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JIMMA UNIVERSITY  
COLLEGE OF SOCIAL SCIENCE AND LAW  
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

ASSESSING THE PRACTICES OF GROUP WORK IN PROMOTING  
COOPERATIVE LEARNING:  
A CASE OF SECOND YEAR ENGLISH FOCUS STUDENTS AND  
INSTRUCTORS AT JIMMA TEACHERS' COLLEGE.



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A thesis Submitted to the Department of English Language and Literature in the  
Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for the Degree of the Masters of Art in  
Teaching English as a Second Language /TEFL

**Taddese Deti**

**June, 2012**

**Jimma**

## **Acknowledgments**

First of all I express my gratitude to my advisors Ato Yohannes Tefera and Yemanebirahan Kelemework for unreserved professional guidance and continuous encouragements.

I would like to thank Kate (VSO volunteer) for being very kind to edit meticulously my work .Moreover, I would like to extend my heartfelt appreciations to the instructors who were willing not only to be interviewed but also to let me observe their class repeatedly. I am also very grateful for second year English focus students at Jimma Teachers' College for providing me valuable information.

Finally, I would like to take chance to thank my family for encouraging me and taking over some of my responsibilities at home.

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## Abstract

This study was conducted to assess the practices of group work in promoting cooperative learning at Jimma Teachers' College among second year English focus students and instructors. To achieve the objective of the study, descriptive case study was selected as the research design. Thirty- eight second year English focus students, three English language instructors and Spoken English II module were the subjects of the study. To gather information from the students, a questionnaire with close-ended and open-ended items and a focus group discussion with a semi-structured format were employed. However, to elicit data from the instructors, a semi structured interview was employed. Furthermore, all the three teachers were observed in the classroom while using group work as one of their teaching strategies. Group activities from spoken English II module were also analyzed against the principles of cooperative learning.

The data that was collected through the questionnaire was analyzed by using descriptive statistics (frequency and percentage) and the mean value for each item, and grand mean for each table were also calculated. The data gathered through focus group discussion, interview, and classroom observation was analyzed qualitatively whereas, the data obtained from the text analysis was interpreted by using percentages.

Data gathered through questionnaires, focus group discussions, teachers' interviews and classroom observations was then analyzed and discussed together in order to draw some conclusion about the practices of group work in promoting cooperative learning at Jimma Teachers' College. However, the data from text analysis was treated alone.

The results of the study suggested that the practices of group work were found to be ineffective in promoting cooperative learning at Jimma Teachers' college mainly because the instructors did not structure tasks to enable all learners to contribute their fair share to accomplish the group task effectively. To address this problems, recommendation were put forward.

# Chapter One

## Introduction

### 1.1 Background to the study

Language is a tool for communicating our ideas, emotions, experiences whether it is oral or in a written medium. River (1983) states that language is considered as “dead” when it is no more functioning for communicative purposes. This tells us that we need to teach language for the basic reason of enabling learners use the target language in their real life situations to express their inner feelings, to inform others about something they know, to ask question about something that they want to know, to understand what they are told by others orally and in written form. These skills of making use of the target language can only be developed through trying the target language in real life situations. However, this is not an essay thing to do particularly if we teach the target language as a foreign language because students hardly hear and practice the target language outside their classrooms. Hence, it is important to think about the situations that allow learners’ interaction by making use of the target language. Brown (2001) reveals that it is clear that teacher fronted rule based teaching deny students interactions in the classroom.

Using pair work and small group work assist teachers to create interactive environment in language classrooms by allowing learners to use the target language for real life communication purposes. Using small group work in language classrooms other than creating the chance of interaction situations it has also a number of merits. According to Harmer (1991) the advantages that group work has also includes: increasing the amount of students’ practicing time as students engaged in using the target language for communication purpose when they strive to accomplish tasks. In teacher fronted classrooms most of the class time is taken away by a teacher and the amount of time students’ talk is insignificant, but when they work in a group many students speak at a time. Brown (2001) illustrates in group of five in large class of fifty students ten students speak at a time when compared with the teacher led



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class which only one learner could be given the chance of speaking while others listen. In addition to this, working in a group creates a more relaxing environment for learners than a teacher led class due to the fact that in whole class discussion learners' wrong mistakes are publicized to all students and the teacher which many students are not comfortable with. On the other hand, students feel less inhibited and freer to speak and make mistake when they work in a group (Long and Porter, 1995)

Moreover, group work creates a suitable forum for learners to come in to contact with varied opinions. In addition to this, it promotes learners' autonomy by allowing learners to make their own decisions without being told by their teachers. Although teachers provide activities that the learners have to accomplish along with certain instructions, they are freer. They are free to use language they think appropriate to serve their purposes, to include ideas they think useful for their purpose and exclude ideas they think are not appropriate, to select materials they think are important to substantiate their work, and they are relatively freer to make decisions on how they plan and act on the tasks. Group work also improves students' self-reliance. This on the other hand, has motivational value because learners' self-confidence assists them in trying to do things unlike students who are unmotivated and fail even before they start to do on the activities

Although grouping students in language classes to enable them to achieve their common goal through using the target language in a real sense is important and has a number of advantages, if it is not used properly the disadvantages may outweigh the advantages. The group work that we must use for enhancing students' language skills need to be organized in such a way that it promotes cooperative learning .In regard to this, Hill and Flynn (2006) explain how ordinary grouping in the classroom is different from grouping students in a cooperative manner. They give a set of criteria by citing from scholars like (Cochran, 1989;Johnson & Johnson, 1999). One of the criteria is that grouping should be heterogeneous in which students who are different in a number of aspects such as in their sex, ethnicity, and achievement level for example are grouped together. If cooperative learning is sought, the other criterion of grouping students should be in the way that it creates positive interdependence among the learners. Positive interdependence is the feeling that students in a group should develop to "sink or swim together". Face to face interaction is another important element that needs to

be considered to assist learners to learn in cooperation in their group to maximize the benefits that group members get from their effort of learning in a group. The other essential element of cooperative learning that any group work should possess is individual accountability. An individual in a group must be responsible for his own learning and the learning of whole group. Good social skills are also one of the elements that make group work cooperative. It involves interpersonal skills such as trust, leadership, decision making and conflict resolution. The other important element which makes the group work effective in enhancing language skills is group processing which is concerned with reflecting on how well the team is functioning and how it can function even better.

