless, it should be stressed that the evaluation was not intended to consider things like sequencing, selection and integration of designed speaking tasks which needs another investigation.

3.4.2. Questionnaire

A questionnaire enables a researcher to collect data from large groups of individuals within a short period of time. It is also easy to administer to a number of participants in one place at a time. The main purpose of using questionnaire in this study was to find out the attitude of students towards speaking tasks. Thus, seven close-ended questions in Lickert scale form and open ended questionnaire were administered to students.

3.4.3 Interview

Interview is another way of gathering data in depth. Thus, it was prepared based on literature review and the objectives of the study. The researcher used interview for two main purposes. (1), semi-structured interview was prepared for a designer to get valid information about speaking tasks in the textbook, and (2), semi-structured interview was used to find out the attitude of teachers towards speaking tasks.

3.5 Data Collection Procedure

The researcher employed the following data collection procedures. First, take samples from Grade 8 Ethiopian English Textbook i.e. out of 30 tasks, 16 speaking tasks were randomly selected. Second, collect the data from the textbook based on the checklist (Nunan's 1989) components of communicative tasks and criteria to identify good qualities of tasks (See appendix I and II).

Regarding finding out the attitude of students and teachers towards speaking tasks, first the researcher designed questionnaire and interview based on the objectives of the study and literature review for students and teachers respectively. Then, a pilot test was conducted. The developed interview was given to two English teachers in Dagimawi Birhan Primary School to evaluate the items carefully in terms of content validity, face validity, clarity of the items and if they fit to measure the objective of the study. The questionnaire was also given for 25 students who were randomly selected from Dagmawi Birhan Primary School to check over all clarity of the questionnaire. Second, the researcher described the purposes and benefits of the study clearly and precisely to the target participants. Then, the data obtained from interview was recorded through taps. Third, the researcher administered questionnaire for

respondents who were chosen by simple random sampling and interviewed sample teachers who were taken through available sampling. Furthermore, the administration of the questionnaire was carried out in the presence of the researcher to clear up any possible misunderstanding that the respondents might face in filling out the questionnaire. Besides, in order to get valid information about speaking tasks, place and time were arranged in accordance with the convenience of task designers. During conducting the interview, the researcher took notes.

3.6 Methods of Data Analysis

Analyzing the data, first, the majority of the data obtained from content analysis (Nunan's 1989) components of communicative tasks were analyzed qualitatively and quantitatively. Second data collected from content analysis (criteria to identify good speaking tasks) were analyzed quantitatively. Additionally, a sample of speaking task as an example was presented and analyzed qualitatively i.e. through words. Besides, qualitative data (interview result) which obtained from a task designer helped the researcher to analysis the data thoroughly. Third, to accomplish an objective which was finding out students' and teachers' attitude towards the speaking tasks, students' questionnaire result was analyzed quantitatively, and teachers' interview result was analyzed qualitatively. To put simply, mixed approaches for content analysis, and quantitative approach for questionnaire and qualitative approach for interview result were used. Finally, conclusions and recommendations were drawn on the bases of the findings of the research.

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION

The main purpose of this study is to evaluate the speaking tasks (activities) presented in Grade 8 new English textbook according to Nunan's (1989) theories of communicative tasks. The study employed three data collection instruments. They were content analysis, questionnaire and interview. The data gathered through content analysis, questionnaire and interview were analyzed and discussed separately:

4.1 The Speaking Tasks

Identifying the speaking task for the proposed evaluation was the first and important activity conducted in this study. There are a total of 30 speaking tasks in all the 12 units under the title speaking in the textbook. The following table shows distribution of speaking tasks in each unit and number of speaking tasks.

Table 2: Distribution of Speaking tasks/ activities in grade 8 English text Book

| No | | Number of speaking activities |
|---|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| English for Ethiopia: Book one grade eight | | |
| 1 | Plans | 2 |
| 2 | The city and the countryside | 2 |
| 3 | Sports | 2 |
| 4 | Health issues | 3 |
| 5 | Plants and their uses | 3 |
| 6 | Coffee | 3 |
| English for Ethiopia: Book two grade eight | | |
| 7 | My hobby | 2 |
| 8 | Art | 2 |
| 9 | Education | 2 |
| 10 | Scientific discovery | 3 |
| 11 | Natural Wonders of Africa | 3 |
| 12 | Technology and the modern world | 3 |
| Total | | 30 |

As shown in the above table, the number of speaking tasks presented in each book is balanced. For example, in book one, it has 15 speaking tasks. The first three chapters have two speaking tasks and the remaining three chapters have three speaking tasks; the same is true for book two. This implies that the distribution of the speaking activities under the speaking section of each unit of the textbook has a similar pattern. This might give an

opportunity to the learners to express their ideas in practicing the speaking activities in each unit because they get equal number of activities under the speaking section of each unit.

4.1.1 Evaluation of goals of speaking tasks

The first important point to be checked in evaluation of a communicative task is the existence of objectives that provide students with an opportunity to determine for themselves where they are going and what they can expect to achieve.

I. To what extent is the goal of the task obvious to students and teachers?

The outcomes of the tasks could depend on the explicitness of the objectives. Therefore, objectives have to be stated clearly and concisely (Nunan, 1989). They should also identify clearly what the students will be able to do and provide the means by which they can determine for themselves whether they have achieved or not. To explain more about tasks' objectives, it is better to consider the example below.

Example 1

Week 4

page (book one: 33)

Debating

Form groups and debate for or against the following motions. Your teacher will explain to you the procedures for conducting the debate.

“Life in a city is better than life in the countryside.”

In the above task, “debating” is content of the lesson and students are expected to make a debate concerning life in the city and countryside. As seen in example, the objective of the speaking task wasn't clearly described. The instruction and the title are only given. However, to conduct a debate, teachers are expected to tell the steps they follow. This helps students to express their thoughts, ideas or feeling so that they could produce the target language for their real communication.

Additionally, if you consider tasks which are presented in appendix VI (page: 50 and 51), their objectives are not explicitly stated in the textbook. Thus, the finding showed that objectives of speaking tasks are not clearly stated in textbook.

II. Real world use of language

Speaking activities resemble real world tasks which have been used outside the classroom because these activities let students communicate with their peers that they are expected to do outside the classroom. This helps the learners to make themselves ready for challenges they face in real life situations. The result showed that out of sixteen sampled tasks, thirteen tasks were designed based on real world tasks. To explain more about real word use of language, let us take example 2. In this task, the objective is “*talk about doctor and patient.*” Talking about doctor and patient is a real world use of language. On the other hand, less numbers of the tasks are pedagogic tasks which were chiefly designed for teaching language elements. These tasks include: speaking about their study plans, using conjunctions such as (*because, because of, therefore, consequently and etc.*), and acting out a dialogue about visiting. These activities are meant to teach students some form of language, which is not necessarily ordered to use outside of the classroom.

Example 2

Week 7

(Book one: page 61)

Doctor-patient dialogue

A. Turn to take with a partner to act out the following dialogue.

Doctor: Well, Mulu, I have completed my examination and I am happy to say it is not serious.

Patient: Do you think you should take an X-ray?

Doctor: I don't think it is necessary for this kind of illness.

Patient: What kinds of disease do I have?

Doctor: It is sexually transmitted diseases.

Patient: Can I be cured?

