



JIMMA UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

**ASSESSING PROBLEMS RELATED TO STUDENTS' SPEAKING SKILLS AS A
FOREIGN LANGUAGE; DEMBI SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN FOCUS**

By: ZELALEM DAGNE

**A THESIS SUBMITTED TO COLLEGE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES,
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE IN PARTIAL
FULFILLMENTS OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE MASTER OF ARTS IN TEFL**

SEPTEMBER, 2021

JIMMA, ETHIOPIA

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Abstract

The study was conducted to investigate problems related to students speaking proficiency in English language at Dembi Secondary School. To achieve this research goal, a descriptive research design was employed. The required data were gathered from 162 students and three English language teachers of Dembi Secondary School using three data gathering instruments: questionnaire, interview and observation .The questionnaire consists of 45 close-ended questions while the interview and observation have 4 and 15 semi structured questions respectively. The data collected through the questionnaire were analyzed using descriptive statistics while the data gathered through interview and classroom observation were qualitatively analyzed. All these data were collated and presented in the discussion to arrive at conclusions regarding problems related to students' poor speaking skills in English. The data analyzed indicates that there were student-related, methodology-related, teacher-related and situation-related problems that contribute to students' low speaking proficiency in English. Based on these major conclusions, possible recommendations have been forwarded. For instance, it is recommended that the school EFL teachers should preserve themselves from dominating the students' talking time, avoid excessive use of mother tongue and avoid harsh way of students' error correction practice. In addition, lack of basic language elements, lack of motivation, and high level of anxiety, excessive use of mother tongue and giving due attention for mastery of language rules were identified to be the main student-related problems that contribute to students' low proficiency in EFL speaking classes. Moreover, dominating the talking classes, immediate error correction and overuse of mother tongue were identified to be the main teacher-related problems that contribute to the development of students' spoken language in EFL speaking classes. Finally the implementation of language teaching as the mastery grammatical rules was found to be methodology-related problems that contribute to students' low speaking skills Based on these major findings (conclusions), possible recommendations were forwarded. Finally, suggestions for further research were recommended.

Key variables: speaking skill, assessment, motivation, anxiety, self-esteem

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List of abbreviation

ESL-English as a second language

L1- First Language

L2- Second Language

EFL- English as a foreign language

CLT- Communicative Language Teaching

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the study

According to Mora (2010), speaking is defined as the process of constructing and negotiating meanings orally. It is a productive skill through which students can display their communicative abilities both inside and outside of the classroom. In addition, according to Burns and Joyce (1997), “speaking is an interactive process of constructing meaning that involves producing, receiving and processing information and it requires students’ ability to express themselves orally, coherently, fluently and appropriately in a given meaningful context.” From these definitions, it is possible to deduce that speaking is one of the four macro language skills which involve a series of process through which human beings share their ideas, perceptions, knowledge, experience, etc. in their daily lives.

In educational world, speaking is considered as the most the most important skill for two main reasons. The first main reason is that it is the basic tool for communication. The second main reason is that it is at the heart of second/foreign language learning (GolkoveandHubackova, 2014). As emphasized by Ur.(1999: 120) “ of all the four skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing), speaking seems naturally the most important skill: people who know language are referred to as ‘speakers’ of the language, as if speaking included all other kinds of knowing”. This is to say that speakers who can speak successfully will easily develop their language capacities to learn other skills. Fauziati (2010:15) also points out that “mastering the art of speaking is the single most important aspect of learning a second or foreign language and success is measured in term of ability to carry out a conversation in the language.” From these expressions, it is possible to say that speaking is learners’ language learning tool in addition to being the basic tool for communication. The reason is that it helps learners to learn other language skills by developing their linguistic capacities.

Learning to speak a second or foreign language will be facilitated when learners are actively engaged in attempting to communicate instead of repeating language models initiated by the language teachers. Hence, in developing their speaking skills, students need to interact, manage interaction and participate in oral activities to display their speaking abilities in the classroom as well as outside the classroom. In order to interact actively, there should be speaking activities that encourage students’ interaction through the language (Mora, 2010). However, in a foreign

language context, students may face difficulties in interacting in oral activities due to different problems (McCroskey et al., 1977: 274 and Majda, 2015).

In foreign language context, learning to speak in the target language is not an ordinary thing to carry out as knowing to speak in the target language is beyond knowing its linguistic rules. In addition to linguistic rules language learners need to develop three areas of knowledge in order to effectively interact in the target language. These areas of knowledge that language learners need to have include; 1) mechanics of language elements 2) the functions of language that deals with speaking performance in the form of transaction and interaction and 3) the socio cultural norms (Burnkart, 1998). This indicates that learning to speak in the target language needs to have communicative competence: the knowledge of rules of a language and the application of these rules in the context of speech. As a variety of research findings indicate, though Communicative Language Teaching Approach has been introduced in many countries including Ethiopia, the result is still very far from what has been intended. That means the assumption that language should be used in meaningful communication hasn't been attained yet. This indicates that there is still a problem that should be assessed (Hendra, 2012).

Similarly, as far as the researcher's experience is concerned, students of Dembi Secondary School are not actively involved in English speaking classes. They are passive listeners and they are not willing to say anything orally in English in the classroom and in real –world. To tackle this problem, the causes of the problem need to be assessed. Therefore, this study intends to assess problems related to students' oral proficiency in EFL speaking classes.

1.2 Statement of the problem

So many authors have written about the significances of speaking skills and they have indicated that speaking is the most important skills when compared with other language skills. For instance, Brown (1994) has stated that speaking is learners' learning tool as it enables them to learn other language skills by developing their vocabulary and grammar and then their skills of writing. In addition, Ur (2000) has stated that speaking is the most important language skill which is required in order to communicate information effectively. Moreover, Baker and Westrup (2003) have stated the importance of oral language outside of the classroom. They have demonstrated that oral language is essential in having more opportunities for better education, getting better job and getting promotion.

However, students' poor speaking proficiency in EFL speaking class is the most problematic one amongst so many problems the researcher has experienced in the teaching and learning processes. In Dembi Secondary School, there is no learners' interaction during conversation sessions; most students stay passive listeners during the conversation classes. They are reluctant to express their ideas and thoughts in front of their classmates and their teachers. And they usually escape from the class when they are told that they have oral tests. Though the aim of teaching the speaking skills is to make learners use the target language both inside and outside of the classroom for interactional and transactional functions (Malkamu, 2002:9), most students are not in a position to do so in the target language. Some abroad and local researchers have conducted studies regarding this problem.

For example, from global researchers, Nisreen (2018) conducted a study on the problem and found out anxiety, lack of motivation, lack of encouragement, fear of criticism by peers, the intense use of mother tongue, insufficient speaking task and school environment as the major factors affecting grade ten EFL students' speaking skills at Jordanian Private schools. In addition, Hendra (2012) conducted a research on speaking problems faced by the English Department Students of Syiah Kuala University and found out two prevalent problems: lack of vocabulary and fear of making mistakes. Moreover, Mekonge (2012) conducted a research on the same issue and found out age of enrolment, lack of motivation, lack of practice and lack of variety of instructional resources as factors affecting students' acquisition of speaking skills in English among secondary schools in Turkana East District, Kenya.

In addition to the above researchers, some local researchers also have done researches on the area. For instance, Assefa (2000) conducted a research on the same issue focusing on global factors that affect Ethiopian grade 11 students' English language speaking skills. In addition, Tella(2007) conducted a research on factors affecting students' English language speaking skills and pointed out students' language level difference, their attitude towards learning English and their shyness as factors that affect students' speaking skills positively or negatively. Moreover, Kedir(2017) conducted a study on the same issue and found out fear of making mistakes, lack of motivation, lack of basic language knowledge (grammar and vocabulary) and absence of supplementary speaking materials as factors affecting students' English language speaking skills. However, none of them described the problems in a combined way as environment-related, student-related, teacher-related and teaching methodology-related problems. In addition, no one

has done a research on problems related to students' low oral proficiency in EFL speaking classes in the school where the researcher has undertaken this study. Therefore, this study is an attempt to fill these gaps by focusing on secondary school students in the context of Dembi Secondary School in Oromia Regional State chosen purposely for its proximity.

1.3. Basic Research Questions

This research is an attempt to answer the following basic research questions:

1. What are environment -related problems that make students not to communicate effectively through spoken English?
2. What are student-related problems that contribute to students' low oral proficiency in EFL speaking classes?
3. What are teacher- related problems that may contribute to students' low or uneven speaking skills in English?
4. What are teaching methodology-related problems that contribute to students' low oral proficiency in English?

1.4. Objectives of the study

1.4.1. General Objective of the study

The general objective of this study is to assess problems that contribute to students' oral proficiency in the English language.

1.4.2. Specific Objectives of the study

The study has the following specific objectives:

1. To identify environment-related problems that make students unable to communicate effectively through spoken English
2. To find out student -related problems that contribute to students' low oral proficiency in EFL speaking classes
3. To identify teacher-related problems that may contribute to students' low or uneven speaking skills in English language
4. To find out teaching methodology -related problems that may contribute to students' low Oral proficiency in English.

1.5. Significances of the study

The result of this study could benefit people who have access to it. For example, it may provide English Language teachers with valuable insights regarding the problems that affect students' oral skills in English. These insights may make them equip their students with the essential skills to minimize problems that encountered in teaching and learning of oral skills in English. To this effect, the researcher intends to put a copy of this paper in the library of the school after the final defense. In addition, it can also benefit students by making them work very hard to overcome student-related problems that contribute to their low oral proficiency in English in EFL speaking classes. Finally, the study may possibly initiate other researchers to conduct further research on the same or related issues.

1.6. Delimitation of the study

The study was conducted in Oromia Region, Buno Bedele, Zone, Dembi Secondary School. It was delimited to assess problems that negatively contribute to students' proficiency in speaking skills of grade 9 enrolled at the stated school in 2013/2021 academic year. This delimitation was needed to make the research manageable for the researcher.

1.7. Limitation of the study

The researcher faced different difficulties or problems while doing this research. Among these difficulties, four of them were the most challenging ones. The first major problem that the researcher encountered was lack of enough time. Lack of sufficient time resulted from the work overload of the school. Another problem that the researcher faced was teachers' unwillingness to be interviewed and observed because at the beginning, they considered the study as fault finding. The third problem that the researcher considered as limitation of the study was lack of generalizability. Though students' interaction in EFL conversation classes is almost similar in many Ethiopian schools even including college and university students, there might be some differences from school to school and from rural to town. Therefore, the researcher fears that the findings of the research may lack generalizability. However, the researcher overcame these problems in different ways. For instance, to solve the problem of time constraint, the researcher used overnights, Saturday and Sunday. In addition, to solve the problem of teachers' unwillingness, the researcher tried to convince them that the aim of the interview and the observation was not for fault finding. Moreover, in order to solve the third problem, the researcher tried to collect reliable and valid data.

1.8. Operational Definition of Terms

Classroom interaction: Describes the form and content of behavior or social interaction in the classroom between a teacher and students and among students (in pair or in-group) that enhances the development of speaking and listening skills among learners.

Communicative ability: This refers Grade 9 students' capacity to use a language both willingly and readily in various situations, forms and functions effectively.

Communicative competence: The knowledge of rules of a language and application of these rules in EFL speaking classes.

Contribute: cause to low speaking skills

English as a foreign language: the study of English by nonnative speakers living in a non-English speaking environment.

Fluency: this is the ability of having appropriate things to say in a wide range of contexts without missing words should a situation arise.

Low: poor/below expected

Native language: the first language (L1) that a person has been exposed to from birth or within the critical period (father tongue/ mother tongue).

Problems: difficulties that hinder the development of students' speaking skills

Speaking: the study's operational definition of speaking skills is grade nine students' ability to convey information orally, using the correct pronunciation, grammar and vocabulary

Target Language: is a language that a nonnative speaker is in the process of learning

CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2. The Speaking Skills

2.1. Definition of Speaking

As different scholars state, speaking is one of the four skills that students need so as to communicate effectively. It is a complex process that requires students' ability to express themselves orally, coherently, fluently, and appropriately in a given meaningful context as Burns and Joyce (1997) believe that speaking is 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 participant and the purposes of speaking (quoted. in Torky, 2006: 30). Indeed, the speaking skill is important for EFL students and it is demanded.

Thus, one can deduce that speaking is often spontaneous, open ended and evolving and it requires learners not only knowing how to produce specific points of language (grammar, pronunciation, or vocabulary) that is linguistic competence, but also understanding of when, why, and in what ways to produce language (socio linguistic competence

2.2. The Importance of Speaking

The recent approaches of language learning and teaching give much importance to the speaking skill as emphasized by Ur (1991:120): "of all the four skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing), speaking seems intuitively the most important: people who know a language are referred to as 'speakers' of the language, as if speaking included all other kinds of knowing", i.e., speakers who can speak effectively will easily develop their linguistic capacities to use it in other skills. Then, speaking enables the students to display different functions which are helpful in communication. Effectively, for many students the phrase speaking a language becomes synonymous to learning a language as Murcia (2000, quoted. in Zareie et al., 2014:445) argues.

Today's learners assess their proficiency in the English language on the basis of how good they speak it as believed by Richards (2008:19) who claims that learners often evaluate their success in language learning as well as the effectiveness of their English course on the basis of how much they feel they have improved in their spoken language proficiency". Outside the classroom, proficiency in speaking the English language can help students more to get a job in a company or organization. These latter look for people who speak English well so as to communicate with others as argued by Baker and Westrup (2003:05): "a student who can speak

English well may have a greater chance of further education, of finding employment and gaining promotion. In addition,

According to Rudder, E. (1999:33), nowadays there is no doubt that oral skills are essential for instructive survival in global setting more than ever before. “This shows that speaking skill is a productive skill that helps us interact with one another and the world in general.