## **1.2. Statement of the problem**

Jimma Teachers' College trains teachers of different subjects for primary schools of Oromiya regional state. English language is one of the subjects in which the college trains teachers. To equip trainees with the appropriate knowledge and English language skills, instructors often use different approaches, teaching methods, techniques and classroom organizations. One of the classroom organization techniques that the instructors use to assist the students to learn is group work. The main purpose of the instructors in using group work is to help the trainees work together by depending on each other through sharing responsibilities and as result learn from each other and their instructors.

However, many instructors, the researcher and the students often complain about problems they face when they use group work for teaching and learning purposes in the college. The instructors often accuse the students for not doing the group work to the expected standards. According to the instructors, the reason why the learners perform below the expected level in their groups tasks can be attributed to different reasons but these reasons lies with the learners: One of the major problems is that group tasks are mostly done by one or two group members while the others merely write their names at the end without contributing anything to the group work. The other reason is that students lack social skills and as a result group work has been the source of conflict among students in the college. Moreover, some students may fail to find group members that they work with as many teachers tell the learners to organize

themselves into groups. This paves the way for students to organize themselves in a group according to the region they come from or according their religious affiliations.

On the other hand, to the knowledge of the researcher the way instructors assign a learner to a particular group has problems. One of the common ways of assigning learners to a group is using the register. This way of assigning learners to a group does not facilitate cooperative learning for the learners because it may let the low achievers to be assigned in one group and also high achievers to the same group. The other common way of grouping learners in the college is through asking the learners themselves to form groups. This way of grouping creates different problems which may hinder the expected outcomes of group activities. There are also teachers who assign learners into groups on the basis of lottery chance.

The researcher feels that there are instructors who use group work only to buy themselves time for a rest and who do not prepare structured tasks which are important to guide the learners in carrying out the group tasks effectively. If the tasks are not structured well for the learners, it is inevitable that learners become confused on how to work on the group tasks effectively. Moreover, the researcher senses that there is not much effort on the parts of the instructors to tackle the issue of students who do not pull their weight in group tasks. On the other hand if group work is not properly organized in line with the principles of cooperative learning, there are two problems which may arise. The first one is that the trainees fail to grasp the required knowledge and skills that are necessary for their career after they graduate. The second problem that arises from ineffective group work in the college extends itself to primary schools of Oromiya where the trainees will be working, as it is inevitable that the potential teachers use the ineffective group work to teach their students at primary schools.

Based on the studies made so far, it is possible to say that no one has addressed, the present study, directly in similar scope and objectives, at least to the knowledge of the researcher. In fact there was a study conducted by Feda (2002). The focus of Feda's study was on assessing how group work was organized in spoken English II classes in two colleges of Oromiya regional state. The course, on which the study was conducted, has already been phased out. It was found from the study that group work suffered at different stages due to organizational problems. On the other hand, the current study focuses on assessing the practices of group work in promoting the five elements of cooperative learning in Jimma Teachers' College

second year English focus class. The other study, which was conducted by Wondewosen (2008) focused on the assessment of group oral lesson in English for New Ethiopia grade seven in promoting cooperative learning. The result of the study was found that lessons in English for Ethiopia grade seven are in line with the criteria of cooperative learning. This study is different in level from the current study as it focused on evaluating students' grade seven textbook. The current study aims to assess the practices of using group work to promote cooperative learning in trainees who are trained to be teachers in primary schools and which take into account different college instructors and trainees.

The other study that was conducted in this area was the one which was conducted by Abay (2008) in Awasa Teachers' College. The focus of this study was the effect of strategy training on students' participation in small group discussion. Abay identified that strategy training in small group discussion improves students' communicative interaction. However, the present study is different in that it focuses on the extent to which group work practices are in line with the cooperative learning principles.

Hence, this study explored the practices of group work in promoting cooperative learning in the Department of English at Jimma Teachers' College. Furthermore, it assessed the challenges that instructors and trainees faced in the college in implementing group work to promote cooperative learning. In addition to these, it identified how learning tasks are structured by teachers to maximize the benefits learners obtained from group work.

### **1.3. Main Objective**

The main objective of this study was to assess the practices of group work in promoting cooperative learning in second year English focus class at Jimma Teachers' College.

### **1.4. Specific Objectives**

In order to achieve the main objective, the study specifically focused on the following specific objectives:



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1. Evaluate whether group work practices in the class under study promotes positive interdependence.
2. Assess whether individual students assume individual accountability when they work in groups in the class under study.
3. Identify whether the group work used in the class under study promotes interactions among learners.
4. Examine whether group work is organized in such a way as to promote social skills.
5. Assess whether group members use group processing periodically to improve learning.

### **1.5 Research Questions**

The study will answer the following research questions.

1. Is the group work that is used by instructors and students structured in such a way as to promote positive interdependence among the learners?
2. Does the group works that instructors and students employ encourage learners to be accountable for their own learning and each group member's learning?
3. Do the learning tasks which are used by instructors and students in group work promote interaction?
4. To what extent does group work promote social skills among learners?
5. Do the group members periodically reflect on the group's progress to decide on the actions to be continued or not be continued?

### **1.6 Significance of the study**

Cooperative learning is one of the techniques which has recently gained wider acceptance in education in general and in foreign language learning in particular. Kohenen in Nunan (1992) says group learning is well recognized as a pedagogical practice that facilitates learning, higher level thinking, and pro-social behavior in students from pre-school to college. Therefore, the study may benefit teachers who teach English as a foreign language and other

teachers who teach using group work as their main technique of classroom organization in the following ways:

1. It may help English language instructors who are currently teaching in Jimma Teachers' College to obtain feedback on how effectively they are using group work to promote cooperative learning.
2. It could give valuable information to language teachers and other teachers who like to use group work as their main technique in classroom organization for teaching.
3. It provides course writers with valuable insights into how groups should be organized and how tasks should be structured in order to get the maximum benefit possible from group work.
4. It may provide teachers with important elements of cooperative learning that they should consider when they organize group tasks.
5. It may prompt other researchers to follow suit and conduct research on group work to deepen the understanding in the area of cooperative learning.

### **1.7 Scope of the study**

The study confined itself to Jimma Teachers' College out of ten teachers training colleges that are found in Oromiya regional state currently. This was due to the reason of proximity and convenience. Furthermore, it was the intention of this study to get in-depth information about the group work that Jimma Teachers' College instructors and students in the department of English second year use in order to promote cooperative learning.

The study covered only second year English focus trainees who were enrolled in Jimma Teachers College and English language instructors who were teaching in the class during the study. Also it was concerned with Spoken English II module for text analysis out of three modules for the second year. Moreover, the study limited itself on assessing the practices of cooperative learning. Thus, it was not the concern of this study to examine the knowledge and attitude of the instructors toward the cooperative learning.