Doctor: If you listen to my advice carefully, I am sure you will be fine soon.

Patient: What should I do?

Doctor: Take these antibiotics every eight hours for five days.

Patient: Thank you doctor.

Doctor: You're welcome.

B. In pairs, create your own situation and play the role of a doctor and a patient.

In the above example, students are expected to talk about doctor-patient. First, students are asked to act out a given dialogue in pairs, and they create their own a patient-doctor dialogue is the second task. The third task they do is to make a role play. A dialogue between patient and doctor takes place outside the classroom which invites the learners to make them ready for communicating in hospital. It is a usual activity that people go clinic whenever they feel sick. This task seems parallel to real world tasks, which is likely taken place outside the classroom (Thornbury, 2005) and it has a motivational value because it pushes the learners to engage in a communication for filling an information gap i.e. a patient is sick and needs to be treated and helped.

Example 3

Week 1

(Book one: page 5)

A. Read the expressions Halima used to talk about her study plan.

1. *I am going to prepare my most effective study plan.*

2. *I am going to list all the subjects I need to study...*

B. In pairs ask what your partner is going to do in his/ her study plan.

In the above example, students are expected to read Halima's study plan. The two given examples mainly focus "be going to" structure. This indicates that a speaking task emphasizes expressing of their pre-determined study plan using future tense. In instruction B, the task demands the students to share ideas regarding what his or her friend is going to do. This task seems more pedagogic than real world, and emphasize to master expression of "be going to", and this type of task is usually asked in the classroom. Additionally, there are different ways that the students could use to express their future plan. They might use expressions like *'I have decided to..., I need to..., I want to...,I have planned to..., I have proposed to...,in the future...* etc. In real world use of language, there is no way students are restricted to express their ideas in a single grammatical pattern ,but they focus the message what is said or transmitted to the other for the sake of accomplishing non-linguistic outcomes (Skehan, 2004).

III. Do the speaking tasks encourage learners to apply class room learning to the real-world?

Speaking tasks help students to be familiarized common topics which they face outside the classroom. For instance, dialogues such as asking for and giving information, doctor – patient, describing and comparing places, favorite foods, hobbies, Ethio-telecom and giving directions about the park, and other contents like talking about sports, talking about the future, problem solving activity, debating on different topics, technology and so on are everyday tasks. On the other hand, some speaking tasks are pedagogic which were designed for the purpose of teaching the target language in the classroom rather than outside. For example, dialogues that talk about future perfect tense, present perfect tense are form focused activities.

As seen the explanation above, it can be concluded that most speaking activities contribute the learners to apply classroom learning to real world language.

4.1.2 Evaluation of inputs of speaking tasks

According to Nunan, (1989), inputs of tasks can be analyzed in terms of the forms they take and their type. In this study too, the language input of the speaking tasks as the other important component of a communicative task were analyzed and evaluated. In so doing, the contents of speaking tasks and the means of presenting inputs were investigated. The result of the evaluation is presented as follows:

Table 3: Content of speaking tasks and means of presenting inputs

| Units | Content of speaking tasks | Means of presenting inputs |
|-------|---|---|
| 1 | ✓ Halima's study plan ✓ Talking about future plan | -Sentences -Sentences |
| 2 | ✓ Describing and comparing places ✓ Debating | -Model dialogue -Debating topic |
| 3 | ✓ Talking about sports ✓ Talking about people | -Picture -Picture |
| 4 | ✓ Doctor-patient dialogue ✓ Expressing the effect of something ✓ Discussion | -Model dialogue -Sentences -Problem solving issues |
| 5 | ✓ Discussion on flowers ✓ Talking about your favorite foods ✓ Reflection on the health benefits of plants | -Listening and reading text -Model dialogue -Listening and reading text |
| 6 | ✓ Steps in growing coffee ✓ Debate ✓ Describing a process | -Picture -Debating topic -Sentences |
| 7 | ✓ Reporting someone's speech ✓ Talking about hobbies | -Model dialogue -Model dialogue |
| 8 | ✓ Acting out dialogue ✓ Describing a crafting process | -Model dialogue -Listening and reading text |
| 9 | ✓ Talking about the future ✓ Describing cause and effects | -Model dialogue -Listening and reading text |
| 10 | ✓ Talking about the past ✓ Asking for information ✓ Talking about health | -Discussion topic -Model dialogue -Model dialogue |
| 11 | ✓ Asking for and offering information(Role-play ✓ Asking and giving directions ✓ Talking about rivers and lakes(Interview) | -Sentences -Model dialogue -Listening and reading text |
| 12 | ✓ Making a speech ✓ Expressing Agreement and Disagreement ✓ Debating (Agreeing and Disagreeing) | -Topics on making a speech -Model dialogue -Debating topic |

As seen in Table 3, one can conceive that the inputs of the speaking tasks are dialogues, pictures, figures, sentences, debating topics, discussion topics, reading comprehension text and listening comprehension text. The findings obtained from curriculum designer's interview and researcher's analysis showed that four speaking tasks out of sixteen sampled tasks were found to be authentic. For example, listening comprehension texts and reading comprehension texts are authentic sources because they are not designed for teaching language elements. Moreover, there are pictures such as Ethiopian athletes, pictures of different sports and process of coffee growing and figure about process of *injera*, which were intentionally prepared for teaching speaking, are also authentic sources. However, ten speaking tasks' sources were found to be inauthentic. Inauthentic sources in the speaking tasks include sentences about Halima's study plan (page: 25), sentences about talking future goals (page: 36), present perfect tense (page: 51) and so on. For example, let's consider the example below:

Example 4

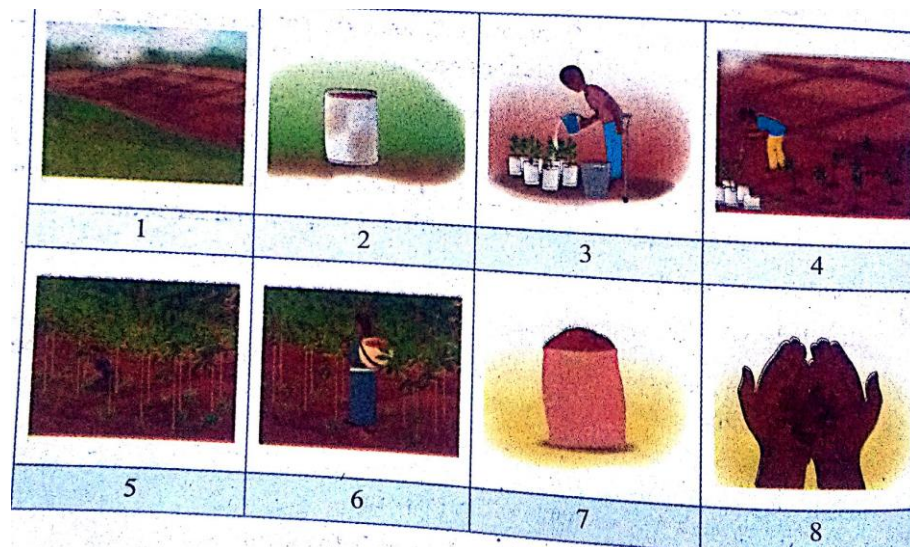
Week 13

(Book one: Page 120)

5. Speaking

Steps in growing coffee

With your group members, discuss the following illustrations of the steps of coffee growing. Then share your ideas with the class. Use sequencing words like first, second... while describing the process.



