Investigating Factors Affecting Students' Interactions in Grade 11 English Classroom: The Case of Three Selected Secondary Schools in Tembaro Woreda, Ethiopia

Alemayehu Wochato[1]*# and Wondwosen Tesfamichael[2]†

[1]*Wolaita Sodo Univesity, Ethiopia.*
[2]*The Department of English Language and Literature, Wolaita Sodo Univesity, Ethiopia.*

Authors' contributions

This work was carried out in collaboration between both authors. Both authors read and approved the final manuscript.

Original Research Article

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate factors affecting students' interaction in grade 11 English classroom. The study was conducted at three selected secondary schools in Tembaro Woreda. It mainly focused on how students interact in English classroom, what does teachers' do to maximize students' level of interaction and what factors determine the level and nature of interaction. The subjects of this study were grade elven English language teachers and students in selected secondary schools. The data were gathered through questionnaire, interviews and classroom observations from 212 students, 6 English teachers and 12 observed classroom lessons. These data were analyzed using quantitative and qualitative method. The quantitative data were analyzed using percentage and qualitative data were analyzed using narrative description. The findings of this study revealed that English classroom interaction was not properly implemented due to teachers and students' lack interest and proper commitment to practice real interaction. Also the study identified that anxiety of foreign language, lack of motivation, lack of teachers' dedication,

#*TEFL, MA and PhD Candidate in ELT).*
†*Associate Professor, MA and Ph.D. in TEFL.*
*Corresponding author: E-mail: awochato@yahoo.com;

fear of students' to speak English language in the classroom, effect of classroom environment and shortage of instructional materials were the most common factors affecting students' interaction in English classroom. As a result, the extent of interaction found in English classroom was minimized. Finally, it is recommended that English language teachers should raise their students' awareness and use their maximum effort for encouraging students' interaction.

Keywords: Interaction; classroom; factors; classroom interaction.

ABBREVIATIONS

B Ed   : Bachelor of Education
M A   : Master of Arts
MOE   : Ministry of Education
SNNPR : Southern Nations Nationalities and Peoples Region
T1   : Teacher One
T2   : Teacher Two
T3   : Teacher Three
T4   : Teacher Four
T5   : Teacher Five
TEFL   : Teaching English as a Foreign Language
UNESCO : United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization

OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

Classroom : A place where students learn the various skills to develop their understanding.
Factor   : A circumstance, fact, or influence to a result or outcome.
Interaction : A process of communication or collaboration in joint activities.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Language is not just a communications code or a cognitive linguistic system (Fisher, 2013). According to Doernyei [1]. it will not come as a surprise to hear that language is a part of psychology. Language is at the center of everything human beings do, from the most prosaic to the most profound. As a result, being able to communicate in another language brings people much closer together and much faster (Fisher, 2013). As the fact of this, the interactive language teaching plays a vital role in developing and fostering people with the necessary attitude, motivation and driving force to become proficient in another language [2,3].

It is also difficult to manage students in promoting their English knowledge through speaking skills (interaction) in ELT classroom because teachers prefer to teach grammar of English language instead of teaching speaking skills (interactions). sir (2010) argued that many teachers feel that they cannot teach other skills, but they restrict their foreign language lessons to grammar. The mastery of speaking skills in English is a priority for many second or foreign language learners. Profound knowledge of oral strategies helps foreign language learners negotiate meaning and solve any communication problem Ellis [4].

In everyday conversation it takes a significant role in communicative language learning and also classroom interaction should take the same role to facilitate students' learning. In effective interaction learners have opportunity to practice English language appropriately which increases their language achievement [5,6-8]. Also the role of communicative language learning allows the students to involve actively in the learning process to promote active participation of students in English language learning.

Research on the whole-class interaction gained movement in the late 1960s, with the aims of evaluating the effectiveness of different methods in foreign language teaching and the educational process is as important focus as the learning outcome. The focus of classroom interaction studies shifted from evaluative to awareness-raising [9,10,11,12]. More attention has been paid to learner talk, examining not only the language produced by learners in response to the teacher, but also their communication strategies, and the relation between task types, learner interaction and opportunities for negotiation of meaning [13,14].

In the last few decades, the study of language learning focus has shifted to the interactive learning and the attention has been paid in social context. Vygotsky's [15] theory promotes learning contexts in to social interaction and language develops primarily from social interaction. Social interaction plays a fundamental role in the process of cognitive development [15]. Children are born into a social world, and learning occurs through interaction with other people. Knowledge

is socially constructed where individuals create meaningful learning through interactions with others. The value of interaction in children expands the concept of interaction into the classroom setting. Instruction in social skills is needed to ensure successful interaction [16].

Basically, English is also the medium of instruction for secondary and higher education in Ethiopia.

Hence, interaction is the collaborative exchange of thoughts, feelings or ideas between two or more people, leading to a mutual effect on each other. Malamah-Thomas [17] describes interaction as teachers and students or/and learner and learner produce a reciprocal effect up on each other through what they say and do. This effect is referred to interaction [18,19]. Rivers [20] describes that "through interaction, students can increase their language skills." Interaction leads to better learning and will activate learners' competence [21]. One of the main objectives of classroom interaction is creating condition for teaching learning to take place in some way. Its function is facilitating interaction usually structure like teachers' initiate, students' respond and teachers' feedback.

The term classroom interaction as the interaction between the teacher and learners, and among the learners in the classroom Carter and Nunan. This describes how the teachers and students in a classroom environment construct the classroom order through their interactions during a class time. The ways in which teachers interact with their students encouraged many researchers to study teacher–students interaction in the classroom [22,23].

In interaction, teachers and students work together to create the intellectual and practical activities that shape both the form and the content of the target language as well as the processes and outcomes of individual development. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to investigate factors that affect students' interaction in grade 11 English classroom in three selected secondary schools in Tembaro Woreda, Ethiopia.

1.2 Concept

1.2.1 Importance of Classroom Interaction

Classroom interaction is important in helping students to achieve their learning objectives. It also offers language practice and leaning opportunities. According to Albright, claims on the importance of classroom interaction in language learning studies, "Interaction is inherent in the very notion of classroom pedagogy itself" [24-27].