### **1.8. Limitation of the Study**

The subjects of the study were limited to students who were learning in second year English focus class of Jimma Teachers' College and instructors who were teaching the same class during the study was on progress. The study also did not compare cooperative learning with other model language learning types such as individualistic learning and competitive learning. In addition to this, the study confines itself to formal and informal groupings due to the fact that group base grouping is the type of group forming that needs the group members to work together for at least a year (Richards and Rodgers,2001). As a result, the study will not cover this third type of grouping.

## Chapter Two

### Literature Review

In this section literature related to group work and cooperative learning in general are reviewed. In addition cooperative language learning and the role of teachers in cooperative classrooms also have particular focus.

#### 2.1. What is group work?

Group work refers to the activities people whose number are two or more than two accomplish together to achieve their common goal. In this accord (Brown, 2001,p. 177) explains what group work is:

*It is a generic term covering a multiplicity of techniques in which two or more students are assigned a task that involves collaboration and self- initiated language.*

*Note that we commonly call pair work is simply group work in groups of two. It is Also important to note that group work usually implies “small” group work, that is, students in group of perhaps six or fewer. Large grouping defeats one major purposes for doing group work: giving students more opportunity to speak.*

Furthermore, Brown explains that discourse is initiated in group work by the students themselves as opposed to the teacher led whole class discussion in which only the teacher has the right to initiate discourse. Likewise, students’ group work gives learners the opportunity of interacting face to face with each other which in turn lead them to adopt roles that would otherwise be impossible in a teacher dominated class. Each group member equally assumes responsibility for his/her own learning as well as his/her team learning.

As cited in Dorenyi (2003,p.13; Robert Brown 2000,p.3) on the other hand has offered the following minimalist common –sense definition of groups: “A group exists when two or more people define themselves as members of it and when its existence is recognized by at least one another. In other words a group should have the qualities of a ‘group’ when it has become a

psychological reality for insiders and outsider alike'. In addition to this as cited in (Dorenyi ,2003,p.13; Ehrman and Dornyei ,1998,p.72) identified the following features of a group:

1. There is some interaction among group members
2. Group member perceive themselves as distinct unit and demonstrate level of Commitment to it.
3. Group members share some purpose or goal for being together.
4. The group endures for a reasonable period time (i.e not only for minutes)
5. The group has developed some sort of a silent 'internal structure; which includes. The regulation of entry and departure into /from the group rules and standard of behavior for members; relatively stable interpersonal relationship patterns and an established status hierarchy; some division of group roles
6. Finally, as a direct consequence of the above points, the group is held accountable for its members' actions.

Sessa and London (2008, p3 ) similarly define group work as, "Two or more individuals comprise a group. Group members often differ in knowledge, skills, abilities, functions, expertise, and background and are brought together to work interdependently on a task because it is assumed that this is an efficient or better use of resources to get work done than having one person do the task alone." Furthermore, Sessa and London states that group members are expected to know how to work together to get the work done through face to face interaction. Group members are expected to do different tasks such as defining problems, brainstorm, gather data, and evaluate alternatives. Group work is successful when the group members ask questions, seek feedback, experiment, reflect and discuss options and errors.

From the arguments of (Brown, 2001; Dorenyi and murphey ,2003; Sessa and London ,2008) it seems possible to draw the following conclusions.

1. Group can be made from two or more members
2. The ideal sizes of the group in a language class need to be smaller, though it depends on the purpose of grouping.
3. Group members need to be interdependent on each other to accomplish tasks
4. There should be common goal that all group members share.
5. Group members have to have a pattern of interpersonal behavior
6. Group members share resources
7. Face to face interaction should exist
8. There should be individual responsibility
9. Group members ask questions, discuss give and accept feedback and reflect occasionally
10. There should be an internal structure that help assess members progress

From this it is possible to say that group work and cooperative learning are highly correspondent to each other. In regards to this, Jacob (1996, p.100) says, "Cooperative learning is the subset of group work method". If one analyzes the above conclusions drawn from the definitions given to group work, he/she may find almost all the basic elements of cooperative learning which will be discussed below.

## **2.2. Concept of Cooperative Learning**

Cooperative learning is a student centered method, in which learners work in pairs or in a small group on a project or a task to achieve a common goal through helping each other." Each student achieves his or her learning goal if and only if the other group members achieve theirs. Students work together ...to ensure that all group members achieve up to a preset criterion. When all group members reach criteria, each member may receive bonus points" (Johnson, Johnson and Smith,1998, p2). It is the pedagogical use of small groups in which students with various ability, gender, nationalities and different level of social skills work together in such a way that they all strive to attain a common goal and in a situation that all group members feel responsible for their individual learning and also for all group members' learning (Bolukbas & etal. ,2011).

Cooperative language learning particularly contributes to attaining better language learning results in foreign language learning, as the ultimate goal of foreign language learning is to achieve communicative competence. Stenlev (2003) states that cooperative language learning gives opportunity for learners to communicate in the target language not just for the sake of doing exercises to emphasize language rules aimed for future communication. When students use the target language in small groups in a situation that fosters cooperative learning in foreign language class it increases learner's self-esteem and reduces intimidation especially among weaker students. Hill and Flynn (2006) elaborate that using cooperative learning in language classes and other subjects prevent boredom and learners going off task.

### **2.3. Benefits of Cooperative language learning**

Cooperative learning is one of the classroom techniques that has recently gained wider acceptance among the scholars of education. This is due to the fact that a considerable amount of research over the last four decades has showed that cooperative learning proved to be effective. In this accord, Jones and Jones (2008) say that cooperative learning is among the well-researched areas of teaching and found to be one of the most effective ways for students to maximize their own learning and academic accomplishments of their peers. According to (Walters,2000; Jenkins, Antil, Wayne, Vadasy, 2003; Zhang , 2010) the following are some of the benefits of using cooperative learning groups:

#### **2.3.1. Cooperative Learning Empowers and Involves Students.**

Cooperative learning enhances students' self-esteem because the learners are learning something on their own through cooperation, rather than being handed ready-made knowledge. However, when learners have low self-esteem they will have low productivity because they set low goals for themselves, lack confidence in their ability and they think that they will not succeed no matter hard they try. They will also be critical of others as well as themselves by looking for flaws in others. Moreover, whenever learners have low self-esteem they withdraw socially due to the feeling awkward and self-conscious. There are also

susceptible to rejection. Moreover, when students have low self-esteem, they have a tendency to agree, be highly influenced by others, affected by criticism. In addition to this, they may develop psychological problems such as anxiety, nervousness, depression etc. Generally cooperative learning helps the learners to develop self-esteem that may assist them to be self-sufficient, self-directed, life-long learners.

