

INVESTIGATION OF EFL TEACHERS' KNOWLEDGE AND PEDAGOGICAL PRACTICES OF COMMUNICATIVE TASKS IN TEACHING ENGLISH SPEAKING SKILLS: ASSOSA UNIVERSITY IN FOCUS

Melkamu Gari¹

Abebe G/Tsadik²

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to investigate EFL instructors' knowledge and pedagogical practices of communicative tasks in teaching English speaking skills Assosa University in Focus. The study employed the explanatory sequential method. The data for this study were collected through questionnaires, interviews and observations from a total of 180 students and 26 instructors. Then, the data were analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively. The findings of the study showed the instructors had favorable knowledge about the contribution of communicative tasks to the development of students' speaking ability, but they lacked confidence to implement task-based speaking because of their students' poor speaking. As a result, the instructors preferred to use instructor-fronted approaches in the classroom. Such an approach denied the students opportunities of self directed

¹ Corresponding Author: Melkamu Gari, PhD ELT candidate, Department of Foreign Languages and Literature, College of Humanities, Language Studies, Journalism and Communication, Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia. email- garimelkamu@gmail.com; Mobile +251917226941; P.O. Box 1176, Addis Ababa University.

² Abebe G/Tsadik (PhD), in TEFL, Assistance professor, Department of Foreign Languages and Literature, College of Humanities, Language Studies, Journalism and Communication, Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia.

practice during the speaking lessons. Students' lack of awareness about task-based learning led them not to tell about the meaning of task-based speaking. The conclusion made from the study is that there is a mismatch between the instructors' knowledge and practices of the speaking-tasks. This seems to have resulted in the students' inadequate speaking skills development. This study implies that instructors should develop confidence in implementing task based speaking. Moreover, they should support and encourage their students to take part in the speaking classes where they learn better and practice speaking effectively.

Keywords: EFL teachers' knowledge, practices, communicative tasks, and speaking skills.

INTRODUCTION

Communicative language teaching emphasizes the active involvement of learners in classroom language practices by interacting among themselves in a meaningful way instead of passively responding to language models initiated by the teacher. In harmony with this point, Hyland (1991:28) asserted: "At the heart of communicative language teaching, there is the need to provide learners with experiences that promote student interaction"; and she goes on to say, "learners are no longer expected to simply absorb and repeat language models provided by their teacher." Similarly, Larsen-Freeman (2000:126) writes that communicative language teaching places emphasis on "communicative interaction" that offers learners ample opportunities to operate the target language for negotiation of meaning rather than on getting learners to carry out structural drills aimed at "just the mastery of language forms." In short, the approach advocates the need to create communicative situations that engage learners in realistic language use while doing classroom tasks.

Therefore, in communicative language teaching approach, tasks are the tools to promote interaction and real language use. Tasks are considered to be the core of language learning. For this reason, the task promotes interactive and authentic language use rather than to serve as a framework for practice on particular language forms or functions. It promotes the function of communication in negotiating meaning and collaborative problem solving (Richards and Rodgers, 2001). Thus, many researchers and EFL practitioners disclosed their interest in this approach, which is believed by many to have introduced major shifts of paradigms in EFL pedagogy, (Legutke and Thomas, 1996 and Cookes, 2003, cited in Mekasha 2005).

This approach, which characteristically aims at teaching language, unlike the structural school of teaching, as a means of communicating, interacting and negotiating ideas (Little-Woods, 1987 Nunan 1987) come up with the new concepts of tasks which are particularly known as communicative tasks (Nunan, 1989). Other researchers such as Prabhu (1987), Skehan (1997), Willis, (2001), Breen (1987), Nunan (1999), Crookes (1986) and Candlin (1987) are called this new concept task-based approach of language teaching.

The research conducted by different scholars such as Wills (1996) show that task-based approach is focused on efficient and effective way of language teaching. The research of American Government Language Institution reported that task-based approach (TBA) made learners 'show far more quick advancement and to operate their foreign language in real world circumstances with a reasonable level of proficiency often in quite short courses (Lever and Kaplon, 2004). Other researches done in different countries such as Brazil and Asia reveal task-based approach helped students to have "extra ordinary success" in their foreign language learning lapses (2004), Nunan (2006), Oxford (2006). As indicated by scholars like Nunan (1989), Willis (1996) and Bygate (2003) the aim of communicative task language teaching is to improve student's language proficiency based on purposeful communication which cannot be separated from social context. Social interaction as the process of communicative task has some features that can stimulate the teaching/learning of speaking. For the reason that Robinson (2003b) compelled communicative task pedagogy facilitate the cognitive processes involved in second language production (performance) and acquisition (development), and their relationship. Prabhu (1987) one of the great supporters of TBLT, accepts that "a task is an activity which require students to arrive at an outcome from the given information through some process of thought, and which allowed teachers to control and regulate that process."

However, even if task-based instruction is essential for the language class, it will never be a sufficient condition in itself to foster language learning. For this reason, the way tasks are known and used in a particular context in relation to other pedagogical considerations will always be significant. Therefore, knowledge of instructors and how they practice communicative tasks is very important to know their feelings on the different approaches

in the teaching of English speaking. In addition, effective teaching is not only about knowledge of certain teaching method but it is also about understanding and implementing principles of teaching-learning in that method i.e. principles of task-based approach.

Thus, different researches were conducted by Horwitz (1987); Kern (1995); Oxford (1990); Wenden (1987), Mekasha (2005) and Meseret (2012) on teachers' perceptions about their students' roles in language learning and the roles of task-based pedagogy in enchaining language learning. The review of literature about task based teaching shows that research done focused on how task based language teaching is used in language teaching in general. To the researcher's knowledge, there are no studies which have been devoted to study EFL instructors' knowledge and pedagogical practices of communicative tasks in teaching English speaking.

Basic Research Questions

- To what extent do EFL instructors know Communicative task instructions in teaching English speaking skills?
- How do EFL instructors practices communicative tasks (communicatively or traditionally do they implement) in the teaching English speaking skills?
- To what extent do the EFL instructors knowledge of communicative tasks match with their practices when teaching English speaking skills?

The Research Design

The research was employed explanatory sequential mixed method design. Explanatory sequential mixed method is one in which the researcher first conduct quantitative research, analyze the result and then build on the result to explain them in more detail with qualitative research. It is considered sequential because the initial quantitative phase is followed by the qualitative phase Creswell (2014). Besides, explanatory sequential mixed design is also deployed for causal studies where pattern-matching can be used to investigate certain phenomena in very complex and multivariate cases. Yin and Moore (1987) note that these complex and multivariate cases can be explained by three rival theories: a knowledge-driven theory, a problem-solving theory and a social-interaction theory.

Thus, this study focused on examining knowledge of the instructors and how they practice communicative tasks in teaching English speaking skills, in which multivariate cases were investigated, i.e. knowledge, pedagogical practices, communicative tasks and speaking skills. Therefore, the researcher used explanatory sequential mixed method for this study.

Participants Selection Techniques

The study was conducted at Assosa University. English language instructors and first year students of the year 2021/22 were the focuses of the investigation. The research site was chosen for the following essential reasons. First, it could be conspicuous to gather data using classroom observation and interview in a research site where you know participants of the study and have worked with them for some years of adequate acquaintance (Creswell, 2009). Second, getting access to the research site and the participants of the study would be easy. Besides, I have focused on first year students of the University for Two Basic Reasons. First, since they offered Communicative English skills- I before, it could not be difficult to get relevant data about the research topic when communicative English skill-II is offered for them. It is believed that they could give rich and correct information to the study. Second, since there are various observation sessions held in the university regularly, my research observation sessions could not be unobtrusive so that artificial class hours could be avoided. During the study, there were one thousand eight hundred (1800) first year students in the university which one thousand two hundred were (1200) natural science and six hundred students were (600) social science (information gained from the university registrar and freshman students coordinators). From these categories, the researcher selected social science students by simple random sampling lottery method.