This task is talking about steps of growing coffee. As shown, the input (a picture) is authentic which was taken somewhere in real context. Besides, it was a non-verbal form or a picture which was given as an input of the task. The picture motivates learners to understand the concepts easily (Bygate, 1987), and they have a greater opportunity to discuss in their groups, to share ideas and describe the process of growing coffee.

The second point is forms of the inputs. As indicated in Table 3, greater numbers of inputs forms were found to be verbal forms. In other words, the form of inputs were presented in listening and reading forms whereas less number of inputs were pictures, photographs and figures accompanied with reading or listening texts. Some speaking tasks don't seem to have inputs, but the data taken from interview of a task designer showed that inputs for each speaking task was not necessary since the textbook was designed based on content based approach. Besides, the speaking tasks were designed by integrating with other language skills.

Appropriateness of input to the goal of the task is the last question. The finding showed that all sampled inputs of speaking tasks were seem to be appropriate to the goal of tasks because the inputs given to the students to perform and the objective the students are expected to carry out are directly related. For instance, in example 4: (page 25). The objective of the speaking task is to "*talk about their study plan*". To do so, the input was given in the form of sentences, and it talked about study plan. Hence, the objective and the input of the speaking tasks are closely related.

4.1.3 Evaluation of speaking tasks

Activities specify what learners will actually do with the input which forms the point of departure for the learning task (Nunan, 1989). The following table shows all the speaking activities found in the first three units.

Table 4: Units and speaking activities and their objectives

| Unit | speaking activities | Objective of speaking tasks |
|------|--|---|
| 1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Read the expressions talking about study plan ➤ Ask what a partner is going to do in study plan ➤ Read the given expressions ➤ Talk about future plans using the expressions as a guide | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Talk about their study plan. ➤ Discuss their future plans using conditional sentence type one. |
| 2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Read the dialogue in pair ➤ Describe own area and compare it with any other places ➤ Make a debate for or against life in the city and countryside | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Describe their area by comparing with other areas ➤ Make a debate concerning life in the city and countryside. |
| 3 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Look at the sport types in the picture and describe and why people play them ➤ take turns to talk about the kinds of sports they like ➤ describe people in the picture considering situations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Talk about different sport types. ➤ Describe people in the given picture. |

I. Are the activities appropriate to the communicative goals of the task?

As described in the above table, each activity contributes the learners to achieve the intended objective through practicing and interaction with their friends or groups. For example, in week one, (page: 25), the implicit objective is “*To talk about the study plan,*” and the activity the learners are instructed to do is “*Ask what a partner is going to do in study plan.*” Hence, the activity the learners are ordered to do and the objective is closely related. In similar way, if we consider, example 4, (page: 27), the objective is, “describe how coffee is grown.” And what students are instructed to do is to describe steps of coffee growing. Thus, this activity is appropriate to the goal of the task. However, in activities which are designed in week 18 and 25, (see appendix IV, page: 51), the activities are not related with objectives. Therefore, it is possibly say that eleven of the sampled tasks seem appropriate for students to make ready for outside classroom communication.

II. Are the activities appropriate to the input data?

Appropriateness of activities to the input of the tasks also contributes learners so that they could use the target language for real communication purpose. As evaluated earlier, the 84% forms of inputs are verbal (isolated sentences, dialogues, and reading and listening texts) and most types of input are inauthentic materials. Out of sampled tasks, eleven of them seem to be appropriate to the input of data; nevertheless, two tasks which don't look like fitting to the input of the data. For example, speaking tasks which were designed in week 18 and 25 in (see appendix IV, (page: 51), don't have any activities which were left for students to carry out. What students are instructed is only to read the given inputs, and then they finish daily's speaking lesson.

4.1.4 Evaluation of settings of speaking tasks

As mentioned in the literature part, the term *setting* is the classroom arrangements specified or implied in the task (Nunan, 1989). It is one of the components of communicative tasks to be evaluated in Grade 8 English textbook. The classroom setting arrangement of all speaking tasks in each unit is presented in the table below.

Table 5: The classroom setting of speaking tasks in grade 8 New English textbook

| No. | classroom setting | Unit | | | | | | | | | | | | total | % |
|-----|-------------------|------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|----|----|-------|-----|
| | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | | |
| 1 | Individual Work | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 2 | Pair work | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 15 | 50 |
| 3 | Group work | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 15 | 50 |
| 4 | Whole class | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | Total | 2 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 30 | 100 |

As seen in the above table, 15 (50 %) of speaking tasks were designed in a group work and 15 (50%) of the speaking tasks were proposed to be performed in a pair work. Tasks clearly instruct students to communicate through forming groups and talk about the given topic. Language students learn each language skill through doing itself (Thornbury, 2005; 2007). For example, students learn best speaking through speaking. In the text book, the tasks were intentionally designed for students so that they could share their ideas, opinions, thoughts, experiences and messages in groups or pairs.

Example 5

Week 12

page (book one: 108)

Reflection on the health benefits of plants

List plants that are used for medicines in your areas. Then discuss in your group how they are used and in what ways they are different from modern medicines.

In the above example, the content of the speaking task is “*reflection on the health benefits of plants*”. The topic is familiar for learners so it might encourage them to talk a lot, participate evenly (Ur, 1996). They are asked to enumerate plants which are used for medicines in their areas. Once they list medical plants in groups, they are asked to explain how plants are taken. Students could say a lot about the use of different plants as much as they can: finally, they talk about how these plants are distinguished from modern medicines. Hence, the learners are invited to work in group being provided with collaborative speaking activities that enable them to speak fluently via practicing again and again.

4.1.5 Evaluation of roles of teachers and students

Role is the part that learners and teachers are expected to play in carrying out learning tasks as well as social and interpersonal relationships between the participants (Nunan, 1989). In this evaluative research, the researcher presented the roles of learners and teachers in speaking tasks presented in grade 8 English Textbook as follows:

Table 6: Distribution of teachers and learners’ role in speaking tasks in Grade 8 English textbook

| No. | | UNIT | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | Total | Percent |
|-------|-----------------|-------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|----|----|-------|---------|
| 1 | Learner's roles | Group participant | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 8 | 26.67 |
| 2 | | Monitor | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 11 | 36.67 |
| 3 | | Risk taker | 0 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 11 | 36.67 |
| Total | | | 2 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 30 | 100 |
| No. | | Unit | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | Total | Percent |
| 1 | Teacher's roles | Prompter | 1 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 11 | 36.67 |
| 2 | | Participant | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 10 | 33.33 |
| 3 | | Feedback provider | 1 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 9 | 30 |
| Total | | | 2 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 30 | 100% |

I. Evaluation of learners’ roles in speaking tasks

The process of communication rather than mastery of language are the emphasis in the views of CLT. Students are responsible for their own learning, developing autonomy and skills in learning how to learn. As shown in Table 6, roles are mentioned in the textbook and teacher’s

guide with how to practice each task and syllabus as well in different approach. 11 (36.67%) learner's role is monitor i.e. they are assigned to focus on communication and form. Similarly, 11 (36.67%) of learner's role are assigned to be risk takers. Finally, 8(26.67%) of learner's role is designed to be group participants. Each speaking task requires the cooperation and participation of every student so that they could get the opportunity to share ideas, opinions, messages, and feelings from different perspectives and practice the target language exchanging their speech. In general, the role of learners seems to be balanced,

II. Evaluation of teachers' roles in speaking tasks

As it can be observed in Table 6, 11 (36.67) of teacher's role in the speaking tasks is designed to be prompter, and 10 (33.33%) of their role is to be participant. Feedback provider accounts 9 (30%) of teacher's role in the speaking tasks. To explain in detail, the roles of the teachers are giving guidance, monitoring students, showing how to do something, asking and eliciting examples, walk around the classroom, and listen conversations while discussing, encouraging students to do the tasks and giving a chance to present their report or speech in the class, etc. This takes full advantage of learners degree to control over learning tasks and how much more time to carry out their roles actively making the teacher their director, counselor or facilitator in showing directions so that the learner could express their ideas better. Teacher's roles are indicated with different techniques or methods of helping the learners to perform the tasks having clearly understood what, why and how to do.

