



Challenges of Teaching English as a Foreign Language in Primary Schools: The Case of Primary Schools in Oromiya National Regional State of Ethiopia

Dagne Tiruneh Dinsa^{a*}, Taye Gudeta Beye^b

^a*Assistant Professor of TEFL in Jimma University, Jimma, P.O Box-581, Ethiopia*

^b*Lecturer of Literature in Jimma University, Jimma, P. O.Box 378, Ethiopia*

^a*Email: haaraandagne2004@gmail.com*

^b*Email: tayegude@yahoo.com*

Abstract

This research was aimed at investigating the challenges of teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in primary schools of the Oromiya National Regional State of Ethiopia. The study embraced four zones of the Regional State: Jimma, South West Showa, Ilu Abba Bor and Eastern Wollega. The participants of the study were teachers teaching English to the primary schools and their students. In order to collect data for the study, the researchers used questionnaire, focus group discussion and classroom observation. Comprehensive sampling was used to take the EFL teacher informants. Students who were involved in the FGD were taken purposively. In order to select the sample schools, the researchers used convenient sampling techniques. Mixed approach was used to analyse the data. Data from teachers' questionnaire was analysed quantitatively. Those from FGD and classroom observation were qualitatively analysed. The research revealed that teachers who were made to teach English at the lower primary classes where self-contained teaching policy is in use were not qualified as EFL teachers.

* Corresponding author.

This has become the cause of frustration and demotivation in the teachers' work. According to the research the main challenges of teaching EFL in the primary schools were teachers' lack of awareness about interactive teaching methods, lack of awareness about their roles in class as EFL teachers, lack of access to up-to-date information and materials on EFL teaching, the difficulty (burden) of self-contained class, shortage of refreshing trainings and workshop on English language teaching/methodologies, shortage of trainings on active learning/interactive language teaching strategies & student centred teaching approaches, large class (more than 85 in a class), absence of suitable conditions to implement student-centred approach, and the difficulty of the new textbook in use for both the teachers and the students. The research concluded that the EFL teachers were challenged with the gap of knowledge and skills they have in teaching EFL in relation to teaching methodologies. On the basis of the findings and the conclusions made, the researchers have forwarded the recommendations thought to be advisable to address the conditions.

Keywords: Challenges; EFL; self-contained; interactive teaching; awareness; student-centred.

1. Introduction

English language is the major medium of instruction and communication through which innovations, ideas, views, and opinions are transmitted from one person to another, institution to institution, and country to country [5,13,14,18]. This makes the knowledge of the language vital for people who are in the academic world and the world of work. EFL is a venue to access contemporary information at a global arena. Students in Ethiopia learn English as a foreign language for various purposes. One among their purposes is that EFL is a compulsory subject starting from the lower primary grade. The other reason is that EFL is the medium of instruction in secondary schools and in universities. In addition, students need to learn English as it is an international language and they think that the language is indispensable for their success in their carrier and at a global level and to widen their opportunities of getting jobs. They also learn EFL to succeed in passing classroom and national examination. In order for the students to succeed in achieving their ambitions in this regard, the EFL teachers are responsible to help their students by teaching them to overcome the existing challenges in the classrooms. The EFL teachers can do this by creating a conducive classroom environment whereby the students EFL learning can be realistic. English language teachers can succeed in this by making their EFL students feel that they are equally and positively valued and accepted and that the activities they do and the efforts they make in their learning process are recognized. One of the ways of doing this is through the proper implementation of the interactive student-centred approach in which the learning of EFL is related to the real life language use. In Ethiopian primary schools, the medium of instruction is the students' mother tongue [9]. According to the Ethiopian Education and training policy "cognizant of the pedagogical advantage of the child in learning in mother tongue and the rights of nationalities to promote the use of the languages, primary education will be given in nationality language" [9],[10]. Even though mother tongue is the medium of instruction, English as a foreign language (EFL) is taught as a compulsory subject starting from grade one onwards. Strengthening this thought, the policy states that English will be taught as a subject starting from grade one [10].

At the lower primary schools (grade 1 to 4), all subjects are taught by one teacher. This is called self-contained classroom and is managed by a single teacher. The teacher is supposed to teach the whole subjects, including

English, for four consecutive years. Despite their deficiencies of in English language, the teachers in the lower primary school are responsible to teach EFL with the other subjects given in the learners' L1. From grade 5 to 8 also all academic subject are taught in nationality language. What makes this 2nd cycle different from the 1st level is that academic subjects are taught by different teachers who are trained in specific fields. For instance, English language is taught by teachers who are trained as EFL professionals. Teachers in this specific cycle are supposed to teach their students by using the students' centred approach. Scholars state that the language teaching approach in which students are the centre of the learning process makes the teaching interactive and the class will enable teachers to develop learner autonomy. In relation to this, [19] reveals that the recent interest shown in learner-centredness in language teaching, apparent in concepts such as learner autonomy, self-directed learning, or syllabus negotiation, revolves around a redefinition of the role students can play in their learning of a language. This implies that interactive approach shifts the responsibility from teacher to students. Students learn to be self-reliant, autonomous and accountable for their own learning. In other words, the role played by students is more than the role of the EFL teacher in the student centred classroom.

Other scholars like [20,21] also pointed out that interactive class in which students are the centre of the learning process student groups together educational philosophies which emphasize the individual needs of learners, the role of individual experience, and the need to develop awareness, self-reflection, critical thinking, learner strategies, and other qualities and skills that are believed to be important for the learners to develop in the process of learning. In spite of its roles in developing autonomous learners, some researchers indicate that equipping the students with the necessary skills of involving in interactive/ student-centred class needs training as it may be difficult for them if they are not aware of it.

According to [11,19], it is vital to equip students with an additional task of developing their' awareness which is designed to help them deepen their understanding of language learning and develop their ability to play an active and self-directive role in their language study. In a similar token scholars like [22,12,2] reveal that learner training programmes help facilitate learning, especially for the 'self-directed' language learner. Learner training is the process of helping students to have thorough knowledge of the nature of language learning and to obtain the understanding and skills which are indispensable for the learners' need in order to pursue their learning goals in an informed and self- directive manner. Researchers emphasize the importance of interactive or student- centred classroom explaining that it is a remedy for overcoming the challenges of teaching EFL in contexts where English language is not a medium of instruction. They pinpoint that this approach encourages even the disinterested and inactive students to take part in the learning process. [27], for instance, claims that training students on learning in student centred classroom would benefit even the 'lazy' students, who might feel that they are doomed to failure in language learning due to their own laziness in the programme, by increasing their self-confidence and self-esteem of participating in class activities. Still it has been indicated that the utilization of communicative approach on the basis of student centred classroom helps teachers to overcome the challenges of teaching English as a foreign language in mother tongue medium of instruction context. Researchers contend that student centred classroom encourages EFL teachers to build up students' background knowledge and culture that their students bring to the classroom [31]. The schemata brought to class by students will be a resource to be utilized in EFL teaching in the situation where learners are the centre of the teaching-learning process.