As it is mentioned above, there are six hundred students in Social Science College. From these populations, 180 students were decided to participate in the study by convenience sampling method. Convenience sampling is non-probability sampling method by which the researcher selected the proper sample size of participants from the whole population. This method is used in order to get reliable & accessible data to ensure the completeness of the research and the rationality of consistent data. Moreover,

convenience sampling is the most useful sampling method because it is the easiest and cheapest method to conduct a research (Cooper, 2000).

These total populations were assigned into fifteen (15) sections by the ratio of forty (40) students in one class. Therefore, from sections 1- 15, 180 students were selected to include in the study. Hence, since it is difficult to gather data from all populations. To get these sample size, the researcher used stratified sampling technique depending on the section of first year social science students of Assosa University were divided in number of strata. The number that was taken from each stratum was determined to ensure proportionality. Once the number is determined stratified sampling was employed to select the specific sample students in each class. This number was thus determined through the formula (the proportional number = $n/N * x$) where 'n' is determined sample size, 'N' is the total number of the students and 'x' is number of students in one class. So that $180/600 * 40 = 12$. For this reason, twelve students were selected in each section by using simple random sampling technique to participate in the study. Thus, $12 * 15 = 180$ students were participated in the research.

In addition to students, instructors were also the main source of data for this study. There were twenty-six instructors of which one male and one female were B.ED holders, thirteen males and two females were MA holders, three males were PhD holders and five males were assistance professor. The researcher selected all the twenty-six (26) EFL instructors by using available sampling technique.

Instruments of Data Collection

Questionnaire

This study used questionnaire for collecting data. It allowed the study to gather data from relatively larger number of research participants. Even, constructing a questionnaire and analyzing data collected through it is relatively easy and more manageable (Dornyei, 2007). Therefore, in order to address relatively larger number of instructors to manage the collected data easily, this study used a questionnaire for data collection.

In developing questionnaire, some parts of them were designed based on TBLT literature, partly adapted and modified from Nunan's (2004) checklist

for communicative tasks and some of the questionnaire items were adapted from the lists of Common Misconceptions about Task-Based Instruction by Ellis (2003). The questionnaires were designed to identify instructors' knowledge and pedagogical practices of the communicative tasks in teaching English speaking skills.

Interview

In order to conduct an in-depth investigation of the teachers' knowledge of communicative tasks this study employed interviews. These interviews also helped the study to crosscheck the survey results collected through the questionnaire. Patton (2002) argues for interview as an effective method of data collection in qualitative research. The fact is that we cannot observe everything. We cannot observe feelings, thoughts, intentions, beliefs and knowledge.... We have to ask people questions about those things. In theorizing teachers' cognitions, Borg (2006) argues that teachers' cognitions are often inferred from teachers' verbal comments. Interview is most relevant to this methodological demand.

In order to understand teachers' knowledge through what they say, the current study was employed semi-structured interview strategy. One advantage of the semi-structured interview is their flexibility which allows the interviewer to elaborate on what the interviewee says, while maintaining the focus of the interview (Borg 2006). Questions in semi-structured interview are often open-ended, so the interviewees can speak as much as they like. As such, open-ended questions are used to foster the respondents' freedom and confidence as long as seeking their views and awareness about reasonably complex issues (Ary et al. 1990). The interviewer will listen carefully and comment thoughtfully on what the respondent says (Borg 2006). Because of these dominant features, semi-structured interview has a well-established tradition in investigating teachers' knowledge (Borg 2012).

After having access to the English teachers in the way described above, the researcher consulted four interested teachers for interview sessions at their working place during their working time. With the permission of each interviewee and the researcher's oral commitment of confidentiality, each session of interview was audio recorded by a mobile phone (Techno Camon 12). The interview lasted for around fifteen to twenty minutes with each

individual teacher. In addition to audio recording, the interviewer was taking quick notes while conducting the interview. Immediately after each of the interview session, the researcher organized and made transcriptions (with the help of recorded information and notes during interview).

Observation

Classroom observation was conducted to investigate teachers' knowledge and pedagogical practices in teaching speaking skills; and how these instructions were implemented in the actual English lessons. Patton (2002) has noted that observations enable the researcher to see things that may not be evident in interviews or documentation. Moreover, observations provide more direct information than other self-reported protocols (Dornyei 2007). In the literature reporting research on teachers' cognitions, observations are often utilized to capture teachers' classroom practices (Borg 2012). Furthermore, observations provide a rich account of teachers' teaching in their -actual classrooms (Cohen, Manion& Morrison 2011). Borg (2006) has argued that observation clearly has a central role to play in the study of language teacher cognition by providing a concrete descriptive basis in relation to what teachers know, think and believe. In short, observation allows the researcher to capture what the teachers actually do in the classroom.

During observation sessions, the researcher prepared and used checklist. Classroom observations checklist was divided into four sections namely: observing to what extent teachers implement pedagogical practices during English speaking instruction, observing to what extent the instructors were given different activities during the lesson, observing what strategies and techniques the instructors use and observing the role of instructors during English classes. Having this check list and video records, twelve classes, four sections three times each was observed randomly by the researcher. The researcher selected these classes through simple random sampling technique since it gives equal chance for selection.

Methods of Data Analysis

The data analysis process consisted of both qualitative and quantitative methods. The quantitative data were analyzed using Likert-type item analysis. In the Likert scale, numerical values to responses and the

numerical representation (the coding) of the items were coded as the following: 'Strongly Agree'(SA) =5; 'Agree' (A)= 4; 'Undecided'(U) =3; 'Disagree' (D) =2 and 'Strongly Disagree' (SD)=1. Similarly, the items of the questionnaire for 'classroom practice' were coded as:- 'Always'(A) =5; 'Often'(O) =4; 'Sometimes'(ST) =3; 'Rarely'(R)=2 and 'Never'(N) =1 respectively.

The data gathered using questionnaires were tallied, tabulated, and analyzed using statistical techniques. Descriptive statistics such as mean, percentage, variance, standard deviation and coefficient of correlation were used for expounding the different features of instructors' knowledge and practices of the communicative tasks in teaching English speaking skills. Tabular descriptions of items or variables in the study were made. These helped the researcher to classify the questionnaire items, into their respective categories.

After classifying the categories, the number of times (frequency) the respondents answered for an item in each category were recorded in a table. Correlation between the mean rating of instructors' and students' knowledge and practices of the speaking tasks were calculated using the Spearman Correlation Coefficient. To show the relationships between the variables, particularly of psychological traits like knowledge, the factor analysis procedures was implemented. SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) was used to analyze the data.

The qualitative data gathering instruments were prepared to obtain information on how and why instructors' knowledge of the communicative tasks affects their classroom practices. Thus, it is helpful to see if what they tell and do match together. After the data were collected, then the data obtained from classroom observation were first categorized and interpreted. The information obtained from interview was coded, transcribed, analyzed and interpreted.

RESULTS

Presentation and Interpretation of Instructors Questionnaire

The purpose of the questionnaire was mainly to obtain information about instructors' knowledge and pedagogical practices of communicative tasks in teaching English speaking skills. The questionnaire, which has 34 items,

was further categorized into four sub-categories. Analysis and discussions of the questionnaire results were made based on the categories as follows.