Classroom interaction will help learners to learn the target language easily and quickly [28]. In the classroom setting the types of interaction can be performed through different means. For example, different tasks may give rise to different patterns of interaction. Interaction could take a more important role to promote students ability. Also interaction is believed to contribute to learners' language development [29,30]. Finally, it is important to note the interaction between the students and the teachers in class is the necessary and valuable part of teaching and learning process.

1.2.2 Organization of Classroom Interaction

The organization of classroom interaction is categorized into three broad dimensions of teaching that are linked to student social development: emotional support, classroom organization, and instructional support [31] a) Emotional support- the ways teachers help children develop warm, supportive relationships, experience enjoyment and excitement about learning, feel comfortable in the classroom, and experience appropriate levels of autonomy or independence. Like: positive climate, negative climate, teacher sensitivity [32].

b) Classroom organization- the ways teachers help children develop skills to regulate their own behavior, get the most learning out of each school day, and maintain interest in learning activities such as behavior management, productivity and instructional learning formats [33].

c) Instructional support- the ways in which teachers effectively support students' cognitive development and language growth by engaging them to develop concept, providing quality feedback and language modeling.

1.2.3 Teachers- Students Interaction

In traditional classes teachers dominated method in the teaching learning process is managed and controlled by the teacher who holds power and responsibility in class. Teachers and students should construct interaction during a class time together. If teachers and students work cooperatively in classroom interaction, the

obtained results will surely improve students' interaction. According to Baker [31] writes that "lasting change does not result from plans, blueprints, and events; rather change occurs through interaction of participants". Strong teacher-student relationships may be one of the most important environmental factors in changing a child's educational path.

Moreover, interaction is the part of any language classroom practice. Sunderland, [33] classified classroom practices into three different categories: teacher-to-student discourse in whole class work, student-to-teacher discourse in whole class work, and learner discourse in pair and group work. The interaction between teachers and students was coded as either academic or behavioral feedback in nature. Academic feedback refers the teachers make comment to a student in reference to an academic subject. Whereas, behavioral feedback refers the teachers make comment to students in reference to the students' particular behavior [34,35].

Finally, it is crucial that the interaction should be subjected carefully that its implication for classroom practice explored in the context of actual classrooms. In the process of fulfilling such kind of tasks the learners have to use language for real communication, which increases their interaction.

1.2.4 Interactive teaching

Currently the interactive way of teaching learning system is highly encouraged by different scholars [36].

However, teachers might think that interactive teaching is a small part of the classroom teaching along the other activities, and interactive teaching requires some extra time which is a wrong conception, but it includes sufficient time to have meaningful discussions around student activities and arrive at fully realized responses. Also teachers sometimes face some problems in engaging students in the class activities. The type and quantity of interactions in classroom vary from one class to another.

Classes with an emphasis on lecture are effective for delivering large volumes of content in limited time, but it provide few opportunities for students-teachers interaction. While this teaching method may appeal to a few highly motivated students, it can often leave much of the class

disengaged from the content. Such classes are often characterized by teachers who take the first shout-out answers to questions or answer their own questions quickly. Teachers are involved as a resource to provide information.

In contrast, more student-centered or interactive classes provide adequate time during activities for students to think about concepts, receive feedback, and/or participate in discussions that may guide the direction of the lesson. Some activities may allow students freedom to engage in their own learning.

Finally, there is certain need of mutual understanding of an effective interaction among the teachers and the students. Teaching-learning is a two-way process in which teaching is the stimulus and learning is the response. As a result, teachers should act as facilitators for building this effective interaction so that interactive teaching comes more into practice. In this traditional approach, teachers take much of students' classroom talk time. Teachers and students' responses and classroom observation results show that teachers use most of students' class talk time. Consequently, students have no any chance to practice interaction.

1.2.5 Interactive learning

Interactive Learning is a pedagogical approach that incorporates social networking and urban computing into course design and delivery. Interactive Learning has evolved out of the hyper-growth in the use of digital technology and virtual communication, particularly by students. The interactive learning is referring to totally learner-centered approaches which are carefully designed to motivate students to learn and gives more responsibility to the students for their own learning.Students' learning takes place in a high quality when they actively interact with their teachers and classmate. In the classroom environment the learners learn not only from taking part in interaction but from listening to student talk, teacher talk, and teacher-student interaction. Through this process the learners can get input and expand their interaction indirectly. In this case listening can be viewed as indirect participation.

Teaching and learning process involves interaction between teacher and students as channels to achieve its objectives. Teachers should have a goal-oriented design to make progress in the student's learning. The teacher is

the facilitator of learning who provides the conditions for effective learning and who seeks to meet the needs and interests of the learners. Learning will occur only when learners react favorably to the environment stimuli. Allwright suggested that the investigation of what individual learners claim to have learned from the interactive classroom events which have just proceeded. Therefore, teachers and the interactive methodology are the two forms of reinforcement for the students' interaction.

1.3 Factors Affecting Students' Interaction

1.3.1 Foreign language anxiety

Anxiety is a state of unpleasant emotion or tension and fear resulting that is experienced in learning language [37]. When learning English as a foreign language has become increasingly concerned with a foreign language anxiety in education. Many studies have been conducted to investigate the effects of foreign language anxiety on a person's ability to learn a foreign language (see, Bailey1983; Horwitz, et al. [38] Gardner, [39]. Onwuegbuzie, Bailey & Daley, 1999;). It is generally agreed upon that foreign language anxiety is a complex phenomenon. Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope provided that foreign language anxiety is not simply the transfer of anxiety from one domain to another, but rather a distinct complex of self- perceptions, beliefs, feelings, and behaviors related to classroom language learning arising from the uniqueness of the language learning process [40,41].

1.3.2 Motivation

In the last decade, motivation has attracted more attention than any other factor in language research studies. In 1990s, in particular show an explosion of interest in the role motivation played in language learning. The main purpose of motivation in research was to predict that learners would succeed. In broad terms, motivation is responsible for why people decide to do something; how long they are willing to sustain the activity; how hard they are going to pursue it [42].