The interactive approach which plays a fundamental role in students' success in EFL classrooms and it makes them aware that their EFL learning will be better when students are made to know their own goals. Therefore, interactive approach for language curriculum development shifts from what should be done in a course of study to what is specifically done by language teachers in their classes, through negotiation between teachers and learners in the planning, implementation and evaluation of language courses [7]. Reference [1] depicts that there are several approaches to EFL teaching/learning that are stated to be 'learner-centred'. However, this scholar gives emphasis to the three related to syllabus design, classroom activities and the idea of who decides what and how to learn. He indicated the classroom procedures employed by learner-centred approach as a 'healthy classroom'. According to Littlejohn, 'healthy classroom' is '... the classroom in which learners are active and where teacher-talking time (TTT) is reduced to a minimum. Thus, teachers spend considerable amounts of time devising tasks that require learners to work in groups, to do role plays, to fill in charts or grids, to give their personal opinions, and generally to engage in more oral work. These tasks have been devised particularly in relation to communicative approaches, since it is now believed that EFL teachers should provide activities that require learners to use the language for particular purpose [1].

2. Materials and Method

2.1. Statement of the Problem

Teaching EFL in schools in general and in primary schools in particular is vital for students' academic success in a wider spectrum. However, teachers in primary schools are often heard of complaining about the challenges of EFL teaching and explaining their hatred for the language. In addition, some self-contained (SC) class teachers ask their friends to teach English language on their behalf as they lack confidence about themselves. Besides, SC teachers use students' local language to teach English instead of encouraging learners to use English by making themselves a role model to them. In addition, English language teachers use the traditional teacher centred approaches where the teacher is a dominant figure in the teaching-learning process. The reason for the happening of this needs to be investigated. Furthermore, according to the way the teachers act in their classroom performance, one can question whether the teachers' attitude on their students and their teaching career is positive or negative.

The perception the teachers have about their own roles in the class and the attitude they have towards their students can also affect their performance. According to [28,32] the attitude possessed by the teachers about their students and their teaching has the power of affecting their classroom performance negatively or positively. Teachers who have warmth, empathy, sensitivity, enthusiasm, and humor regarding their profession can make themselves effective and successful teachers. Making the EFL classroom a conducive environment for the teaching-learning process is vital for the success of students. This requires the presence of teachers who are competent and who know the subject matter and the methodology to be utilized. In addition the EFL teachers' ability of teaching through the utilization of interactive language teaching/learning techniques in general and student centred approach in particular is mandatory. In classes where the EFL teachers are capable of implementing the teaching strategies which help the students to have active role in the learning process, the students' EFL skills will progress. In relation to this, it has been emphasized that teachers are expected to stress

on the communicative use of English by using English themselves in the classroom at the appropriate level of difficulty for their students. However, the current situation in the setting shows that even after learning EFL for more than ten years, starting from grade one, the EFL skills and abilities which the students possess is quite deplorable. In order to identify the root causes of these problems and to investigate the factors challenging the teaching of EFL in primary schools, conducting this study was found to be indispensable. To this end, the research addressed the following questions:

2.2. Objectives of the Research

The general objective of the study was to investigate the main challenges of teaching EFL in primary schools of the Oromiya National Regional State of Ethiopia. Specifically, the study intended:

- to identify the teachers' awareness about their roles and their practices in the EFL classes,
- to find out the root causes of the challenges of teaching EFL.
- to identify the extent to which the teachers are aware of the interactive teaching approach,
- to identify the dominant methods of EFL teaching employed by the teachers in their classes.

2.3. Research Questions

The study tried to address the following questions.

- What are the main challenges of teaching EFL in contexts where students' vernacular is the medium of instruction?
- How do the EFL teachers perceive their roles and the methodologies to be employed in their classroom?
- To what extent are the teachers aware of the interactive approach to teaching?
- What are the main EFL teaching methods used by the teachers?

2.4. Significance of the Study

This research is significant in that it would give awareness about the challenges of teaching EFL in classrooms where English is not the medium of instruction. The would also help to identify the root causes of the problems so as to make endeavour to indicate what would be advisable to done to overcome them. In addition, the study is expected to inform the EFL teachers in the primary schools the ways which could help them to scale up their classroom performance through the application of language teaching approaches which foster learner autonomy. The study would also give insights on what the EFL teaching looked like in the present day Ethiopian primary school classrooms. It would enable the EFL teachers to clearly define their roles in the EFL classrooms. Furthermore, the research would give awareness to responsible bodies regarding the vitality of updating EFL teachers' teaching skills and their knowledge of the useful language teaching methodologies in the era. It could also be used as a springboard for those who need to carry out investigations in a related area.

2.5. Limitations of the Study

The main limitation of the study was problems of getting the informants for FGD and classroom observations at the researchers' conveniences. This required the researcher to repeatedly go the schools to arrange schedules for this purpose. The main cause of this was the fact that the teachers were busy teaching, giving exams and involving in co-curricular activities.

3. Literature Review

In contexts like Ethiopia, where English language is taught as a foreign language, students do not have much exposure to the language outside of the classroom. In most cases, the students get introduced to the language in general when they join primary schools. As a result, teaching English to primary schools and Learning it has a variety of challenges [3]. In learning English as a foreign language, primary school students, whatever level they are at, face different challenges. In the first place, the students have to deal with a new language which is alien to them in a new situation. English as a new language may be perplexing to the students and they learn it in a new environment. These students are gradually getting used to being in a classroom rather than being at home with their parents or family [5]. The other challenge which the EFL learners face is that they should make sense of the new language and try to produce it in a very good way [6]. This necessitates numerous complicated processes in their minds as they struggle to choose the correct way to say something. The EFL students are also challenged with mastering the skills of reading and writing in English. Since the language is new to them and they find it in school for the first time in most cases, learning and practicing reading and writing skills is daunting for the learners [17]. In order to be able to help students succeed in learning EFL and to find the ways of overcoming the challenges, it of paramount importance for the EFL teachers to understand the challenges the students are facing. Identifying the challenges students encounter in learning English makes the teacher to prepare him/herself for the challenges which may be faced in the process of teaching the language. There are differences between teaching first language and second/foreign language to students. This can be a challenge for teachers who have been teaching first language or in contexts where first language is used as a medium instruction. Regarding the demarcation between the teaching of first language and second language (L2), researchers indicate that is learnt in much the same way as first language if it is learnt in the similar natural context or conditions. The clear demarcation is that children use the subconscious rules which they have used for the first language on the second language [23,33,29] Children are often challenged in second/foreign language learning when they wrongly use an L1 rule to L2 learning. This usually affects the teaching and learning of English in primary schools' EFL classrooms. Teaching/learning English as a foreign language in classroom is quite distinctive from learning first language or mother tongue in different ways. According to [21,31], learning/teaching EFL is different from learning mother tongue in the following ways.

- When children learn their mother tongue, they often hear it around them all the time because of their adequate exposure to the linguistic input in the environment. In the process of learning an EFL, the students hear it only for a few hours a week during their English class or when it is used as a medium of instruction to teach other academic subjects. EFL is not often heard by the students out of the classroom. In other words, EFL is confined to the classroom context and the exposure which students get outside of the

classroom in real life situation is very limited.