Category 1. Instructors' knowledge of the Effects of Communicative Tasks on improving the Teaching of English-Speaking skills

An attempt was made to get data on instructors' knowledge about the effects of communicative tasks on the teaching of English-speaking skills. The purpose of the questionnaire items in this category is to elicit data on what the instructors know about the effect of the communicative tasks in improving the teaching of English speaking.

Table 1

Knowledge concerning the Effects of Communicative Tasks on improving the Teaching of English Speaking

No	Statement		SA (5)	A (4)	U (3)	D (2)	SD (1)	Mean
1	The communicative tasks in the course material are communicative goal directed; thus they enhance students communicative language learning	F	6	12	8	-	-	3.83
		%	23.076	46.15	30.77			
2	The communicative tasks in the course material engage students to put a primary focus on meaning.	F	6	10	6	4	-	3.50
		%	23.076	38.5	23.076	15.38		
3	Students are expected to come up with clearly defined outcomes at the end of their speaking	F	7	12	7	-	-	3.58
		%	26.92	46.15	26.92			
4	The communicative tasks promote learners' ability in an academic speaking (advanced speech)	F	5	14	4	3	-	3.66
		%	19.23	53.85	15.38	11.53		
5	The communicative tasks help students to develop skills far beyond knowledge of linguistic structures.	F	9	11	6	-	-	4.00
		%	34.61	42.31	23.076			
6	Tasks in the course material are beyond the students' ability.	F	8	10	-	4	4	3.00
		%	30.77	42.31		15.38	15.38	
7	It is really difficult to assess the outcome of a communicative tasks	F	13	11	-	2	-	4.16
		%	50	42.31		7.7		
8	The communicative tasks promote the development of integrated skills in the classroom.	F	-	6	8	8	4	2.50
		%		23.076	30.77	30.77	15.38	
9	Pattern practices of communicative tasks are more appropriate to	F	-	9	9	-	8	3.33
		%		34.61	34.61		30.77	

	provide students meaningful context to use the target language for speaking.								
	The end result of the communicative tasks has to be assessed by what the students have done rather than how they have done it.	F	-	9	9	4	4	3.16	
10		%		34.61	34.61	15.38	15.38		
	The outcomes of communicative tasks are to be measured by how the students have done the tasks than what they have done.	F	-	9	9	-	8	3.3	
11		%		34.61	34.61		30.77		

As shown in table 1 above, item 4 was designed to explain to what extent communicative tasks have effects on improving students' speaking ability. In response, more than half of the instructors (73%) agreed that the communicative tasks in the course material promote learners' speaking proficiency. Task-based language teaching bases its foundation principle on meaning, not on form. Similarly, more than half of the instructors (61.5%) agreed that the primary focus of the communicative tasks in the course material is meaning (item-2). Willis (1996) states that task based teaching consider language just as a tool for communication. Similarly, instructors' responses show that in task-based language teaching is primarily a means of making meaning.

Instructors' expectations of the final product of speaking are likely to affect their students' focus on the speaking activity. With regarded to the outcomes of the speaking tasks, most of the instructors (73.07%) agreed that there is a clearly defined outcome for tasks (item 3). It is useful to distinguish between the 'outcome' and the 'aim' of a task. 'Outcome' refers to what the learners arrive at when they have completed the task. 'Aim' refers to the pedagogic purpose of the task, which is to elicit meaning focused language. Indeed, it has been argued that it is not task features themselves but rather learner interpretation of task features which determine interactional outcomes (Breen 1987). However, a few instructors (34.61%) agreed to the statement which says 'the outcomes of a task are to be measured by the number of correct answers students produce (item 10). It is true that students can involve in the task process and interpret a task in different ways. As Hosenfeld (1976) pointed out, learners are adroit at redefining activities to suit their own purposes.

Though the majority of the instructors seem to have understanding about theory of task based language teaching in general and the communicative tasks in particular, (34.61%) of the instructors agreed that pattern practice provides a meaningful context to use the target language for speaking. In addition, (34.61%) of the instructors believed that an accomplishment of a task has to be evaluated more by the process in which the students did the task than the end result of the task (item 11). However, it should be noted that in the teaching learning process, what the students do in the task is as important as how they do the task. A task seeks to engage students in using language pragmatically rather than displaying language. As Kumaravadivelu (1991: 99) puts it, tasks 'indicate' the content but 'the actual language to be negotiated in the classroom is left to the teacher and the learner.' In general, the responses obtained from the instructors' questionnaire show instructors' knowledge of the theoretical principles of task-based language teaching.

Category- 2: Knowledge of the Relevance of the Communicative Tasks

The second category focuses on instructors' knowledge about the importance of the communicative tasks in improving students' speaking ability.

Table 2

Knowledge of the Relevance of the Communicative Tasks

No	Statement		SA (5)	A (4)	U (3)	D (2)	SD (1)	Mean
12	The communicative tasks assist the students to use the target language outside the classroom.	F		9	6	9	2	2.66
		%		34.61	23.076	34.61	7.7	
13	The communicative tasks in the course material are appropriate for the students to develop their speaking skills.	F		6	8	6	6	2.33
		%		23.076	30.77	23.07	23.07	
14	The communicative tasks encourage students to plan their speaking, since speaking tasks are implemented in phases	F	6	10	6	-	4	3.50
		%	23.07	42.31	23.07		15.38	
15	The communicative tasks improve learners' interaction skills	F		15	5	6	-	2.83
		%		57.69	19.23	23.07		
16		F		9	7	10	-	2.83

	The communicative tasks help students to focus on real world activities	%	34.61	26.92	42.31			
17	It is essential to use task based teaching in the speaking classes.	F	6	9	-	5	6	2.83
		%	23.07	34.61		19.23	23.07	
18	It is difficult to use the communicative tasks in the classroom	F	4	5	6	7	4	3.16
		%	15.38	19.23	23.07	26.92	15.38	
19	It is more important for students to learn rules of the language than its use in the speaking classes	F	-	6	6	7	7	3.66
		%		23.07	23.07	26.92	26.92	
20	It is very important for students to finish the communicative tasks which they are assigned in the classroom.	F		6	4	8	8	3.83
		%		23.07	15.38	30.77	30.77	

As can be seen in table 2 above, (57.68%) of the instructors indicated that it is essential to use tasks in their speaking classes (item 17) because tasks help the students to use the target language outside the classroom (item 12). On the other hand, 33.3% agreed that it is difficult to use tasks in the class. Willis (1996) indicates that task based teaching as a method is challenging when the teacher and/or the students do not have orientations about the method; as a result, students' and /or teachers' participations will be limited. Similarly, about (38.45%) of the instructors agreed that it is very important for students to finish the communicative tasks which they are assigned in the classroom (item 20). 53.83% of the instructors disagreed to the statement "It is more important for students to learn rules of the language than its use in the speaking classes" (item 19). Ellis (2003) and Long (1991) state that, in task based language teaching, there is naturally less concern for use of grammatical accuracy. That is to say, working more on grammatical accuracy inhibits students learning. As the philosophies of task based language teaching is enhancing students' interaction, many instructors 57.69% agreed that the communicative tasks in the course material improve students' pair or group interaction skills (item 15). Interaction is a pivotal element of the task-based teaching which is student-centered.

Category- 3: Knowledge concerning Students' and Instructors' Roles in the Communicative Tasks

The results of the questionnaire in this category deals with indicating the instructors' knowledge of the roles that students and instructors play during the speaking activity.