Example 6

Week 21

(Book two: page 50)

5. Speaking

Describing causes and effects

In small groups, discuss why the students repeat in the class or dropout of classes and the consequences of dropouts. Use the words or phrases below in your discussion.

Because because of as a result hence therefore consequently

In this example, the roles of students are: First, form groups and talk about the reasons why students repeat or drop out of class. Second, after discussing the causes, they are asked to have a discussion on the effects of dropouts. The final role in this task is to use six conjunctions in their discussion. When the students talk about causes of the problem, they contribute ideas one another simultaneously they take information from the group members. The same is true for the result of dropouts. Hence, the students play the lion share in the task. On the other hand, teacher's roles in teacher's guide are: tell students to discuss the question in groups, ask them to use the given words or phrases in their discussions, explain the

examples given, encourage the students to express their ideas freely and ask some students to share their sentences with the class. In the above task, learners are group participant and teachers are prompters.

4.2 Evaluating good qualities of speaking tasks

In order to develop students' speaking skill, activities should fulfill the following criteria of good speaking of tasks. The findings of the tasks are presented in the following table:

Table 7: Criteria's of evaluating good speaking tasks

| No. | Criteria's of evaluating quality of speaking tasks | Options | Unit | | | | | | | | | | | | Total | % |
|-----|---|---------|------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|----|----|-------|-------|
| | | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | | |
| 1 | Motivation | Yes | 0 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 22 | 73.33 |
| | | No | 2 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 8 | 26.67 |
| | | Total | 2 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 30 | 100 |
| 2 | Meaningfulness | Yes | 2 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 26 | 86.67 |
| | | No | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 4 | 13.33 |
| | | Total | 2 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 30 | 100 |
| 3 | Purposefulness | Yes | 0 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 22 | 73.33 |
| | | No | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 8 | 26.67 |
| | | Total | 2 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 30 | 100 |
| 4 | Productivity | Yes | 2 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 24 | 80 |
| | | No | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 6 | 20 |
| | | Total | 2 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 30 | 100 |
| 5 | Suitability for pair work or group work | Yes | 2 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 30 | 100 |
| | | No | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | | Total | 2 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 30 | 100 |
| 6 | Stages of tasks pre-, while and post-task of activity | Yes | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 8 | 26.67 |
| | | No | 2 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 22 | 73.33 |
| | | Total | 2 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 30 | 100 |

A) Motivation of tasks

Motivation plays a great role for the success of learning a particular language. The tasks have to be motivating and interesting to the students so that they could learn the target language successfully.

As seen in table 7, 22 (73.33%) of the speaking activities make the students to be motivated because the topics are familiar and go through in their real-life communication, For example, tasks that talk about describing places, people, information, food, health, problem solving, plants, telling process, role plays and interview are motivating tasks although objectives are not clearly stated. On the other hand, 8(26.66%) of the activities don't seem to initiate

students to do, and lacks some of the qualities of motivating tasks. For example, an activity which is presented in week 13 (page:27) i.e. steps of growing coffee may not be motivating at all for a learner who never participates in growing coffee, for instance, urban students. This is because urban students may not have the chance to grow coffee in their life. For further clarification, let us take an example:

Example 7

Week 11

Page (book one: 98)

5. Speaking

Talking about your favorite foods

A. *Act out the following dialogue in pairs taking turns.*

B. *Then, based on this model dialogue, create another dialogue about your favorite fruit's use with your partner.*

A: *Do you like fruits?*

B: *yes, I do.*

A: *What are your preferred fruits?*

B: *Orange, apple, banana, pineapple, mango, papaya and grape are among those I like, but apple is my favorite fruit.*

A: *Why do you like apple most?*

B: *it has many benefits. There is even a saying 'an apple a day keeps the doctor away'.*

A: *How often do you eat fruits?*

B: *Oh, at least five days a week.*

A: *Do you also like vegetables?*

B: *yes, they are also part of my daily food, especially tomatoes, carrots, cabbage, and Pepper.*

In the above example, students are expected to *talk about their favorite foods*. To do so, first the students are asked to act out the dialogue in pairs. The second task what they do is to create their own conversation based on the model dialogue. Here, when students prepare a dialogue, they share ideas about fruits what they like. Finally, they are invited to present their work in front of the class. Exchanging ideas about foods we like and dislike is our usual activity, and the topic fits with students' interest and need. Since the topic is familiar for them, they will be more interested and motivated to talk about.

Example 8

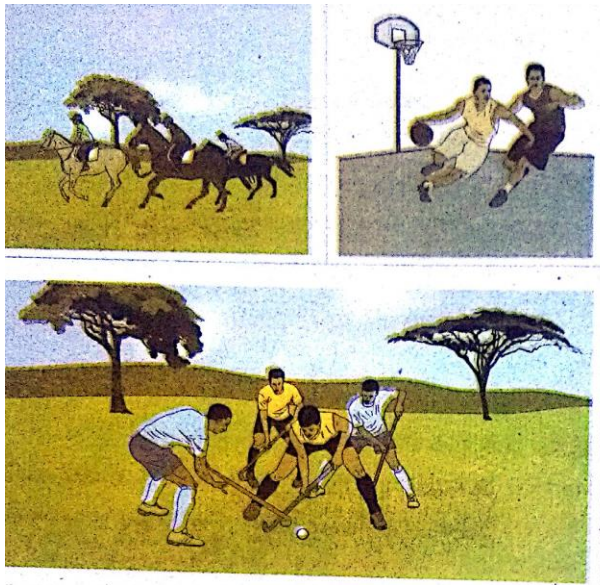
Week 5

Page (book one: 41)

Talking about sports: Like and dislike

1. *With your partner, look at the sport types in the pictures and discuss what they are and why people play them.*

2. *Then, take turns to talk about the kind of sport you like most. What do you like it?*



*Example:
I like football because...*

From the above activity, students are expected to talk about sports they like and dislike. The topic by itself is very interesting, and students become enthusiastic to share ideas, feelings and attitudes through doing the task in pair. Students could produce the language as much as they can. This helps them developing their speaking skills. Additionally, talking about sport is the usual habit because it is a means of entertainment and is presented in TV, radio, and in normal speech, and its authenticity of input motivates students to perform the given tasks (Bygate, 1987). Since the input is comprehensible and the topic is familiar for students having different learning style, particularly visual learners, the activity is motivating.