### **2.3.2. Lower Achieving pupils Gain Confidence and Motivation.**

By working collaboratively with higher achieving students, low achieving students are able to take part in activities without feeling they lack necessary skills and understanding. By being actively involved in the lessons activities (instead of being bored or frustrated) they are less prone to disrupt. The high ability students also benefit through the process of guiding and supporting their fellow group members; their understanding of the material is increased.

### **2.3.3. Participation and Practice**

Cooperative learning is particularly useful for students who are learning English as a foreign language, because it gives learners' opportunity to practice the target language for its real use when they try to accomplish the tasks. In non-cooperative classrooms, teachers often talk most of the time and only a few of the brightest pupils have the opportunity to participate. In cooperative learning everyone talks: sometimes to peers in small groups, sometimes to the full group to report a group's findings.

### **2.3.4. Improved Discipline**

One of the advantages of cooperative learning is that it creates a good atmosphere in the class. This frees the teacher from the role of maintaining social control in favor of providing support to individuals and small groups. The teacher spends more time teaching and less time managing pupils. Greater participation from learners actually helps their academic

achievement and language development. In well managed cooperative learning classrooms, pupils spend more time engaged in learning tasks .At the same time learners become more active, self- directed and communicative as they work cooperatively.

### **2.3.5. Creating Effective Climate**

If the foreign language classes are meant for developing the language skills of the learners, the classroom situations should be a place where learners can practice communicating with the foreign language. On the other hand, to help the learners practice in the target language, it is vital to establish a social and effective climate in which students practice in the target language without being restricted, aggressive, or feared. Cooperative learning, like other group work, offers a relaxed climate in the classroom, while it also increases student motivation. Individuals have the opportunity to rehearse their answers before being asked to offer them in front of the whole class so their anxiety and fear of failure may reduce. Time to think and receive feedback form group members, and the greater likelihood of success reduce anxiety and can result in increased participation in learning language. Therefore, more participation will inevitably increase learners' self-confidence and self-esteem.

### **2.3.6. Increasing a Variety of Language Functions**

Cooperative language learning gives a greater opportunity to produce language in a functional manner. In a traditional classroom, discourse is usually initiated by the teacher in an artificial setting, but cooperative learning can be used a mimic real-life social settings. For a specific purpose in accomplishing the group task, cooperative groups can be helpful to students in developing their social abilities. Students may find themselves involve in requesting, clarifying, making suggestions, encouraging, disagreeing, negotiating of meaning, exchanging conversation during group work. Working in cooperative learning groups will foster learner discourse control and thereby ensure opportunities for language learning.

### 2.3.7. Cognitive Development

In cooperative learning learners use their thinking skills as they compare their views with others in order to come to an agreement and prepare information to present to the rest of the class. Throughout this process, pupils gain practice in the use of the language necessary to carry out these tasks – practice that is varied, purposeful, and directed to the range of pupils’ proficiency levels.

### 2.3.8. Fostering Learner Responsibility and Independence

The final aim of cooperative learning is to make each student a stronger individual through doing work cooperatively. Cooperative learning, therefore, emphasizes individual accountability. It places responsibility for action and progress on each of the members of the group. Positive role and goal interdependence help students to become more autonomous and self-controlled and less dependent upon outside authority, and over time, they will gradually move from interdependence to independence.

### 2.3.9. Developing Social Skill

Cooperative learning also aids students in developing social skills. Teaching appropriate social behaviors to students is increasingly important. Cooperative situations help students learn these skills by working together. In addition to learning social skills, cooperative learning has a positive impact on the classroom environment; content of the communication, students’ self-esteem, attendance, students’ attitudes towards education, and students’ psychological health.



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## **2.4. Basic elements of Cooperative learning**

There are five basic components of cooperative learning. In order to say that group works promote cooperative learning in a given classroom, the group work successfully passes the tests of these basic elements of cooperative learning: positive interdependence, individual accountability, social skills, promoting interaction and group processing.

### **2.4.1 Positive interdependence**

Positive interdependence in group work is the situation in which students assist each other to achieve an academic goal that is set for them. It is a situation in which each learner perceives he/she can attain his/her goal only when other group members also attain theirs. In relation to this, Kagan (2009) states that positive interdependence creates mutual support among students and it is also increases the frequency and quality of peer tutoring. When the group is positively interdependent, each group member needs the other to complete the task. In a classroom, putting learners in a group and asking them to work on a particular activity may not assist in helping learners grasp the required knowledge and language skills. To help them to be effective in their group tasks, teachers need to be aware on how they organize the learners in a group to enable them positively interdependent as opposed to negative interdependence. In this accord, Johnson & Johnson in Gillies, Ashman & Terwel (2008) state that when students are in a cooperative or competitive situation, they are oriented toward the required outcome, goal or reward. If there is no outcome interdependence (goal and reward interdependence), there is no cooperation. Moreover, the means through which a common goal or reward interdependence should be achieved is important because it specifies the actions that are required to be taken on the part of group members. Means interdependence includes resource interdependence, role interdependence, and task interdependence which are overlapping and are not independent from each other.

According to (Rohanen in Nunan ,1992; Jacob &Ball 1996; Richards & Rodgers, 2001;Johnson &Johnson in Gillies, Ashman & Terwel,2008) in classroom group

interdependence can be created through assigning a role for each group member , setting a common goal ,giving joint rewards and by distributing shared information .

Role interdependence can be created through assigning each learner a particular share that he/she has to play while working in a group to reach the group's common goal. According to Jacob (2003) the roles that teachers may assign to the learners include group facilitator, group recorder, group language monitor etc. As it is stated in Liang (2002) doing this has further advantages learners are to made depend on each other to accomplish their jobs and this creates responsibility in each learner to contribute to the group's achievement. In addition to, positive group interdependence can be structured by getting students to think that the goal of the whole group ensures the learning of all group members. It through creating such a notion in the mind of the learners, that positive goal interdependence can be created. Moreover, positive goal interdependence can be encouraged by requiring the whole group to produce a single piece of work and by giving each individual member a test from which the group results would be averaged. When each group member receives a reward based on his/her own and group's achievement, positive group interdependence can be created. Resource interdependence is created when each group member possesses specific resources needed for the group as a whole and when they share each other's resource to achieve their common goals.

Research on positive interdependence revealed that goal interdependence is one of the factors that contribute to much higher achievement and greater productivity. In connection with this, Johnson & Johnson, in Gillies, Ashman & Terwel (2008,pp.21-22) explain the effect of goal interdependence, material interdependence and reward interdependence as follows.