Table 3

Knowledge concerning Students' and Instructors' Roles in the Communicative Tasks

No	Statement		SA (5)	A (4)	U (3)	D (2)	SD (1)	Mean
21	The communicative tasks are based on the student-centered instructional approach.	F %	- 30.77	8 30.77	8 30.77	6 23.07	4 15.38	2.83
22	Success in teaching speaking depends more on what the instructor teaches	F %	7 26.92	-	11 42.31	8 30.77	-	3.00
23	The communicative tasks put much burden on instructor	F %	8 30.77	6 23.07	6 23.07	3 11.53	3 15.53	2.63;2
24	The communicative tasks are appropriate to increase students' participation.	F %	-	8 30.77	6 23.07	8 30.77	4 15.38	2.66
25	Most students do not have interest to participate in the speaking activity	F %	7 26.92	8 30.77	-	7 26.92	4 15.38	3.00
26	If instructors do not explain an activity thoroughly first, the students will waste their time	F %	8 30.77	8 30.77	6 23.07	-	4 15.38	2.33
27	Keeping the students focused on their speaking depends more on the material than on the instructor.	F %	6 23.07	6 23.07	4 15.38	8 30.77	2 7.7	3.16
28	Students as negotiator between the self, the learning process and the object of learning can learn independently.	F %	-	7 26.92	5 19.23	8 30.77	6 23.07	2.41

As shown in table 3 above, a few instructors (26.9%) indicated that success in students learning does not depend only on what the instructors teach (item 22). Contrary to their response to item (22), many (61.5%) of the instructors agreed that it is appropriate for the instructors to explain an activity thoroughly first, so that the students can effectively use their time (item 26). The paradox is if the instructors use much of the time for explanation, students are left with little time to use in the classroom.

One of the central focuses in communicative tasks is students' participations and contributions in the speaking classes. However, 57.69% of the instructors indicated that most students do not participate in the speaking activity (item 25). In principle, effective learning is a result of greater self direction rather than dependence up on the instructor. But about 57.69% of the instructors agreed that the communicative tasks put much burden on them (item 23). Task-based instruction should not be teacher-centered; therefore, it requires commitment on the part of the instructors to help students to participate in the class discussions. If students are notably lacking in these qualities of taking part in the discussions, task-based instruction may indeed be difficult to implement (Krahne 1987). In general, most of the instructors favored more the role of the instructors in teaching than students' role in learning.

Category- 4: Knowledge concerning the Effects of the Communicative Tasks on Confidence

The questionnaire items in this category revealed instructors' knowledge of the effects of the communicative tasks on students' confidences in practicing the speaking.

Table 4

Knowledge concerning the Effects of the Communicative Tasks on Confidence

No	Statement		SA (5)	A (4)	U (3)	D (2)	SD (1)	Mean
29	The communicative tasks help students to develop self confidence in speaking	F %	-	9 34.61	6 23.07	11 42.31	-	2.83
30	The communicative tasks foster a relaxed atmosphere to facilitate the target language use.	F %	9 34.61	-	9 34.61	8 30.77	-	3.33
31	Students are not expected to come up with the same answer for communicative tasks, but some students are uncertain about this.	F %	11 42.31	9 34.61	-	6 23.07	-	4.16
32	Students have experiences on how to deal with task based speaking which actually helped them develop confidences in their speaking.	F %	-	7 26.92	13 50	-	6 23.07	2.50

33	Students are confident to work with task-based speaking activities.	F	-	8	4	8	6	2.66
		%		30.77	15.38	30.77	23.07	
34	Teaching students to develop confidences and take responsibility for their own learning is futile since learners are not used to task-based learning approach.	F	-	-	8	9	9	4.16
		%			30.77	34.61	34.61	

In working with communicative task-based speaking activities effectively, experiences of task based teaching/learning are important. With regard to this, the results in table 4 above show that 30.77% of the instructors indicated those students do not have experiences on how to work with task-based speaking (item 32). And many (53.8%) instructors agreed that students do not have confidence to work with task based learning (item 33). But still 50% of the instructors are not sure whether the communicative tasks help students to develop confidences in their speaking ability or not (item 22).

Contrary to what is discussed above, a few instructors (30.77%) agreed that students are confident to work with task-based speaking activities (item 33). However, some (53.77%) of the instructors disagreed that the students are confident to work with task-based speaking activities (item 33). About 69.2% of the instructors agreed that if students are learned on how to work with task-based speaking, they can develop confidence and take responsibility for their own learning (item 34). This shows that the instructors lacked confidence in their students' ability to handle the speaking tasks.

Questionnaire for Students

During this study, there were one hundred and eighty (180) students participated in the research. The students were those assigned and learned in Assosa University for 2021/22. The purpose of the questionnaire was to reveal the instructors' knowledge about communicative task-based in teaching English speaking. The analysis and the results of the students' responses are made as follows.

Category-1: Knowledge concerning Communicative Tasks effects on improving the Teaching of Speaking

Category one of the students' questionnaires focused on revealing instructors' knowledge of the communicative tasks in helping students to improve their speaking abilities. Accordingly, the results obtained from students are presented in the following table.

Table 5

Knowledge concerning Communicative Tasks effect on improving the teaching of Speaking

Item No	Statement		SA (5)	A (4)	U (3)	D (2)	SD (1)	Mean
1	I believe the communicative tasks in the course material enhance my speaking skills	F %	16 8.8	19 10.43	83 46.1	35 19.44	27 15	2.83
2	In working with the communicative tasks in the course material, my instructor is expected to focus on meaning than form of the language.	F %	20 10.99	23 12.63	59 32.77	42 23.07	36 19.79	3.33
3	The communicative tasks in the course material are appropriate to develop knowledge and skill of the language.	F %	30 16.5	21 11.54	57 31.66	40 22	32 15.6	4.16
4	The communicative tasks in the course material are beyond me/student level; therefore, the instructor should provide me other opportunities to improve my speaking.	F %	25 13.74	25 13.74	46 25.55	46 25.3	38 20.87	2.50
5	Success in doing a communicative tasks measured by both how it has been done and what has been done	F %	34 18.7	22 12.64	63 35	30 16.5	30 16.5	2.66
6	Success in learning speaking depends on tasks that instructors can do in the classroom	F %	35 17.23	38 21.1	91 50	10 5.5	6 3.5	4.16
7	Success in learning speaking depends on tasks that my classmates and I do in the classroom	F %	20 10.99	20 10.99	16 8.88	60 32.96	64 35.16	2.83
8	A task in the course material can have different solutions; this helps me to see the task in different perspectives.	F %	25 13.73	20 10.99	26 14.44	62 34.44	47 25.82	3.33

The responses in table 5 above show that a few (23.62%) of the respondents agreed that in working with the communicative tasks they are expected

from their instructor to focus more on meaning than form of the language (item 2). According to Bygate, Skehan, and Swain (2001), a task is an activity which requires learners to use language, with emphasis on meaning. On the other hand, 31.34% of the students agreed that success in doing a speaking task is measured by both how it has been done and what has been done (item 5). However, the majority of the students (60.26%) disagreed that the communicative tasks in the course material can have different answers (item 8). But Richards and Rodgers (2001: 228) suggest that 'tasks are believed to foster processes of negotiation, modification, rephrasing, and experimentation in second language learning.' Accordingly, the opportunity to modify the solution(s) to a task is the way in which interaction contributes to language learning. Regarding the role of task in facilitating learning, about 40% of the students did not decide whether or not tasks help them to improve their speaking (item 1). This shows that the students are not sure whether or not the communicative tasks help them improve their speaking ability.