According to Melham (2002:9), speaking skill has two basic functions: interactional and transactional functions. He explains these two functions of the speaking skills in more details and says: The interactional functions primarily concern with the maintenance of social relationship in other words, primarily, interactional language is listener - oriented conversations are for the people who are participating in them to achieve their purposes being friendly, hospitable comforting, etc. The Purpose of the speaker in speaking is to be nice speaker to the listener. Speakers have a social or personal reason to speak. On the other hand, the transactional function is primarily concerned with the transfer of information. Transactional spoken language is concerned to get things done in the real world .The purpose of the speaker is to communicate his message. The speaker should be able to express himself, his needs ,wishes, ideas, opinions, attitudes, information, services, etc., When spoken language is used for a primarily transactional function, what is primarily an issue is the transference of information.

Brown and Yule (1983:13) also drew a useful distinction between two basic language functions: the **transactional function**, which is primarily concerned with the transfer of information, and the **interactional function**, in which the primarily purpose of speech is the maintenance of social relationships.

From the above concepts, one can conclude that a proficient speaker is one who uses the language for interactional and transactional functions in his/her real life situation. . Hence, EFL teachers should encourage their students to use the language for interactional and transactional functions.

2.3. Features of spoken language

Spoken language has many distinctive features. These could be in its forms, functions, contents, participants and companions. In spoken language much attention is not given to grammar and structure, but to the message to be conveyed. Concerning this point. Melkamu (2002:10) states:

In speaking, it is common to deviate from the topic without making it known to the listener. The meaning of what they say may not always be clear to the speaker. As to the participants, speaking involves two or more people, usually facing each other, paying attention and responding to what is said rather than to how correctly it is said. There also exists negotiation and exchange of feedback between speakers and listeners. In communication, participants ask for repetition or clarification of ideas, errors not affecting communication are largely ignored by the participants; for some reasons participants interrupt each other. They comment on what has been said or reply to questions.

Recently, designing activities for the learners are based on tasks which there are equivalence between fluency and accuracy achievement. In the communicative approach, both fluency and accuracy are important. Learners should develop communicative competence through classroom practice; however, simultaneously they should know how the language system works in correct and appropriate way (Thornbury, 2005, p.9).

2.3. 1. Fluency

Fluency is the main characteristic of the speaker performance and it is the essential goal that teachers aim to achieve in teaching speaking skill. Hughes (113) defines fluency as the learner's ability to speak in reasonable, intelligible and accurate way without too much hesitation in order to not break down the communication because listeners will lose their interest. Hedge Tricia (54) states also that the term fluency relates to the production and it is normally reserved for speech. It is the ability to link units of speech together with facility and without strain or inappropriate slowness, or undue hesitation

2.3. 2. Accuracy

Learners often need to be fluent in the foreign language and forget to be accurate. However, they should pay attention to the correctness and the completeness of language form when speaking i.e. they should focus on the grammatical structure, vocabulary and pronunciation

As one can understand from the above explanations, spoken language has its own distinctive features. Among these, involving two or more participants, giving due attention to the message rather than to the grammar and asking for clarification are some of them. Therefore, teachers should help their students so that they will be fluent speakers of the English language.

2.4. Problems Related to Students' Low Speaking Skills in English Language

2.4.1. Environmental - related Problems

Hannah (2013) indicates that there are a number of environment –related problems that contribute to learners' low speaking skills and some of them are stated below:

2.4.1 .1.Instructional materials used in the teaching of speaking skills

Researchers have indicated that students who have an exposure to different types of instructional material like radios, televisions videos, tape recorder, pictures and charts develop their speaking proficiency easily than those least exposed to teaching and learning. These instructional resources promote students oral, aural skills and appeal to their sense. Furthermore, they state that these materials are very important in language teaching in promoting perception, understanding, reinforcing the verbal message, in memorizing what has been learnt acting as motivation and stimulating students' interest towards the learning through students' use of the five senses to appropriately learn the language. For instance, according to Ibe-Bassey (1991), an instructional material serves as a tool of communication. However, he regrets that instructional materials in teaching oral skills are very few and are sometimes totally absent in many schools. Therefore, as the utilization of these instructional resources in teaching is the primary function of EFL teachers, they should plan for their presentation in order to make the material meaningful during lesson presentation.

2.4.1.2. Lack of Language Input from the Environment

Different research findings indicate that teaching the English speaking skills in a country where English is a foreign language is very difficult due to the fact that student do not hear the spoken English outside of the classroom situation. Concerning this, Hsin and Jin (1988:36) state “Although English is the principal foreign language in our country, there is no natural English input from the community. In our environment, almost the only language input comes from

teachers and teaching materials. The students therefore find it difficult to improve their speaking skills.

As indicated above another problem which limits students' speaking skills of the English language is that English is not spoken outside the classroom. As far as the researcher's experience is concerned, even English teachers themselves aren't willing to use English outside the classroom. Therefore, teachers should establish the English Club and the English Day in the school so that students can practice English outside the classroom. Moreover, EFL teachers should be a good model in using English outside of the classroom so that their students can model them.

2.4.1.3 Large Class Size and. Seating Arrangement

Large class size is another problem which limits conversation practice. Concerning the impact of a large class size on conversation session, Dobson (1997) states: "In large classes, conversation sessions must be modified considerably because of the sheer number of students involved. The only way to conduct a worthwhile session under these circumstances is to break the large group up into a number of small groups of six or eight people each assigning to each group an outstanding student to serve conversational leader of course, you should move from one group to another to oversee the activities." Therefore, as it can be understood from Dobson's expressions, unless teachers are creative in order to solve large class problem, it will be very difficult for students to practice speaking.

Sitting arrangement is another problem which contributes to students' low interaction among themselves in the target language. Different research findings indicate that the way students are organized can either facilitate or interaction among group members. For instance, Cruickshank, et. al, (1999, quoted in Feda, 2002) assert that "seats arranged in a row hinder oral interaction as they prevent students from talking by facing one another through this is very vital for oral communication." In addition, Katie and Pauline (1997:84, quoted in Feda, 2002) suggest: "Sitting in a circle horseshoe helps all students concentrate and listen to each other, feel like a group and talk to each other easily as there is no barrier between them." From these expressions, one can understand that sitting arrangement is a determinant factor either to facilitate or impede learners' interaction among their group members.

Research findings also indicate that there are different constraints to set up suitable seating arrangement for group activities. For instance, Fedá (2002) mentioned two of them: the size of the class and the style of furniture. However, teachers ought to be creative in order solve these constraints try their best to find solutions to the problems. For instance, Fedá has indicated how to solve the problem of fixed seats: “if the seats are fixed and if there is no space to rearrange movable seats, students can be asked to turn round and work with those sitting at their backs”

2.4.2. Learner- related Problems that Contribute to Students’ Low Speaking Skills

Urrutia and Vega (2010) state that there are a number of problems that contribute students’ speaking proficiency in English. Insufficient vocabulary, hesitation, and the worry to be judged by the others are some among these problems. Some of the problems are stated below:

2.4.2.1. Lack of Basic Language Skills / Elements

Students of English sometimes face the problem of having to search for an appropriate word in order to fit into a particular context. Concerning this, Baker and Westrup (2003) argue that it is difficult for many students to respond when teachers ask them to say something in English language because they may have little idea about what to say, which vocabulary to use, how to use grammar correctly. This means, that they do not have enough basic language skills to listen, and respond to what has been said and read and write on given topics and to use the language appropriately and accurately at the level of sounds, syllable, grammar, vocabulary, texts and discourse. This will lead to failure in communicating fluently in English language, which will again lead to losing of confidence and lack of motivation to speak in the target language. Therefore, English teachers should provide their students with basic language skills that promote students’ speaking skills

2.4.2.2Lack of Clear Purpose of Learning English

As indicated by HaileYesus, Hailu and Mesafint (2000),” Learning English in this country is largely linked with academic reasons rather than for interactional or communicative purpose.” Therefore, this is why the students focus on the mastery language rules in order to pass an examination instead of using it for communicative purposes. Therefore, EFL teachers should encourage the students to use the language for interactional and transactional purposes in every day communication so as to develop their students’ oral proficiency in English language.

2.4.2.3 Interference of Learners ‘Mother tongue

Interference of learners’ mother tongue is one of the factors that affect the developments of student’s English speaking skills. Regarding this, Atkins, et al (1996:23) stated that “from the four basic skills, the interference of learners’ mother tongue is mostly observed in speaking skills”. Dobson also added “The students converse for a while and then lapse in to their native language. While it is natural for students to long for the ease of communication in their mother tongue, you must speedily return them to English. Otherwise, they waste the valuable time they need for practice in English”. Norrish (1990) also stated as interference from the first language limits the development of students’ English speaking skills. From the above scholars’ ideas, one can understand that interference of mother tongue is common during conversations sessions. Therefore, teachers should be careful to control this interference and should encourage the students so that they need to listen and to speak in English to master the target language.

2.4.2.4. Fear of Making Mistakes

Many students fear committing mistakes and/or errors of pronunciations, grammar, and vocabulary regardless of the difference between them .i.e., mistakes and errors: Xiuqin (2006: 35) declares that students often feel frightened at the idea of making mistakes and receiving negative evaluations from their peers. They avoid this by silence and they think they can practice the language themselves outside the classroom by speaking English until they are perfect in the target language. In English classrooms, making mistakes is unavoidable. These students assume that they will be negatively evaluated and being misjudged by the others since mistakes are not allowed inside the classroom.

Atkins, et al (1996:139) also indicated that “Most students tend to think that it is bad to make mistakes that they will be ridiculed by other students or by the teacher. “ This explanation shows that most students have negative attitude towards making mistakes, as a result, they are not willing to say what they want to say due to the fact that pupils and teacher will laugh at them if they make mistakes.

It is true that students feel fear when they are exposed to the language forms that they are not familiar with. This fear makes the students not express themselves. Concerning solution to this problem, Dobson (1997) says that “you must be sympathetic to his frustration and make him feel

that what he is saying is a worthwhile step towards fuller as expressions.” Form this expression, teachers should know that they are responsible and should approach students and treat their psychological problems by convincing them that making mistake is part of learning and it is a step towards fluency and accuracy in developing speaking skills in English. Therefore, teachers should treat their students’ psychological problems so that the students feel free to practice the speaking skills.

2.4.2.5. Lack of Motivation

Different scholars contrast how motivated and unmotivated students involve themselves in conversation classes in order to develop their speaking skill. They state that motivated students are more interested to practice conversation than those who are not motivated. Concerning this, Dobson (1997) wrote:

Motivation is crucial to the success of direct conversation practice where students want to converse. Students cannot be set down in group or sent off in pairs and told to interact in the foreign language unless they are motivated. Motivation to communicate must be aroused. Motivated students develop a strong group identity; they are more motivated to express themselves in English and become real participants in the activities you plan for them. They become confident English speakers in the world outside the classroom.

In addition, Brown (1978) states the role of motivation in developing students’ English speaking skills as “Motivation in language learning plays a vital role. It is motivation that produces effective second-language communicators by planting in them the seeds of self-confidence. It also successfully creates learners who continuously engage themselves in learning even after they complete a targeted language”. With regard to the issue of motivation in learning to speak, Nunan (1999) also stresses that motivation is important to notice in that it can affect students’ reluctance to speak in English. In this sense, motivation is a key consideration in determining the preparedness of learners to communicate in the target language. Furthermore, Babu (2010) argues that lack of motivation in learning causes students’ hesitation to speak English in the classroom. In line with what Babu says, Aftat (2008) believes that motivation is a product of good teaching. In his further explanation, Aftat emphasizes that to motivate students to learn well and actively communicate in English, teachers should have passion, creativity and interest in

their students. In other words, students' motivation is really influenced by the teachers' teaching performance. Therefore, it is important that teachers should also show enthusiasm in their teaching performance in order to motivate their students so that they become well motivated to actively interact in EFL speaking classes.

From the above scholars' expressions on motivational factors above, one can understand that it is the primary responsibility of teachers to motivate students so that the students will be free and confident speakers of the English language.

2.4.2.6 Lack of confidence

Different researches indicate that lack of confidence is the most common problem encountered by learners in the second /foreign language acquisition process. Speaking activities require a learner to have all eyes on him. This exposure to an audience can often give learners stage fright due to lack of confidence and shyness. Regarding this, Baker&Westrup(2003) observe that shyness is very likely to occur when students speak English because most students do not prepare what to say and also underestimate speaking as a skill. Instead, a majority of the students only picture what to say in mind but remain silent. From the above scholars' ideas, one can understand that lack of confidence emerges from lack of preparation and it leads to fear. Fear in turn leads to anxiety and unwillingness to speak in front of an audience Therefore, EFL teachers should make their students prepare themselves before they make presentation in front of an audience.

2.4.2.7 Anxiety

Anxiety is defined as a psychological phenomenon, which may appear when students speak in second or foreign language in the presence of audience. It is defined by Horwitz et al. (1986:125) as "the subjective feeling of tension, apprehension, nervousness, and worry associated with an arousal of the autonomic nervous system".

Speech therapist, Lagerfeld (1992) describes speaking anxiety as something that has a great impact on one's self-confidence since it often makes one experiences failure when not being able to speak out and show what one knows. If a student with speaking anxiety experiences failure, he or she will rather remain quiet than take the risk of failing again. Speaking anxiety creates a low self-confidence which makes students remain quiet in all situations, even if they have the

capacity to express themselves and knowledge that is worth hearing. This can be summarized that language anxiety is the sum of feelings of apprehension, fear, and tension, nervousness responses to perceived or real threats specific to foreign language learning to speak in the target language. Irregular heartbeat, perspiration, stumbling and an inability to act are a few symptoms that block ones capacity to speak out.

Individuals might be anxious to speak due to many reasons which can be personal or interpersonal, i.e., caused by the surrounding variables as situation, audience, or context as it is supported by Young (1991) who claims that language anxiety emerges from personal as well as interpersonal causes. The former includes personality, lack of vocabulary, lack of preparation lack of practice, fear of being the Centre of attention and fear of making mistakes while the latter includes variables like laughing at students' utterances, competition, teachers' behavior and the classroom situation.