- Students learn their mother tongue naturally in contact with their friends, family and other adults. The students have the opportunity of freely communicating with each other and speak the language when they want to say something. They learn English as a foreign language in a distinctive way in the classroom. The opportunity of the students to use the language when they wish to say something is very limited. The students use English only when their teacher asks them a question.
- The other difference between the process of learning/teaching mother tongue and the EFL is that the students' chance of using English is limited because of the presence of a large number of students in a class. In large class, the teacher may not be able to reach all students to help them practice speaking English. In such situations, it is the teacher who often takes most of the talking time.
- In the process of learning their mother tongue, students are not taught the grammatical structure. They pick it unconsciously. In learning EFL in classroom; however, the teacher teaches the students grammatical rules of English.
- Students learn their mother tongue mostly by listening and speaking it and they utilize it in the informal contexts. When they learn EFL in the classroom context, the students start reading and writing and learning it formally. The process followed in learning mother tongue usually leads students to fluency of speaking the language.

Lack of awareness and adequate knowledge about the presence of discrepancy between the teaching of first language and foreign language can challenge EFL teachers in their classroom performance. Thus, they are obliged to prefer to utilize the students' first language while teaching English. Teachers who are experienced in teaching mother tongue usually think that translating English lessons to first language would hasten students' understanding of the content taught. This idea often comes from the EFL teachers' lack of confidence to fully rely on English.

Scholars indicate that using students' mother tongue (L1) in English class does more harm than good. In particular using first language translation every time in teaching English language deters students' efforts of using English in the class. Concerning this, [22,26] emphasizes the fact that it is very tempting to use the students' mother tongue in the classroom, especially if the EFL teacher is not confident in using English him/herself. According to this scholar, if a teacher uses the students' mother tongue in English class, the students understand what the teacher is saying and it is easy for the teacher to explain new English words and language to the students.

Teachers should resist the temptation of using L1 in the EFL class. If a teacher uses the students' mother tongue, the teacher is not helping the students to learn English. EFL teachers have to use the students' mother tongue only when it is indispensable, for instance, when the teacher is giving instructions or explanations that the students would otherwise fail to understand. EFL teachers should be strict in using English alone in teaching new English items.

Research in Language teaching and learning indicates that using English in language class allows students to hear more English and so learn useful everyday phrases beyond the textbook. This gives them the opportunity of

access and exposure to English language and helps them to develop their skills of using the language. In addition, using English in class provides an English language environment for the students to use in. In other words, it becomes the source of the linguistic input for the students. Besides to this, using English reveals to the students that English is used to communicate for variety of purposes. This encourages the students to make efforts to use English themselves. When the EFL teachers use English to in their classroom, the students will be enthused to use the language as their teacher does. In such a way students will be accustomed to thinking in English and not thinking first in their mother tongue and then translating into English.

In the EFL classroom, students mother tongue can be used one to give difficult instruction, to explain difficult new words to the students when they fail to understand it in English, to explain a complicated background point to a story the teacher is telling the students (for example, “The old lady has been living on her own for a long time because her husband is dead and her son is away in the army.”), and to elaborate something which the students meet in their textbook that is not familiar to them [26].

In addition to lack of knowledge about the difference between the teaching of L1 and foreign language, English teachers classroom performance can be influenced by variety of factors.

EFL teachers have a vital role to play in helping their students develop good command of English. In the first place they are supposed to make their classroom a conducive learning environment for their students. This may be possible provided that the teachers possess the necessary knowledge, skills and competence related to the subject matter they teach; English in our case. EFL teachers’ competence of teaching, in particular, plays a fundamental role to help them overcome the challenges which they encounter in the process of teaching English to primary school students.

EFL teachers teaching competence help them to identify what an effective EFL class should look like and what an effective EFL teacher does. According to [30] teachers’ competence is considered as a foundation for teachers to be effective in their career. These scholars emphasize that an EFL teacher who is effective and competent is expected have the necessary knowledge for teaching. It has also been revealed that EFL teachers’ competence and effectiveness in teaching their students is dependent on theories of education and practical classroom situations.

Teaching competence comprises of the knowledge, skills, beliefs, experiences or abilities of teaching the subject matter which the teacher has and is able to utilize in the teaching learning process [24].

On the basis of this thought, it is possible to say that EFL teachers’ competence is the teachers’ ability to teach his/her lesson in such a way that he can help the students develop the necessary linguistic competence.

The sources of teaching competence for EFL teachers are their understanding of educational theories of teaching and learning, courses they learn in teachers’ training colleges or universities, experience from teaching career during their actual work, and workshop, training or innovations [19]. In order to develop professionally, EFL teachers need to have access to these according to [19].

Scholars indicate that teachers experience and their classroom practice in general can directly or indirectly affect the quality of education. According to [4], for instance, quality of education can be affected by the roles played by teacher in three ways. These are the teacher as a person, the teachers as curriculum planner, and the teacher as instructor of a course.

The role of a teacher as a person is developing, changing and improving his experience in his/her walks of life. Furthermore, the role of a teacher is immense in the world of students as the students have closer contact with him/her on a daily basis [4]. It is possible to infer from this that the role played by teachers to affect the academic development of their students is of paramount importance.

When the role of a teacher as a curriculum planner is considered, according to [1,4], he/ she is accountable for developing his/her own curriculum. The content of the curriculum he/she develops and the coverage of the lessons/topics incorporated to be taught can directly affect the quality of education. According to [4], even if the teacher is not supposed to develop curriculum directly, the way he/she understands and implements the curriculum in the classroom can influence the quality of education. Reference [4] emphasizes that the planning and decision making role of the teacher in changing the curriculum from what was aimed by the developers or designers into what is actually put to practice in the classroom can affect the teaching learning process as a whole. [4] further elaborates that the other way in which the role of a classroom teacher can affect the quality of education is through his/her classroom instruction. A teacher's classroom instruction has to do with his actual classroom performances, his teaching methods, the efforts he/she makes to make the students the centre of the teaching- learning process, the strategies he/she employs to encourage students' involvement, the types of interactive activities he designs and uses to develop his/her students of using the language for function and etc. According to [4], classroom instruction can be done in various ways such as such as lecturing, demonstration, dramatization, debate, public speech, group or pair discussion, role-play interview, questioning, etc.

According to [4], EFL teachers can influence the quality of education positively or negatively. As has already been indicated, the teachers' influence on the quality of education can be observed in three different roles they play. These are teacher as a person, as curriculum planner, and as instructor. If a teacher is ineffective in any of these three domains, the quality of education will be negatively affected, whereas if the teacher is effective or stronger in these three roles, the quality of education will be better. [19], on the other hand, state that teachers need to have positive attitude, knowledge, and skills which are vital for the success of the teaching profession in order for effective teaching to be achieved. These scholars divide the three domains: attitude, knowledge and skills (AKS) into five main areas of competence for teachers to be effective in the teaching. These are attitude that fosters learning and genuine human relationships, knowledge of the subject matter to be taught, theoretical knowledge about learning and human behavior, personal practical knowledge, and skills of teaching that promote student learning.