Interaction gives learners the opportunity to use language successfully and to measure their progress which in turn should lead to an increase in motivation. The effort learners were prepared to make to learn a language and their persistence in learning. Therefore, motivation is a

fundamental aspect to promote student interaction and for successful learning.

1.3.3 Lack of teachers' effectiveness

Teachers' effectiveness indicates the teachers' knowledge of subject matter and mastery of pedagogical skill which create positive effect on students' interaction. Effective teachers are basic elements for enhancing student's interaction. Moreover, they are highly committed and take care about their students and they need supportive working conditions to maintain these attitudes [43].

Therefore, teachers of English who are assigned to teach English are expected to explain, communicate with students, and question them effectively and respond fully to their questions using the English language. Whereas, work content factors are belong to the work itself. Content variables are the crucial factor in motivating teachers to high levels of performance. They include opportunities for professional development, recognition, challenging and varied work, increased responsibility, achievement, empowerment, and authority [44].

So that, every educational system should make great efforts to attract qualified teachers to the profession and to provide them with the best possible working conditions and incentives that make them to satisfy their students need. This plays its own role in encouraging up students' interaction. Therefore, teachers ought to approach their students in providing professional support and maximum opportunity to students during classroom interaction.

Generally, to improve the classroom interaction of the students the following issues should be carefully revised as the scholars [45-50]: Gender biases, fear to speak English language, school facilities, Effect of classroom environment, shortage of instructional materials [51,52,53].

1.4 Statement of the Problem

In secondary schools almost all subjects are delivered in English and also the classroom interaction should be done in English. Since the teachers and the students are not used to communicate and explain in English, the interaction might be affected by different problems.

One of the basic problems of English classroom interaction in selected secondary schools is

teachers' lack of commitment to create conductive atmosphere for their learners. English teachers may not perform the roles expected greatly from them. They lack commitment to create interactive way for their learners and to have enough time to help them in interaction. Sometimes they face some problems in engaging students in the class activities. Teachers are not playing crucial role for enhancing interaction in determining the way for their learners [54].

Also within long experience and careful personal observation it has been seen that most students are less willing to present in front of the class. It is a great challenge for students to express their idea appropriately and efficiently using the language. So that students at selected secondary schools did not perform interaction [55].

There are many locally conducted researches with regard to classroom interaction which show that students after learning English from elementary to secondary schools master only the language systems. That is, they are not provided with opportunities to practice the different ways of interaction in English classroom. For example, research conducted by Meseret [56] on "Classroom interactional implication" shows that classroom interaction is not successfully implemented. On the other hand, Sisay [57] studied classroom interaction and its influence in English class. Sisay's finding shows that the classroom interaction has an influence on the development of students' interaction.

In the class more emphasis is given for grammar exercise and teacher controlled methods which inhabit students from interaction.

Moreover, Melaku [58] studied on implications of classroom interaction. The finding of his study revealed that the performance of interaction in English classroom is generally less to meet the demanded goal that the classroom level requires. Most students do not understand the proper role expected from them. These studies focus on the implementation of students' classroom interaction in English classroom. As a result, the researchers were motivated to investigate the implementation of students' classroom interaction.

Basically, the present study focuses on the investigating factors that affect students' interaction in English classroom. The research finding has relation with its context or area of the study, problem on students' classroom interaction in one area may not exactly the same with other area. Context includes the environment and conditions in which the study takes place as well as the culture of the participants and location. Also it may vary based on time and place.

Furthermore, the reason that made the researcher to focus on studying factors affecting students' interaction in English classroom was researcher experience as a school teacher. In this case the researcher experience is as a good starting point for this study. When the researcher had been teaching English for grade 11 students at Mudulla secondary and preparatory school for years, he recognized that in English classroom students' interaction was minimized or below the required target. Some students sat passively in the class and others were interacting to some extent while the teacher was teaching English in classroom.

Therefore, the practical experience about students' interaction mainly motivated the researcher to choose this research topic and personally interested to learn more about students' interaction in English classroom is essential. Hence, the area needs further research in depth. Concerning this point, there seems a gap between what ought to be and what exists in reality to bring in the intended outcomes of the students' interaction that could be because of different factors.

1.5 Significance of the Study

This study would help the teachers to maximize students' level of interaction, to use as reference for their performance and to enhance the quality of education being practiced in their schools. In addition, it would provide for schools to have relevant documents to initiate students in classroom interaction. Moreover, the study could indicate the gap between what the intended outcomes were and what exists in reality. So that educational administrative bodies of different level would take corrective measures to fill the identified gaps. Finally, this study would serve as starting point for other researchers who are interested to study in the area to use as a reference material.

1.6 Objectives of the Study

1.6.1 General objective of the study

The general objective of this study is to investigate factors affecting students' interaction

in grade 11 English classroom in selected secondary schools.

1.6.2 The specific objectives

This study specifically aimed to:

1. Examine the quality of students' interaction in English classroom.
2. Examine quality of English teachers' interaction with their students.
3. Find the factors that determine the level and nature of interaction.
4. Investigate what teachers do to maximize students' level of interaction in selected schools.

1.7 Basic Research Questions

The study was conducted to find answer to the following basic research questions.

1. How actively do students interact in English classroom?
2. How do English teachers interact with their students?
3. What factors determine the level and nature of interaction?
4. What teachers do to maximize students' level of interaction in selected schools?

1.8 Limitation of the Study

This study had some limitations. Some respondents might be unwilling to give necessary data due to lack of information. Other limitations were lack of well-organized documents and reference materials to get on time, and less experience of research study. Moreover, shortage of money and time were also other challenges.

2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

2.1 Research Design

The study was planned to investigate factors affecting students' interaction in English classroom. For the purpose of this study mixed method design was used. Recently, research approaches have become more flexible in their application of methods mixed-methods being more acceptable and common. As Creswell [59] a mixed-methods approach to research is one that involves gathering both numeric information (e.g., on instruments) as well as text information (e.g., on interviews) so that the final data base

represents both quantitative and qualitative information.