1. Positive goal interdependence promotes higher achievement and greater productivity than resource interdependence.
2. Positive goal and reward interdependence tend to be additive; while positive goal interdependence is sufficient to produce higher achievement and productivity than do individualistic efforts, the combination of goal and reward interdependence tends to increase achievement more than goal interdependence alone or individualistic efforts
3. Resource interdependence by itself may decrease achievement and productivity compared with individualistic efforts .That is, when individuals need the resources of other group members but do not share common goals, the emphasis tends to be on

obtaining resources from others without sharing one's own resources with them. The result tends to be an interference with each other's productivity.

4. Both working to achieve a reward and working to avoid the loss of a reward produced higher achievement than did individualistic efforts. There is no significant difference between the working to achieve a reward and working to avoid a loss.
5. Positive interdependence does more than simply motivate individuals to try harder; it facilitates the development of new insights and discoveries through promotive interaction. Members of cooperative groups use higher level reasoning strategies more frequently than do individuals working individualistically or competitively.
6. The more complex the procedures involved in interdependence, the longer it will take group members to reach their full levels of productivity. The more complex the teamwork procedures, the more members have to attend to teamwork and the less time they have to attend to task work. Once the teamwork procedures are mastered, however, members concentrate on task work and outperform individuals working alone.
7. Studies on identity interdependence involving social dilemmas have found that when individuals define themselves in terms of their group membership, they are more willing to take less from common resources and to contribute more toward the public good.

#### **2.4.2. Individual accountability**

Individual accountability occurs when an individual learner feels responsible for accomplish his /her portion of work and the team work. As a result no member's whose portion of work is done for him/ her by the remaining members of the teammates. In connection to this, Sarfo (2011) says that each member of the group needs to have something to contribute for the group success. He/she has to pull his/her own weight by himself/herself. When the performance of a person affects the group result, the person feels responsible but when his contribution does not have any effect on his teammates' achievement he does not responsible. In connection to this, Johnson & Johnson in Gillies, Ashman & Terwel (2008,p.22) say, "Failing oneself is bad, but failing others as well as oneself is worse"

Cooperation brings about higher achievement when individual accountabilities are structured than when it is not structured. Group members reduce their efforts when individual contribution is difficult to identify. In addition to this, group members reduce their efforts when there is the lack of group cohesiveness and when there is lessened responsibility for the final outcome. On the other hand, when the number of group members increases, the accountability of individual learners decreases. Therefore, to maintain accountability the number students in a group should be as small as possible. In connection to this, Brown (2001) explains, team performance actually improved when one team member was missing from five-person team, perhaps because members believed that their contributions were more necessary.

### **2.4.3. Face to face interaction**

According to (Jacob 2003) and Richards and Rodgers (2001) promoting interaction refers to individuals promoting each other's productivity and achievement through face to face interaction during the group activity. It occurs as individuals encourage and support each other in order to reach their common goal. Promotive interaction manifests itself in different ways in cooperative group works. An individual in a group needs to share resources and information among teammates. Group members should provide each other with feedback on the portion of work each should do to improve subsequent performance and assign tasks and responsibilities, challenge each other's and reasoning in order to promote higher quality decision making and greater insight into the problems being considered, and promote face to face interaction. Positive interdependence alone does not generate the degree and intensity of interaction required in cooperative learning activities alone but also team members need to think that ongoing interaction particularly face-to-face interaction is important for success some tasks may be positively interdependent, but may not be evident in promoting interaction.

#### **2.4.4. Group processing**

Rohanen in Nunan(1992) and Kagan, (2009) identify group processing as the situation in which group members meet and reflect on how well they plan and how they function during the group work in order to identify the jobs that are helpful and unhelpful , which jobs need to be changed and which need be continued. The purpose of group processing is to discuss and plan how group members improve and enhance effectiveness of group activity in the subsequent work. In order to make the group processing work effective, teachers need to allow sufficient time for it to take place. Moreover, it should made specific rather than vague , by maintaining students' involvement, reminding students to apply their social skills during the processing and making sure that the purpose of the processing is communicated.

According to Johnson and Johnson (1994), there are two levels of group processing. The first one is small group processing where the instructor should assign time at the end of each class session for each cooperative group to assess how effectively members worked together. Groups required describe which member actions were helpful and which were unhelpful in completing the group tasks and make decisions about what behavior to continue or change. Doing this helps the groups to focus on maintaining good working relationships among members. It also enables the members to receive feedback on their participation, ensures that students think on the metacognitive as well as the cognitive level and helps to enforce positive behavior of the group by providing a chance to celebrate success together.

The second level of group processing is whole class processing in which the instructor should periodically engage in collecting information about how the groups were working together by using a formal observation sheet. After analysis is made about information obtained from moving systematically from group to group the instructor conducts whole class processing

### **2.4.5. Social skills**

One of the essential elements of cooperative learning is social skills or interpersonal skills. In order to coordinate efforts in group work, social skills such as getting to know and trust each other, communicating accurately and efficiently, accepting and supporting each other and resolving conflicts cooperatively are very important. However, in order to gain these skills learners need to be taught these skills. In relation to this Johnson and Johnson (1994) state that small group skills does not magically appear when they are needed. The students should be given training if social skills are required for high quality collaboration and productivity in group work. The more students are proficient in social skills and the more the instructors pay attention to teaching and rewarding the use of social skills the higher the achievement that can be expected within cooperative learning groups. Regarding implementation of cooperative learning, Liang( 2002) says that it is very important to teach students social skills explicitly so that students could work among themselves, not only in terms of cooperation but also without hostility and without the teacher's authority.

## **2.5. Cooperative Learning Tasks**

As Shaaban and Ghaith (2005) point out, cooperative learning is a generic term that refers to different methods for organizing and conducting classroom instructions. Almost any teacher can find a way to use cooperative learning that complements his or her philosophy and practices. So many teachers use cooperative learning in many different ways. Although it is difficult to give a full list of the types or activities, some which have gained wider acceptance and are relevant to foreign language learning are explored below:

### **2.5.1 Three-Step Interview**

The Three step interview can be used in the foreign language class to give the students a purpose for discussion by assigning role to students. In the three step interview, student A interviews student B for specific information, student B listens attentively and asks probing questions. When A finishes B interviews A for the same kind of information through listening attentively and asking probing questions. After that the pair joins another pair and starts to report information that they have obtained from their partners (Stenleve, 2003). One example could be that the students interview each other about which of the two stories they have read they find more interesting and why, which person in a short story they find most realistic/interesting/ intelligent and why, etc. In the process, the person being interviewed will not only have to express himself or herself in the target language he will also become involved in an interpretation process.