In order to be successful in their teaching EFL teaches need to have a positive attitude towards their teaching and have good rapport with their students. EFL teachers need to possess warmth, empathy, sensitivity, enthusiasm, and humor in order to be effective teachers. The attitude which an individual possesses has the power of affecting the way he/she acts negatively or positively. This on the other hand can affect the way s/he

acts in his/her performances [19]. According to these scholars attitude which affect a teachers teaching behaviour can be divided into four types. These are the teacher's attitude towards himself /herself, the teacher's attitude towards his/her students, the teacher's attitude towards his/her co-workers and students' parents, the teacher's attitude towards the EFL and its teaching, the EFL teacher's level of knowledge of the subject matter to be taught, the EFL teachers knowledge of learning theory and human behaviour, and English teacher's practical and personal knowledge [28,3,4,34].

4. Methodology

In order to study the challenges of teaching EFL in primary schools of the Oromiya National Regional state of Ethiopia, the researchers utilized descriptive survey design.

4.1. Sample size and Sampling Techniques

In order to select sample schools from the four zones, the researchers employed convenient sampling technique. As the primary schools in the country as a whole were sparsely distributed and far from each other in most cases in different areas, the researchers took schools which were convenient to be reached. The primary schools in the sample districts of the zones were taken on the basis of their proximity and their accessibility to transportation services. Using this technique, the investigators took three 2nd cycle primary schools and three 1st cycle schools in the zones. In other words, the researchers took three 1st cycle and three 2nd cycle primary schools. Accordingly, the total number of schools which took part in the study from each zone was 6. This shows that the total number of sample schools which took part in the study from the 4 zones was 24. To take sample teacher informants from first cycle primary schools (grade 1- 4), the investigators used comprehensive sampling technique. This is because 1st cycle primary schools were the levels at which self- contained teaching approach had been employed. All academic subjects at this cycle were taught by a single teacher. The researchers took grade only 4 for the purpose of the study. In self-contained class, a single teacher handles the whole subjects including EFL. In the first cycle primary schools under consideration, the number of sections of grade 4 at a school was 10 in the morning and afternoon shifts (grade 4 A- 4E in the morning shift and grade 4 A - 4 E in the afternoon shift). Accordingly, the researchers took ten grade 4 teachers from one school. Since the number of sample 1st cycle schools from each zone was three, the total number was 12 from the four zones. On the basis of this, the number of teacher-informants who were involved from the 1st cycle primary schools was 120. From the levels in second cycle primary schools (grade 5-8), the researchers focused on grades 7 and 8. Among the EFL teachers teaching at this level, the researchers randomly took 40 teachers. From each zone, the researchers took ten EFL teachers of 2nd cycle primary schools at random among the total 15 teachers. On the whole the total number of teachers who participated in the study was 160, one hundred twenty from 1st cycle and 40 from 2nd cycle.

4.2. Data Collection Tools

In order to gather pertinent data for the research, the investigators employed questionnaire, classroom observation and focus group discussions

4.3. Data Analysis

In order to analyze the data, the researchers utilized mixed approach. Quantitative approach was used to analyze the data collected by using questionnaire. The SPSS software version 16.0 was used for these data. Frequency and percentage were used for this purpose. Data from focus group discussions and classroom observation were qualitatively analyzed.

4.4. Ethical considerations

Below are the researcher's ethical and moral principles and procedures followed in the process of research:

- Prior to beginning the data collection process, the researchers made the participants read a statement of informed consent and told them that they would participate at will and they could discontinue the process at any time.
- Clarification was given to the participants concerning the purpose of the data intended to be collected, and clear direction was given to them on how to provide the required information (how to fill the questionnaire, time arrangement for FGI and observation)

All data were stored in a secure location and all identifying information was removed so that anonymity and confidentiality would be guaranteed.

- The participants were informed that the data generated through questionnaire, focus group interview and observation, were used only for the purpose of the research.

5. Findings

5.1. Findings from the Questionnaire

In the following subsection, the result of the data gathered using questionnaire has been indicated.

As can be understood from table 1, the main challenges which EFL teachers faced in teaching English to primary school students were the difficulty (burden) of self-contained class, shortage of refreshing trainings and workshop on English language teaching/methodologies, lack of access to up-to date trainings on active learning/interactive language teaching strategies & student centred teaching approach, students' poor background in English Language learning, large number of students in a class, lack of awareness & suitable conditions to implement student-centred approach, students' lack of interest to learn English since they learn all other subjects their mother tongue, and problem/lack of experience in using the appropriate EFL teaching methodologies respectively. These factors respectively accounted for 91.9%, 79.4%, 76.2%, 75%, 67.5%, 61.2%, and 59.4% respectively. Among the factors which challenge the teaching of EFL, the most serious ones according to the data were teachers' teaching overload in self-contained class, EFL teachers' lack of opportunities to attend refreshing trainings/workshops and lack of access to up to date teaching materials and methods. The contributions of EFL teachers' opinion about English language at primary schools and the

students' wrong perceptions about the use of EFL is less as compared to the others in challenging the teaching of English language.

Table 1: Challenges to the Teaching of English Language

No	Item	challenges	to a very great extent		to a great extent		to some extent		Not at all		not sure		total	
			f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
1	To what extent do the following factors challenge the teaching of English language in your class/school?	Large number of students in a class	108	67.5	36	22.5	10	6.2	6	3.8	0	0	160	100
		Students' wrong understanding about the importance of English Language	85	53.1	46	28.8	13	8.1	15	9.4	1	0.6	160	100
		Lack of awareness & suitable conditions to implement student	98	61.2	38	23.8	16	10.0	7	4.4	1	0.6	160	100
		Lack of access to up-to date trainings on active learning/interactive language teaching strategies & student centred teaching approach	122	76.2	29	18.1	7	4.4	2	1.2	0	0	160	100
		shortage of refreshing trainings and workshop on English language teaching/methodology	127	79.4	26	16.2	4	2.5	2	1.2	1	0.6	160	100
		Students' poor background in English Language	120	75.0	27	16.9	8	5.0	4	2.5	1	0.6	160	100
		Lack of enough textbooks for students	82	51.2	27	16.9	21	13.1	22	13.8	8	5.0	160	100
		Problems of experience in using good teaching	95	59.4	39	24.4	15	9.4	9	5.6	2	1.2	160	100
		Students' lack of interest to learn English since all subjects are taught in	95	59.4	33	20.6	23	14.4	6	3.8	3	1.9	160	100
		The difficulty (burden) of self-contained class	147	91.9	8	5.0	4	2.5	0	0	1	.6	160	100
The teachers view that English language is not much important	65	40.6	29	18.1	33	20.6	21	13.1	12	7.5	160	100		

In order to improve their teaching skills and to develop professionally, teachers have to get support. One way of supporting them is through providing them with up to date information on the teaching of English language. This up-to-date information can be given to the EFL teachers through continuous trainings and workshops.