It is indicated that students who suffer from communication apprehension practice less in the language, which limits their progress in speaking instead of developing it .Therefore, it is better to suggest possible strategies to cope with speaking anxiety in academic setting. Regarding anxiety reduction strategies, researchers suggest different ways of reducing anxiety in language classroom. For instance, ZhaoNa et al. (2007, cited in Majda, 2015) suggest the following anxiety reduction strategies:

Help students understand that language anxiety can be brief and do not inevitable develop in to a lasting problem, reduce the competition present in the classroom, providing students with positive reinforcement and creating a relaxed classroom environment, conducting classroom activities in groups and teachers should avoid negative evaluation of students in classroom and comment on students' behaviors with more encouragement. Therefore, efforts must be made to find ways of assisting students to feel more secure in their foreign language classroom, in order to maximize the language learning experience.

Understanding different reasons that cause students to be anxious when they learn foreign language and recognizing what students show because of anxiety when they speak the second / foreign language is very necessary steps in coping with language anxiety. An extensive body of

research has suggested a variety of strategies to cope with language anxiety in academic settings, which can also offer an understanding of how to deal with it in the broader social contexts. In addition, Majda (2015) reported that when anxious students have to speak in front of the class, it is helpful if they first practice intensively in a small group.

2.4.3. Teacher- related Problems

Different scholars state that there are some teacher-related problems that contribute to students' uneven English speaking skills. Amongst these, the followings are few of them:

2.4.3.1. The Traditional Approach of Teaching

The traditional language teaching approach which focuses more on grammar and structure, doesn't give more opportunity to students to practice the speaking skills. Concerning the influence of teaching method on students' speaking proficiency, Hsin and Jin (1988) state "The direct cause of students' poor speaking skills could be rooted in the teacher's teaching method. For instance, in the Traditional Approach of Teaching, students were made to listen much more than to speak. As a result, students were given little opportunity to practice speaking"

From the above expressions, one can understand that the type of language teaching approaches used in the class play a great role in promoting student's speaking skills of the English language. Therefore, EFL teachers should use Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) whose goal is to encourage learners to engage in communication as frequently and efficiently as possible in the language classroom environment, hoping that such engagement will help them initiate communication in out-of-classroom settings (Richards, 2006).

2.4 .3.2. Teacher's Dominance of Conversation Classes

Unless teachers give more opportunity to the student's, the students will be passive listeners. Concerning this point, Dobson (1997) says "You must do some talking to keep the session lively and interesting. But the students may be all too inclined to settle back and listen to you, and before you know it, you are the only one participating in English". This indicates that students' active participation will be restricted and the lesson will be boring if teachers dominate all of the conversation classes. In addition, if teachers take the lion's share in the talking classes, the students won't get the opportunity to practice speaking. If they don't practice speaking, they

won't be proficient speakers of the language. Therefore, EFL teachers should give more opportunity for the students to practice speaking.

2.4.3.3. Immediate Correction of Errors

Dobson (1997) states that:

Immediate correction of errors that occur during the conversation session may inhibit the student. By its very nature, conversation / speaking practice a time of some errors in pronunciation, grammar, or vocabulary; students are trying out their wings and inevitably they will make mistakes. You will want to correct errors, but you should not interrupt the flow of conversation with constant minor correction. While you can correct a few major mistakes the moment they are made, it is preferable to wait until the students finish.

From Dobson's idea above, one can understand that tolerating student's errors and correcting the errors at the end of conversation instead of interrupting the flow of conversation leads to successful conversation which helps in developing students' confidence in conversation sessions. Therefore, teachers should preserve themselves from interrupting learners' oral performances during conversation sessions.

2.4.3.3Lack of Subject Matter Knowledge

Recent research finding in language learning indicates that the issue of unqualified teachers in teaching English as a foreign language is the most significant and over looked problem. The finding indicates that the problem is too difficult to solve. What makes the problem too difficult to solve is that many communities are English language learners. Hence, they cannot determine who is a good teacher and who is not, who is well qualified and who is not. Therefore, whatever the teacher says is taken as something correct by the learners (Andrew, 2019). From the expressions given above, one can understand that EFL teachers' knowledge of the subject matter is very questionable /problematic. Therefore, EFL teachers should first make themselves proficient in the target language by mastering their subject instead of blaming learners in every day teaching and learning processes.

2.4.4. Methodology-related Problems that Contribute to Students' Oral Proficiency

In the history of language teaching methodologies, linguists have discovered a great variety of teaching methods and techniques so as to make second or foreign language learning as easy as L1. These methods and techniques evolved, existed for some time and then disappeared and were replaced with a seemingly more effective teaching method.

For many years, during the Audio-lingual approach, teaching the speaking skills involved providing students with the components of the language in hopes that they would eventually put them all together and speak. So students might spend several semesters repeating after the teacher, studying grammar rules, reciting dialogues and learning vocabulary. However, this didn't bring actual conversation as actual conversation doesn't sound like the textbook dialogues. This led to language acquisition research which states that people acquiring the second or foreign language learn the pieces by interacting with other people. The belief that people learn language by interacting has created the assumption that learners should interact during lessons. As a result, a communicative language teaching method, which encourages interaction, arose.

Two versions emerged from the communicative language teaching approach: the weak version and the strong version. The weak version says teachers should teach the components of language but include communication activities. The strong version says since students learn through interacting, lessons should consist of opportunities to communicate in the target language. In this method, teachers often down play accuracy and emphasize how students communicate when they speak the target language (Nunan, 2003).

From the above expressions, one can understand that the type of language teaching approaches used in the class play a great role in promoting student's speaking skills of the English language. Therefore, EFL teachers should use Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) whose goal is to encourage learners to engage in communication as frequently and efficiently as possible in the language classroom environment, hoping that such engagement will help them initiate communication in out-of-classroom settings (Richards, 2006).

2.4.4.1. Principles of Teaching Speaking Skills in the Communicative Language Teaching Approach

Nunan (2003) states five principles for planning speaking lessons in language classes and he explains these principles as follows:

1. Aware of the differences between second language and foreign language learning contexts.

Nunan (2003) states that speaking is learned in two broad contexts; second language and foreign language situations. He says that a teacher faces challenges in teaching the speaking skills in the target language context. He also states that learning speaking skills is very challenging for students in FL contexts as they have very few opportunities to use the target language outside the classroom. From this expression, one can conclude that foreign language learners do not have language input from the environment except from the classroom. Therefore, teachers should provide learners with as much language input as possible to enable them to use the language for interactional and transactional functions both inside and outside the classroom.

2. Give Students Practice with both fluency and accuracy

Nunan (2003) states that beginners and intermediate learners should be given opportunities to develop both their fluency and accuracy. He states that students cannot develop fluency if the teacher is constantly interrupting them to correct their oral errors. He also indicates that teachers must provide students with fluency building practice and realize that making mistakes is a natural part of learning a new language.

3. Provide opportunities for students to talk by using group work or pair work and limiting teachers' talk.

Nunan (2003) demonstrates that pair work and group work activities can be used to increase the amount of time that learners get to speak in the target language during lessons. He adds that when the teacher is removed from the conversation, the learners take on diverse speaking roles that are normally filled by the teacher (such as posing questions or offering clarification). This indicates that more opportunity should be given for learners.

4. Plan speaking tasks that involve Negotiation for meaning

Research suggests that learners make progress by communicating in the target language. When the target language is used for communication, there is negotiating for meaning. Negotiating for meaning involves activities like checking to see what someone has said, confirming that someone has understood the meaning in the interaction, etc. that increase learners' speaking ability (Nunan, 2003).

5. Design classroom activities that involve guidance and practice in both transactional and interactional purposes.

Nunan (2003) and Van (1996) state that speaking activities in the classroom need to embody both Interactional and transactional purposes, since language learners will have to speak the target language in both interactional and transactional settings. From this expression, one can understand that classroom activities to teach the speaking skills should be designed in the way that they enhance learners to use the language for social maintenance and for transfer of information.

2.4.4.2. Communicative Classroom speaking activities

Ur (1996) states that making students effectively communicate in the target language cannot be achieved only by input from the teacher. Teachers need to create situations where students get the chance to speak and communicate with one another. Speaking activities in the classroom are an important part of teaching English since they help students develop their language proficiency when talking. Ur also argues that the speaking is the most important one since foreign language learners are most of all interested in becoming actual speakers of a language. Therefore, activities that develop learners' speaking skills are important parts of a language course.

SL/EFL learners need to practice the language regularly inside the classroom through performing different activities. Thus, effective teacher should vary the oral activities to encourage and involve the learners in the classroom interaction. There are many different activities that can be done inside the classroom and help the learners to develop their speaking skill. Those below are some of the common ones:

2.4.4.2.1. Discussion

Discussion is the most common activity used in speaking classes. This activity gives the students the opportunity to talk and share their interests, opinions, and experiences. As Hedge (2000) said that the discussion must be limitless i.e. free discussion, here the students can use their background knowledge about that specific subject. Students often are unwilling to give their opinions in front of the whole class. So, to avoid such problems the easiest solution is dividing the class to groups because when getting into groups, the students will exchange ideas, propose suggestions, give remedies or even ask each other about a word or expression in their target

language, etc. Marcia (2001). From these expressions, one can understand that group discussion is the easiest solution to help students who are reluctant to express their ideas in front of the whole class. In addition, it is an activity where students interact in a meaningful communication so as to be confident and proficient communicators of the target language. However, if a discussion activity is done carelessly, students cannot benefit from it. Therefore, EFL teachers should plan and set up a discussion activity which is interesting and easy to talk about. Moreover, they should plan and implement a discussion activity related to students' real-life situation.

2.4.4.2.2 Role-play

It is an enjoyable activity for most of the students particularly those who like to imitate the others. Role play is an authentic technique because it encourages a large number of students especially if it is based on real-life situations; moreover, it helps them to reduce their fears in front of the whole class because usually it should be performed in pairs or groups. Thus, each student has to perform a role. In addition to that, role play activity gives the students the opportunity to practice and develop variety of socio-cultural speech acts that are appropriate to the situation and to the characters. For example, when requesting, apologizing, complaining, thanking... etc. This activity can be performed from prepared scripts, student's imagination or experience. The success of the role play depends on the choice of the topics and to the teacher's motivation.

2.4.4.2.3. Communicative tasks

Communicative tasks are enjoyable language tasks that entertain both students and teachers in making a sense of humor in language classroom. These tasks are characterized by some features. Among these features, Thornbury (2005:79) proposed that communicative tasks are characterized by some features: being from real-life situations, using language in funny way for achieving some outcome, making the students practice and interact and helping the students use their language without limitations.

Ur (1996) also states that communicative activities are characterized by some features. One of the characteristics is that motivation is high. Learners are eager to speak: because they are interested in the topic and have something new to say about it, or because they want to contribute to achieving a task objective. In addition, the language of communicative activities is an

acceptable level. Learners express themselves in utterances that are relevant, easily comprehensible to each other, and of an acceptable level of language accuracy. Moreover, in communicative activities, learners talk a lot. As much as possible of the period of time allotted to the activity is in fact occupied by learner's talk. This may seem obvious, but often most time is taken up with teacher talk or pauses. Further, in communicative activities participation is even. Classroom discussion is not dominated by a minority of talkative participants: all get a chance to speak and contributions are fairly evenly distributed so, English language teachers should prepare communicative tasks that promote students' communicative ability.

CHAPTR THREE: THE RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1. The Research Design

There are numerous types of research design that are appropriate for the different types of research projects. The choice of which design to apply depends on the nature of the problems posed by the research, the specific objectives and research questions. Descriptive research design is one of them. Borg and Gall (1989) note that descriptive research is intended to produce statistical information about aspects of education that interest policy makers and educators. Gay (1992) contends that the descriptive approach enables one to obtain information that describes existing phenomena by asking individuals about their perceptions, attitudes, behavior or values. In line with this, the current study employed descriptive research design which enabled the researcher to access information on the teachers' and students' views on problems that contribute to students' speaking skills in English during classroom interaction. Therefore, descriptive design was used to conduct the study. Descriptive study is useful when a researcher wants to look into a phenomenon or a process in its natural context in order to get its overall picture. Moreover, the study adopted a survey study approach because surveys are useful for collecting data from large group of subjects and aim at describing the characteristics of a population by examining a sample of that group (Seliger and Shohamy, 1989, Dornyei, 2007). In view of this, a descriptive survey was appropriate to answer the research questions raised in this study.

To the selected research problem, the researcher used a mixed method approach in which both quantitative and qualitative method were used to answer the research questions. This research design was used since social phenomena are very complex and different kind of methods are needed to understand best such complexities and to get comprehensive information in studying the proposed problems than using quantitative and qualitative method alone. Moreover, it helped the researcher to freely use different research methods in order to get through data in studying the proposed problem (Best and Khan, 1999).

3.2. Participants of the study

The participants of the study were grade nine students and English teachers at Dembi Secondary School. The school was chosen for its proximity and the grade was selected as a high percentage of the students had difficulty in expressing themselves and communicating proficiently in English. This grade had 540 students and four English teachers.

3.3. Samples and sampling Technique

When a number of populations are large, it is very difficult to include all the population in the data gathering process, so it is necessary to take samples that can represent the population. Taking the representatives of the population can be done in two ways: probability and non-probability sampling techniques (Best, 2006). According to Dornyei (2007), investigating the whole population is waste of resources, but appropriate sampling saves time, effort and resources. In line with this, the researcher employed both probability and non- probability sampling techniques in order to take the samples of the study. The probability sampling was used to sample the students. This technique was employed in order to give equal chance for the students to be included in data gathering process. To this effect, based on what is stated in Gay (1992), the researcher included 30% of the students from each section in the data gathering process by using lottery method. That means, 18 times 9= 162 students were selected. In sampling the students, the researcher used the following steps:

- Eighteen 1's and 42 0's were written on pieces of paper for each section.
- These pieces of paper were rolled and mixed carefully.
- Students were told to pick one drawing turn by turn.
- Those who picked 1's were sampled

In addition to the students, the researcher included all grade nine English teachers of Dembi Secondary School by using purposive sampling technique..