Category- 2: Knowledge of the Relevance of the Communicative Tasks

In category two, the questionnaire items were designed to investigate instructors' knowledge the relevance of the communicative tasks in improving their students speaking ability. The results are shown in the following table.

Table 6

Knowledge of the Relevance of the Communicative Tasks

Item No	Statement	SA (5)	A (4)	U (3)	D (2)	SD (1)	Mean
9	I think my instructor needs to know well about the language rules before he/she deals with the communicative tasks in the course material.	F 27 % 14.83	60 33.33	45 25	28 15.38	20 10.99	2.83
10	The communicative tasks in the course material help me/student think more about my speaking because they are related to real world situation.	F 31 % 17.03	20 10.99	57 31.66	36 15.38	36 10.99	2.87
11	The communicative tasks in the course material are appropriate	F 40 % 21.98	39 21.43	43 23.88	30 16.48	28 15.4	2.96

	to develop students' speaking skills							
12	When instructor works to solve difficult tasks in pairs, it helps me think more about my speaking.	F %	30 16.48	32 17.58	20 10	48 26.4	52 28.6	2.62
13	Having time to think about a task helps me think more about my speaking.	F %	22 12.08	24 13.19	37 20.55	50 27.47	47 25.47	2.35
14	My instructor does not know most of the tasks in the course material thus he/she doesn't think he/she can add something new to my earlier knowledge of speaking.	F %	40 21.98	35 19.23	28 15.55	40 21.98	38 20.87	2.81
15	Most of the communicative tasks in the course material are familiar to me; therefore, I am focused on my speaking.	F %	22 12.08	25 13.74	58 32.2	37 20.33	38 20.87	2.79
16	I enjoy doing meaning focused task based speaking better than form focused speaking	F %	30 16.48	30 16.48	50 27.47	30 16.48	40 21.98	2.87
17	Knowledge of the rules of a language does not guarantee the ability to speak in that language.	F	15 8.24	20 10.99	46 25.55	47 25.82	52 28.57	2.29

As shown in table 7 above, 48.16% of the students agreed that their instructors need to know well about the rules of the language before they deal with the communicative tasks (item 9). This indicates that the instructors know the language forms should be taught before they engage in the actual speaking activity. In connection with the relevance of the communicative tasks, 31.88 % of the students disagreed that the communicative tasks in the course material are appropriate to develop their speaking (item 11). Moreover, many (52.94%) of the students disagreed that having time to think about a task helps them think more about their speaking (item 13).As it is explained above, the communicative English course material gives opportunity to students to work most of the activities by themselves. If students do not have experience of autonomous learning and are not ready to take responsibility for their own learning, they tend to depend more on their instructor.

Regarding the applicability of the tasks in solving a real world problem, about 28% of the students agreed that the communicative tasks in the course material do not focus on the real world problems (item 10). The students

seem to limit the contributions of the communicative task to the classroom consumption purpose. On the other hand, about 38.46% of the students disagreed that they enjoy learning in task-based speaking (item 16).

Category 3: Knowledge concerning Students' and Instructors' Roles in the Communicative Tasks

In category three, the questionnaire items focus on investigating instructors' and students' roles in using the communicative tasks during English speaking classroom. The results are presented in the following table.

Table 7

Knowledge concerning Students' and Instructors' Roles in the Speaking

Item No	Statement		SA (5)	A (4)	U (3)	D (2)	SD (1)	Mean
18	The communicative tasks in the course material give more information for students to practice speaking than instructor's discussion.	F %	24 13.19	21 11.54	38 21.11	55 30.22	42 23.07	2.51
19	The task based speaking encourage instructor-centered discussions	F %	59 32.42	57 31.32	20 11.1	26 14.3	18 9.9	2.51
20	Task oriented speaking enhances students' interaction in the speaking classes.	F %	30 16.48	42 23.08	38 21.11	32 17.58	38 20.88	2.79
21	Success in teaching speaking depends on what the instructor does in the classroom.	F %	50 27.77	40 21.98	28 15.55	32 17.58	28 15.55	2.81
22	I think the tasks in the course material promote independent learning.	F %	25 13.74	27 14.84	45 25	40 21.98	43 23.62	2.74
23	The communicative tasks in the course material are appropriate to work with other students in the classroom.	F %	41 22.53	43 23.63	26 14.44	40 21.98	30 16.97	2.92
24	I do best when my instructor is taught as a whole class.	F %	32 17.58	36 19.79	36 19.79	36 19.79	40 21.98	2.98

Students can contribute a lot to their learning if they are familiar with the method of learning. In table 7 above, the students responses in connection with task familiarity show, many (53.29%) of the students agreed that they do not know how to work with the communicative tasks in the course

material (item 18). And about 49.75 % of the respondents agreed that success in learning to speak depends on what the instructor does in the classroom (item 21). But some scholars state that learning is not so much a matter of taking in and possessing of knowledge but rather of the taking part in activities (Ellis, 2003, p. 176).

About 24.2% of the students disagreed that much time is given to the instructors than the students (item 19). Unquestionably, instructor's involvement in the teaching process, unless it distracts students learning, is essential for initiating learning activities, setting standards, assessing performances, and providing some forms of feedback. Stevick (1996) writes "the more the teacher talks and explains the less internal work the learner is likely to do." Contrary to the principles of task based learning, about 45.6% of the students do not agree that the communicative tasks promote independent learning (item 22).

Category 4: Knowledge concerning the Effects of the Communicative Tasks on Confidence

The questionnaire items in category four were prepared to explore instructors' knowledge of the effects of the communicative tasks on their confidence of speaking ability. The results of the responses are discussed as follows.

Table 8
Knowledge concerning the Effects of the Communicative Tasks on Confidence

Item No	Statement		SA (5)	A (4)	U (3)	D (2)	SD (1)	Mean
25	The communicative tasks help me to plan for my speaking.	F %	19 10.44	27 14.83	-	60 32.97	74 41.1	2.46
26	Having freedom to explore topics in class helps me think more about the speaking task	F %	20 10.99	39 21.43	35 19.44	45 24.72	41 22.53	2.94
27	The speaking tasks in the course material provide me room to decide on how to arrive at the outcomes of the task	F %	30 16.48	30 16.48	33 18.33	43 23.63	44 24.17	3.01
28	I gained confidence in my ability to speak because of the tasks in the course material.	F %	22 12.08	28 15.4	58 32.2	34 18.68	38 20.88	2.92

29	My earlier experiences about tasks helped me to speak better.	F	18 9.9	19 10.44	13 7.2	74 40.66	56 30.77	2.42
30	I am confused about what and how to do the tasks in the course material.	F %	49 26.92	56 30.77	23 12.77	28 15.4	24 13.19	2.85

Students' contribution to their own speaking starts from participating in the pre-speaking (planning) stage. In relation to this, the results of students' response in table 8 above show that a few (35.27%) of the students agreed that the communicative tasks helped them to plan for their speaking (item 25). And 47.25% of the students disagreed that having freedom to explore topics in class helped them think more about the communicative task (item 26). But the literature about task based-teaching shows that communicative task-based speaking promotes students' ability to frame and modify topics for the speaking tasks.

Concerning the effects of the communicative tasks on developing the students' confidence in their speaking abilities, 39.56% of the students disagreed and 32.97% of the respondents did not decide that they gained confidence in their ability to speak (item 28). Moreover, many (57.69%) of the students agree that they have problems in deciding what and how to do the speaking tasks in the course material (item 30) because they do not have experience of task-based learning.