Creating opportunities for EFL teachers to get access to trainings help them to improve their teaching skills and to overcome the challenges they face in class [4]. According to the findings of the study, these vital issues are lacking and the teaching of EFL is under challenges. The findings from the data above imply that the EFL teachers were not discharging their responsibilities appropriately.

Table 2: The Role of EFL Teachers in English Class

No.	Item	EFL teachers' Roles	Very important		Important		Less important		Not Important		Total	
			f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
2	How important are the following to you in the teaching of English language?	Using the whole period to explain the lesson to my students	120	75	28	17.5	11	6.9	1	0.6	160	100
		Using the given time to teach/give lecture on the lesson of the day	142	88.8	14	8.8	1	0.6	3	1.9	160	100
		Encouraging students to listen to what I teach them attentively	139	86.9	15	9.4	3	1.9	3	1.9	160	100
		Encouraging the students to work together in pairs or in groups during the lesson	53	32.11	16	10	55	34.4	36	22.5	160	100
		Giving exercises and correcting students notebooks	28	17.5	5	3.1	51	31.9	76	47.5	160	100
		Encouraging the students to talk more that their teacher (take more time of speaking) &facilitating the lesson.	25	15.6	7	4.4	49	30.6	78	48.8	160	100
		creating favourable condition for students to use English Language during the lesson	2	1.2	17	10.6	135	84.4	6	3.8	160	100

The data in table 2 indicates the roles expected to be played by the EFL teachers to make their classroom an effective and conducive environment for English language teaching. As can be understood from the data in the table, most of the respondents indicated that using the given time to lecture on/ teach the lesson of the day, encouraging students to listen to what the teacher teaches attentively, and explaining the lesson to the students were the main roles played by the EFL teachers in their class. As indicated in the table 88.8 %, 86.9 %, and 75 % of the respondents revealed the vitality of these roles respectively. The roles indicated by the teachers to be preferable make the students passive listeners and the teacher becomes the main figure and source of knowledge from whom the students have to expect everything to be learned. In the process of using the whole period to explain the lesson of the day, for instance, the students do not have an active role to play except listening to that the teacher teaches. The finding from this data also showed that activities which were expected to make the

students the centre of the teaching-learning process were overlooked. EFL teachers can make their classes interactive by encouraging the students to participate in pair and group work. In such a situation the teacher is supposed to play the facilitative role in order that the students can get the opportunity of using English language for real life purpose like communication. In addition, the EFL teachers are expected to create a conducive situation for the students to use English language during the lesson instead of passively receiving the information provided by the classroom teacher. The data in the table revealed that the roles of EFL teachers which were useful for effective teaching of English language such as creating favourable condition for students to use English Language during the lesson , encouraging the students to take most of the talking time in the classrooms &facilitating the lesson, giving exercises and correcting students’ notebooks to give feedback, and encouraging the students to work together in pairs or in groups during the lesson respectively were given the least attention and were considered as less important and not important for the teachers in their class. From this it is possible to figure out that the EFL teachers awareness about their roles in the classroom was less.

Table 3: Level of EFL teachers’ Awareness about interactive teaching

No.	Items	Indicators of awareness About interactive teaching/student centred approach	Always		sometimes		Very rarely		Never at all		Not sure		Total	
			F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
3	How often do you ask your students to perform the following activities during the English lesson?	A, Doing exercises given in the book individually	107	66.9	40	25	10	6.2	3	1.9	0	0	160	100
		B, Listening to what you teach	124	77.5	31	19.4	5	3.1	0	0	0	0	160	100
		C, Giving responsibilities to each member of the group during group work	24	15	7	4.4	7	4.4	58	36.2	64	40	160	100
		D, Copying notes from the blackboard and taking notes by listening to the teacher	100	62.5	48	30	9	5.6	2	1.2	1	0.6	160	100
		E, Practicing dialogue and acting it out in pairs	11	6.9	7	4.4	9	5.6	75	46.9	58	36.2	160	100
		F, Telling them to be quite until they are sure of their understanding	114	71.2	29	18.1	2	1.2	5	3.1	10	6.2	160	100

The data in table 3 indicates that the EFL teachers used lecture method where students were supposed to listen passively. Among the respondents, 77.5% revealed that the EFL teachers often made their students listen attentively and carefully to what the teacher taught. According to the modern EFL teaching this method is traditional and discouraging for the students. Furthermore, the data indicated that more than half of the respondents, 71.2% , informed their students to be quite until the students were sure of their understanding of what the teacher had taught. In addition, 66.9% of the respondents indicated that the students were ordered to do the exercises provided in their textbooks on the individual basis. The other activity in which the teachers were involving was asking the students to copy notes from the black board and taking notes by listening to what their teachers said during the lecture. As can be seen from the data, activities which can help to foster the utilization of student centred –approach in class were disregarded. The table clearly indicated, for instance, that encouraging students to practice dialogue and to act it out in pairs, and giving responsibilities to each member of the group during group work were not given much attention. Among the respondents, 75% and 58% respectively pinpointed that they never used these techniques in their class. It is possible to understand from this that the EFL teachers’ awareness about the student - centred approach and its utilization was low. In other words, the EFL teachers’ lack of awareness about the appropriate teaching techniques to be used in classes is one of the challenges affecting the teaching of EFL in primary schools.

Table 4: EFL teaching methods employed by teachers in class

No	Item	EFL teaching methods	Always		Sometimes		Rarely		Never		Total	
			f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
4	How often do use the following when you teach English to your students?	Translating into Afan Oromo to help the students understand the lesson	129	80.6	30	18.8	1	0.6	0	0	160	100
		Explaining grammar rules and giving grammar exercises	121	75.6	38	23.8	1	0.6	0	0	160	100
		Reading passages before students and asking the students to read aloud in turns	138	86.2	19	11.9	3	1.9	0	0	160	100
		Explaining the contents of the lesson in students’ mother tongue	132	82.4	28	17.5	0	0	0	0	160	100
		Bringing activities related to students’ real life outside the class, telling them to discuss, practice and present in group/pair	12	7.5	8	5	47	29.4	93	58.1	160	100
		Giving pair/group presentation	8	5	15	9.4	61	38.1	76	47.5	160	100
		Telling them a story; asking them to discuss in group and to retell	8	5	8	5	24	15	120	75	160	100