### **2.5.2. Number Heads**

Each student is given number from one to five ( if the intention is to get the students to work in group of five). Then the teacher gives them the task of should discussing until all group members agree on the answer and each group member feels confident to explain their answer on the behalf of the group. After a silent signal is given, the teacher calls out a number and only those who designated by the number will raise hands to respond on the behalf of the team. It is also possible to move a selected student to the next group where he/she explain the team's answer. The presentation to the new team is not only proof that the material has been mastered but also on the opportunity to share new knowledge.(McCloskey,2005)

### **2.5.3. Think - pair-Share**

Stenlev (2003) explains think- pair- share as that the teacher asks a question the whole group. Then, students work out solutions individually. After that, students pair up and discuss their answers. After a signal for silence students share their responses with whole group.

#### **2.5.4. Team Practice from Common in put –Skills Development and Mastery of Facts**

Team practice from common in put follows the traditional teacher directed presentation of certain material. Students are put in their small groups where they are required to consolidate their understanding of the material presented. Each group member has to understand the material and answer all the questions that are set in connection with the material at hand. Because students want their team do well, they coach and tutor each other to enable any member of the group to answer for all of them and explain the team's answer .When the teacher takes up the question or assignment, any one from the group could be called on to explain answer on the behalf of the group. This technique is particularly good for review and practice tests; the group takes the practice test together, but each student has to take the review test individually. The technique is efficient in situations when the composition of the group is unstable.(Richards and Rodgers,2001)

#### **2.5.5. Jigsaw**

Each group member receives a different piece of information in their original group. Then they are regrouped in a topic group (expert group) which contains one member from every group of the original groups. Students with similar information discuss their specific material until they can master it and are sure that they can explain it to others. Then each group member returns back to his/ her home group where he/ she is expected to explain what he /she has learned to the rest of the group members. After all the group members have shared their piece of information, the home group works hard to synthesize the information. The home group should rehearse the whole material that has been synthesized and prepare themselves for presentation. Each group member has to play his/her part in presentation. Finally all members take a test on the whole material.(Shaaban and Ghaith, 2005)

### **2.5.6. Students-Teams-Achievement Division (STAD)**

Students Team Achievement Division Technique starts with direct teaching of material or discussion, involve some audio visual presentation of material. Following the direct teaching, students are grouped in a heterogeneous group based on their academic achievements. They study worksheets, discuss problems together, compare answers, correct misconceptions, and coach and tutor each other. The major function of the team is to promote each other's learning. After that, all students take individual quizzes, students are not allowed to help each other. This ensures that every student is responsible for knowing the material. Students' quiz scores are compared with their previous scores. Students earn points for their teams based on how much they exceeded their previous scores. When students make progress on their quizzes, the whole are compared to their past average. When students make progress on their quizzes, the whole group's performance improves. Finally if students' average score exceeds certain criteria the team can be awarded certificate or other rewards.

### **2.5.7. Teams-Games-Tournaments (TGT)**

In this technique of cooperative learning, the lesson plan consists of five components: classroom presentation, team study, a tournament determining individual improvement points, and team recognition. It begins with the teacher's introduction of the material under study in a class presentation, it is followed by grouping the learners into heterogeneous group of four members each, making sure that all team members have understood the material. A tournament is then held at the end of the unit or the week during which team representatives of similar level ability (high, average, low,) compete together to earn points for their teams. Finally, the achievements of the teams are determined by calculating the average improvements earned by the members of the team. Team- game tournament lends itself in particular to teaching of spelling language rules and the mechanics of the target language.

### **2.5.8. Round Robin/Roundtable**

This activity is useful for brainstorming, writing, and reviewing concepts and vocabulary. It can be initiated by the teacher writing a question he wants his students to answer on the blackboard. Then he divides the students into groups of 3 or 4. Each group member writes his/her answer on a paper and passes it on to the other group member. The answer written by one group member cannot be repeated by the other student. Students continue to add responses until the teacher calls time (3 to 5 minutes). The teacher asks one student from each group to name as many answers as he/she can remember. Students are asked not to repeat an answer already stated by another group. The teacher records each group's answers on the board or chart paper.

### **2.6. The Teacher's Role in Cooperative Learning**

Teachers need to play a number of crucial roles in order to help learners learn cooperatively while they work in groups. During group work the teacher is likely to become group creator, mediator, organizer, coach, mentor and adviser in resolving internal group problems. Moreover, he/she is responsible for dealing with issues of inequity, allocating and moderating grades and providing useful feedback to individuals and groups. Hence teachers who wish to use cooperative learning in their classes need to base their practice on theories validated by research unlike some teachers who instruct learners to get in to their groups and complete activities which are found in a textbook without considering any different ways of organizing their classes. Example of this include not assigning roles that learners need to play, not structuring the tasks in such way that they need student's cooperation and not setting criteria for success both for the team and individual members. In relation to this, Johnson and Johnson in Gillies, Ashman & Terwel (2008) says that the relation between theory and practice makes the classroom situations somewhat unique.

According to, Richard and Rodgers (2001) there are three types of cooperative learning \_\_\_ formal, informal and cooperative base group.

## **2.6.1. Formal Cooperative group**

Formal cooperative learning group consists of members who work together from one class up to several weeks. The purpose is to achieve shared learning goals, complete different learning task together. The roles of teachers in formal cooperative group include the following:

### **2.6.1.1. Making pre-instructional decisions**

According to Richards and Rodgers (2001) the roles of teachers in cooperative learning very different from the role of teachers in traditional teacher fronted lesson. Teachers are expected to create a highly structured and well organized learning situation in the classroom. Johnson and Johnson in Gillies, Ashman & Terwel,( 2008) identify the pre- instructional decisions that teachers need to make to implement the formal cooperative learning. The pre-instructional decisions that the teachers have to make include:

- (a) Formulating both academic and social skills objectives; the social objectives deals with the interpersonal and group skills that students have to learn as they work in group.
- (b) deciding on the size of groups: deciding the number of learners who should be assigned in a group
- (c) choosing a method for assigning students to groups: deciding on whether learners, are grouped in their achievement level like high achievers, medium achiever and low achievers or whether we use different methods
- (d) deciding which roles to assign group members; this helps to establish role interdependence of learners.
- (e) arranging the room; this helps the teacher to establish environmental interdependence and
- (f) arranging the materials students need to complete the assignment. This helps teachers to establish material interdependence .