3.4. Data Gathering Instruments

Triangulation is very important in the data gathering process because it is used to magnify the validity and reliability of data and its findings (Mohammed,2013). Based on this truth, the researcher employed three data gathering instruments to gather relevant data for the study: questionnaire, interview and observation.

3.4.1 Questionnaire

A questionnaire is any written instruments that present the respondents with a series of questions or statements to which the respondents react either by writing their answers or selecting from existing answers. It is usually used to collect quantitative data to conduct survey research. In addition , it is a data gathering instrument which is used to collect necessary information from a large number of respondents within a limited period of time (Brown , 2001). Having

the benefits of this instrument in mind, the researcher used questionnaire to collect quantitative data for the study. To this effect, the researcher adapted 43 close- ended questions which were originally used by Nisreen (2018) and Mekonge (2012) and gave them to two MA holders of EFL teachers of Dembi Preparatory School to check how much the questions were significant to answer the research questions. In addition, to be more certain about the effectiveness of the questions to answer the research questions, the researcher gave them to his advisor and his co advisor who have had experiences in designing questionnaire. Moreover, to avoid language barriers, the researcher translated the questionnaire to the Oromo language and gave it to Afan Oromo teachers for validation. Here this translation was needed to help the sampled students would understand questions in the questionnaire in the same way (Richards&Schmidt, 2002). Finally, after passing through all these processes, the researcher printed, duplicated and distributed the questionnaire developed on five points Likert scale ranging from strongly agree (5) to strongly disagree (1) (Best,2006) for the sampled students at their respective school so that they filled and returned it to the researcher. The questionnaire includes four sections: environment- related problems, student- related problems, teacher- related problems and teaching methodology- related problems that contribute to students' speaking proficiency in EFL speaking classes.

3.4.2. Interview

Interview is one of the qualitative data gathering instruments which helps the researcher to obtain in- depth and firsthand information from some knowledgeable individuals. In addition, it is an instrument of data gathering which allows the researcher to know what people think and feel about something. Moreover, it is an instrument of data collection which allows the researcher to probe for information (Merriam, 1998:71).Based on this fact, the researcher conducted an interview with grade nine English teachers of Dembi Secondary school thinking that these teachers have some knowledge about problems that contribute to learners' low English speaking. To this effect, the researcher prepared semi- structured interview consisting of 4 questions and gave to his advisor and his co advisor for validation then after interviewed the teachers at their respective school. To make the interview tangible, the researcher recorded the speeches of the interviewees after asking their willingness.

3.4.3. Classroom Observation

Responses may not correctly represent what the respondents do in actual situation. To substantiate and strengthen the data that gathered through questionnaire and interview, classroom observation was used as a vital data collection tool. Classroom observation is important in descriptive qualitative research for collecting genuine and pertinent data from the participants' behavior in their actual setting. In addition, it is an instrument of data collection which is used to obtain current information for the present study. Furthermore, it is an instrument of data collection which helped the researcher to obtain a more detailed insight in to the practices and aspects of the classroom context. In addition, it gives insight into the actual practices carried out rather than perceived or intended practices (Johnson& Turner, 2003).

Therefore, the researcher used classroom observation to triangulate the data that obtained through questionnaire and interview. To this end, the researcher adapted 15classroom observation checklists and observed grade 9 students' oral English performances as they were occurring in their natural settings. Due to shortage of time, the researcher conducted observation of four sampled grade nine sections three times each.

3.5 The Data Collection Procedures

In this study, the researcher employed a series of procedures in order to collect relevant data for the study. First, the researcher had an official letter written from Education Office to Dembi Secondary school. After having the official letter, the researcher communicated the school director and the vice director to get permission. After getting permission from the directors, the researcher communicated the participants of the study and asked their willingness to participate in the study. After passing all these procedures, the researcher collected relevant data using questionnaire, interview and classroom observation for study.

Of these three data collection instruments, the researcher conducted classroom observation before the interview and the questionnaire. The reason why the researcher conducted observation first was that the researcher might influence the teachers when asking questions during the interviews. Thus, participants might try to control their behavior while they were observed. Next to the observation, the researcher conducted the questionnaire. To collect the required data through the questionnaire, first the researcher gave a brief orientation on the purpose of this study to students. The researcher identified and acquired the willingness of the respondents to

take part in the study and then distributed the questionnaire to the selected samples. The administration of the questionnaire took place in students' class under the researcher's supervision to clear up any possible misunderstanding the respondents may face in the filling of the questionnaire and to ensure 100% return. Finally, the researcher made the necessary arrangements with the EFL teachers selected for the interview and interviewed them on the bases of guidelines agreed and recorded their voices based on their consent.

3.6. Method of Data Analysis

Research findings indicate that a mixed method research is essential as it incorporates both quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection and analysis. This method is used to magnify the reliability and validity of data (Mohammed, 2013 and Mertens, 2012). In the same way, the researcher used both quantitative and qualitative methods of data analysis. To do this, the data collected through questionnaire were analyzed using quantitative method. In this study, the data were analyzed as per the objectives and the research questions. To this effect, the quantitative data were presented using tables, percentages, frequency and mean for descriptive analysis following Likert- type item analysis. To do this, first, the Likert- type items were given numerical scores as Strongly Agree=5; Agree= 4; Undecided= 3; Disagree= 2 and Strongly Disagree=1. Then, the mean score for each item in the questionnaire was calculated based on the numerical score given for the Likert- type item. The mean value was used to show the label of agreement or disagreement. Thus, in order to ease interpretation, percentage of strongly agree and agree was added together to show agreement whereas percentage of disagree and strongly disagree was added together to show disagreement. The agreement and the disagreement were determined by the mean value. That means, the sum of percentage of strongly agree and agree could be either strongly agree or agree and the sum of disagree and strongly disagree could be either disagree or strongly disagree based on the mean value of an item. On the other hand, the data gathered through interview and observation (the qualitative data) was analyzed using qualitative method. That means they were qualitatively analyzed by first being organized into various themes based on the variables under study and then analyzed.

3.7. Ethical Consideration

To conduct the study, the researcher had an official letter written from Dembi Education Office to Dembi Secondary School. Based on the letter, the researcher asked permission and began establishing rapport with the concerning bodies for the successful accomplishment of the study. In doing this, the researcher explained the purpose of the study to the participants and asked their consent to answer questions in the questionnaire and interview guide. In addition, the researcher informed the participants that the information they provided would be used only for the study purpose. Moreover, the researcher ensured confidentiality by making the participants anonymous.

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION

Introduction

This chapter deals with data presentation and discussion. The chapter is divided into different sections. The first section deals with the presentation and discussion of data obtained from the sampled students through questionnaire. The second section presents the presentation and discussion of data obtained from grade nine EFL teachers via interview whereas the last section focuses on the presentation and discussion of data obtained through observation. Each section is further divided into four: environment related, student-related, teacher-related and teaching methodology-related problems that contribute to students' speaking skills.

4.1. Analysis of Data Obtained from Students Questionnaire

The students were asked 45 close-ended questions to identify the major problems that contribute to students' low or uneven EFL speaking classes at Denbi Secondary school. The questionnaire was divided into four main categories: environment-related, student-related, teacher-related and teaching methodology-related problems that contribute to students' speaking skills in English.

4.1.1 Lack of Opportunity for practicing English outside of the class room

A lot of authors indicate that limited exposure to English outside of the class room is a serious hindrance in the development of students' communicative competence. This is due to the fact that there is no natural English input from the community. The only language input comes from teaching materials and teachers. Hence, learners find it difficult to use English effectively as their LI which is available in the community (Hsin and Jin, 1988). The solution to this problem is that English teachers should establish English community (English Day and English Club) in the school.

Table 1: Students' Responses regarding opportunity for practicing English outside of the Classroom.

No	Items		Responses								Mean	Label		
			AS(5)		A(4)		UD(3)		D(2)				SD(1)	
			N	%	N	%	N	No	%	No			%	No

		0		0		0								
4	Our EFL teachers encourage us to use English outside of the class room	3	2	3	2	1	0.8	26	15.9	129	79.3	1.8	D	
5	There is functional English club in our school	3	2	3	2	1	0.8	26	15.9	129	79.3	1.8	D	
6	There is a functional English Day in our school	5	3.2	6	4	3	2	33	19.8	115	71	1.4	SD	

Table one summarizes the responses the response of students regarding the opportunity for practicing the speaking skills of the English language outside of the classroom As can be seen from the table, 79.3 % of the respondent strongly disagreed with the mean 1.8 to the ideas that there were practical English Day and English Club in Dembi Secondary School. However, only 2% of them strongly agreed or agreed to the ideas whereas the rest very small number (0.8%) of them nether agreed nor disagreed to the ideas The table also reads that a large number (71%) of the sampled students strongly disagreed with the mean 1.4 to the idea that there was continuous encouragement from EFL teachers to practice speaking English outside of the class room . Nonetheless, a small number (3.2%) of them strongly agreed or agreed to the idea whereas the rest very small number (2%) of them couldn't decide to give answer. From the data summarized in the above table, one can conclude that there were no practical English Day and English Club and continuous teachers' encouragement to make the school students practice speaking out side of the classroom . This means there was no any opportunity created for the school students to practice the speaking skills .This indicates that the language input used to teach the speaking skills was only from the teachers and the teaching materials.

It is undeniable that the limited language input from the teacher and the teaching materials is not enough to foster the development of students' speaking skills of the English language . Therefore EFL teachers should create opportunity for the students to practice the speaking skills by establishing practical English Day and English Club in the school. In addition they should

provide their students with continuous encouragement by becoming a good model in using English both inside and outside of the class room.

4.1.1.1 Environment- related problems that contribute to students’ low speaking skills

4.1.1.2 Lack of Instructional Materials used in the teaching of speaking skills

Researchers have indicated that students who have an exposure to different types of instructional material like radios, televisions, videos, tape recorder, pictures and charts develop their speaking proficiency easily than those least exposed to teaching and learning. These instructional resources promote students oral, aural skills and appeal to their sense. Furthermore, they state that these materials are very important in language teaching in promoting perception, understanding, reinforcing the verbal message, in memorizing what has been learnt acting as motivation and stimulating students’ interest towards the learning through students’ use of the five senses to appropriately learn the language (Mekonge2012). Therefore, the present study seeks to establish if instructional materials used in teaching of speaking skills are available and utilized in Dembi Secondary School if not, to forward possible recommendations.

Table 2: Students’ Responses Regarding Instructional materials

No	Items	Responses										Mean	Label
		AS(5)		A(4)		UD(3)		D(2)		SD(1)			
		No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%		
1	The ratio of English text book in my class is 1:1	162	100									5	SA
2	Our EFL teacher usually brings materials like radios, televisions, videos, and tape recorder to teach us the speaking skills.	15	9.2	15	9.2	3	2	1	0.8	128	79	1.7	D
3	These instructional materials have motivated me to practice	15	9.2	15	9.2	3	2	1	0.8	128	79	1.7	D

As shown in Table 2, 100% of the respondents with the mean value 5 strongly agreed that the ratio of English text book was 1:1. However, regarding the utilization of other instructional materials like radios, videos, and tape recorder, a large number (79%) of the respondents with the mean value 1.7 disagreed while 9.2% of them strongly agreed or agreed that their EFL teachers usually used instructional materials like radios, videos and tape recorder. The table also reads that 79% of them with the mean value 1.7 disagreed that the materials had motivated them whereas 9.2% of them agreed and the rest of them neither agreed nor disagreed.

From the data portrayed in Table 2 one can understand that the school students had very limited exposure to variety of instructional materials except textbook. Limited exposure to variety of instructional materials could result in less motivation and less understanding of what has been learnt as there was no sense involvement. This in turn could impede students' speaking proficiency in English. Therefore, EFL teachers should be resourceful in order to heighten their students' motivation and understanding while teaching speaking skills.

4.1.1.3. Large Class size

Dobson (1997) states that large class size contributes to students' low or uneven participation (Interaction) in an EFL speaking classes. The author states that large class size is a great problem for teachers to oversee if the students are on task or not, if they are using the target language or their L1 while group discussion. She adds that it is very difficult for EFL teachers to provide their students with the opportunity of individual oral presentation. Therefore, the current study wants to establish if there are a sheer number of students in grade 9 EFL speaking classes at Dembi secondary school.

Table3: Students’ Responses regarding large class size

No		Responses										Mean	Label
		SA (5)		A(4)		UD(3)		D(2)		SD(1)			
		No	%	No	%	N	%	N	%	N	%		
7	In my class, where are more than 50 students	129	79.6	13	7.9	3	2	13	8.02	4	2.5	4.5	SA
8	In my class, there are less than 50 students	3	2	13	7.9	3	2	13	8.02	129	79.6	1.4	SD
9	My class is too noisy	115	71	32	19.8	3	2	5	3.1	6	4	4.5	SA

Table three summarizes the responses of students regarding large class size. As indicated in the table, a large number (79.6%) of the sampled students strongly agreed to the idea that there were more than 50 students in their class. This was labeled with the mean 4.5 on the contrary, 8.02% of them disagreed or strongly disagreed to the idea while the rest 2% of them neither agreed nor disagreed to the idea. In addition, the table reveals that 79.6% the sampled respondents strongly disagreed to the idea that there were less than 50 students in their class. This item got the mean 1.4 which shows strongly disagree. Nonetheless, 8.02% of them strongly agreed or agreed to the idea while the rest 2% of them couldn't decide to give their answers. Furthermore, table three indicates that 71% of the respondents strongly agreed that the class was too noisy in EFL speaking classes. On the other hand, 3.1% of them disagreed or strongly disagreed to the idea whereas the rest 2% of them were unable to decide.