B) Meaningfulness of tasks

As stated in literature review, a meaningful activity refers to an activity where language control is still provided but where students are required to make meaningful choices when carrying out practice Richards (2006). In meaningful activities, the language learners carry out tasks which require them to communicate meaningful information, but there is still goal of instructing the learners in the language.

As indicated in Table 7, 26(86.67%) of speaking tasks are meaningful because they let students express their ideas by their own choices. This helps the learners to comprehend the message what they are intended to perform in the activity. However, 4(13.33%) of tasks are meaningless because there are not any activities left for students to do and express their ideas freely (see activity in week 18, and 25 in appendix IV, page: 51), and activity in week 6,

page: 51) is beyond students comprehension level. For better understanding, let us look the example given below.

Example 9

Week 2

(Book one: page 14)

5. Speaking

Talking about future plans

A. Read the following expressions.

1. *If I study hard, I will pass my grade 8 exam with good results.*
2. *If I score good results in my exams, I will attend high school.*
3. *If I attend high school, I will work hard to attend preparatory school.*
4. *If I attend preparatory classes, I will score good results to join university.*
5. *If I attend university, I will study medicine.*

B. In groups, talk about your future plans using the above expressions as a guide to explain your own goals or plans.

According to the above task, students are instructed to talk about future plans. In doing so, first, they read the input which is authentic in instruction A, and in Instruction B, they are expected to express their future plans using the expressions given in A. Here, the input given in A is mechanical practice (Richards, 2006), and the task students are asked to perform is meaningful because they could have choices to express their future plans using a model example (probable condition). Nevertheless, in real-world task, people are not forced to use a single structure of language. For example, there are ways of expressing future plans such as “be going to” (indefinite time) “using will”, and “present continuous tense” (definite time). Although the topic is familiar with our everyday life, the input given and the task encourage students to master grammar tasks.

C) Purposefulness of tasks

Purpose is a reason why something is done or used. When students have intentions to perform or deliver a particular message, they should have a desire to communicate with others and that purpose should be the most important part of communication.

As shown in Table 7, 22 (73.33%) of the activities are purposeful i.e. the students have something they fill in a communication gap in the tasks and have a reason to communicate with their peers or groups. Since students have various exposures to apply sampled contents or tasks outside the classroom, they become motivated, and the activities are useful for them. For example, there is a topic which talks about future plans, hobbies, describing places, sports, people, doctor-patient, foods, health, describing processes, effect of something, lakes

and rivers, direction and so on. All these topics expose students to be familiarized the real languages that face outside the classroom. Now, let us consider the example given below.

Example 10

Week 15

(Book one: page 139)

Speaking

Describing a process

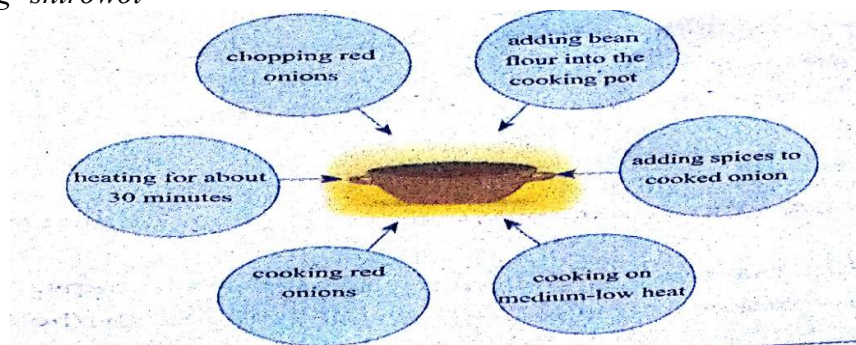
Using the phrase in the graphic organizer in the correct order, describe orally how “shiwot” is made. As an example, use the description given below how to make “injera”.

Example,

Mixing flour with water; stirring yeast into the mixture; giving time till batter forms; pouring dough onto a baking pan; taking injera from the pan; serving injera.

- *First, flour and water are mixed.*
- *Second, yeast is stirred into the mixture.*
- *Third, time is given for the mixture to form a batter.*
- *Fourth, the batter is poured evenly onto a hot baking try*
- *Fifth, flat injera is taken off the baking pan*
- *Finally, flat injera is served.*

Making ‘shiwot’



This task is mainly developed to describe the process of making *Injera* and *shiwot*. In doing so, first, students read the description of making *Injera* in the form of a paragraph discourse and steps of *injera* from mixing flour to serving *injera*. Taking this sufficient input as an example, students are instructed to describe the process of making *shiwot* through considering another inputs given in the figure. Thus, the example given above is purposeful because it helps the students to express how *Injera* and *shiwot* is made as well as introducing new language structure i.e. passive voice.

D) Productivity of tasks

Once an input is given, and students practice in a group or pair work and plan to express their ideas, the next step would be producing what they want to say or express their feeling, ideas, emotion or message. A speaking activity needs to be maximally language productive in order to provide the best condition for autonomous language use (Thornbury, (2005:90). As shown in Table 7, 24 (80%) of speaking tasks allow students to produce their thoughts, ideas or

feelings regarding the given tasks whereas 6 (20%) of tasks don't seem to let learners practice using the target language, for instance, see tasks which were designed in week 6 (page: 50), and (week 18 and 25 in appendix IV, page: 51) and (week 11 page: 34). For a clear understanding, let us consider textual evidence in the textbook:

Example 11

Week 30

(Book two: Page 140)

Debating (Agreeing and Disagreeing)

In your groups, choose one of the following topics/ motions for conducting a debate. Use social expressions like: I agree, I am afraid..., I don't think so, I don't think..., I suppose so...etc.

- 1. Technology has more disadvantages than advantages.*
- 2. A TV is more important than a radio.*
- 3. Mobile phones are more important than landlines.*

From the above activity, students are asked to express their agreement and disagreement regarding technology. To make a debate, students choose one of the three and argue by supporting one of two. Here, when they conduct a debate, they produce their ideas through the target language; thus, this task let students present their message to the audiences.

E) Suitability of pair or group work.

As indicated in Table 7, all the speaking tasks were developed to be gone through in pair work or group work. Since students learn speaking through speaking (Thurnbury, 2007), they will have remarkable opportunities to listen to someone's speech, opinions, ideas, facts or information, and at the same time they could say something since the topics are familiar.

Example 12

Week 10

(Book one: page 88)

In your groups, take flowers types that you are familiar with/ you know well in your local areas and discuss the following.

- | | |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <i>The types of flowers</i> | <i>Their importance</i> |
| <i>The colors they have</i> | <i>Seasons they grow and bloom in</i> |

In the above example, students are instructed to do the tasks in groups. To do the task, first what learners need to perform is to find out flower types they are familiar with them. While taking flowers types, students could mention a variety of plants that they have already known. During this time, students study different types of flowers' name, and enlarge their vocabulary words by receiving others information and contributing their own ideas. In the second task, they are expected to discuss the flowers they mentioned in the first task and again talk about them through considering the given four points i.e. categories, colors, importance and seasons they grow and bloom in. When students share ideas, they become

motivated and have a good opportunity to develop their fluency which is one of the concerns of the current communicative approach. Thus, the task is suitable for group work.