As can be understood from the data in table 4, the dominant EFL teaching method employed by the English language teachers was translation. The teachers translated the content of the lesson to their students' mother tongue in the name of helping them to understand the lesson well. The data obviously revealed that 86.6% of the informants depended on L1 translation in the process of teaching EFL to their students. EFL teachers' complete reliance on translation to the students' mother tongue during teaching negatively affects students' motivation of practicing and using the target language. On the basis of this fact, [33] states that the use of mother tongue in the process of teaching English Language should be minimized. Various points were indicated by this scholar as reasons for this. The first reason is that there are syntactic differences between the target language (English) and the students' native language and this may mislead students. This is evident from the fact that the word order in the construction of English sentences follows the pattern subject-verb-object (SVO). In Afan Oromo, the language into which the EFL teachers in the research site translate English lessons to, sentence structure follows the pattern subject-object-verb (SOV). The other reason specified is that the use of mother tongue can become habit which is difficult to change later. If it becomes habit when students encounter some difficulty in using English which is the target language, they will shift to the mother language. As a result, students will be less exposed to the target language and they lack motivation to train themselves to use English Language. When teachers prioritize mother tongue translation in teaching English, the students will be deficient in developing comprehensible input, and this leads the students to less language learning. As a third reason it has been indicated that translating EFL lessons to students vernacular, most of the time, does not work. This is not only because of the syntactic differences between the target language and the students' first language but also the pragmatic differences between the two languages makes translation nonsense. Translation may be helpful when its aim is to give instruction and when infrequently used to clarify some words or concepts which are difficult to make clear in other ways. In addition, it had been found out that loud reading of the passages provided in students' textbooks by the teachers to make the students imitate their teachers was another method used by the teachers. Among the informants of the research, 75.6% pinpointed that in the process of teaching reading skills to their students, they read texts aloud before students so that the students can also do the same way as the teacher did. Even though the intention of the teachers in reading aloud and asking the students to stand up in turns and read aloud like their teachers was to teach reading skills, such activity contradicts the purpose of teaching reading and the techniques to be employed to develop students reading skills. Scholars indicate that reading is an individual activity and it should be done silently. They state that asking students to read aloud is needed when the aim of the reading is to teach pronunciation. Furthermore, in the process of reading comprehension skills development, reading aloud usually slows down students' reading speed [37]. The other EFL teaching method employed by the teachers according to the finding of this study was explanation of grammar rules and giving grammar exercises to the students. Despite the fact that grammar is important in English, the main focus of teaching it has to be enabling students to use grammar for communication. Teaching the students to memorize the rules of grammar without making them aware of its meaning and function in real life context has no value in developing the students' communicative competence. The information in this table on the whole depicts that the primary school EFL teachers have some gaps of knowledge in using the appropriate EFL teaching methods. The other dominant method of teaching EFL used by the teachers was explanation of grammar rules and giving grammar exercises. Equipping the students with grammar rules alone cannot guarantee the students' ability of using EFL for communication. As can be understood from the table,

75.6% of the respondents indicated that traditional rule oriented teaching of grammar was dominant in EFL classrooms. The data indicate that EFL teaching methods which could develop students language skills such as giving pair/group work, bringing activities related to students' real life outside the class, encouraging students to discuss, practice and present activities in group/pair, telling students a story; asking them to discuss in group and encouraging them to retell were disregarded. The result of the study in the table revealed that only 7.5% and 5% respectively of the respondents used these methods to teach EFL to their students.

5.2. Results from Focus Group Discussion

5.2.1. EFL Teachers' FGD Result

It was found out that there were various challenges to the teaching of English language. One of the main challenges specified by the participants was the fact that they did not have the opportunities of attending trainings and workshops to refresh their teaching skills and EFL knowledge. This had made the awareness which they were supposed to have about the modern EFL teaching techniques (e.g. using student-centred/interactive approach, using communicative language teaching methods, etc.) very low. The other challenge indicated by the participants of the FGD was shortage of teachers' guide book for the newly implemented textbooks. The result indicated that EFL textbooks for students and guide books for the teachers were not fairly distributed to schools. In addition, the result showed that teachers were not given any induction workshop before the newly prepared EFL textbooks were implemented.

The result of FGD with first cycle primary schools revealed that the teachers were not qualified to teach English language. Since a single teacher had to handle all subjects in self-contained class, he/she was made to teach English as well even though he/she does not have skills and knowledge necessary for it. The study also revealed that the EFL teachers are less awareness of interactive language teaching. The teachers used explanation of grammar rules, lecture methods and explaining the meaning of new vocabulary and the lesson to students' in the local language as the main methods of teaching.

The result indicated that the teachers had negative attitude towards English and its teachings. The teachers were not much interested in teaching English because of the little confidence they had. It was also found out that the teachers had knowledge and skill gap as they were not given supportive trainings and workshops. It was also indicated that students were not interested in learning English and their poor background was a cause of the teachers' demotivation.

The finding revealed that EFL teachers intended to cover the textbook in the given academic term. Since it was a must for a teacher to completely cover the book, they could not use additional materials to support their students and to improve their teaching. The finding of the study from the FGD clearly showed that the teachers were not well aware of their roles in the classroom and their attitude towards teaching English was not good.

It was indicated that the teachers did not use student-centred approach in their teaching because of the large number of students in the class and inconvenient classroom conditions like fixed seats. The other challenge indicated by the participants was the difficulty of the textbook. The EFL teachers revealed that the textbook in

use was difficult for their students and for them as well.

Regarding the causes of teachers' challenges in teaching EFL classes, the teachers also pinpointed that the trainings given to teachers at teachers training institutions are insufficient. In particular, the attention given to courses related to the methods of teaching English as a foreign language is very meagre.

In order to improve the current situations of English as a language teaching, the participants of the FGD emphasized that workshops and short trainings could help the teachers to improve their teaching skills.

5.2.2 Students' FGD Results

The intention of the FGD with the students was to identify how they were taught English and what they felt about learning English as a foreign language. In addition, the discussion was aimed at exploring the activities in which the students often involved during their English class. It also tried to identify the main problems the students faced in learning English language. Accordingly, it was found out that teachers explained English lessons in the students' mother tongue. It was indicated that the students preferred translation from the start and it is difficult for them to understand if the teacher used English only.

Regarding the their teachers utilization of student centred teaching approach in the English class, the students stated that they were not often asked to do in groups and in pairs, rather; the teacher taught them and they listened to him quietly. As a reason, they students explained that they do not know much English to exchange ideas with their friends. The students explained that they often discussed in Afan Oromo when their teacher gave them activities to be discussed in group.

The data revealed that the students could not understand the book and they often could not do the exercises in the textbooks due to its difficulty. They tried to do some of the exercises only when their teacher explained to them what they had to do in their mother tongue.

5.3. Results of the Classroom Observation

The classroom observation was conducted to see what was actually happening in the EFL classrooms. It had been found out that the EFL teachers were the dominant figure in the classroom. They were observed explaining the lesson of the day without involving the students. The teachers' were the sole speakers and the students were passive listeners of the teachers' long talk. Even though the role of a teacher in a class is expected to be facilitative, the EFL teachers observed did not seem to be aware of this. Furthermore, the students were not given the opportunity to reflect on the lesson of the day. Under normal circumstance where communicative or student-centred approach is implemented, EFL teachers are supposed to communicate the objective of their lesson to their students at the beginning of the lesson to raise the students' expectation and to show them what is expected of them at the end of the class. However, the teachers' actual classroom performance depicted that no effort was made to make the objectives of the lesson known to the students. The teachers made no efforts to check the students' understanding of the lesson taught. The EFL teachers' use of English to present the lesson was sporadic and the use of students' mother tongue was dominant in the name of helping the students to

understand well. The result also revealed that teaching methods which could make students the centre of the teaching-learning process was not employed by the teachers. The teachers were not organizing students into group or pair. Interactive teaching methods like group discussion, pair work, presentations, role play, acting out dialogue, etc. were not used. The teachers often wrote grammar notes to be copied down by the students without making sure that the students can use the grammar for communication. It was also found out that the EFL teachers could not make themselves role models to their students by using English as much as possible.