From the data summarized in the above table, one can understand that there were asheer number of students in EFL speaking classes and the class was too noisy. This could be a great challenge for EFL teachers to oversee students' interaction and to provide their students with individual oral presentation. This in turn, may impede the development of students' speaking skills of the English language. Therefore EFL teachers should be creative in order to solve the problem of large class size in collaboration with the school principal (Dobson, 1997).

4.1.2. Student -related problems that contribute to students’ uneven speaking skills

4.1.2.1 Lack of Basic Language Skills

Baker and Westrup (2003) state that students usually face difficulties in communicating in English due to lack of basic language skills like vocabulary, pronunciation and grammar. They added that EFL learners usually don’t know which vocabulary to use, how to pronounce English words correctly and how to use grammar correctly to effectively interact among themselves in EFL speaking classes. This indicates that EFL learners should have basic language skills (sufficient vocabulary, appropriate pronunciation and grammar) which enable them effectively communicate in target language.

Table 4: Students’ Response regarding Basic Language skills

No	Items	SA		A		UD		D		SD		Mean	Label
		No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	N	%		
1.	I don’t have enough vocabulary to express ideas in EFL speaking classes	67	41.3	53	32.7	5	3.08	23	14.1	14	8.6	4.6	SA
2.	I don’t know how to use grammar correctly to express my ideas fluently in EFL speaking classes.	71	44	54	33.3	6	4	21	13	10	6	4	A
3.	I can’t effectively communicate in EFL speaking classes because I don’t know how most English Words are said or pronounced	70	43.2	62	38.2	7	4.3	19	12	4	2.4	4.1	A

As the data portrayed in the above table indicates, majority (74.%) of the respondents responded that they didn't have enough vocabulary words to express their ideas freely in EFL speaking classes whereas 22.7% of them strongly disagreed or disagreed . However, the rest 3.08% of them responded that they couldn't decide. The table also shows that 77.3% of the sampled students witnessed that they didn't know how to use grammar correctly to express their ideas in EFL speaking classes while 19% of them answered that they disagreed or strongly disagreed that their knowledge of grammar didn't contribute to their low or uneven speaking skills. However, the rest 4% of them couldn't decide how their knowledge of grammar contributed to their poor speaking skills. The table further shows a substantial number (81.4%) of the respondents strongly agreed that lack of the knowledge of pronunciation contributed to their low speaking skills. Nonetheless, only 4.3% of the sampled students answered that they couldn't decide low lack of the knowledge of pronunciation hindered their participation in EFL speaking classes whereas the rest 14.2% of them disagreed or strongly disagreed that pronunciation didn't contribute to their poor speaking skills.

In general, from the data portrayed in the above table, one can conclude that Grade nine students of Dembi didn't have basic language skills to actively involve themselves in EFL speaking classes. That means, they lacked the knowledge of vocabulary pronunciation and grammar in the target language. Therefore, EFL teachers should provide their students with basic language skills like vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciations that the learners will be able to effectively interact among themselves in EFL speaking classes.

4.1.2.2 Mother tongue Influence

As Atkins, etal (1996:23) stated that, the interference of learners' mother tongue is mostly observed in speaking skills and this interference affects the developments of students' English speaking skills. Dobson (1997) also states that EFL learner's converse for a while and then lapse in to their native language to long for the ease of communication in their mother tongue. Dobson also suggested that EFL teachers must speedily return the students to English not to waste the valuable time they need for practicing speaking in English. Therefore, the present study tries to establish if the school EFL students could effectively communicate without the influence their mother tongue language.

Table 5: Students’ response regarding Mother tongue Influence

No	Item	Responses										Mean	Label
		S.A		A		UD		D		SD			
		No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%		
4	Your English teacher uses only English in EFL speaking classed	3	2	6	4	5	3	46	28	102	63	1.53	D
5	I use English effectively in EFL speaking classes	3	2	5	3	3	1.6	36	22.6	115	71.6	1.4	SD
6	Your English teacher speaks a mix of A/O or Amharic in EFL speaking classes	103	63	45	28	5	3	3	2	6	4	4.4	A
7	Your EFL teacher lets you use Afan Oromo Or Amharic if you can’t express your ideas in English in EFL speaking classes	128	79.4	26	15.9	2	1.2	5	3	1	0.5	4.7	SA

As the data shown in the above table indicates, majority (91%) of the respondents disagreed that their EFL teacher used only English in EFL speaking classes. On the other hand, only 6% of them agreed or strongly agreed that the teacher repeatedly used only English in EFL speaking classes while the rest 3% of them couldn’t decide to agree or disagree. The table also reads that a substantial number (91%) of the sampled students agreed that their EFL teacher used a mix of English and Afan Oromo / Amharic in EFL speaking classes whereas 6 % of them disagreed or strongly disagreed that their EFL teacher used a mix of English and students’ mother tongue. However, 3% of them were unable to decide. The table further reads that majority (95.3%) of the sampled respondent’s strongly agreed or agreed that their EFL teacher let them use their mother tongue if they couldn’t express their

ideas in English during speaking classes 3.5% of them disagreed or strongly disagreed that their EFL teacher let them use Afan Oromo or Amharic .Nonetheless , only 1.2% of them were unable to decide and the rest.

From the data given in table two above, one can conclude that there was an excessive use age of students' m other tongue by EFL teachers and the students during Speaking classes . The use of a mixof English could have a positive and a negative effect. The positive effect could be that students might feel less anxious and in habited by the teacher when s/he speaks in Afan Oromo / Amharic , and they may feel that they can understand what is being said in EFL speaking classes on the negative side, students could be un willing to put effort speak English and could end up speaking Afan Oromo or Amharic in EFL speaking , classes In addition, When EFL teachers use Afan Oromo of Amharic in EFL speaking Classes, the students wouldn't feel the urge to speak English Since the teachers understand Afan Oromo / Amharic. This way, students definitely couldn't benefit from EFL class and wouldn't be able to practice the target language proficiently . This is due to the fact that learners need to listen and to speak in English to master the language instead of translating from the target language to mother tongue and vice versa (Krashen, 1985).

Table6: Students' Response regarding fear of making mistakes and Anxiety

No	Item	Responses										Mena	Label
		SD		A		UD		D		SD			
		NO	%	No	%	No	%	NO	%	No	%		
8	I fear committing mistakes /errors while speaking English	82	50.8	63	38.8	5	3.2	5	3.2	6	4	4.9	S A
9.	I fear criticism from others while speaking English	84	51.6	64	39.7	3	1.6	5	2	8	5.1	4.3	A
10.	I am shy and confident while speaking English in class	96	59	63	38.6	1	0.8	1	0.8	1	0.8	4.9 5	S A

11.	I feel anxious while speaking English class	84	51.6	64	39.7	5	3.2	5	3.2	6	4	4.9	S A
12.	I prefer to keep silent during speaking classes not to be laughed at	82	50.8	63	38.8	5	3.2	5	3.2	6	4	4.5 2	S A
13.	I feel anxious when I am asked to make speech in front of my class mates and teacher .	84	51.6	64	39.7	3	1.6	5	3.4	6	4	4.3	A

As shown in the above table six , 89.6% of the sampled students strongly agreed that they feared making mistakes/ errors while speaking English and preferred to stay silent in EFL speaking classes while 7.2% of them disagreed or strongly disagreed to the idea.. However, the rest 3.2 % of them couldn't decide to give their answer, Table six also indicates that a substantial number (97.6) of the sampled students agreed that they felt shy and didn't feel confident in EFL speaking classes However, only 1.6% of them disagreed or strongly disagreed to the point and the same percent of them(0.8%) couldn't decide to give answer to the point .

In general, from the data presented, analyzed and interpreted in table six above, one can conclude that a high percentage of the students felt anxious in EFL speaking classes. Their anxiety could be due to fear of making mistakes / errors and receiving negative evaluations from their peers. Their fear of making mistakes or errors results from lack of self – confidence and their lack of confidence results from lack of practice and preparation .

According to Xiuqin (2006) , students who suffer from communication apprehension practice less than those of their peers who do not suffer from communication apprehension . Those who suffer from communication apprehension either practice little or avoid speaking the target language at all so that their chance to practice the target language is reduced Hence, there would be limited progress in their speaking proficiency. Therefore, EFL teachers should convince their students that making mistakes / errors is part of learning and it is a step towards fluency and accuracy in becoming proficient speakers of English . In addition, they

should advise their students to practice the language so as to be self -confident to make speech in front of their teachers and peers.

Table 7: Students’ Response Regarding Motivation

No	Item	Responses										Mean	Label
		SD		A		UD		D		SD			
		No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%		
14	My family encourages me and support me to speak English	3	2	6	4	5	3.2	49	27.7	102	63.1	1.53	D
15	My EFL teacher motivates me to speak English in class	8	4.7	10	6	3	2	39	23.8	102	63.5	1.6	D
16	I am well motivated while speaking English	8	4.7	10	6	3	2	39	23.8	102	63.5	1.6	D
17	My EFL teacher uses speaking topics which I am interested in	8	4.7	10	6	3	2	39	23.8	102	63.5	1.6	D
18	My EFL teacher uses speaking activates which motivate me to speak English	8	4.7	10	6	3	2	39	23.8	102	63.5	1.6	.D

Table seven indicates that 87.3 % of the subjects disagreed that they werewell motivated while speaking English. Nonetheless, 10.7 % of them strongly agreed or agreed to the point while the rest 2% couldn’t decide to give answer. Table seven also indicates that 90.8% of the respondents witnessed that there was no encouragement from family to practice speaking. However, only 6% of them answered that there was family encouragement to practice speaking while the rest 3.2% of the respondents were unable to the respondents were unable to decide. Moreover, table seven indicates that a substantial number (87.3%) of the sampled students responded that there was no motivation from EFL teachers to while speaking English as

there were no interesting topics and speaking activities that could stimulate them to use English in EFL speaking classes. From the data presented, analyzed and interpreted in table four, one can understand that almost all the students did not have motivation to speak English both from their families and their EFL teachers .

According to Philpot (2007), lower motivation level or lack of motivation hinders students from actively participating in speaking activities. Macro (2010) also states that students who are persistently motivated to learn eventually do better than those less encouraged. The author also states that students' from families that value English language learning are likely to acquire / learn English faster than those less value the language. The author further states that learners who are given continuous and appropriate encouragement to learn by their teachers and parents will generally fare better than those who do not. . Therefore , EFL teachers should provide their students with interesting and stimulating speaking topics and activities in EFL speaking classes . In addition, they should always appreciate any improvement made by students towards using English in the right context . Furthermore, parents should value their children's English language learning so that the children also value English language learning .

Table 8: Students' Response Regarding Their Reason for learning English

No	Items	Response										Mean	Label
		SA(5)		A(4)		UD(3)		D(2)		SD (!)			
		No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%		
19	I study English primarily for communicative (Interactional) purpose	4	2.2	11	7.1	4	2.2	24	15.1	119	73.4	1.54	D
20	I want to be fluent speaker of English so I usually practice	4	2.2	11	7.1	4	2.2	24	15.1	119	73.4	1.54	D

	speaking English													
21	I study English primarily to pass written exam, so I mainly focus on grammar	119	73.4	24	15.1	4	2.2	24	15.1	4	2.2	4.54	S	A

As shown in table eight, 88.5% of the respondents disagreed that they studied / learnt English primarily for interactional purpose. However, 9.3% of them strongly agreed or agreed that they studied English for interactional function while the rest 2.2% of them responded that they couldn't decide. In the table, it is also shown that a substantial number (88.5% of the sampled students answered that they didn't usually practice speaking English to be fluent speakers of the language. Nonetheless, only 9.1% of them strongly agreed or agreed to the point where as 2.2% of them couldn't decide. Finally, table eight also shows that 88.5% of the sampled students strongly agreed that they studied English primarily to pass written examination where as 9.3% of them disagreed or strongly disagreed to the point and the rest 2.2% of them were unable to decide.

From the data presented, analyzed and interpreted in the table eight, one can understand that majority of the school EFL learners studied English to pass written examination and hence focused on the mastery of the language structure. However, this is not the ultimate goal of learning language skills in general and the speaking skills in particular. The ultimate goal of language teaching (learning) is to make learners use the language for interactional and transactional functions both inside and outside of the classroom. (Melkamu, 2002), Another conclusion that could be made from the table is that there was no interaction among learners. If there are no interactions among learners, there won't be exchange of ideas (meaning negotiation) among them. This is to say that learners need to interact or make a verbal exchange in the target language in order to perform speaking activities. In the process of interaction or verbal exchange, they are able to get exposure to input, which is language features a bit beyond students' current level of understanding. In order to negotiate this linguistic input, there should be interaction among the learners for mutual understanding to

take place (Krashen , 1985) Therefore .learners should develop their communicative competence so as to interact instead of focusing on the mastery of linguistic rules.

In addition , EFL teacher should make learners learn the target language for interaction as interaction is the means and ultimate goal of language learning (Ying , 2010).

4.1.3 Teacher- related problems that contribute to students’ uneven speaking proficiency

A lot of research findings indicate EFL teachers play significant roles in promoting students’ speaking proficiency in English. For instance, designing and implementing teaching methods that can foster students’ speaking ability, designing and employing speaking activities and tasks that encourage learners’ interaction, giving more time for learners, encouraging learners ‘fluency by tolerating mistakes and errors that occur during oral production are some of these roles.

4.1.3.1. Methods used by EFL Teachers

Research findings indicate that the type of teaching method used by EFL teachers play a significant role in promoting or hindering the development of students’ speaking proficiency in English. Regarding this issue, Barnes (1969) conducted a study in language to establish the effect of the language teachers use on the learning process and found out that the style of language used by the teacher could prevent the content from getting through to the learners and prevent some from contributing to the classroom dialogue. The author added that a method of teaching where a teacher talk dominates learner-talk prevents learners’ active participation in EFL speaking classes. As the author suggested, enhancing learners’ speaking skills in English, a teacher of English should employ various methods that encourage interaction among students in EFL speaking classes. Therefore, the current study seeks to establish if EFL teachers are employing methods that promote students’ oral proficiency in English language if not, to suggest possible recommendation.