2.2 Population of the Study

The target population of this study was the grade 11 students and English teachers at three selected secondary schools in Tembaro Woreda in SNNP Region, Ethiopia.

2.3 Sample Size and Sampling Techniques

For this study the researcher used three secondary schools from Tembaro Woreda. From total 882 grade 11 students of three selected secondary schools 212 students as sample population were selected by considering 24% of the population for the quantitative data collection. Then, the researcher took 6 English teachers who were then (2021/22) teaching English language in grade 11 at these schools.

The students were selected by simple random sampling method or a technique that provides equal opportunities for students to participant whereas; teachers were selected by using non-probability sampling or available sampling technique. The researcher used all grade 11 English teachers in those schools, who were currently (2021/22) teaching English, selected purposively for interview, because they were five or fewer in number to manage.

2.4 Instruments of Data Collection

For collecting relevant information on students' interaction the researcher used questionnaire, interview and observation. These data gathering tools were used to obtain information from grade 11 students and English teachers, and to examine students' interaction in English classroom.

2.4.1 Observation

Observation is used to gather qualitative data. It is significant in classroom research for collecting genuine and pertinent data from teachers' and students' behavior in the actual setting. Researchers employed observation suitable or appropriate in educational research [60] Observation was considered as appropriate for the study because what the teachers and the students do in the class when the researcher physically presents to see an event take place during interaction in the class. Thus, the study simply examined the pattern of interaction.

The purpose of observation in this study was to check whether the respondents' response was the same with what was going on in the class during interaction. Hence, in this research study formal observation was employed. To gather the information, five randomly selected classes were observed two times each. That means ten observations were made in five classes. The data collected were based on the requirement of the classroom observation checklist. During the classroom observation to overcome the problem in the actual classroom practice, the researcher registered events related to students' interaction and teachers' activities to minimize students' interaction.

2.4.2 Questionnaires

Questionnaire is widely used in education research to obtain certain information. To collect the information from students the researcher used closed-ended questionnaires. When the researcher was preparing the questionnaires for students he used limited items in order to avoid boringness. The major concern of the questionnaires was teachers-student interaction related factors that affect students' interaction.

During the time of data collecting through questionnaires the participants of the study were informed that they have the right to participate voluntarily. The questionnaires were distributed to the respondents for the actual work of the study and returned back from the sample population. Best and Kahn [61] indicate that both kind of items can be used in questionnaires.

2.4.3 Interview

Interview was used as one of the data gathering tools to get the necessary data from grade 11 English teachers. The main purpose of the interview was to cross check information from other sources and to obtain data not revealed by another instruments for data collection. Best and Kahn [61] stated that people tend to be more interested to talk than to write; hence, they are likely to provide detailed information when they are asked orally. Such detailed information could be gathered through interview. The data collected through interview were qualitative data.

According to Kvale the interview helps to understand the world from the subjects' point of view, to unfold [to open] the meaning of people's experiences. It involves personal interrelations between the interviewer and informant, and the knowledge understanding that results from their dialogue and interaction. The researcher

organized the interview plan depending on the willingness of the teachers and it was conducted out of teachers' school time. The interview questions were designed to obtain the necessary information about factors affecting students' interaction and how English teachers manage to overcome the problem in the actual classroom practice.

According to Selinger and Shohamy [62] the use of interview as a data collecting instrument permits a level of in-depth information, free responses, and flexibility that cannot be attained by other procedures. Interview was held with five purposively selected teachers. There were four basic guiding questions. These are: how do you feel about students' interaction in your English classroom, how often do you employ pair or group discussion to promote students' interaction, what factors affecting students' interaction and what improvements do you think should be made to solve the problems. These questions help the researcher to explore detailed information from teachers'.

Therefore, the instrument was helping the researcher to answer the question what strategies the target group used to minimize interaction in English classroom.

2.5 Data Collection Procedures

First the questionnaire, interview and observation checklist were prepared. Then, participants were selected at random in accordance with the samplingsize mentioned above. The purpose and procedure of the study was explained.

During the time of data collection, the participants of the study were informed that they have the right to participate voluntarily and not being forced to participate. After this, questionnaire was distributed to the respondents for the actual work of the study and returned back from the sample population. Also the researcher used interview and observation. Finally, the researcher carefully examined all the collected data and unclear statements were corrected before the actual usage.

2.6 Method of Data Analysis

The data obtained from the questionnaire, interview and observation were analyzed using different methods based on the specific nature of the data. The quantitative data obtained through close-ended questionnaires was edited and categorized in the tables. Then, qualitative data

gathered through, interview and observation were analyzed using narrative description. Qualitative method helps to study things in their natural setting or situation. It is mostly associated with words, language and personal experiences to understand the human experience in social context using open-ended questions. Finally, data was summarized to reach conclusion and for certain recommendations.

3. DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

This part mainly deals with the presentation and analysis of the data that were collected for the study. The description of the participants, the analysis of data obtained through the students questionnaire, classroom observation checklist and teachers' interview are presented and analyzed in the following sections.

3.1 Description of the Participants

As indicated in Table 1, for this study the researcher used three secondary schools from Tembaro Woreda. From total 882grade 11 students 212 students as sample population were selected by considering 24% of the population for the quantitative data collection. Then, the researcher took 6 English teachers who were currently (2021/22) academic year teaching English language in grade 11 at these schools.

3.2 The Analysis of Data Obtained through the Students Questionnaires

The responses of students about their perception and factors affecting their interaction in English classroom are presented using the table. This part deals with various factors that affect students' interaction in English classroom.

The students' questionnaire contained factors are grouped under three categories. These are overall classroom tasks, teacher role and students' activities that affect students' interaction. Therefore, in this section the responses obtained through the students' questionnaire are analyzed and presented using the tables.

To begin with, Table 2 the result of item 1 indicates 63.5% of the respondents agreed and strongly agreed that there were interactive tasks or activities that English lesson involve or the activities were found to be interactive. Similarly, the observation results also showed that 70% of observed classes there are interactive tasks or activities that English lesson involves. However, this does not mean that every activity is properly designed and implemented in the way it involves all students in the classroom.