F) Stages of Speaking Tasks

Tasks should have stages in order to address the intended objectives to the learners. As seen in Table 7, 22 (73.33%) of the speaking tasks don't fulfill the three stages. In other words, any of the three stages of tasks is missed. This doesn't encourage learners to accomplish the task successfully. On the other hand, 8 (26.67%) of speaking tasks seem to fulfill the three stages and are implicitly stated. Let us consider the example below:

Example 13

Week 22

(Book two: page 61)

Talking about the past

Talk to your partner about what you were doing yesterday. Express your ideas using the past continuous tense. You may use the following situations.

In the morning

At home

In the afternoon

At school, etc.

In the evening

In the above example, students are expected to talk about the past. As described in unit two, input and the actual message is introduced in pre task stage, However, input, which students listen or read, was left. Preparatory input activities serve to mobilize learner attention and arouse interest (Skehan, 2002). Thus, pre task stage is not introduced although the topic is described and the situations that the students might use are given. In during task, students are instructed to talk about the past using past continuous tense in pairs. This is a good opportunity for them to express their ideas. While task stage is completed since they are communicating. Post-speaking task is also not clearly stated because at this stage students are expected to practice and analyze (Willis cited in Harmer, 2007).

Now, let us take another example, week 18, which is in appendix IV, (on page 51). This example talks about present perfect tense. According to willis cited in Harmer, (2007), the Pre-task (introduce to topic and task), the Task cycle (task, planning, report) and the Language focus (analysis, practice). In this task, the input and the topic is presented that is the pre task stage, and the students are only instructed to act out the dialogue. Nevertheless, while task stage i.e. planning and doing a task are not given for learners. As a result, the learners may not practice and analyze except reading the input given.

4.3 Analysis of students' questionnaire results

Questionnaire was mainly designed to check out what students feel towards designed speaking tasks. To find out opinions, 70(19%) of students in EGPS were selected using proportional and simple random sampling. The result of their response was presented in percentage, mean and standard deviation in the table below.

Table 8: students' questionnaire results

| No | students attitude towards speaking tasks | | SA | A | U | D | SD | Total | Mean | SD |
|----|---|-----|------|------|------|------|------|-------|------|--------|
| 1 | The objectives of speaking tasks in the text book are clear to me. | No. | 2 | 4 | 8 | 32 | 24 | 70 | 1.97 | 0.9776 |
| | | % | 2.9 | 5.7 | 11.4 | 45.7 | 34.3 | 70 | | |
| 2 | The speaking tasks in the text book are familiar to me. | No. | 18 | 23 | 13 | 13 | 3 | 70 | 3.57 | 1.1865 |
| | | % | 25.7 | 32.9 | 18.6 | 18.6 | 4.3 | 70 | | |
| 3 | I enjoy doing speaking tasks because they are motivating and interesting to me. | No. | 23 | 30 | 9 | 4 | 4 | 70 | 3.91 | 1.0999 |
| | | % | 32.9 | 42.9 | 12.9 | 5.7 | 5.7 | 70 | | |
| 4 | The speaking tasks in my textbook encourage me to work in pair and group. | No. | 23 | 29 | 8 | 8 | 2 | 70 | 3.9 | 1.0787 |
| | | % | 32.9 | 41.4 | 11.4 | 11.4 | 2.9 | 70 | | |
| 5 | The speaking tasks help me to use English outside the classroom. | No. | 25 | 22 | 8 | 11 | 4 | 70 | 3.75 | 1.2561 |
| | | % | 35.7 | 31.4 | 11.4 | 15.7 | 5.7 | 70 | | |
| 6 | The difficulties of speaking tasks are moderate. | No. | 13 | 33 | 17 | 4 | 3 | 70 | 3.7 | 0.9831 |
| | | % | 18.6 | 47.1 | 24.3 | 5.7 | 4.3 | 70 | | |
| 7 | The speaking tasks in my textbook consider my background knowledge. | No. | 18 | 26 | 15 | 8 | 3 | 70 | 3.68 | 1.1104 |
| | | % | 25.7 | 37.1 | 21.4 | 11.4 | 4.3 | 70 | | |

As described in Table 8, in item 1, the students were asked whether the objectives of the speaking tasks are clear or not. The result showed that 56 (80 %) of students strongly disagreed or disagreed. The response to item 2 (i.e. the familiarity of the speaking tasks) showed that more than half of the respondents 43(58.6%) 'Strongly agreed' or 'Agreed' to the point.

Besides, the third item invited students to answer if the speaking tasks are interesting and motivating. 53(75.8%) of them agreed or strongly agreed on the point that the tasks are interesting in arousing their motivation as they are familiar to them.

As to item 4, in Table 8, 52 (74.3%) of students strongly agreed or agreed about the questionnaire that the speaking tasks in their textbook encourage them to do in pair and group. Item No. 5, majority of the students 47 (67.1%) strongly agreed or agreed about the use of the tasks in making them to communicate with outside the classroom.

The question related to difficulty of tasks was presented to students, which is item 6. According to information given, two-third of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the speaking tasks are moderate for them. For the last item 7, majority (62.8%) of the students again agreed or strongly agreed to the statement which stated whether speaking tasks consider students' background knowledge or not.

Generally, the questions were related to finding out students' attitude towards the designed speaking tasks in book one and two in grade 8. As shown Table 8, the mean result ranging 3.68 to 3.91 revealed that the respondents have positive attitude towards speaking tasks except item one which is about clearness of objectives whose mean result is 1.97.

4.4 Analysis of teachers' interview results

Interview was the other instrument employed in this study to collect data about the attitude of teachers towards the speaking tasks. This tool was primarily used to gather data from four teachers. The results of the interviews and their analysis were presented as follows:

Item 1: The speaking tasks' objectives

Four teachers were interviewed whether the objectives of the speaking tasks are clearly mentioned in students textbook or not. Teacher three, for example, claimed that speaking learning objectives are not clearly stated. This was supported by teacher one who said, "The speaking tasks objectives are not totally written in textbook." Teacher two said, "It is difficult to say that the speaking tasks' objectives are clearly stated in the text book." Teacher four said that the objectives of speaking tasks are not stated in the tasks.

Item 2: Speaking activities invite teaching speaking

Whether the speaking activities encourage respondents to teach speaking or not was interviewed. One teacher said that activities invite him to teach students, and two of the respondents said that the book is designed based on communicative approach. Regardless of students' weak performance and shortage of time, the speaking activities seem to be good.

However, teacher four said that tasks seem grammar than speaking. Thus, the tasks encourage them to teach speaking, but the students' background knowledge doesn't seem to invite to teach speaking due to their weak performance, time and authenticity of inputs.

Item 3: Familiarity of topics of speaking tasks and considering students' background

The teachers were asked if the topics of speaking tasks are familiar or not. They said that most of topics are related to everyday activities. This has a good relevance in letting learners speak about issues they are familiar with and in turn they develop their speaking skills. The other question was "Do the tasks consider students previous knowledge?" They don't agree because (1) only a few students participate actively while doing tasks (2) the students don't complete the tasks; (3) Students don't have minimum learning competence (MLC).

Item 4: Teachers 'attitude towards motivation and interestingness of speaking tasks to students

When asked, three of them agreed with this idea. They claim that most of the tasks are familiar with students' day-to-day activities. They also added that as far as the topics are linked with students experience and students can say about the content, it couldn't make them de-motivated while doing the tasks. Nonetheless, for example, teacher three said, "No there are many tasks which are boring for them, not for their familiarity of topic selection but their authenticity of inputs and less probability of being performed by students. This might discourage them not to do the activities properly.