Table 9: Students’ Responses Regarding Methods used by EFL Teachers in teaching speaking skills in English

No	Items	Responses										Mena	Label
		AS(5)		A(4)		UD(3)		D(2)		SD(1)			
		No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%		
1	My English teacher focuses more on accuracy while teaching speaking	101	62.7	27	16.7	3	2	21	12.7	10	5.9	4.2	A
2	The talking classes are usually dominated by the teacher	101	62.7	27	16.7	3	2	21	12.7	10	5.9	4.2	A
3	The taking classes are usually dominated by the learners	3	2	27	16.7	3	2	27	16.7	102	62.9	1.9	D

As shown in table nine, a large percent (84.4%) of the respondents agreed that their English teachers focused more accuracy while teaching speaking and the same percent of the respondents agreed that the talking classes were usually dominated by the teacher. On the other hand, 18.6% of the respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed to the idea that their English teachers focused more accuracy while teaching speaking and same percent of them disagreed or strongly disagreed to the idea that the talking classes were usually dominated by the teacher whereas the rest percent (2 %) couldn't decide to give answers. In the table, it is also indicated that a large percent (79.6. %) of the sampled students disagreed that the taking classes were usually dominated by the learners while a small percent (18.2% of them strongly agreed or agreed to the idea whereas the rest very small percent (2%) of them neither agreed nor disagreed. From the data summarized in table nine, one can conclude that the methods employed by most of the

school EFL teachers were accuracy-based and teacher- dominated teaching styles which doesn't invite learners' interaction in the target language. Therefore, EFL teachers should employ teaching methods where learners can have the opportunity to talk more by using group work or pair work by limiting teachers' talk during the talking classes. Otherwise the teaching will be similar to teaching a person about car driving without giving him the car.

4.1.3.2. Immediate Error Correction

Several authors indicate the importance of errors in second or foreign language teaching. For instance, Allwright and Bailey (1991) demonstrate that errors are essential in second or foreign language teaching as they are ways of understanding learners' progress in the language learning process

Regarding the role of error correction in second or foreign language learning, some researchers affirm that error correction serves no use in second or foreign language learning while some others argue that error correction in language classrooms enables learners to improve their proficiency in the target language, According to Allwright and Bailey (1978) to understand the role of error correction in language teaching, it is very important to establish a difference between communicative practice and accuracy practice as language teachers tend to address errors differently in the two contexts. Communicative practice refers to activities whose goal is to get students to engage in free language production whereas accuracy practice refers to activities that focus on discrete syntactic, morphological, or semantic structures.

According to these authors, in communicative practice, only errors that affect communication should be corrected by the language teachers. The authors add that teachers should tolerate errors in the communicative activities so that learners can communicate with more confidence. Furthermore, they state that communicative language lessons should be focused on learners' ability to convey their ideas and less concerned with their ability to produce perfectly grammatical sentences. Moreover, they state that learners might become frustrated, build negative attitudes towards language learning and feel reluctant to use the target language if their attempts to speak during free communicative activities are constantly interrupted (corrected) by the teachers. Therefore, the present study tries to establish if English teachers tolerate students' errors in EFL speaking classes to promote students' speaking proficiency if not, to forward possible remedies.

Table 10: Table6. Students Response Regarding Error Correction

No	Items	Responses										Mea	Label
		AS(5)		A(4)		UD(3)		D(2)		SD(1)			
		No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%		
4	My EFL teacher corrects my Speaking mistakes/ errors all the time while I time Speaking	95	57.9	35	21.8	6	4	8	5.2	18	11.1	4.1	A
5	MY EFL teacher waits until I finish what I am saying and the corrects my speaking mistakes errors	13	7.9	8	5.2	11	7.1	26	15.9	104	63.9	1.8	D
6	My EFL teacher considers my speaking mistakes/ errors as strong side	13	7.9	8	5.2	11	7.1	26	15.9	104	63.9	1.8	D

As portrayed in table seven, a large number (79.7%) of the sampled students agreed that EFL teachers corrected students' errors/ mistakes all the time while they were speaking. On the other hand, a small number (9.3%) of them disagreed or strongly disagreed to the point while the rest very few number (4%) of them neither agreed nor disagreed. The table also reads that a substantial number (79.8%) of the respondents disagreed that EFL teachers tolerated correcting students' errors until they finished what they wanted to say. The same percent (79.8%) of the respondents disagreed that their EFL teachers considered errors during speaking class as a strong side of learners. Nonetheless, 13.1% of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that their EFL teachers waited until they finished what they wanted to say and they agreed or strong agreed that EFL teachers considered their errors/ mistakes as learners' strong side whereas the rest 7.1% of the them couldn't decide to respond to items 5 and 6

From the data presented, analyzed and interpreted in the above table, one can understand that most of the school EFL teachers didn't consider errors that occurred in EFL speaking classes as a strong side. In addition, it was indicated that they corrected the errors all the time

by interrupting the flow of oral language production . This may inhibit the development of learners' speaking skills of the English language. Therefore, the school EFL teachers should regard errors as a natural part of the learning process , as a meaningful learning tool and not as an obstacle that may hinder a successful learning experience. In addition, in order to avoid learners' fear of making errors that may result in discouragement to interact in EFL speaking classes, they should preserve themselves from interrupting learners oral production . Instead, they should correct the errors at the end of conversation.

4.1.4. Teaching Methodology- related Problems that Contribute to Students' Oral Proficiency in English speaking Classes

Many second or foreign language teachers agree that students can learn to speak in the second or foreign language by interacting with one another .Learners' interaction can be achieved through communicative language Teaching (CLT). CLT enables students to learn how to speak in English through interaction in real -life situations. If this approach is used in the class room context , learners will have the opportunity to use oral English by interacting with their teachers and peers through authentic activities and meaningful tasks that promote their spoken English progress . In communicative language Teaching (CLT), activities like group work, brainstorming , information gap, storytelling and brief dialogues are encouraged to be employed as they foster the development of students' speaking skills in English .These activities are used to increase the amount of time that learners get to speak in the target language in EFL speaking classes by limiting the speaking roles that are normally taken by the teacher .(Nunan, 2003)Therefore, the current study tries to establish if methodology designed and employed could initiate to communicate fluently in English and if not, to recommend remedial solutions

Table11: students’ Responses regarding the methodology Designed to Teach and practice the speaking skills

No	Items	Responses										Mean	Label
		SA(5)		A(4)		UD(3)		D(2)		SD(1)			
		NO	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	No	%		
1	My English teacher usually uses student-centered approach to teach the speaking skills.	10	5.9	21	12.7	3	2	27	16.7	101	62.7	1.9	D
2	My English teacher usually focuses more on the communicative aspect of the language while teaching speaking skills in English	10	5.9	21	12.7	3	2	27	16.7	101	62.7	1.9	D
3	My English teacher uses teacher-centered approach while teaching the speaking skills	101	62.7	27	16.7	3	2	10	5.9	21	12.7	4.1	A
4	Our English teacher usually uses lecture method while teaching speaking	101	62.7	27	16.7	3	2	10	5.9	21	12.7	4.1	A

5	Our English teacher usually lets us working pair and group while teaching the speaking skills	10	5.9	21	12.7	3	2	27	16.7	101	62.7	1.9	D
6	Our English teacher usually uses text book speaking text book speaking activities while teaching speaking	101	62.7	27	16.7	3	2	10	5.9	21	12.7	4.1	A
7	Our English teacher usually uses real life topics and activities while teaching speaking	21	12.7	10	5.9	0	2	27	16.7	101	62.7	1.9	D
8	Our English teacher gives us the chance to choose speaking activates and tasks that encourage interaction	3	2	3	2	3	2	27	16.7	126	77.3	1.4	D

As shown in the table eleven a large number (79.4%) of the respondents agreed to items 3, 4 and 7 given in the table. That means, they agreed that a teacher –centered approach, lecture method, only text book activities, accuracy focused mode of teaching and teacher - dominated talking classes were employed while teaching speaking. On the other hand, a small number (18.6%) of the respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed to the items whereas the rest 2 % of the sampled respondents neither agreed nor disagreed to the items mentioned. Table eleven also indicates that a substantial number (79.4% of the respondents disagreed to items 1,2,5,7 and 8 given in the above table. That means, they reacted negatively to the ideas

that EFL teachers usually employed student centered approach, CLT (Communicative Language Teaching) method , pair/ group work, motivating speaking activities like problem solving , role- play, dialogue, real- life topics and tasks and learner- dominated speaking classes while teaching speaking. On the contrary small number (18.6%) of the sampled respondents reacted positively to the item mentioned whereas the rest very small number (2%) of them were unable to agree or disagree to the items mentioned. Moreover, table eleven also reads that a very large number (90%) of the sampled students disagreed that their EFL teachers gave them the chance to choose speaking topics, activities and tasks that promote their interaction in EFL speaking classes. Nonetheless, a very small number (4%) of them agreed or strongly agreed that their EFL teachers usually gave them the chance to choose motivating speaking topics , activities and tasks that encourage in traction (meaning negotiation) during speaking classes while insignificant number (2%) of them neither agreed nor disagreed to the item

From the data presented, analyzed and interpreted in the table eleven , one can understand that most of the school EFL teachers employed the Traditional Language Teaching Approach to teaching Speaking skills. There are some indicators for saying this. The first indicator is that lecture method was dominantly used as a mode of lesson delivery while teaching speaking . The second main indicator is that learners didn't get the opportunity to interact in pair or group as the talking class was dominated by the teacher. The third indicator is that only textbook speaking topics and activities were employed The fourth main indicator is that accuracy was focused while teaching speaking The fifth main indicator is that there was no chance for learners to choose speaking topics and activities that stimulate them to practice the speaking skills . This implies that the methodology designed to teach and practice the speaking skills has its own defects when compared with the communicative language teaching Approach whose means and ultimate goal is interaction. Unlike CLT, the method employed by the school EFL teachers didn't encourage learners' interaction. Instead, the talking class was dominated by the teachers' talk as there were no pair and group work activities that could increase the amount of time that learners get to speak in the target language.

In addition, unlike CLT, the methodology designed to teach the speaking skills gave much attention to accuracy. From this, one can conclude that the methodology the school EFL

teachers designed to teach the speaking skills couldn't foster the development of students' speaking proficiency. Therefore, the school EFL teachers should implement CLT whose means and ultimate goal is interaction. In doing this, they should plan speaking tasks that involve negotiation for meaning, provide opportunities for students to talk by using pair / group work and give them practice with both fluency and accuracy so as to foster the development of students' speaking proficiency (Nunan, 2003).

4.2. Analysis of Data Obtained from the School EFL Teachers through Interview

To obtain in depth and firsthand information on problems related to students speaking proficiency, the researcher interviewed the school EFL teachers from the interview made with the four school EFL teachers, the researcher obtained the following results:

1. What are environment - related problems that contribute to students' poor interaction in EFL speaking classes? What are the possible strategies to overcome these problems?

Teachers' Answers Regarding Environment - related Problems that Contribute to Students' poor Interaction in EFL Speaking Classes

Regarding environment- related problems that impede the development of students' oral

Proficiency, all the interviewees commented three main problems: large class size, sitting arrangements, and lack of opportunity to practice speaking in English outside of the classroom. Regarding the problem of large class size, they stated that there were a large number of students involved in an EFL speaking classes. As they stated, due to the sheer number of students involved in the class, it would be difficult for EFL teachers to provide the students with individual oral presentation that could foster the development of students' oral proficiency. They also added that it would be difficult for EFL teachers to follow up if the students are on task or not, if they are using the target language for meaningful communication or if they have stopped using the target language and have begun using their mother tongue. Concerning the problem they mentioned, they stated that the seats were not appropriate to arrange for group work activities as they were not moveable. Regarding the third problem, they witnessed that Ethiopian students in general and Denbi Secondary School students in particular, do not have any opportunity to practice speaking in English outside of the classroom or they have limited exposure to the target language. They added

that even EFL teachers themselves do not have the habit of communicating in English outside of the classroom so that their students could model them.

The interviewee also proposed possible solutions to solve these problems. As they said, one of the solutions was that the school EFL teachers should work in collaboration with the school administrative body to solve the problems of class size and sitting arrangements. They added that they should work with the school administrative organs to get extra classrooms and to have moveable chairs that can be arranged for group work activities. Another solution they suggested was that EFL teachers should create opportunities like English Cub and English Day where the students could practice speaking in English outside of the classroom. Moreover, they added that EFL teachers should become a good model in communicating in English not only in the class room but also outside of the class room. In addition to the problems mentioned above, the first interviewee added lack of instructional materials in teaching speaking skills in English. He stated that there was no attractive school environment to teach the speaking skills. As he stated, the school didn't have instructional materials like radios, televisions, videos and tape recorder that stimulate and motivate the students to involve themselves in a meaningful communication. He added that only text book and teacher's guide were available and adequate. As he generalized, there was no attractive school environment that could foster the development of students' speaking proficiency in English.

The interviewee also proposed possible recommendations in order to solve the problem of Instructional materials. He suggested that EFL teachers should identify instructional materials that stimulate and motivate students to interact among themselves in a meaningful communication.

Then, he suggested that they should ask the school administrative body to buy these materials,

2. What are student-related problems that contribute to students' poor speaking proficiency in EFL speaking classes?

Teachers' Responses on Student- related Problems that contribute to students' low speaking proficiency in EFL speaking classes?

Regarding this question, the four EFL teachers responded as follows:

The first interviewee, who has 24 years of experience in teaching English and holds an M.A. in TEFL, mentioned four important problems that contribute to students' low or uneven interaction in EFL speaking classes. These were shyness, lack of prior experience, lack of interest and mother tongue interference. As the interviewee tried to explain, the way the students were educated from K.G (their prior experience) made them disinterested and shy to interact in EFL speaking classes.