Analysis of Instructors' and Students' Responses to Communicative Tasks Practice in Classroom

The purpose of the questionnaire was mainly to examine and obtain information on what the instructors are to say about their classroom practices of communicative tasks.

Table 9

Frequency, Percentage and Mean of Responses for Classroom Practice

No	Statement	F	A	O	ST	R	N	Mean
			5	4	3	2	1	
1	Introduce the new language item in context and demonstrate the use and meaning of the new language	F %	9 34.61	9 34.61	8 30.77	-	-	4.00
2	Involve students in planning the task they are going to do.	F %	-	5 19.23	7 26.93	10 38.46	4 15.38	2.50

3	Before engaging students in doing the speaking exercises, Explaining new grammatical terminologies or forms and patterns (rules).	F %	9 34.61	12 46.16	5 19.23	- -	- -	1.91
4	Letting students do the speaking exercises in the course material after new words and phrases are discussed.	F %	8 30.77	10 38.46	5 19.23	3 11.54	- -	2.16
5	Use instructor- led classroom discussion.	F %	9 34.61	11 42.30	2 7.7	4 15.38	- -	2.25
6	Impart (demonstrate) knowledge through activities such as explanation, speaking and giving examples.	F %	3 11.54	4 15.38	8 30.77	8 30.77	6 23.07	2.83
7	Encourage and involve students to find the contextual meaning of the new language items.	F %	2 7.7	4 15.38	- -	12 46.16	7 26.92	1.83
8	Involve students in pair and group works.	F %	3 11.54	3 11.54	9 34.61	8 30.77	3 11.54	2.91
9	Help students to correct their error in pair and group discussion.	F %	5 19.23	4 15.38	8 30.77	6 23.08	3 11.54	2.91
10	Correct students' error in controlled practice activities like question and answer.	F %	6 23.08	8 30.77	9 34.61	3 11.54	- -	2.41
11	Evaluate students in paper and pencil test (in terms or semesters).		7 26.92	8 30.77	6 23.08	5 19.23	- -	2.16
12	Evaluate students' progress on the basis of their day to day communicative performance	F %	2 7.7	3 11.54	9 34.61	7 26.92	5 19.23	2.83

As can be seen from the above table, 34.61% and 46.16 % of the respondents indicated that they practiced “explanation of new grammatical terms, forms and rules” ‘always’ and ‘often’ respectively (Item 3). And also, the response for item 4 shows that 30.77 % ‘always’, and 38.46% ‘often’ practice explanation of new words or phrases. This means, about 69.2 % of the respondents knew that they use ‘explanation of new words or phrases’ ‘always’ and ‘often’. Similarly, 34.61% and 42.30% of the respondents indicated that they practiced ‘always’ and ‘often’ respectively use instructor- led classroom discussion (item 5.) Contrary to the principles of communicative task, 7.7% and 15.38% of the instructors agreed that they practice ‘always’ and ‘often’ encourage and involve students in finding the contextual meaning of the new language items (item 7). This implies that the majority of the class discussions were done through information transmission/ instructors-centered approach to teaching.

The responses to items 10 and 11 about error correction and mode of assessment are stated as follows. 23.08% and 30.77% of the instructors indicated that they correct students' error in controlled practice activities (item 10) 'nearly always' and 'often' respectively. And, 26.92% and 30.77% of the respondents indicated that they evaluate students' language performance using paper and pencil tests- on semesters or terms 'always' and 'often' respectively (item 11). But, 7.7% and 11.54% of the instructors affirmed that they evaluate students' progress on the basis of their day to day communicative performance (item 12) 'always' and 'often' respectively. This implies that most of the instructors did not practice continues assessment. Generally, the data obtained from the instructors in connection with their classroom practice shows that contrary to their knowledge of communicative task-based language teaching, most instructors tend to favor using instructors fronted or the traditional ways of EFL teaching.

Table 10

Frequency, Percentage and Mean of Students' Responses for Classroom Practice

Item No.	Statement	A 5	O 4	ST 3	R 2	N 1	Mean
1	My instructor is involved in telling the meanings of the new language items in context to demonstrate the use of 'the new language	30 16.66	28 15.55	37 20.55	42 23.33	43 23.88	2.33
2	He/she plans for the task I am going to do	25 13.74	28 15.55	33 18.13	44 24.18	50 27.47	2.48
3	He/she gives much time for grammatical and patterns (rules) discussions.	60 32.98	42 23.076	18 9.9	30 16.66	30 16.66	2.96
2.4	He/she searches for the meanings of the new words in dictionary to do the exercises in the course material.	38 20.88	38 20.88	43 23.88	30 16.66	31 17.03	2.85
5	He/she focuses more on accuracy during the communicative tasks	36 20	36 20	46 25.55	32 17.77	30 16.66	2.75
6	He/she teaches more through self-engaged learning than he/she teaches through instructor explanations and discussions	37 20.55	35 19.4	26 14.4	37 20.55	45 25	3.83

7	He/she tries out the contextual meaning of the new language items.	25 13.88	25 13.88	35 19.4	49 27.2	46 25.55	2.37
8	He/she participates in pair and group works.	36 20	38 21.1	40 22.2	40 22.2	26 14.4	3.11
9	He/she corrects errors in pair and group discussion.	15 8.3	20 11.1	40 22.2	51 28.3	54 30	2.00
10	He/she focuses on correcting errors in controlled practice activities.	54 30	50 27.77	35 19.4	20 11.1	21 11.66	2.46
11	He/she disregards his classmates' comments during feedback session.	62 34.4	60 33.3	30 16.66	13 7.22	15 8.3	2.09
12	He/she judges his progress on the basis of his day to day performance	20 11.1	20 11.1	30 16.6	60 33.3	50 27.77	2.22

As shown in the above table, 20.55%, 23.33% and 23.88% of the students respondents indicated that their instructors involve them in finding contextual meaning of the language item they are using in their speaking (items 1) 'some times', rarely' and 'never' respectively. Similarly, about 18.13%, 24.18% and 27.47% of the students agreed that they plan for the tasks they are to do (item 2) 'some times', rarely' and 'never' respectively. The results of items 1 and 2 indicate that most of the students depend on their instructors in finding the meanings of new words in the speaking exercises, thus much of the class discussions are dominated by the instructors.

Regarding their speaking, 20%, 20% and 25.55% of the students indicated that they focus more on accuracy than fluency (item 5), 'always', 'often' and 'some times' respectively. Similarly, 30%, 27.77% and 19.4% of the students focus on correcting errors in controlled practice activities (Items 10) 'always', 'often' and 'some times' respectively. This shows that most of the students give much of their time to learn about the forms of the language. In response to questions asked to assess their efforts for cooperative learning, 20%, 21.1% and 23.3% of the students indicated that they participate in pair and group works 'always', 'often' and 'some times' respectively' (item 8). And 34.4%, 33.3% and 16.66% of the students agreed that they disregard their classmates' comments during the speaking classes (item 11) 'always', 'often' and 'some times' respectively. This shows that students lack confidences and are hesitant about their classmates' ability to contribute for learning.

Correlation

Correlation coefficient is usually used to find the relation between different variables. Either Pearson or Spearman rank order correlation can be applied depending on the type of data. In this study Spearman rank order correlation was preferred to Pearson correlation because the data is non-parametric. Moreover, the responses given to each questionnaire item was ranked among 1 to 5 in accordance with the magnitude of the response. Then the average mean values, the standard deviations and variances of the variable under the study were analyzed and discussed. The results of both knowledge and practices, obtained from the instructors' questionnaire are correlated with the results of the students are discussed as follows.