Item 5: Purposefulness of speaking tasks in letting students use language outside the classroom

When teachers were interviewed about purposefulness of tasks for encouraging them to the real world tasks, they responded that most tasks are linked with students' everyday activities, so except some tasks such as dialogues in present perfect, future perfect tense and so on which seem mastering the structure, the students might get benefit in practicing them since they get those activities in their real life communication.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The main objective of this study was to evaluate speaking tasks presented in the grade 8 English Textbook based on Nunan's (1989) components of communicative tasks and qualities of good speaking tasks. Content analysis, questionnaire, and interview were the instruments that were employed to collect data. In order to evaluate the speaking tasks, the researcher used checklist for communicative tasks and criteria of good speaking tasks. What's more, the participants of the study were four English language teachers' and 70 grade 8 students of EGPS. An attempt has been made to bring the theoretical aspects of speaking learning tasks to evaluate. Based on the major findings of the study, the following conclusions and recommendations are drawn separately.

5.1 Conclusions

Based on the findings, the following conclusions are drawn.

- Objectives of speaking tasks are not apparently stated in students' textbook, but there are in teacher's guide.
- Inputs of most speaking tasks are inauthentic materials, which were designed for pedagogic purposes. On the other hand, pictures, charts, photos, listening and reading texts were authentic materials. Most of the input tasks were designed to be verbal i.e. in the form of listening and reading text whereas some of them were accompanied with verbal and non-verbal.
- Majority of activities are good because they invite learners to real life communication, but some modifications are needed to make the activities attractive and communicative.
- Roles of students are clearly stated in both teachers' guide and student's textbook. Similarly, the teachers' roles are more obviously mentioned in teachers' guide.
- In relation to setting, adding together, (100%) of speaking tasks were designed to be practiced in the form of pair work or group work.
- Regarding goodness of tasks, the activities in the textbook satisfy (73.33%) of motivation, (86.67%) of meaningfulness, (73.33%) of purposefulness, (80%) of productivity, and (100%) of suitability of pair or group work. However, stages of tasks are not clearly designed.
- In relation to students and teachers' attitude towards speaking tasks, both have positive attitude towards the tasks except questioning speaking objectives. To put simply, according to students and teachers' attitude, goals of tasks are not clearly stated, activities

are motivating and familiar with them, most inputs are inauthentic, the role of teachers is clearly mentioned in teacher's guide and students' roles are mentioned in both, and the setting is mainly organized in pair or group-work, and activities fulfill most of the goodness of speaking tasks.

5.2 Recommendations

Based on the findings and the conclusions draw from the study, the following recommendations could be made:

- Objectives of speaking tasks should be clearly stated for both students and teachers in the text book so that students could determine what they are going to perform in the task.
- The input of speaking tasks ought to be authentic because authentic materials make students ready for real communication outside the classroom. Texts which are taken from newspapers, advertisements, magazines, etc., and tapes of natural speech taken from radio or television programs need to be included.
- Balanced forms of inputs are recommended to get students attention, particularly addressing the different students' learning style.
- In the activity component, 10 dialogues are designed which have the same format of presenting the tasks. Some of tasks don't have any activity left for learners. Thus, activities should be varied and modified to capture students' motivation.
- Information gap and problem solving activities need to be added to make students more motivated in the tasks.
- When material designers develop speaking tasks, they had better involve teachers, students. Particularly, since tasks are primarily designed for students, their ideas, interest, need, and cultural issues should be taken into consideration.
- Tasks need to have pre stage, while stage and post task since each stage has its own contribution for learners to practice the target language.

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Appendix I-A checklist for evaluating communicative tasks

1. Goals

- ✓ Are the task goals or goals of the tasks obvious to students and teachers?
- ✓ Do the tasks reflect a real world or pedagogic rationale? Are they appropriate?
- ✓ Do the tasks encourage learners to apply classroom learning to the real world?

2. Input

- ✓ What forms and types do the input take?
- ✓ Are they authentic?
- ✓ If not, are they appropriate to the goal of the task?

3. Activities

- ✓ Are the activities appropriate to the communicative goals of the task?
- ✓ If not can they be modified to make them more appropriate?
- ✓ Are the activities appropriate to the input data?
- ✓ Are the activities designed in a way which will allow learners to communicate and cooperate in groups?

4. Roles and settings

- ✓ What levels of complexity are there in the classroom organization implicit in the task?
- ✓ Is the setting confined to the classroom?

5. Roles of teachers and students

- ✓ What learner and teacher roles are inherent in the task?
- ✓ Are they appropriate? Adapted from David Nunan (1989)

Appendix II -A checklist for Evaluating qualities good Speaking Tasks

(Activities)

1. To what extent the speaking tasks motivate learners in addressing their needs and interests?
2. To what extent the speaking tasks are meaningful?
3. To what extent the speaking tasks are purposefulness?
4. To what extent the speaking tasks are productivity?
5. To what extent the speaking tasks are suitable for pair work or group work?
6. To what extent the speaking tasks include a pre-task, a while task and a post task?

Source: (Nunan, 1989, Thornbury, 2005; Tomlinson and Maley 2017)

Appendix III- Questionnaire

ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY

**COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES, LANGUAGE STUDIES, JOURNALISM
AND COMMUNICATIONS**

DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES AND LITERATURE

Dear students,

This questionnaire is an attempt to gather information about “An Evaluation of speaking Tasks in Ethiopian grade 8 English text book.” The researcher is interested only in pointing out your attitude towards the speaking tasks that you have done so far in your textbook. Your ideas are highly valued and your cooperation genuinely appreciated. The data thus collected only serves to this particular research and is helpful for the successful completion of the research.

Please put a tick () mark in the column that match your position most, according to the following degree.

Strongly agree= 5 Agree= 4 Undecided=3 Disagree=2 strongly disagree=1

| No | Students' Attitude towards the speaking tasks | Scale | | | | |
|----|--|-------|---|---|---|---|
| | | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 1 | The objectives of speaking tasks in the text book are clear to me. | | | | | |
| 2 | The speaking tasks in the text book are familiar to me. | | | | | |
| 3 | I enjoy doing speaking tasks because they are interesting and motivating to me. | | | | | |
| 4 | The speaking tasks in our textbook encourage me to do in pair and group. | | | | | |
| 5 | The speaking tasks help me to use English outside in the classroom. | | | | | |
| 6 | The difficulties of speaking tasks are moderate. | | | | | |
| 7 | The speaking tasks in your text book consider the students background knowledge. | | | | | |

Please, describe anything towards speaking tasks if you have.....

Thank you for your cooperation!

Appendix IV -Interview questions for teachers

1. Do you think the goals of the speaking tasks stated explicitly in the textbook?
2. To what extent are the speaking activities (tasks) inviting for teaching speaking?
3. To what extent the topics of speaking tasks are familiar to the students' day to day activity?
4. To what extent the speaking tasks promote students interest in the way that they could arouse their motivation?
5. Do you think the speaking tasks are purposeful in letting students use the language outside the classroom?