Regarding the solution to the problems, the interviewee proposed the following solutions: giving motivating speaking activities which can be done in pair / group, encouraging learners' interaction, providing learners with basic language skills in order to compensate their lack of prior experience.

The second interviewee, who has 15 years experiences in teaching English and has an M/A in TEFL, mentioned three main student- related problems that contribute to learners' low or uneven interaction in EFL speaking classes: lack of sufficient vocabulary mother tongue influence and studying English mainly for passing exams rather than for communication purpose. As the interviewee tried to state, the students lacked enough vocabulary to express their ideas and opinions in EFL speaking classes. The interviewee added that the students were enforced to use their L1 when they couldn't get vocabulary words which enable them to communicate in the target language. Furthermore, the interviewee stated that most Ethiopian students in general, and Dembi Secondary school students in particular study English to pass written exam, hence, they focus mainly on the mastery of language rules and this greatly hinders the development of students' speaking proficiency in English.

The interviewee suggested the following possible solutions to overcome these problems: providing the students with sufficient vocabulary that enable them to express their ideas, limiting the overuse of mother tongue and encouraging learners to focus more on the communicative aspect of the language so as to develop their oral proficiency in the English language.

The third interviewee, who has 10 years experiences in teaching English and has a B.A degree in English, commented three main student - related problems that impede the development of students' speaking proficiency in English . There were lack of basic language skills (such as pronunciation, vocabulary and grammar), mother tongue interference and fear of making mistakes

As the interviewee tried to respond, the school students didn't know how to pronounce words, which vocabulary to use and how to use grammar correctly to effectively communicate orally in English in EFL speaking classes . Due to lack of this knowledge, they made errors / mistakes while responding to teachers' questions. Hence, they preferred to stay silent or use their mother tongue due to fear of making mistakes. The interviewee proposed the following possible solutions to overcome these problems: modeling teaching the pronunciation of words before the students use the words, providing the students with a as sufficient vocabulary as possible , giving the students comprehensive language input and telling them that making error is natural in language learning.

The forth interviewee who was unwilling to record his sound has 30 year experience in Teaching English And holds a B.A Degree in English language and literature. In line with the other interviewees, he commented lack of interest, mother tongue interference, anxiety, lack of confidence and lack of motivation as the main student -related problems that impede the development of students' speaking proficiency in EFL speaking classes of Dembi Secondary School The interviewee explained that the students didn't have motivation on their sides to interact in EFL speaking classes. As they lacked motivation, they were not interested to practice speaking in English .Lack of practice in the target language resulted in mother tongue interference and lack of confidence .Finally, lack of confidence resulted in anxiety and anxiety hindered learners in EFL speaking classes of Dembi Secondary School.

Regarding the strategies used to overcome these challenges be proposed the following Possible solutions: designing and employing motivating and stimulating speaking activities so as to arise the interest of the students, implementing more group work or pair work in Speaking classes where students feel less stressed and feel confident to perform the speaking activity more efficiently.

3. What are teacher- related problems that contribute students' speaking proficiency in English? What strategies have you been using to overcome these challenges?

Teachers' Responses on Teacher- related Problems that contribute to students' low speaking proficiency in EFL speaking classes?

Regarding teacher- related problems that hinder the development of students' speaking proficiency in English the first interviewee mentioned four important teacher related problems that impede the development of learners' oral proficiency. These were lack of the language skills in speaking, overuse of L1, taking the lion's share in EFL speaking classes and implementing the old trend in teaching speaking skills. The interviewee clearly stated that EFL teachers themselves contributed much to the problem as nowadays some EFL teachers are not well-organized in their profession hence, they commonly use students' mother tongue in order to teach the target language. The interviewee added that EFL teachers usually implement methods in which the students are passive listeners and the teachers are dominant speakers even today. Moreover he added that some EFL teachers even today focus more on grammar than on the communicative aspect of the language . As the language focus (grammar) consumes most of the English lessons, the students can't get sufficient number of speaking classes The interviewee suggested the following possible solutions to tackle these problems: The interviewee recommended that EFL teachers should prepare themselves in a good manner on the first hand. .Then, they should design and implement group work or pair work activates in which learners interact in the target language.

Similarly, the second interviewee commented two main teachers – related problems that affect students' oral proficiency in English: overuse ofL1and teachers' dominance in EFL speaking classes.

In line with the first interviewee, the third interviewee mentioned three main teachers- related problems that contribute to students' low interaction in EFL speaking classes dominating all the talking classes, immediate error correction and overuse of students' mother tongue. The interviewee tried to explain that teachers usually undermine that their students cannot communicate orally in the target language , Hence, they usually cover almost all the talking classes by taking the lion's share in the talking classes . The interviewee also added that most teachers usually interrupt students' interaction to give immediate error correction and

this blocks the flow of conversation which promotes (fosters) the development of students' speaking proficiency in English . Furthermore, the interviewee demonstrated that most EFL teachers usually use students' mother tongue to ease students' difficulty of understanding the target language.

Regarding possible solutions to tackle these problems, the interviewee proposed the following possible strategies: providing opportunities for students to practice more by using group work or pair work and limiting teacher' talk, tolerating students ' errors while oral communication (waiting until the students finish what they want to convey) and making English the medium communication by limiting the overuse of students' mother tongue

Similarly, the third interviewee commented two main teacher- related problems that affect students' oral proficiency in English: methods that teachers use to teach speaking and over use of students' mother tongue The interviewee stated that the methods EFL teachers design and employ in teaching speaking skills in English greatly affect students' oral interaction. He said that employing teaching methods which teachers dominate more of the talking classes cannot foster the development of students' oral proficiency in English . In addition , the interviewee explained that teacher's use of a mix of students' mother tongue and the English language in EFL speaking classes and allowing them to use their L1 when they can't convey their ideas in English can greatly affect learners' oral skills.

Regarding the strategies to be used in order to solve these problems, the interviewee proposed the following possible strategies: designing and implementing methods that encourage learners' interaction and limiting the use of students' mother tongue because to master the language, learners need to listen and speak in English instead of interacting in their L1.

In the same way the fourth interviewee mentioned teacher's proficiency and lack of support from teachers' side and excessive usage of L1 as the main teacher- related problems that can negatively affect students' speaking skills in English . He said that an EFL teacher who doesn't have the knowledge of communicative approaches and who excessively uses the mother tongue language can't support his/ her students to be proficient speakers in the target language. He added that some EFL teachers have problems in helping their students based on

their ability level. Furthermore, he said that only active learners benefit from most EFL teachers' speaking classes

Regarding the strategies used to overcome such problems, he proposed the following possible solutions: EFL teachers should develop their knowledge of communicative approaches to be proficient speakers in the target language there by to produce proficient learners. In addition, he recommended that EFL teachers should categorize their students based on their level of ability to provide them with necessary support. He further suggested that EFL teachers should arrange make up classes to support slow learners as the regular time is not sufficient to support all the students.

4. What are teaching methodology- related problems that contribute to students' low proficiency in EFL speaking classes?

Teachers' Responses Regarding Teaching Methodology- Related Problems that Contribute to Students' Low Proficiency in EFL Speaking Classes?

Regarding the methods used in teaching the speaking skills, all the EFL teachers stated that communicative language Teaching is more appropriate in teaching speaking skills in English as it encourages learners' interaction among themselves in the target language. Regardless of this, all of them frankly answered that they usually employ teacher- fronted methods for two main reasons. The first reason they stated is to complete the complete the contents of the book within the time allotted. As they stated, they were evaluated on the basis of the completion of course contents. The second reason is connected with students' unwillingness to interact among them. They stated that learners were unwilling to interact thought they were given chance to interact among themselves. As they stated, they usually employ teacher- centered approach to feed the learners with the language that moves the learners interact in EFL speaking classes Regarding solution to tackle the problem they suggested the following possible recommendations: The MOE should put into consideration students' background while preparing English textbook and should minimize contents to be covered in the semester an in the year.

4.3. Analysis of Data Obtained Through Observation during the Actual Teaching

This section presents the presentation and analysis of data obtained through actual teaching observation. This observation mainly focused on the school environment, errors that students committed in EFL speaking classes and students' motivation and anxiety in EFL speaking

classes, teacher- related problems in EFL speaking classes and teaching methodology employed in teaching speaking skills in English.

4.3.1. The School Environment in Teaching Speaking Skills in English

The current actual teaching observation of the school environment in teaching speaking skills in English mainly focused on the number of students in EFL speaking classes, appropriateness of the sitting arrangements to organize the students in groups and availability and utilization of instructional resources to teach speaking skills.

4.3.1.1 The Number of Students in EFL Speaking Classes and Appropriateness of the Sitting Arrangements to Organize the Students in Groups

Regarding the number of students in EFL speaking classes, the researcher observed that there were a sheer number of students in each EFL speaking classes. Each section contained above 55 students. Due to the large number of students included, the classes were noisy and difficult to manage whether the students were on task or not. In addition to the sheer number of students included. The researcher observed that the seats in most speaking classes were inappropriate to organize the students in groups. They were not movable to arrange the students in groups. Rather they were fixed and arranged in the way students keep everything from teachers. From this classroom observation, the researcher concluded that the sheer number of students and inappropriate sitting arrangements contributed to the developments of students' oral proficiency in English.

4.3.1.2 Availability and Utilization of Instructional Resources to Teach Speaking Skills.

Research findings indicate that properly used instructional resources reinforce verbal message get hold of the learners attention, provide for direct interaction of students with the venality of the social and physical environment and also facilitate teaching and learning if in good supply, rich in variety and range , However, lack of these resources can hinder the development of students' spoken English as non- native learners of English are limited from learning more vocabulary which can help them improve their speech (Onyejemezi, 1998).

Though using a variety instructional resources is very important in teaching speaking skills in English, the researcher observed that all the teachers were using only English text book which was the only available and adequate instructional material. Except this instructional

resource none of the teachers used instructional materials like radio, television, tape recorder, videos and other literary materials that could motivate the learners to practice the speaking skills in English. To answer the question why didn't the school EFL Teachers use these materials?; the researcher visited the English Department and ensured that all these materials except some literary texts were not totally available. Nonetheless, none of the school EFL teachers used those available literary texts that might have motivated the students to use English orally in a meaningful context. From the actual class room observation on instructional materials the school EFL teachers used in teaching speaking skills in English, it is possible to conclude that the school EFL teachers think that using only textbook could foster the development of students' speaking skills in English.

Therefore, as it is very difficult to foster the development of students speaking proficiency without instructional materials, EFL teachers should be aware of the variety instructional resources needed to develop students' fluency in English. In addition, they should be accustomed to use instructional resources which help in motivating and stimulating learning as this makes the students learn best by doing.

4.3.2. Spoken Errors students made In EFL speaking classes

Different authors indicate that non-native users of English make so many errors when they are involved in speech activities. Among these, Lack man (2010) states errors in pronunciation, grammar and mother tongue interference as the common ones. In line with this, the researcher observed that grade nine students of Dembi Secondary School made some common errors while interacting in the group discussion led by the two EFL teachers and while responding to language models initiated by the rest two EFL teachers. One of the common errors that the researcher observed during the actual teaching was error in pronunciation. The researcher observed when the students pronounced some English words wrongly. For instance, the following words were pronounced wrongly during the actual teaching classroom observation: **endangered, culture, sure, shut, knee, wrist, and thumb**

The mispronunciation of words was due to mother tongue interference. The students substituted some phonemes from Afan Oromo with those in English. This resulted in difficulties in communicating meaning

In addition to pronunciation error, the researcher observed the overuse of L1 by both the teachers and the students in the EFL Speaking classes. Here the researcher observed that most of the teachers repeatedly used Afan Ormo so that the learners could comprehend what was being uttered in EFL speaking classes. The teacher's use of a mix of Afan Omo and English made the learners not to put their effort to speak in English and end up speaking Afan Oromo. This in turn made the students stay silent until the teachers translated what was to be learned from the target language (English) to their L1 (Afan Oromo). In general, from the actual classroom observation, the researcher concluded that the school students didn't benefit from the speaking classes dominated by the overuse of AfanOrmo as the overuse hindered the students from practicing speaking English. Furthermore, the researcher observed so many grammatical problems from the students who were responding to language models initiated by the teachers.

Among these grammatical problems, tense error and subject- verb disagreement and voice errors were the major problems observed. Regarding tense errors, the researcher heard that the students repeatedly misused tense. For instance, the following tense errors were heard during the actual teaching observation.

My mother buy me a ball yesterday (Wrong)

My mother bought me a ball yesterday (Right)

I am write a letter to my sister now (Wrong)

I am writing a letter to my sister now (Right)

Besides tense errors, there was a problem regarding an agreement between the subject and the verb in a verbal statement made by the students. For example, a student was heard saying:

The man speak Amharic(Wrong)

The man speaks Amharic(Right)

He always go to church(Wrong)

He always goes to church(Right)

Moreover, the learners didn't know when to use active voice and passive voice. For example, a student was heard saying;

Breakfast eats every morning (Wrong)

Breakfast is eaten every morning Right)

In general, from his personal actual teaching observation, the researcher concluded that grade nine students of Dembi Secondary School had insufficient basic language skills to interact in EFL speaking classes. That means, they didn't have the knowledge of pronunciation, vocabulary and grammar. That was why they couldn't use the target language as effectively as possible. Therefore, the school EFL teachers should encourage their students to read extensively English language materials as well as practice speaking in English in order to gather sufficient vocabulary to use when expressing themselves. This means, the school EFL teachers should encourage the students to do a lot of practice in speaking English so that they achieve fluency in speaking in English.