### **2.6.1.2. Explaining the instructional task and cooperative structure**

The second major role that teachers in formal cooperative group should play is explaining one instructional task and cooperative structure: This may encompasses a number of activities

a teacher who is implementing formal cooperative group type of cooperative learning should do. According to Johnson and Johnson in Gillies, Ashman & Terwel (2008), these activities include the following: one of them is explaining the academic assignment that the learners should accomplish in the course of cooperative learning .The other activity which is very important is structuring positive interdependence among learners .Structuring accountability is another activity which is equally important to explaining the academic assignment and structuring interdependence in a formal cooperative group. Explaining the expected social behaviors and emphasizing intergroup cooperation are also important activities that teachers need to consider. These help the instructor to avoid individual competition among the learners. Moreover, teachers may teach concept and learning strategies that students should use in order to complete the task at hand.

The third major role that teachers are expected to play during implementing formal cooperative group is monitoring students' learning and intervention to provide assistance. While conducting the lesson the teacher moves around the groups and monitors each group's learning and intervenes when the need arises to improve task work and teamwork. In addition to intervening the teacher's movement around the learners while they are engaged in groups, work helps him/her to collect important data which help the teacher to plan for later interventions (Richards & Rodgers, 2001)

According to Johnson and Johnson in Gillies, Ashman & Terwel (2008), the fourth major role that teachers play in formal cooperative learning is assessing students' learning and helping students to process how well their groups functioned. This brings closure to the lesson. During this time, students' achievements are assessed and evaluated quantitatively and qualitatively. Moreover, the teacher assesses how well students worked together and judge how well each group performed. This in turn enables the teacher to make students plan for improvement and make students celebrate the hard work of the group in a form of reward interdependence.

### **2.6.2. Informal Cooperative Learning**

Informal cooperative learning consists of students who work together temporarily for the time that lasts for a few minutes to one period class. Teachers mainly use informal cooperative learning: to focus students attention on materials to be learned, set conducive environment for learning, help set expectation and summarize what was learned ( Rohanen in Nunan,1992).

### **2.6.3. Cooperative Base Group**

Cooperative base groups are long term, heterogeneous cooperative learning groups with stable members usually they last from a whole semester to a year. According to Johnson & Johnson in Gillies, Ashman & Terwel (2008) the role of teachers' in cooperative base group includes:

- (a) forming heterogeneous groups of four or three
- (b) scheduling a time when they will regularly meet (such as beginning and end of each class session or the beginning and end of each week);
- (c) creating specific agendas with concrete tasks that provide a routine for base for groups to follow when they meet;
- (d) ensuring the five basic elements of effective cooperative groups are implemented; and
- (e) having students periodically process the effectiveness of their base groups

## **Chapter Three**

### **Research Methodology**

This chapter presents the methods of study that were used in order to assess the practices of group work in promoting cooperative learning in the second year English focus students and instructors at Jimma Teachers' College. In addition to this, techniques of data collection, population size, characteristics of participants and method of data presentation and analysis were discussed.

#### **3.1 Design of the study**

The intention of this study was to assess the practices of group work in promoting cooperative learning in second year English focus class of Jimma Teachers' College. Hence, it seems logical to use a descriptive study as a research design. Gray (2004) states that descriptive study is concerned with describing the characteristics of a particular person or group. Moreover, this study uses quantitative and qualitative data that will be secured from instructors, students and analysis of teaching material.

#### **3. 2. Subjects of the Study and Sampling Techniques**

There were three groups of English focus students who were learning in the English department of Jimma Teachers' College from year one to year three. From the three groups second year students were selected through purposive sampling technique. Third year students left the college for two months of teaching practice during the time the data for this study had to be collected and the first year students had not yet had adequate exposure to group work in the college hence there was concern that the researcher might not get appropriate information from them.

In the second year there were 39 students out of which 22 were female and 17 were male. All the students of the class under study were the subjects of the study. For the focus group discussions however, only 24 students were selected based on their three semester results. First the students were grouped into three categories: high achievers, medium achievers and low achievers. To group the students, *Rules and Regulations of Jimma College of teacher Education* was consulted. Accordingly, the regulation identifies students whose CGPA (cumulative grade point average) above 3.25 as high achievers as it entitles them being distinction students. However, the rule and regulation of the college is silent about medium achievers and low achievers. Nevertheless, there is a censuses in the college that those students whose CGPA is 2.5 and above are medium students and those whose CGPA below 2.5 are low achievers. Hence the researcher used 3.25 and above, 2.5 and above, below 2.5 as cutting points to select high achievers, medium achievers and low achievers respectively. Due to the number of students whose CGPA between 2.5 and 3.25 are greater than the high achievers and low achievers combined two groups of focus group discussion were selected from medium achievers.

On the other hand, all the three English instructors who were offering course to the class under study during the data was collected were also made the subjects of the study. From the three teachers two of them were MA holders in TEFL (teaching English as a foreign Language) and taught English for 10 and 8 years. The other one was BA holder in English language teaching and he had 30 years of English teaching experience.

Among the three modules which the class under study was using, Spoken English II was selected through purposive sampling method. One of the other modules was not selected because the module did not make clear which activities had to be completed in a group and which were to be completed individually. The third module was not selected because there was no enough activity in the module that students had to do and also it was not clear also that whether the activities have to be completed in groups. To decide which activities need to be examined against the objectives of the study from the module selected, first the units were selected through simple random sampling method. From 6 units in the module three of them were selected by using lottery system. All group activities in the units selected were examined against the objectives of the study.

### **3.3. Data Collection Instruments**

To secure valuable information as to what extent group work practices promote cooperative learning, different data collection instruments were used:

#### **3.3.1. Questionnaire**

Questionnaire is one of the most important research instruments which is simple for the respondents to indicate their responses. It is particularly appropriate to collect information from a large number of informants. Therefore, it was employed to 39 students who were learning in the class under the study. The questionnaire was made up of seven sections. The first part contains only one closed ended question which was concerned with the presence of group work in the class under study. The second section of the questionnaire which comprised five closed ended questions was intended to secure data about positive interdependence. The third section of the questionnaire had four closed-ended items which was used to illicit information about individual accountability. The fourth section also consisted of four closed items which were intended to secure data about promotive interaction (face- to- face interaction). The fifth section comprised three closed-ended items which aimed to secure whether social skills were cultivated in the class under study during group work. The six section contains four close ended items which were used to obtain information about group processing by the learner themselves and the instructors during the group work is in progress. The last section consists of two open- ended questions which were intended to secure data about the strengths of group work and also the weaknesses of group work in the class under study.

The questionnaire was translated into Afan Oromo before it was given to the learners just to avoid any language barrier that may hamper information given.