Summary of Instructors' and Students' Knowledge of Communicative Tasks

The following tables show the summary results of instructors' and students' knowledge of communicative tasks in teaching English speaking. The discussions of the summaries are presented based on the classifications (categories) of knowledge made earlier. The summary of each category is presented as follows.

Table 11

Summary of knowledge concerning the effects of communicative task on improving the teaching-learning of speaking skills

Respondents	Mean	Standard deviation	Variance	Remarks
Instructors	3.61	0.8215	0.058	
Students	2.84	0.5172	0.155	

Table 11 shows that the results and relationships between instructors' and students' questionnaire on knowledge of the effects of communicative tasks on improving students' speaking. As shown in the above table, the mean average knowledge rate for instructors is higher than the average mean scores of students. The variation between instructors and students shows a big difference in general. This could be because of the teacher awareness about communicative tasks principles. The instructors might use most of the time teacher-fronted method and change their knowledge about task-based speaking. In general, instructors have better understanding

about the contributions of the communicative tasks in improving students' speaking ability. However, students have no more understanding and awareness about communicative tasks.

Table 12

Knowledge of the relevance of the speaking tasks

Respondents	Mean	Standard deviation	Variance	Remarks
Instructors	3.07	0.5432	0.136	
Students	2.73	0.5117	0.255	

Table 12 compares instructors' and students' knowledge of the relevance of the speaking tasks. As shown in the table, the mean average of the knowledge of the instructors and the students is different. This implies that unlike the students, the instructors have favorable knowledge about the importance of the communicative tasks in helping students to improve their speaking. However, they did not apply what they know in English speaking classroom

Table 13

Summary of knowledge concerning students' and instructors' roles in the communicative tasks

Respondents	Mean	Standard deviation	Variance
Instructors	2.90	0.5313	0.261
Students	2.75	0.5122	0.254

Table 13 shows the average means for instructors and students are different. The variation from the mean is the different for instructors and students. This shows that both groups have different knowledge of students' and instructors' roles in the speaking classes. The results indicate that the instructors' and students' knowledge of their roles in the speaking classes diverge. Therefore, the results above reveal that the students need awareness which bring changes in their knowledge about their roles in communicative tasks.

Table 14

Summary of knowledge concerning the effects of the communicative tasks on confidence

Respondents	Mean	Standard deviation	Variance
Instructors	3.27	0.6123	0.111
Students	2.70	0.5020	0.234

In table 14, the results of the average means for instructors' and students' knowledge concerning the effect of the communicative tasks on confidence show differences among the respondents. The difference is relatively big between instructors and the students. This indicates that the students' and instructors' knowledge about the effect of the communicative tasks on confidence mismatches. The likely effect of this mismatch in knowledge can reflect on the classroom practice.

Correlation of instructors' and students' classroom practice

Table 15

Summary of classroom practice

Respondents	Mean	Standard deviation	Variance	Remark
Instructors	2.56	0.5004	0.242	
Students	2.68	0.5013	0.251	

Table 15 shows the average mean value of the students is higher than the mean values of instructors. This indicates that the students' improved knowledge contributed to their relatively better classroom practices.

Table 16

Summary of Coefficient of correlation between instructors' knowledge and practice

Variables	N	Mean	STD.D	R	r2	P
Knowledge of the communicative tasks	15	3.17	0.6117	0.414	0.17	0.181
Practices of the communicative tasks	15	2.56	0.5004			

Table 16 shows that $r = 0.41$, P-value is 0.18. The result indicates that the relationship between instructors' knowledge and practices is positive and

weak. There is no significant relationship between instructors' knowledge and practice since the p value is greater than 0.05. Therefore, instructors' knowledge and practices of the communicative tasks mismatch.

Table 17

Summary of Coefficient of correlation between knowledge and practices students

Variables	N	Mean	STD.D	R	r2	P
Knowledge of the communicative tasks	50	2.80	0.5107	0.91	0.82	0.03
Practices of the communicative tasks	50	2.68	0.5013			

Table 17 shows that $r = 0.91$ and P-value is 0.03. This means that the relationship is strong and statistically significant ($p < 0.05$). It shows that there is little difference between what they think and do about the communicative tasks. Therefore, there is significant relationship between the students' knowledge and practices.

So far the results of the questionnaire about instructors' and students' knowledge and practices of the communicative tasks were discussed. The results show, the knowledge and practices of the students match, but the instructors' knowledge and practices mismatch.

CONCLUSION

The conclusion of the study focuses on answers to the questions raised under the statement of the problem and the summary of the research finding. Accordingly, each question is discussed as follows:

What is instructors' knowledge toward the communicative tasks instructions?

Ideally, almost all instructors agreed on the importance of communicative task instructions in improving the students' speaking abilities. Accordingly, the instructors indicated in their responses to the questionnaire that communicative task instructions were relevant to enhance students' speaking. Moreover, many of the instructors agreed that most of the tasks in the course material were appropriate to teach speaking. However, they tended to conclude that most students were unable to participate in the speaking task because of their inability to speak. In addition, the instructors

were complaining that students were not willing to take responsibility for their speaking. However, an interesting experience drawn from the instructors' knowledge is a context dilemma. Instructors should not consider students' speaking inability only as a constraint but also as opportunity. Accordingly, they should help students to cope up with the demands of task-based speaking.

It would be a mistake to assume that problems associated with task-based speaking cited by instructors and students as fundamental weaknesses of tasks. In fact the weakness lie on the instructors' approaches to implement task based teaching. In some cases instructors tried to make the students suitable to the method they are using rather than making the method suitable to the students. This means, the instructors focus on imposing their teaching philosophy on the students rather than focusing on how to help students improve their speaking. The literature about the history of language teaching shows that any language teaching method in use can be effective only if it is adapted to a given teaching/learning situation (context).

It's important to notice here that task as an instructional method is more than just giving activities to students and evaluating their performance. More importantly, the instructor, who wants to implement speaking tasks successfully, is required to have sufficient knowledge and commitment to practice the tasks.

What pedagogical orientation (communicative or traditional) do instructors use in the practice of communicative tasks?

Most of the instructors agreed that task-based language teaching enhances students' learning but they practiced instructor fronted teaching during the speaking classes. This conflicting knowledge and practice have adverse result on students' speaking ability. For example, one of the many weaknesses of instructor-fronted classroom discussions is that much of the class time is used by the instructor which actually is against the principle of task-based speaking. In other words, the students are given less time to practice speaking.

Unless students are given opportunities to speak by themselves and develop confidence in their speaking ability, they always think that they are unable to speak. This is reflected by the challenge posed from loss of

confidence in their speaking. Similarly, almost all the students lacked orientations about task-based learning. This lack of orientations limited them to appreciate instructor-centered discussions where they depend more on what their instructor does on the structure of the language. And one of the weaknesses of form focused learning is that it does not encourage holistic approach in the speaking process because students are mostly focused on the language items than the speaking context.

Do instructors' knowledge of communicative tasks match with their practice?

The result of this study shows that most of the instructors were ambivalent in using and practicing task-based speaking in the class. The paradoxical disparities that exist between what instructors know and profess and what they actually practice in the EFL classroom resulted in poor performance of task-based speaking. Many of the instructors were strongly inclined to change the task-based method and make it fit their own personal blend of methodological beliefs which actually is instructors-centered teaching.

The overall findings of this study reveal that despite an understanding of task based teaching concepts, many instructors developed fear of adopting tasks as an instructional method. One of the instructors' reasons to avoid implementing task based teaching was their students' inability. As stated above most instructors in the study believed that their students' low speaking ability was a barrier to the implementation of the task based speaking. Though the students' inability is a factor, there is a possibility to argue that such views may also be prompted by instructors' dilemma and misconceptions in making the students aware about task-based speaking concepts. And the mismatch between instructors' knowledge and practices of task-based speaking can partly be attributed to the need of instructors to continue with their own preferred teaching method.