Table 1. Description of Teachers and Student participants

No	Secondary Schools	No, Sections	Grade11 English Teachers	Grade 11 Total Students			24% of Sample Students		
				Male	Female	Total	Male %	Female %	Total %
1	Mudulla	12	3	251	265	516	60.24	63.6	123.83
2	Keleta	6	2	125	104	229	30	24.96	54.96
3	Ambukuna	3	1	80	57	137	19.2	13.68	32.88
Total		*21*	*6*	*456*	*426*	*882*	*109*	*101*	*212*

Table 2. Overall classroom tasks in students' questionnaire

No	Items	SA	A	UN	D	SD
		%	%	%	%	%
1	English classroom lesson involves interactive tasks.	29.6	33.9	7.8	23.5	5.2
2	Classroom interactive tasks invite all students to interact.	20.8	9.6	-	47	22.6
3	Interactive tasks are helpful to promote students' interaction.	45.2	38.3	-	12.2	4.3
4	There are sufficient instructional materials.	1.7	14.8	1.7	44.4	37.4
5	There is enough time for all students to take part in interaction.	13	15.7	-	36.5	34.8

Ranking key: SA =Strongly Agree, A= Agree, UN=Undecided, D=Disagree and SD= Strongly Disagree

Item 2 show that only 30.4% of the respondents agreed with the statement that classroom interactive tasks invite all students to interact. The majority of the respondents disagreed. This means the classroom interactive tasks not invite all students to interact.

Likewise, it is also presented in observation results show that 60% of observed classes the classroom interactive tasks were not inviting all students to interact.

Another result of item 3 shows that 83.5% of the respondents were agreed and strongly agree with the given statement that interactive tasks are helpful to promote students' interaction. The respondents have shown their strong support to the idea. On the other hand, the result of item 4 indicates that 81.8% of respondents' disagree and strongly disagree with the given statement. Besides, classroom observation also revealed that 90% of the observed classes there were no sufficient instructional materials in the schools. Therefore, this indicates that the learning environment is not conducive for the students to interact.

Regarding item 5 the result shows that 71.3% of respondents' disagree. This indicates there is not enough time for all students to take part in interactive activities. Moreover, it is also showed in observation results that80%observed classes; the given time is not enough for all students to complete activities. Importance of giving enough time has been stated that students need time to think about the language they are learning and see what its linguistic system looks like [63].

Teachers have many roles to promote interaction in English classroom. However, the result of Table 3 item 1 shows that 67.8% of respondents' disagree with the given statement. Thus, the data

indicate that the majority of language teachers were not trying to help their students to engage in interaction as believing that students are not interested to take part in interaction. Similarly, the observation results also showed that 70% of the observed classes, the teacher have did not try to use all possibilities to involve or engage all students to take part in interaction.

Therefore, the teachers were not played sufficient role or not tried to use all possibilities to engage all students to take part in English classroom interaction. Also students were not encouraged to interact.

Regarding item 2 the result indicates that 71.3% of respondents' agree with idea that teacher gives pair or group activities for the students to interact. However, the teacher did not give enough time for pair or group activities that the students to interact each other. The time ended before more than half of group members contributed their idea to their group. This means the discussion carried out by teacher-centered in the whole class.

Another result of item 3 reveals that 64.4% of respondents' agree the teacher give more attention or treatment for male students in interaction. The other similar point which is raised under item 4 was 69.5% respondents' disagree that teachers did not give more attention or treatment for female students in interaction. The students' interaction would be affected by teachers' treatment. It was practically observed in the classroom interaction. As O'Gara and Kendall (1996) reported that males and females students receive different treatment from their teachers. Therefore, the results of the two opposing statements are found to be the same and support each other.

Table 3. Teachers' role in students' questionnaire

No	Items	SA	A	UN	D	SD
		%	%	%	%	%
1	Teacher tries to use different possibilities for all students to take part in interaction.	15.7	15.7	0. 86	52.1	15.7
2	Teacher gives pair or group activities for the students to interact.	44.4	26.1	-	10.4	19.1
3	Teacher gives more attention or treatment for male students in interaction.	39.2	25.2	1.7	12.2	21.7
4	Teacher gives more attention or treatment for female students in interaction.	9.6	20	0.86	42.6	26.95
5	Teacher focuses only on active students when implementing interaction.	37.4	47	-	5.2	10.4

Regarding item 5 the result show that, 84.4% of the students responded that they agree and strongly agree in the given statement that English teachers focus only on active students when implementing interaction rather than giving chance for all students. Active or voluntary students were given special attention by their language teachers during interaction. Similarly, the data from the observation result revealed that teachers frequently focus on active students.

Because they simply predict that most of the students don't want to interact in the classroom. On the other hand, it is also possible to infer that the English teachers don't allow students to learn among themselves to develop their interaction. Also performance is reduced due to fear of speaking English.

The result of Table 4 item 1 indicates that 75.7% of respondents' disagree with the given statement that most of the students are not interested to involve in classroom interaction.

Also the classroom observation result indicates that the students lack interest in performing interaction. Regarding item 2 the result showed that 74.7 % of the respondents disagree that students do not use English while they carry out interaction. The result of item 3 shows that 65.5% of respondents' agree that students prefer to use L1 during pair or group interaction.

Moreover, in the observation result revealed that 80% of the observed classes' students prefer to use L1 during pair or group interaction. Also the students were not encouraged to use the target language in their group discussion.

On the other hand, the result of item 4 indicates that 64.2% of respondents' agree with the raised idea that students interact more freely with each other. The majority of the students' agree with the concept. Because they know each other more when they work together and strengthen their friendly relationship. On the contrary, the result of item 5 shows that 70.4% of respondents' disagreed and strongly disagreed that students not interact more freely with their teacher. The same result was also presented in the classroom observation results. Therefore, students' perception of the friendliness of their peers contributed to how often they were willing to speak in the class.