Adapted from Meron (2015) and Meseret (2013)

Appendix V-Task designers' Interview

This research aims at evaluating speaking tasks presented in grade eight English textbook. And the researcher wants to get valid information from textbook designers. Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

1. Do you think speaking tasks are presented communicatively?
2. In your opinion, are the objectives of speaking tasks clearly stated?
3. Do you think the inputs of speaking tasks are authentic?
4. What were the criteria you designed speaking tasks?
5. In your opinion, are speaking activities/ tasks are appropriate to:
 - A. The goal of communicative tasks
 - B. The input of tasks
 - C. students to communicate outside the classroom

Appendix VI- Grade 8 English for Ethiopia Textbook

Week 6

Speaking Talking about People

In your groups, describe the following Ethiopian athletes. In your description, consider their competitions, medals they won, where they participated, personal records, etc.



WEEK 18

A. Act out the following dialogue taking turn with a partner.

Hagos: Hi, Girma, I didn't expect to see you at the art gallery. How is your visit going?

Girma: It's fine. I've been here for over an hour already. There are a lot of works to look at. I have registered many of them.

Hagos: Great. Have you met anyone you know?

Girma: No, I haven't seen anyone that I know. But I have met many foreigners visiting and many of them were taking photos.

Hagos: Have you taken any photos yourself?

Girma: Yes, I have taken quite a few.

Hagos: Did the gate guard give you permission to take your camera in with you?

Girma: Yes, they did, but I had to pay a small fee.

Hagos: That is great Girma. You have chosen a nice museum to visit. Have you visited any other museum before?

Girma: No, I haven't visited any museum before. That is my first visit.

WEEK 25

Asking for information

In a group of three, about the dialogue below taking turns as the Receptionist and Bethlehem.

Receptionist: good morning Ethio Telecom! What can I help you?

BETHLEHEM: Good morning I would like some information about putting a landline phone in my house.

Receptionist: certainly, sir. I'll put you through to the customer services. Please hold on for a moment.

BETHLEHEM: Customer service office. Bethlehem speaking. What can I help you?

CUSTOMER: I would like to know if it's possible to have a landline phone in my house.

BETHLEHEM: Absolutely. You have to submit a request letter to our Customer service office, and the office will then let you know when you are able to come.

CUSTOMER: Ok, when shall I come then?

BETHLEHEM: you can come at any time during work hours. Please bring all the necessary documents so that our engineers will be able to bring the new phone and other equipment with them in a short time.

CUSTOMER: Can I get some written information about the requirements and service type?

BETHLEHEM: Of course sir. You can come to our nearest office and collect a few brochures about our services.

CUSTOMER: Thank you very much. That is very help of you.

BETHLEHEM: Not at all. Are you calling from your mobile phone number now, sir?

CUSTOMER: Yes, I am.

BETHLEHEM: Then, I have your mobile phone number. Thank you very much, bye,bye.

CUSTOMER: Thank you, bye, bye.

Appendix VII-Task Designer's interview result

1. Do you think speaking tasks are presented communicatively?

Task designer: To some extent, speaking tasks are communicative.

2. In your opinion, are the objectives of speaking tasks clearly stated?

Task designer: task designer said that the objectives of speaking tasks are not clearly stated in the student's text book, but they are mentioned in the teacher's guide, and teachers are responsible for telling the objectives before carrying out the tasks.

3. Do you think the inputs of speaking tasks are authentic?

Task designer: Not all inputs of speaking tasks are authentic. For example, all dialogues are created. However, most listening and reading texts are authentic tasks which were taken from internet sources. Reading and listening texts were mainly added to textbook for promotion purpose.

4. What were the criteria you designed speaking tasks?

Task designer: Basically, the textbook was developed based on scope and sequence which the criterion was set by Minster of Education, (MoE), manual. We, textbook designers, were given two documents so that we could develop the textbook. The textbook was also designed based on content-based approach, and all skills are integrated, not separated in each unit.

5. In your opinion, are speaking activities/ tasks are appropriate to:

A. The goal of communicative tasks

Task designer: To some extent, they tried to make the tasks fit with the goal of the tasks.

B. The input of tasks

Task designer: The inputs of tasks and the activities go together because when the textbook was designed, it is tried to make language skills not presented in isolation. Thus, tasks are related with their inputs.

C. students to communicate outside the classroom

Task designer: Their age, need and interest were taken into consideration to make students use the language outside the classroom.

Appendix VIII-Teachers' Interview Result

1. Do you think the goals of the speaking tasks stated explicitly in the textbook?

Teacher one: objectives of the speaking tasks' are not totally stated in textbook. In other words, they are not clear enough to understand for students.''

Teacher two: He said that, "It is difficult to say that the speaking tasks' objectives are clearly stated in the text book."

Teacher three: he claimed that speaking learning objectives are not clearly mentioned in textbook.

Teacher Four: the objectives of speaking tasks are not stated in students textbook.

2. To what extent are the speaking activities (tasks) inviting for teaching speaking?

Teacher one: most speaking activities invite me to teach students.

Teacher two: the book is developed based on communicative approach. Regardless of students lack minimum learning competence and constraints of time to give a chance for students to produce what they want to say, the speaking activities seem to be good.

Teacher three: Regardless of students' weak performance and shortage of time, the speaking activities invite me to teach students.

Teacher Four: I think tasks seem grammar than speaking; on the other hand, the students don't perform them because of their weak performance.

3. To what extent the topics of speaking tasks are familiar to the students' day to day activity?

Teacher one: I think topics of most speaking tasks are related to everyday activities, but in my opinion, the tasks don't consider students pervious knowledge because students who are attending in my class are not interested in producing what they want to say.

Teacher two: In my opinion, contents of speaking tasks are familiar to students' everyday activities. On the other hand, the tasks don't seem to consider students pervious knowledge because when students are given a chance to say something about the topics they don't construct even a single sentence.

Teacher three: "I believe that topics of speaking tasks are not new for grade eight." The tasks don't consider students pervious knowledge because students fail to communicate with their friends after enough introduction is given.

Teacher Four: I think topics resemble what students do outside the classroom, so most topics of speaking tasks are familiar with students' real life communication. It is difficult to judge whether the tasks consider students' pervious knowledge or not because some are capable of doing them whereas others are not.

4. To what extent the speaking tasks promote students interest in the way that they could arouse their motivation?

Teacher one: Most speaking tasks are familiar with students' day-to-day activities. experience and have something to say about the content, it couldn't make them de-motivated while doing the tasks.

Teacher two: Students know most of the speaking tasks. Therefore, they don't make students de-motivated during doing the tasks.

Teacher three: Teacher three said, "No there are many tasks which are boring for them, not for their familiarity of topic selection but their authenticity of inputs and performed by students."

Teacher Four: Most of the tasks are familiar with students' every day activities. For example, contents talking about asking and telling direction make students motivated.

5. Do you think the speaking tasks are purposeful in letting students use the language outside the classroom?

Teacher one: I think most speaking tasks are linked with students' everyday activities. Thus, the tasks are very purposeful in encouraging students to do in the classroom.

Teacher two: In my opinion, almost more than half of speaking tasks are associated with students' daily activities. As far as students get those tasks outside the classroom, tasks are purposeful for students.

Teacher three: Since speaking tasks are closely related with tasks what the students do outside the classroom, tasks prepare students to communicate in their real life.

Teacher Four: Contents of speaking tasks help students cope with their daily activities, tasks are purposeful.