6. Discussions

Issues related to the problems of the teaching of English language in primary schools of Ethiopia are rife. Teachers are often heard of complaining about teaching English and revealing their detest to it in various ways. Surprisingly, experience indicated that some self-contained class teachers have reached the extent of asking (begging) their friends whom they think are better than them to teach English to their students on their behalf by leaving the class during the schedule of English language. Such problems and other related issues have become the subject of argument between teachers and school principals as most teachers usually refuse to teach English. Parents and community at large are also expressing their discontent about the level of their children's English language at all levels. Addressing this issue is thought to be good as it at least exposes the root causes of the challenges observed with regard to the teaching of EFL in primary schools.

The study indicated that there are various factors which challenged the teaching of English language to primary school students. Among the challenges were the teachers' lack of qualification to teach English. The teachers who were teaching English in first cycle primary schools (Grade 1-4), in particular, were not qualified English teachers. Since English is one of the subjects taught in self-contained class, the one teacher handling all subjects is supposed to teach it [9]. A self-contained classroom teacher had to teach English in spite of his/her knowledge gap. The training given to these teachers while they were in teacher training institutes (TEIs) was deficient. Lack of sound knowledge about the teaching of English often challenges the teachers in their classroom performance. The burden of self-contained class was another problem identified as a challenge. Since a teacher had to be in a class for the whole teaching time (4-6 hours in one shift), he/ she lacks time to focus on English as a single subject to prepare well for it. Because of the burden of teaching six different subjects in a day without leaving a class, the self-contained class teacher did not have time to prepare good English tasks to make their classes interactive. The other challenge was lack of access to up-to-date trainings on active learning/interactive language teaching strategies & student centred teaching approach.

The teachers had to teach the subject without being given any guidance or supportive training. They lack the necessary methodological and skills knowledge, but are made to handle the class in spite of everything. Large class (more than 80 in most cases) was another challenge of teaching English in the context under investigation. Teachers had to manage classes of more than 80 students, which is quite hectic. The other challenge was the teachers' problem/lack of experience in using the appropriate EFL teaching methodologies. Lack of confidence to teach had affected the teachers' interest to teach. This had made the teachers ignorant of their roles in the class. In addition, lack of knowledge, experience and skills of teaching English has made the teachers develop a negative attitude towards themselves, their students and the subject they were teaching, English. [19] & [9] state

that in order to be successful in their teaching, EFL teachers need to have a positive attitude towards their teaching and have good rapport with their students. They need to possess warmth, empathy, sensitivity, enthusiasm, and humor in order to be effective teachers.

The attitude which an individual possesses has the power of affecting the way he/she acts, negatively or positively. This on the other hand can affect the way s/he acts in his/her performances. The relationship or the interaction which a person is supposed to have with others is often influenced by his/her attitude [19]. According to scholars like [3,8,28,35,36,4] the attitude which teachers have towards themselves, their students, their colleagues and students' parents, the subject matter they teach affect their success in executing their teaching career effectively. In addition, studies indicate that experience and knowledge which teachers have about a subject, the theoretical knowledge which teachers possess about learning and human behaviour, their own personal and practical knowledge have the role to play in making their classroom performance successful or in deterring it [7,14,34,1,19]. Lack of adequate English textbooks for students & guide for teachers was also a challenge hampering the proper teaching English language to primary school students.

The EFL teachers had got the wrong perceptions about their roles in the classrooms. Because of this, they failed to lead their students on the right track of learning. The classrooms were completely dominated by the teachers and the students had a passive role. Real language teaching has to make students the centre of the process. Scholars indicate that more of the talking time should be taken by students, and teachers have to play the role of facilitation [12,13,14,15,24].

The teachers were not aware of teaching methods which make students active participants in the classroom. They fully relied on lecture and used translation to L1 as the main teaching method. The finding revealed that more than 87% of the EGL teachers in the schools used translation to L1 when they taught English. To make students successful language learners, teachers are expected to design tasks which can involve the students into real life activities [16,17,18,19].

English language is a classroom limited subject in Ethiopia in most cases. Because of this, students do not have much exposure to English unless they go to class. It was found out that the teaching of English was challenged by students' lack of interest for it in Ethiopian primary schools. They lack interest because of poor background and because of lack of access to it in a wider spectrum.

Concerning the students' lack of wider opportunity to learn English out of the classroom, [25] states the following ideas about the Ethiopian students' English skills:

Students do not possess sufficient English even to understand what they hear from their teachers or read in their textbooks, let alone to participate actively through their own speaking and writing. as a result of the inability of students to function

through English, the quality of teaching and learning in schools has been very adversely affected. At best, it means that mere rote learning often prevails, with no critical and creative participation of students, and little of even simple comprehension by them of what they told. And at worst it means that some – possibly many – students whose English is not sufficient even for rote-learning spend most of their class hours copying down notes that the teacher has written on the black-board, and transforming them in the process into complete nonsense. In such a situation it is no longer appropriate to call English a medium of instruction; rather it has become a medium of obstruction.

In spite of their great importance in increasing students' English skills, pair/group work, activities related to students' real life, role-play, encouraging students to discuss, practice and present activities in group/pair, telling students a story; asking them to discuss in group and encouraging them to retell, etc., were totally overlooked.

7. Conclusion and Recommendations

7.1. Conclusion

The study investigated the challenges of teaching English Language in primary schools of the Oromiya National Regional State of Ethiopia. It particularly focused on four zones of the region: Ilu Abba Bor, Jimma, South West Showa, and Eastern Wollega zones. The participants of the study were EFL teachers and students in first cycle (Grade 1-4) and second cycle (Grade 5-8) primary schools of the four zones. In order to collect data for the study, the researchers employed questionnaire, focus group discussions and classroom observation. Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions were drawn.

It was concluded that there were varieties of factors challenging the teaching of English in primary schools. The main challenges were caused by the teachers' lack of adequate knowledge and experience, lack of access to up-to-date trainings and workshops, lack of qualification to teach English, lack of awareness about interactive

approaches and other modern language teaching methods, large number of students in a class (more than 85 on average), teachers' lack of confidence and interest to teach English, teachers' lack of knowledge about their roles in the EFL classrooms, burden of self-contained classroom, the level of difficulty of the English language textbooks, unfair distribution of English textbooks and teachers' guide to different schools, difficulty of the EFL textbooks to the students and the teachers, absence of induction workshop for teachers when new books are prepared and implemented, and lack of professional support from the concerned body.