The students' responses of item 6 show that 69.6 % of them agree to the idea that students often feel shy and fearful to speak English in the classroom. Besides, the classroom observation result show that 80% of the observed classes, students often feel shy and fearful to speak in English even with their classmates. Most of the students do not interact or their performance is reduced due to fear of speaking English. Also teachers of English who are assigned to teach English are expected to explain, communicate with students, and question them effectively and respond fully to their questions using the English language [64].

3.3 The Analysis of Data Obtained through Classroom Observations

In this section, the data obtained through classroom observation would be presented and analyzed. To gather the information, five randomly selected classes were observed two times each. That means ten observations were made in five classes. The data collected were based on the requirement of the classroom observation checklist. The results of observed classes were added up and presented in the following tables.

Table 4. Students' activities in students' questionnaire

No	Items	SA	A	UN	D	SD
		%	%	%	%	%
1	All students are interested to involve in classroom interaction.	11.3	11.3	1.7	49.6	26.1
2	Students use only English in classroom interaction.	7.83	15.7	1.7	52.17	22.6
3	Students prefer to use L1 during pair or group interaction	33	32.2	1.7	15.7	17.4
4	Students interact more freely with each other.	29.7	36.52	-	13.08	21.7
5	Students interact more freely with their teacher.	14..8	13.9	0.86	39.13	31.3
6	Students often feel shy and fearful to speak in English even with their classmates.	33.9	35..7	0.86	19.1	10.44
7	Students report the result of group activities to the class.	15.7	12.1	-	34.8	37.4

Table 5. Overall classroom interaction during observation

No	Items	Yes		No	
		No	%	No	%
1	Does English classroom lesson involve interactive tasks?	7	70%	3	30%
2	Are the classroom interactive tasks inviting all students to interact?	4	40%	6	60%
3	Is there enough time for all students to tak e part in interactive activities?	2	20%	8	80%
4	Are there sufficient instructional materials?	1	10%	9	90%

The observation result of Table 5 (item 1) indicates that 70% of observed classes there are interactive tasks or activities that English lesson involve or the activities were found to be interactive. Beside, students' questionnaire similar results indicated. Item 2 show that 60% of observed classes' interactive tasks were not inviting all students to interact. Another observation result of item 3 indicates 80% of observed classes there is not enough time for all students to take part in interactive activities. In the observed classes the time given for each is not enough to complete activities. The time ended before more than half of group members contributed their idea to their group.

Importance of giving enough time has been stated that students need time to think about the language they are learning and see what its linguistic system looks like [63]. This observation result strengthens students' response in the questionnaire and interviews that shortage of time affects their interaction. Also the teacher preferred teacher centered approach and effective interaction might not be achieved in most of the classes. Moreover, item 4 indicates 90% of the observed classes there were no sufficient instructional materials.

Teachers' role in promoting foreign language learning is very important, as they are responsible for providing students with appropriate contexts in communicative situations that allow students to express themselves and interact in the target language. So that teachers have many roles to promote interaction in English classroom. Some of their roles are listed in the observation checklist and presented in percentages for easy analysis. The classroom observation result presented in Table 6 indicates that majority of the activities expected to be practiced by the teachers. For instance, the result of Table 6 item 1 show that in 70% of the observed classes, the teachers did not try to use all possibilities to involve or engage all students to take part in interaction.

Therefore, the teachers played insufficient role to engage all students in English classroom interaction. Also students were not encouraged to interact. Regarding item 2 group and pair works were preferred in 60% of the observed classes. However, the teacher did not give enough time for pair or group activities those students to interact each other. This means the discussion carried out by teacher-centered in the whole class.

Another classroom observation result of table 6 of item 3 reveals that 60% of the observed classes, the teacher give more attention or treatment for male students in interaction. Whereas, item 4 indicates, 60% of the observed classes the teachers not give more attention or treatment for female students in interaction. The students' interaction would be affected by teachers' treatment. In revision to this, O'Gara and Kendail (1996) reported that males and females students receive different treatment from their teachers. Therefore, the results of the two opposing statements are found to be the same, support each other and fit with what was practically observed in the classroom interaction.

Moreover, the result of item 5 indicates that 70% of the observed classes the teachers focus only on active students when implementing interaction rather than giving chance for all students. Active or voluntary students were given special attention by their language teachers during interaction. From these data, it can be possible to notice that teachers have not played their roles to promote interaction in English classroom

The result of Table 7 item 1 indicates 70% of the observed classes the students lack interest in performing interaction. The reasons might be due to the factors that have been discussed. Some of students' activities were also not performed well.

Regarding item 2 the result showed that 70% of the observed classes, students do not use only English while they carry out interaction. The other similar point which is raised under item

3theobservation result revealed that 80% of the observed classes' students prefer to use L1 during pair or group interaction. Most of them use L1 and Amharic instead of the target language. Also the students were not encouraged by their teachers to use the target language in their group discussion. The classroom observation result of items 4 and 5 shows that 60% of the observed classes, students interact more freely with each other than with their teacher even though they were not using English in their interaction.

Moreover, the classroom observation result in item 6 indicates that 80% of the observed classes, students often feel shy and fearful to speak in English even with their classmates.

Regarding item 7 the result showed that 70% of observed classes most of the students were not interesting to report the result of group activities to the class individually.

Another study reported that students feel more comfortable when they did not get in front of the whole class to speak [65].

Finally, all these problems were properly preventing the students from practicing interaction. Therefore, effective classroom

interaction was not practiced in most of observed classrooms. However, to some extent it was done in some observed classrooms.

3.4 The Analysis of Data Obtained through Interviews

In this section, the data gathered through interview from the five English teachers' about whole classroom interaction would be presented and analyzed. The analysis of data gathered through interview has also shown some differences with the findings of questionnaire and observation. The interview questions were designed to obtain the necessary information and to examine the common factors that affect students' interaction.

This interview conducted with English teachers to overcome the problem in the actual classroom practice. Five teachers have participated in the interview. The researcher used T1, T2, T3, T4 and T5 to represent five English teachers respectively. They were asked four related open-ended questions and the data of their responses were organized and presented depending on teachers' responses.