4.3.2.2 Students' motivation in EFL speaking classes

Many researchers have indicated that motivation is essential in second / foreign language learning. They contrast motivated learners and unmotivated ones in EFL speaking classes and they motivated learners do better in EFL speaking classes than those who are not motivated. However, the researcher observed that grade nine Students of Dembi Secondary Students did not seem motivated to interact in EFL speaking classes. Rather they seemed unmotivated and passive. The researcher observed that most of the school EFL students were passively listening to their teachers instead of actively interacting among themselves through the target language. From the classroom observation, the researcher deduced that grade nine students of the students couldn't develop their oral proficiency in English as they did not have motivation to interact among themselves in EFL speaking classes

4.3.2.3. Anxiety in EFL speaking Classes

Many researchers in the language learning have indicated that anxiety has a negative effect on students' oral performance. They have stated that learners who have a high level of anxiety perform less in EFL speaking classes. Similarly, the researcher observed that grade nine of Dembi Secondary School students seemed anxious. The researcher observed that students who tried to respond to the language models initiated by the teacher showed some signs of anxiety such as forgetting what to say, mouth drying, avoiding communication and sweating. From this classroom observation, the researcher concluded that grade nine students of Dembi Secondary

School had very little chance to practice the target language as students who suffer from speaking anxiety either practice little or avoid practicing the target language at all

4.3.3. Methods EFL teachers used

Nunan (2003) demonstrates that studying a grammar rules repeating after the teacher, reciting dialogues and learning vocabulary can't bring actual conversation as actual conversation doesn't sound like the text book dialogues. This led to the assumption that people learn language by interacting with other people. The belief that people learn the language through interaction has created a new approach, communicative language Teaching which encourages interaction. This approach is an effective approach in the present century. In communicative language Teaching Approach, the means and ultimate goal of language Teaching is interaction. That means, its goal is to encourage learners to interact as frequently and efficiently as possible in the language class room environment hoping that such interaction will help them initiate communication in out- of classroom settings (Richards, 2006). To promote interaction, learners are organized in small groups and provide with speaking activities like discussion, problem solving, debates, role plays, storytelling and language games that are used to increase the amount of time that learners get to practice that target language during speaking classes. Communicative Language Teaching considers mistakes/ errors as a natural part of learning a new language. Because the due emphasis is how students communicate when they speak the target language. Hence teachers shouldn't constantly interrupt students' interaction during oral classes. Instead, they must provide the students with fluency building practice and they should appreciate any progress made by the students.

However, the researcher observed that the teaching methods used to teaching speaking skills during the actual class room observation was not in accordance of the Communicative Language Teaching methods. The researcher observed that two of the teachers organized the students into small groups and provided them discussion topic to be done and only one of them guided and supervised the discussion and let them present their answers before the class. The classroom organization in the rest 4 sections was almost teacher – cent red. The indicator was that there was no interaction among students as there were no opportunities for the students to talk by using group work or pair work though properly organized group work is

an essential tool for implementing student centered language instruction , which is the principal tenet of communicative language teaching

From this actual classroom observation, the researcher concluded that almost all the school EFL teachers used teacher - fronted method which doesn't give students extensive opportunities to use the language they are learning for communicating among themselves. Therefore EFL teachers should employ communicative language teaching so that learners interact among themselves in a meaningful way instead of passively listening or responding to language models initiated by the teacher. To achieve this, they should organize group work properly as poorly organized group tasks can have counterproductive effects on student learning (Feda ,2002).

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5. Introduction

This chapter presents the summary of the major tasks carried out, the conclusions drawn and the possible recommendations to the stated problem.

5.1. Summary

This study was undertaken to assess problems related to students' oral proficiency in English at Denbi Secondary School, particularly Grade Nine Students of 2012/2019). In particular, the study was carried out to answer the following basic research questions:

- What are environment-related problems that make students not to communicate effectively through spoken English?
- What are student-related problems that contribute to students' low oral proficiency in EFL speaking classes?
- What are teacher-related problems that may contribute to students' low or uneven speaking skills in English?
- What are teaching methodology-related problems that contribute to students' low oral proficiency in English?

Hence, the study has the following specific objectives:

1. To identify environment-related problems that make students unable to communicate effectively through spoken English
2. To find out student-related problems that contribute to students' low oral proficiency in EFL speaking classes
3. To identify teacher-related problems that may contribute to students' low or uneven speaking skills in English language
4. To find out teaching methodology-related problems that may contribute to students' low oral proficiency in English.

To achieve the above research objectives, descriptive research design was employed and relevant data were gathered from the respondents through three data gathering instruments: questionnaire, interview and observation. Through these instruments, both quantitative and qualitative data were collected. The quantitative data obtained through questionnaire were analyzed quantitatively with the help of descriptive statistics such as frequency, percentage and mean

value whereas the data obtained through interview and observation were analyzed qualitatively to arrive at conclusions. Based on the conclusions, possible recommendations were forwarded.

5.2. Conclusions

Based on the data presented, analyzed and interpreted in chapter four of this research, the following conclusions were drawn in accordance with the research questions and research objectives:

1. From the data analyzed and interpreted, it was concluded that grade nine students of Dembi Secondary School did not have motivating school environment in order to interact in EFL speaking classes. This was due to lack of language input outside of the classroom, lack of adequate instructional materials, large class size and inappropriate sitting arrangements.

2. The results of students' questionnaire, teachers' interview and classroom observation indicated that grade nine students of Dembi failed to involve themselves in EFL speaking classes due to lack of basic language elements, lack of motivation, and high level of anxiety, excessive use of mother tongue and giving due attention for mastery of language rules.

3. Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that grade nine EFL teachers of Dembi failed to give more opportunity for the students to practice speaking as they were repeatedly employing a teacher-fronted approach accompanied by overuse of mother tongue and immediate error correction.

4. From the data analyzed and interpreted, it was concluded that there was a mismatch between the school teachers' knowledge on CLT and its practical implementation. Though they stated that Communicative Language Teaching is more appropriate in teaching speaking skills in English, majority of the school EFL teachers failed to implement the approach.

5.3. Recommendations

Based on the major conclusions drawn, the following possible recommendations were forwarded:

1., The school EFL teachers should establish functional English Club and English Day in the school so that the students will have the opportunity to practice the largest language outside of

the classroom. In addition, EFL teachers should be good models in using English outside of the classroom so that their students can model them. Moreover, they should work in collaboration with the school administrative bodies to have extra class rooms and moveable seats to solve the problems of large class size and sitting arrangements respectively. Furthermore, they should identify and use instructional materials that motivate and stimulate the students to involve themselves in real communication. If the materials are not available and adequate, they should ask the school administrative body.

2. The school students should have their own motivation to use the target language for meaningful communication. Hence, they should practice speaking in English in order to minimize mother tongue interference and anxiety. In other words, they need to practice speaking in English in order to develop their self-confidence. To this effect, the school EFL teachers should encourage their students to focus more on the communicative aspect of the language than the mastery of language rules as the mastery of language rules alone cannot lead to effective oral communication in the target language. To do this, EFL teachers should motivate the students to arouse their need and interest to practice speaking in English so that they feel free and confident to express their ideas orally in English. In addition, EFL teachers should provide their students with as sufficient basic language skills as possible to tackle the problems of lack of basic language skills/ elements and mother tongue interference in EFL speaking classes.

3. The School EFL teachers should preserve themselves from dominating the students in EFL speaking classes. If the talking class is dominated by a teacher, students cannot get more opportunity to practice speaking skills in English. If they do not get more opportunity to practice speaking, they will not be proficient speakers of the target language. In addition, EFL teachers should preserve themselves from overusing students' mother tongue language as overuse of mother tongue cannot make learners put their effort to develop their oral skills in the target language. Moreover, EFL teachers should tolerate errors that students make in EFL speaking classes. That means, they should wait until the students finish what they want to convey because if they are interrupted, they may become frustrated, build negative attitude towards speaking in the target language and they may be reluctant to practice speaking in the target language. Furthermore, EFL teachers should focus on learners' ability to convey their ideas fluently in the target language than focusing on their ability of producing perfect grammatical sentences in communicative practice. Hence, they should correct only errors that affect communication.

4. The school EFL teachers should be aware of language teaching approach which encourages the development of students' speaking proficiency in English. In line with this, they should familiarize themselves with Communicative Language Teaching Approach which is widely used and has advantages over other language teaching approaches in fostering students' ability to communicate effectively in the real world using the target language. In addition, they should practically implement what the approach advocates as knowing about the approach without its practical implementation can bring nothing.

Suggestions for Further Studies

- 1. The MoE should establish special criteria in selecting EFL teachers**
- 2. A similar study should be carried out in Dembi Secondary School in order to check consistency in the research findings.**
- 3. As the issue of EFL teachers' proficiency is currently very critical, further study should be carried out on EFL teachers' oral proficiency.**

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Appendix A: Students' Questionnaire

Dear student,

Given the importance of speaking skills the field of communication in second or foreign language, this questionnaire is designed to obtain relevant information about issues surrounding the teaching and learning of speaking skills in secondary level EFL classrooms. Thus, you are kindly requested to react the questions presented. Of course your comments and opinions will be considered confidential and your responses will be used only for research purpose.

Thank you in advance!

NB:

1. You are not requested to write your name
2. All your responses will be kept confidential

Direction

Below are problems that contribute to students' low participation in EFL speaking classes. Tick (√) the appropriate response (s) based on the degree of influence using the scale given below:

No	Items	Responses				
		SA	A	UN	D	SD
1.	The ratio of English text book in my class is 1:1.					
2.	Our EFL teacher usually brings materials like radios, televisions, videos, and tape recorder to teach us the speaking skills.					
3.	These instructional materials have motivated me to practice.					
4.	There is a functional English Day in our school.					
5.	There is functional English Club in our school.					

6.	Our EFL teachers encourage us to use English outside of the class room.					
7.	In my class, there are more than 50 students.					
8	My class is too noisy during EFL speaking classes.					
9	I don't have enough vocabulary to express my ideas in EFL speaking classes.					
10	I don't know how to use grammar correctly to express my ideas fluently in EFL speaking classes.					
11	I can't effectively communicate in EFL speaking classes because I do not know how most English words are said or pronounced.					
12.	I can't use English effectively in EFL speaking classes.					
13	I usually speak a mix of A/O or Amharic in EFL speaking classes.					
14	My EFL teacher lets me use AfanOromo or Amharic if I cannot express my ideas in English in EFL speaking classes.					
15	I fear committing mistakes /errors while speaking English.					
16	I fear criticism from others while speaking English					
17	I am shy and I am not confident while speaking English in class					
18	I feel anxious while speaking English class.					
19	I prefer to keep silent during speaking classes not to be laughed at.					
20	I feel anxious when I am asked to make speech in front of my class mates and teacher .					
21	My family encourages me and supports me to speak English.					

22	My EFL teacher motivates me to speak English in class.					
23	I am well motivated while speaking English.					
24	My EFL teacher uses speaking topics which I am interested in.					
25	My EFL teacher uses speaking activities which motivate me to speak English.					
26	My primary aim of learning English is not for communicative (Interactional) purpose.					
28	I study English mainly to master the rules of the language.					
29	I study English primarily to pass an examination, so I don't want to practice speaking.					
30	My English teacher focuses more on accuracy while teaching speaking.					
31	The talking classes are usually dominated by the teacher.					
32	Our EFL teacher usually focuses on mastery language rules while teaching speaking.					
33	My EFL teacher corrects my speaking mistakes/errors all the time.					
34	My EFL teacher usually corrects my speaking mistakes errors immediately					
35	My EFL teacher does not consider my speaking mistakes/ errors as strong side					
36	My English teacher usually uses student-centered approach to teach the speaking skills.					
37	My English teacher usually focuses more on the communicative aspect of the language while teaching speaking skills in English.					
38	Much time is given for students in our EFL					

	speaking classes.					
39	There is always an interaction among students through the target language in my EFL speaking classes.					
40	Our English teacher usually lets us work in pair and group while teaching the speaking skills.					
41	In addition to textbook speaking activities, our English teacher usually uses a variety of motivating speaking activities while teaching speaking.					
42	Our English teacher usually uses real-life topics and activities such as role play, storytelling, dialogue, problem solving while teaching speaking.					
43	Our English teacher gives us the chance to choose speaking activities and tasks that encourage interaction.					

Key: SA =Strongly Agree (5), A= Agree (4), UN=undecided (3) D= Disagree (2), SD (1) =strongly Disagree

(Source: Adapted from Nisreen, 2018 and Mekonge, 2012)

Appendix B: Teachers' Interview

Dear teacher, the main objective of this interview is to assess problems related to students' speaking skills of the English language. Therefore, the researcher requests your honest and genuine responses.

1. What are environments - related problems that contribute to students' low interaction in EFL speaking classes? What are the possible strategies to overcome these problems?
2. What are student- related problems that contribute to students' low speaking proficiency in EFL classes?
3. What are teacher- related problems that contribute to students' speaking proficiency in English? What strategies have you been using to overcome these challenges?
4. What are teaching methodology- related problems that contribute to students' low proficiency in EFL speaking classes? Which teaching methods do you usually employ in teaching the speaking skills? How often do you organize your students in pair/ group work to teach the speaking skills? What kinds of task do you often use to teach the speaking skills?

Appendix C: Observation Checklists

1. Are the sitting arrangements suitable to practice speaking?
What is the number of students in each section?
2. What types of instructional material are repeatedly used to the speaking skills?
3. What are the common errors that students make during EFL speaking classes?
4. How often do EFL teachers correct these errors?
5. Which language is dominantly used in EFL speaking classes?
6. Are the students free/ anxious to express themselves in English during oral classes?
7. Are the students well-motivated to interact in oral English classes?
8. What method of teaching is dominantly used?
9. Who dominates the conversation classes?
10. How often do the students interact in pair work or group work?
11. What kinds of speaking activities and tasks are repeatedly used in EFL speaking classes?
12. How often does the school EFL teacher encourage all the students to practice the speaking skill?
13. How often does the teacher motivate the students to practice the speaking skills
14. On what language aspect does the teacher focus?