It was evident from the research that teachers in first cycle primary schools were made to teach English to their self-contained students without being qualified for it. This has become the cause of disinterest and frustration among the teachers of lower primary schools. Besides to this, lack of qualification to teach English and their obligations to teach it in self-contained class with other academic subjects have made the teachers develop negative attitude towards teaching the subject and towards their students.

The finding of the study also indicated that teachers who were teaching EFL to primary school students were not aware of their roles in the teaching process. As a result, they were the dominant figures and sole speakers while the students were passive listeners. The teachers made no effort to make their classroom an interactive class whereby students have active roles.

According to the study the concerned educational stake holders (Regional Educational Bureaus (RBEs), Zonal education offices, districts education offices, etc.) do not offer professional development support and refreshing trainings which can help the teachers to update themselves in their teaching career.

It was also concluded that lecture and translation of English lessons to students' L1 were the most frequently used teaching methods used by the teachers to teach English. The teachers fully depended on mother tongue translation during the English lesson.

The presence of skills gap, knowledge gap, lack of refreshing trainings, sufficient training/workshop were found to be the major causes of the challenges.

7.2. Recommendations

On the basis of the conclusions drawn from the study, the researchers forwarded the following recommendations.

- Suitable condition should be created by the concerned body (the regional education bureau, zonal education office, the districts etc.) to assign qualified English teachers to teach the language at all levels of the primary schools.
- The concerned body should support the teachers by offering opportunities of attending refreshing trainings and workshops which enable them to update their teaching skills and to fill their knowledge gaps.
- The zonal education offices should work in collaboration with Universities' and teacher training College ELICs and give the EFL teachers awareness raising trainings related to EFL teaching methods

and EFL teachers role in class.

- Schools should work in collaboration with the other stake holders to create conducive classroom situations where learners' involvement in interactive tasks will increase.
- The teachers should use strategies which encourage their students to practice using English in the class by making themselves a role model and by mitigating complete reliance on L1 translation.
- Curriculum design and textbook preparation should consider the students' and teachers' level of understanding, socio-cultural experience, needs, etc.
- Textbook introduction workshops/trainings (induction) should be organized and given by the concerned body to EFL teachers when new books are prepared before their implementation.
- Closer follow up should be made by the RBEs on the fair and balanced distribution of teaching materials to schools in different zones.

Acknowledgements

We would like to express our indebtedness to primary school teachers and students in Oromiya National regional State of Ethiopia. Our cordial appreciations also go to Zonal and district education officers and process owners in the research settings.

References

- [1] A. Littlejohn, *Learner Choice in Language Study*. EL T Journal Volume 39/4Oxford University Press.1985
- [2] A. Wenden, *Leaner Strategies for Leaner Autonomy*. Prentice Hall International.1991
- [3] C. Cullingford, *The Effective Teacher* .Great Britain London: Red wood Books.1995
- [4] C.M. Clark, *Thoughtful Teaching* . Great Britain, London: York House Typographic Ltd.1995
- [5] D. August and T. Shanahan, *Developing Literacy in second Language Learners: Report of the National Literacy Panel on Langaue Minority Children and Use*. NY: Rutledge.2006
- [6] D. Dansamo, *Problems in Using English as a Medium of Instruction in the Junior Secondary Schools of Ethiopia*, University of Nairobi.1981
- [7] D. Nunan.(ed), *Practical English Language Teaching*. McGraw Hill.2003
- [8] D. Wyse, *Becoming a Primary School Teacher*. U.S.A, Canada: Routhledge Falmer.2002
- [9] EETP (Education and Training Policy), Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, Addis Ababa, St. George Printing Press.1994
- [10] Federal Ministry of Education. *National Policy on Education* Lagos:NERDC Press.2004

- [11] G.D. Borich, *Effective Teaching Methods*. U.S.A, New York: Macmillan Publishing Company.1988
- [12] G. Ellis, and B. Sinclair, *Learning to Learn English: A Course in Learner Training*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.1989
- [13] G .Petty, *Teaching Today. A Practical Guide*: Nelson Thornes.2001
- [14] H. Brown, *Teaching by Principles: An Interactive Approach to Language Pedagogy* Longman/ Pearson Education, White Plains, New York.2001
- [15] H. Brown, *Strategies for Success: A practical Guide to Learning English*.White Plains,NY: Pearson Education.2002
- [16] H. H. Stern, *Issues and Options in Language Teaching*. Oxford: OUP.1992
- [17] H. Thompson, *Teaching Primary English*. Malaysia: Macmillan Publisher Limited.2001
- [18] I. Lee. ,*Supporting greater Autonomy in Language Learning*. EL T Journal Volume 52/4 Oxford University Press.1998
- [19] I. Tudor, *Learner-centredness as Language Education*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.1996
- [20] J.C. Richards and T. Rodgers, *Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching*. Second Edition. New York: Cambridge University Press.2001
- [21] J.C. Richards & T. Rodgers T., *Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching*. First Edition. New York: Cambridge University Press.1987
- [22] J. McDonough and C. Shaw, *Materials and Methods in EL T*. Oxford: Blackwell.2003
- [23] J.M. O'Malley and A.U. Chamot, *Learning strategies in second language acquisition*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 1990
- [24] J. Rogers, *Why Not Abandon English Teaching in the Elementary School*. In *Ethiopian Journal of Education*. 3, 1:24-31.1969
- [25] J. Stoddart, "The Use and Study of English in Ethiopian Schools". Addis Ababa.1986
- [26] K. Fedderholdt, "Using Diaries to Develop Language Learning Strategies" on Internet.1997
- [27] K. Lee, *English Language Education Policy and Language Ideologies in South Korea*. Working Papers in Educational Linguistics,24(2),41-56.2009

- [28] K. Ryan, & M. Cooper, *Those Who Can Teach*. U.S.A, Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co. 2004
- [29] L.W. Fillmore, "The language learner as an individual: Implications of research on individual differences for the ESL teacher", in Clark, M.; Handscombe, J. (eds.), *On TESOL '82*, Washington, DC, TESOL. 1982
- [30] M. Brundrett and P. Silcock, *Achieving Competence, Success and Excellence in Teaching*. U.S.A, Canada: Rotledge Falmer. 2002
- [31] M. Calderon, *Teaching English to English language Learners. Grade 6-12*. Thousand Oaks: CA Crown Press. 2007
- [32] R. Fisher, *Teaching Children to Learn*. United Kingdom, London: Nelson Thornes Ltd. 2001
- [33] S. Krashen, *Second Language Acquisition: Theory, Applications, and Some Conjectures*. Mexico: Cambridge University Press. 2013
- [34] T.L. Good and J.E. Brophy, *Looking in Classrooms*. U.S.A, New York: Pearson Education Inc. 2003
- [35] T. Negash, *The Crisis of Ethiopian Education: Some Implications for Nation Building*. Sweden: Uppsala Reports on Education. 1990
- [36] W. Bergquist & S. R. Phillips, *A Handbook for Faculty Development*. New York: Danville Press. 1981
- [37] W.L. Neuman, *Social Research Methods: Qualitative and Quantitative approaches*. 5th edition. Boston: Allyn and Bacon. 2003.