Table 6. Teachers' role during observation

No	Items	Yes		No	
		No	%	No	%
1	Does the teacher try to use all possibilities to engage all students to take part in interaction?	3	30%	7	70
2	Does the teacher give pair or group activities for the students to interact?	6	60%	4	40%
3	Does the teacher give more attention or treatment for male students in interaction?	6	60%	4	40%
4	Does the teacher give more attention or treatment for female students in interaction?	4	40%	6	60%
5	Does the teacher focus only on active students in interaction?	7	70%	3	30%

Table 7. Students' activities during observation

No	Items	Yes		No	
		No	%	No	%
1	Are all students interested and engaged in classroom interaction?	3	30%	7	70%
2	Do students use only English in classroom interaction?	3	30%	7	70%
3	Do students prefer to use L1 during pair or group interaction?	8	80%	2	20%
4	Do the students interact more freely with each other?	6	60%	4	40%
5	Do the students interact more freely with their teacher?	4	40%	6	60%
6	Do students often feel shy and fearful to speak in English even with their classmates?	8	80%	2	20%
7	Do the students report the result of group activities to the class?	3	30**%**	**7**	30%

4. RESEARCHER

How do you feel about students' interaction in your English classroom? What about your students?

For this interview question the teachers' responses were that most of them are interested to practice interaction in communicative approach the assumptions and views of active students' interaction. But grammar teaching approach and national exams oriented teaching influenced them. Most of them were teaching English language structure based on grammar due to the presence of keeping the interest of learners to promote national exam. In this regard teachers traditional teaching approach in which the teacher dominates influenced interaction in the classroom and inhibits learners' from interaction. Teachers forwarded that:

T1: Really, I am interested to practice interaction in communicative approach. But most of our teachers who were teaching English language generally based on grammar teaching approach. They were teaching the language structure due to the presence of keeping the interest of learners to promote national exam

T2: Well, Interaction in English classroom is very interesting. I am very happy to practice interaction in communicative approach because students use their language the way they like.

T3: Yeah, I have been trained in communicative approach that the way one can learn and acquire better language. Really, I have been dealing or taking part with the issue of students' interaction that enables the learners to develop communicative skills.

T4 says: I am interested in students' interaction. But grammar teaching approach and national exams oriented teaching influenced me and I am trying to separate myself from it. Also I am not using role models even the textbook allows to use.

T5: Replied: I am still trying my best to practice interactive learning in the classrooms.

Also teachers' reflection suggests that most of their students are not interested in classroom interaction. They are fearful because primary school does not prepare them to practice interaction. Students are assumed that interaction is not their benefit and they take

interaction as wastage of time. They believe that in order to succeed in national exam, teachers have to teach them more of grammar rules using lecture method. In this case, students lack self-confidence to practice interaction. Teachers suggested that:

The majority of our students, especially the girls are afraid to speak. They are fearful because primary school does not prepare them to practice interaction. (Teacher 1) Also my students have different attitudes that based on their academic back ground. They are not interested in classroom interaction. (Teacher 2)

From my experience, some students fear to speak, thinking that their answers may be wrong. For some of them, this may seem shame and give them the image of incompetence. In classroom activities, many students do not speak even they have correct responses. (T3) Students are not interested to participate in interaction and to practice activities because they fear to speak English. (Teacher 4)

I am still trying my best to practice interactive learning in the classrooms. Students are assumed that interaction is not their benefit. Also they take interaction as wastage of time. They believe that in order to succeed in national exam, teachers have to teach them more of grammar rules using lecture method.(Teacher 5)

Item 2: Researcher: How often do you employ pair or group discussion to promote students' interaction in English classroom?

From the responses of teachers the employing of pair or group discussion has significant contribution to promote students' interaction in English classroom. Teachers usually employ group or pair discussion especially, when there are interactive activities. If students practice interaction in the classroom sharing their ideas they develop confidence to use the language in the real life situation. Interaction facilitates or promotes communication.

T1: Yes, I usually employ group or pair discussion especially, when there are interactive activities, role play and discussions. I would arrange students in group cooperatively and order them to discuss in a group and to present to the class. While the group leader presents, the other group member will ask question.

T2: I employ pair or group work almost every day. Most of the activities are designed in

communication approach. During interaction students take part in the discussions to share or exchange their knowledge in the class. Generally the main purpose of language learning is for communication. So that interaction facilitates or promotes communication.

T4: *says: Well, I usually employ pair or group work to enable my students to share their ideas in English. While they are sharing ideas they gain confidences.*

However, from the responses of teachers the class size and number of students not matched to practice interaction. It means the number of students in the class is more than from an expected. So that to employ pair or group work it is very difficult. They assume that they have no time to let every group member get chance to take turn in all the tasks. Teachers indicated that:

T3: *It is important to practice interaction but the class size and number of students not matched. It means the number of students in the class is more than 70. Thus, to practice interaction or group work it is very difficult. If the class size is suitable for interaction students share their knowledge and experiences in the class as well as outside.*

T5*: I employ pair or group work sometimes. I have no time to let every group member get chance to take turn in all the tasks. Because it takes much time to practice.*

The results of the study indicated that English classes are not suitable for the students to practice the activities in group. As a result, some students not involved in different group activities practice interaction and affects the students' motivation to develop social skills.

Item 3: Researcher: In your experience of teaching English in grade 11 at secondary school level, have you ever recognized factors affecting students' interaction? Yes / No

If yes, would you mention some of the factors?

For this interview question the teachers' responses were among the factors that affect students' interaction, the most common are foreign language anxiety, lack of motivation, teachers' lack of effectiveness, students' lack of interest to interact, students shyness or fear to speak English, students negative attitude about interaction, poor academic back ground, , exam

oriented learning and worry about national exam are that negatively affect students interaction in English classroom of the schools.