The results about students' knowledge and practices show that they did not have experiences about task-based teaching principles. Thus, the instructors were in favor of instructor-fronted teaching. On the other hand, the students preferred deductive (top-down) approach to the learning of speaking where the grammatical rules for speaking are explained through instructor-directed discussions. This tendency of depending more on instructor did not help them much to improve their speaking and to

develop confidence in their speaking ability. However, the students had interest to develop their knowledge on task-based speaking. As a result, they have shown interests to take responsibility for their speaking and they gradually developed confidences in their speaking. This indicates that if students are given the necessary support in their speaking classes, they can bring changes in their speaking abilities. Therefore, though supporting students to develop favorable knowledge towards task-based speaking is a challenge, it is essential and attainable.

The researcher believes that it is dangerous to assume that task based teaching/ learning is a perfect one-size-fit all kinds of students and can just be applied to every corner of the world. Problems can stem from instructors' knowledge and practices of task based speaking. Therefore, we cannot ignore that problems can and do occur as we export methodologies across contexts. It is our responsibility, as instructors, to make our students aware of this. Students who do not have orientations about task-based learning avoid participating in task-based activities. This may result from their lack of confidence in performing tasks. That is why it is necessary for the instructors to help students build confidence by encouraging them to learn how to deal with tasks and use collaborative skills in task-based performance.

Acknowledgement

The authors acknowledge Addis Ababa University for funding this research. In addition, we thank the instructors and students of Assosa University for their willingness to participate in this study.

Authors' Contributions:

Melkamu Gari: Collection of data, analyze and the interpretation of data and production of the manuscript was done by him.

Abebe G/Tsadik; Supervised the PhD Project and commented started from the proposal to the final versions of the manuscript.

Funding: The corresponding author disclosed that this PhD project was funded by Addis Ababa University.

References

- Borg, S. (2003). Teacher cognition in language teaching: A review of research on what language teachers think, know, believe, and do. *Language Teaching*, 35, 81- 109.
- Borg, S. (2005). A Case Study of the Development in Pedagogic Thinking of a Pre- service Teacher. *TESL-EJ*, 9(2). URL- <http://www.tesl-ej.org/ej19/a2.html>
- Borg, S. (2006), *Teacher cognition and language education. Research and Practice*. London: Continuum.
- Borg, S. (2012), *Current approaches to language teacher cognition research: A methodological analysis*. in R Barnard & A Burns (ed.), *Researching Language Teacher Cognition and Practice: International Case Studies, Multilingual Matters*, Bristol, UK, pp.11-29.
- Brumifit, C. (1979). Communicative language teaching. In Brumifit, C. & Johnson, K. (Eds). *The communicative approach to language teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Bygate, M. (2003). Effects of task repetition: Appraising the development of second language learners. In J. Willis and D. Willis (eds). *Challenge and Change in Language Teaching*. Oxford: Heinemann
- Canale, M. and Swain, M. (1980). *Theoretical base of communicative approaches to second language teaching and testing*. *Applied Linguistics*. 1(1), 1-47
- Candlin, C. (1987). *Towards task based language teaching*. In C Candlin & D. Murphy (eds.). London: Prentice Hall International.
- Coughlan, P. & Duff, P. (1994). Same task, different activities: analysis of sla from an activity theory perspective. In J. Lantolf and G. Appel (eds.) 173-194.
- Crooks, G. (1986). *Task classification: a cross disciplinary review*. Technical report Honolulu: Center for second language research.
- Dornyei, Z. (2007). *Research methods in applied linguistics: Quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methodologies*. Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- Edwards, C & Willis, J (Ed.) 2005. *Teachers exploring tasks in English language teaching*. Palgrave Macmillan, New York, NY.

- Ellis, R. (2003a), *Task-based language learning and teaching*. Oxford University Press, Oxford, UK.
- Ellis, R. (2006). The methodology of task-based teaching. *Asian EFL Journal*, 8 (3), 19-45.
- Frankfort, (1996). *Research Methods in Social Sciences*. University of Wisconsin, Mil Waukee.
- Harmer, J. (1991). *The practice of english language teaching*. London. Longman
- Harmer, J. (2001). *The practice of English language teaching* (3rd.ed.) Longman: person Edu. Ltd.
- Holzer, S. (1994). *From Constructivism ...to active learning*. The Innovator, No.2
- Horowitz, D. (1986). What professors actually require: academic tasks for the esl classroom, *TESOL Quarterly*, 20(3), 445-462.
- Horwitz, E. K. (1988). The beliefs about language learning of beginning university foreign language students. *The Modern Language Journal*, 72(3), 283-294.
- Johnson, K. E. (1992). *Learning to teach: Instructional actions and decisions of pre-service ESL teachers*. *TESOL Quarterly*, 26, 3, 507-35.
- Jackson, P. W. (1968). *Life in classrooms*. New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston.
- Kumaravadivelu, B. (1991). Language-learning tasks: Teacher intention and learner interpretation. *ELT Journal*, 45 (2) 98-107
- Kvale, S. (1996). *Interviews: An Introduction to Qualitative Research Interviewing*. Sage Publications, Thousand Oaks, CAk
- Lopes, J. 2004. Introducing TBI for teaching english in brazil: Learning how to leap the hurdles. In Leaver, B. L and Willis, J. R. (Eds.) 2004. *Task-based instruction in foreign language education: practices and programs*. Washington, D. C: Georgetown University Press.
- Larsen Freeman, D. (2000). *Techniques and principles in language teaching*. Oxford University Press.

- Leaver, B. L. and Kaplan, M. A. (2004). Task-based instruction in U.S government slavic language programs. In Leaver, B. L. & Willis, J. R. (Eds.), *Task based instruction in foreign language education: practices and programs*. Washington, D. C: Georgetown University Press.
- Mekasha Kasaye. (2005). *An exploration of the task design procedures of efl teachers in ethiopia* (unpublished PhD dissertation). Addis Ababa: AAU.
- Murphy, J. (2003). Task-based learning: The interaction between tasks and learners. *ELT Journal* 57(4), 352-360.
- Nuna, D. (1989). *Designing tasks for the communicative classroom*. Cambridge University Press.
- Nuna, D. (2004). *Task-based language teaching*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, UK.
- Oxford, R.,(2006). Task-based Language Teaching and Learning: An Overview. *Asian EFL Journal*. 8(3), 250-270.
- Parrott, M. (1993). *Tasks for language teachers*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Prabhu, N, (1987). *Second language pedagogy: A perspective*. Oxford. Oxford University Press.
- Richards, J., and T. Rodgers. (1986). *Approaches and methods in language teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Richards, J., and T. Rodgers (2001). *Approaches and Methods in language teaching*. (2nd Eds.). New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Robert Stroud, (2013). *Task-based learning challenges in high schools: What makes students accept or rejectk8 tasks?* In Japan Nottingham University
- Skehan, P. and Foster, P. (1997). *Task type and task processing conditions as influences of foreign language performance*. *Language Teaching Research*.1 (3):185-211.
- Williams, M. and Burden, R. (1997). *Psychology for language teachers: A social constructivist approach*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Willis, J. (1996) *A framework for task-based learning*. Harlow: Longman

Yin, R. K. (1984). *Case Study Research: Design and methods*. Beverly Hills, Calif: Sage Publications.