T2: *Yeah, many factors affect the students' interaction. The most factors are foreign language anxiety or their shyness and lack of motivation. Also poor academic back ground,*

T4: *as you know, fear of making mistakes and its consequences, lack of confidence, teachers ' lack of interest in communicative approach, most of the students worry about national exam. Language skills are secondary for them. Teachers have the first responsibility if many students fail in their respective subjects.*

In addition, teachers described that teacher centered approach or teaching style, nature of tasks, classroom effects, large class size, shortage of time and instructional materials for interaction, are among factors commonly raised to delay implementation of effective interaction in English class.

T1: *Yes, there are different factors that hinder students' interaction in our school. From these, some are students not speak in the class, copying notes takes more time than practice interaction, the large number of learners in one classroom hinders students' interaction.*

Also it is difficult even for teachers to move around to help the students in the class and to manage their activities properly.

T3: *Yes, for instance, teachers teaching style which is the same in every day, nature of tasks that some text book pictures are not familiar or not clear, in convenience of seat arrangement for group activities, shortage of time and so on affect the students' interaction.*

T5: *Of course, there are many factors that affect the   implementation of interaction. For example, the classes are not convenient and also the seats are not suitable for group activities, the textbook is extremely large to be covered in the given time. With the intention to help my students; I try to cover the content using teacher centered method. So that most of time, I am not practicing interaction in the classroom.*

Item 4. Researcher: What improvements do you think should be made to solve the problems of students' interaction?   How do you maximize students' level of interaction in your school?

In this interview teachers described that the improvements to be made teachers should not apply traditional lecture method and stop promoting illiterate students. Teachers should encouraging students to be active participant and increase interaction using target language in classroom. So that teachers should create favorable condition in changing the way they teach using simple and clear language for effective implementation of interaction.

Teachers forwarded that:

T1. The improvements to be made teachers should stop promoting illiterate students. In addition, teachers should not apply traditional lecture method in their classes with the intention to teach English for exam rather than for communicative purpose.

T4: The only means to solve the problem of interaction is depend on effective implementation of communicative approach or student centered in the class. In addition, teachers should not apply traditional lecture method in their classes with the intention to teach English for exam rather than for communicative purpose.

Regarding teachers perception, they expressed

T2. Teachers could apply basic strategies and guidelines such as arranging students for group discussion, encouraging students to be active participant, organize the lessons in the level of students, changing the way we teach simple and clear language. Also giving more time for students to speak in the class and having small number of students in one class are important to maximize interaction. Because it difficult to apply interaction even for active teachers in large class.

T3: Teachers play significant role to improve lower level of interaction exist in their English classes of the school. In interactive learning, employing pair or group activities make all students to involve in class discussions. Students should minimize using L1in classroom interaction. So that teachers should create favorable condition in classroom.

T5: For improving interaction teachers should encourage students to implement interaction.

The student- centered approach should apply rather than teacher-centered. The number of students in one class should minimize. The number of students in one class should minimize.

From the result of interview and teachers perception, it was concluded that that interaction is essential for learners' language development. However, the reality observed in the classroom was the reverse. The teacher-centered approach dominated most of observed classes. As a result, there was minimum interaction in theEnglish classroom. Most teachers have experienced classes in which student interaction has been more limited than they would like, with students becoming reticent when asked to 'talk to their partners.

In the interview that made with teachers described *Moreover, These are some challenging factors of interaction Also the large number of learners in one classroom hinders students' interaction*

This study was focused on factors affecting students' interaction in grade 11 students in English classroom. The study was conducted at three selected secondary schools in Tembaro Woreda, SNNPR, Ethiopia. It mainly focused on how students interact actively in English classroom; how teachers' maximize students' level of interaction and what factors determine the level and nature of interaction.

In order to achieve the intended research objectives, relevant data were gathered through questionnaire from students , observation from teachers and students in actual classroom and interview from teachers. The subjects of this study were grade ten English language teachers and students in selected secondary schools. For collecting data, 212 students were supplied with the questionnaire, five English teachers were interviewed and 12 have been observed. The quantitative data were analyzed in percentages whereas the qualitative one was analyzed in narrative description.

The findings of this study pointed out that English classroom interaction was not properly implemented due to teachers and students lack interest and proper commitment to practice interaction. Also foreign language anxiety, lack of motivation, teachers' lack of effectiveness, students fear to speak English language, effect of classroom environment, and shortage of instructional materials were the most common factors affecting students' interaction in English classroom. As a result, the extent of interaction found in English classroom was minimized.

5. CONCLUSION

Based on the findings, the following conclusions were drawn.

1. Most of the students were not interested in English classroom interaction especially, the girls are afraid to speak English. Students were not actively participating to promote interaction and to practice student-centered approach. Also they believe that to succeed in national exam, teachers have to teach them more of grammar rules using lecture method.

2. The support of English language teachers to promote interaction was below the required target. And the result clearly showed that teachers and only active students dominate the class interaction. Also the teachers give more attention or treatment for male students in interaction. They do not have enough time to help and to encourage their students to be active participant.

3. The study revealed that there were many factors that affect students' interaction. Among these factors the most common are foreign language anxiety, lack of motivation, teachers' lack of effectiveness, students' lack of interest to interact in English classroom, teacher centered approach and exam oriented learning, classroom effects, shortage of time and instructional materials for interaction are that negatively affect students interaction in English classroom of the schools.

4. The overall result indicates that English teachers lack interest and proper commitment to maximize interaction. They did not provide favorable condition in managing and facilitating for effective implementation of interaction. Also some teachers believed that traditional approach is better to succeed national exam.

Based on the findings and the conclusions drawn above the researcher forwarded the following possible recommendations.

1. Student should participant actively to practice interaction. They should minimize using L1 in classroom interaction.
2. English language teachers should make awareness their students about effective interaction. They should have enough time to support and treatment their students.

3. In order to increase students' interaction and reduce the negatively affecting factors, teachers should facilitate alternative solution. They have to make the learning environment safe and attractive.
4. Teachers should use their maximum effort to promote interaction. Also grammar and exam oriented teaching has to be replaced by interactive teaching.

CONSENT

As per international standard or university standard, respondents' written consent has been collected and preserved by the author(s).

COMPETING INTERESTS

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

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