### **3.3.2. Interview**

Due to the peculiar nature of interview to create a clear pictures of situations, all the instructors who were teaching English courses in the class under study were interviewed to obtain information about the extent to which practices of group work promote cooperative learning among learners. The items for the interview were semi-structured to help the researcher control the direction of the interview towards the information needed. The interview consists of seven general questions with extra questions in each item which the researcher used to control the direction of the interview and to illicit more information .The interview was conducted after classroom observation to protect any artificiality might happen during classroom observation.

### **3.3.3. Focus group discussion**

Focus group discussion is one of the data gathering instruments that helps to collect qualitative data. It is known by its very nature to elicit information from the subjects of a study. Hence, there were focus group discussions in which four groups of students from the class under study took part in the discussion. The group of students was selected to include high achievers, medium achievers and low achievers. This was due to the fact that a heterogeneous group provides varied and in-depth information which can represent all subjects of a study. In addition, to illicit information from the participants the homogeneity of the group is important. In connection to this, Zaltan (2007) states that “ ...in order to obtain a wide range of information, the usual strategy is to have several groups which as a whole are different from each but each of which is made up of similar people; this is usually referred to as ‘ segmentation’ and it involves within- group heterogeneity and homogeneity and intergroup heterogeneity and involves within group homogeneity in the sample.” Thus, four focus groups of students in which each group contained six students were organized and interviewed through semi-structured items. According to (Marczyk, DeMatteo & FeStinger, 2005 & Zoltan, 2007), in focus group discussion the number of participants should not be

fewer than six if it is less than that, it restricts diversity of opinion obtained from the participants and also the number of participants should not exceed ten, if it exceeds that it makes it difficult for the participants to give their comprehensive opinion. The discussion was conducted in Afan Oromo in order to put the participants at ease and enable them to give the information without a language barrier. In addition to this, the discussions were videotaped to enable the researcher to access them again and again.

### **3.3.4. Classroom observation**

In order to triangulate the information that was obtained from students and teachers, classroom observations were conducted. Classroom observation is one of the data gathering instruments which may serve to get information which is not readily available from interviewee either because the interviewee does not recognize its existence or doesn't want to disclose the information. The researcher on the other hand can observe the situations in their natural setting and gather relevant information. Cohen, Manion & Marrison (2000) say that observational data are attractive as they give the researcher the chance to gather 'live' data from 'live' situations. In this study the researcher employed classroom observation to gather firsthand information about the practices of group work in promoting cooperative learning in the class under study.

To conduct the classroom observation, the researcher used a semi-structured checklist. The check list was prepared parallel to the basic elements of cooperative learning in mind.

Each of the three teachers was observed four times with an interval of two days at least to avoid the observation of the same lesson twice. The first observation for each of the instructors was not registered because the researcher wanted to become familiar with the classroom situations. After each observation, the researcher conducted informal interview with instructors about the group work that they organize in their classes.

### **3.3.5. Content and Task Analysis of Teaching Materials**

It is inevitable that classroom techniques are influenced by the teaching materials that are used to teach. Therefore, the teaching module that was used in class under study was analyzed in terms of the basic five elements of cooperative learning. Spoken English II was selected to be analyzed through purposive sampling method and all the tasks from the three units which were suggested by the course writers to be accomplished in groups were analyzed against the basic five elements of cooperative learning. To conduct the analysis of the tasks and contents 5 tables were used to examine each five elements of cooperative learning at a time.

To decide whether the tasks were in line with the basic principles of cooperative learning along with the researcher one rater was provided training on the basic principles of cooperative learning and the researcher and the other rater first individually decided whether the sub elements of cooperative learning existed or not for all the five basic principles after that they came together and saw the differences and they discussed to convince each other to decide on the right assessment.

### **3.4. Techniques of Data Analysis**

As has already been mentioned questionnaire, focus group discussion, interview, classroom observation and text analysis were the instruments used to collect the data from students and instructors. Data that was obtained from thirty-eight students through questionnaire was tallied and tabulated first. In addition to this, percentage and mean were also calculated for each item and also the grand mean was calculated for each section. Moreover, data which were secured from the students' questionnaire were analyzed separately and presented together with other data with the exception of data obtained from text analysis .On the other hand, the data that were secured from students' focus group discussion were transcribed and also analyzed separately first and then presented together with data that were obtained from questionnaire, interview and classroom observation.

The data that were found from the instructors through the interview were transcribed first and analyzed and presented with other data that were secured from other sources. Moreover, the

data which were obtained from classroom observations were used to triangulate students' and instructors' responses which were secured from questionnaires, focus group discussions and interviews. However, the information that was secured from text analysis were analyzed and presented separately.

## **Chapter Four**

### **Presentation and Discussion of the Data**

#### **4.1. Introduction**

As it has been already stated, the aim of this study was to assess the practices of group work in promoting cooperative learning in Jimma Teachers' College second year English focus students and instructors. To collect the relevant data, questionnaire, focus group discussion, interview, classroom observation and text analysis were employed. The information obtained through these instruments were presented and analyzed in this chapter. For convenience, the data that were obtained from text analysis was treated separately whereas the remaining data was analyzed together.

The chapter is divided into eight different sections. In the first section data secured from students through focus group discussion, instructors' interview and classroom observation about common group size used and how students used to be assigned to a particular group in class under study were examined. In the second section data about positive interdependence of the learners and whether teachers structure positive interdependence were presented and analyzed. In the third section the data about individual accountability of the learners and whether teachers structure individual accountability was examined. In the fourth section the data on promotive interaction (face to face interaction) of the learners was presented and analyzed. Whereas, in the fifth section data gathered about the social skills of the learners and how the instructors promote social skills was treated. In the sixth section on the other hand, data obtained about group processing learners did while they were engaged in their group tasks and how the instructors used to practice group processing was presented and discussed. In the seventh section, data concerned with the presentation and analysis of open-ended items

of the questionnaire were looked at. In the final section the data obtained on text analysis was presented and analyzed.

## **4.2. Group size and Assigning Students to a Particular group**

In this section information gathered through students' focus group discussions, instructors' interviews and classroom observations about the common group size and how the instructors were assigning the students to a particular group were presented and discussed.

With regard to the group size, both instructors and students were interviewed. During focus group discussion the students reported that the size of groups that their instructors organize ranges from 2-8 students in a group. However, they added that the size of the groups could sometimes be as big as 10 students in a group. In addition to this, the learners also commented that the sizes of the groups vary from instructor to instructor and from activity to activity. Nevertheless, the instructors' view of group size differs from that of the students. One of the teachers said that the common group size that he uses for teaching in his class ranges from 5-6 students. However, when he gives a group work that the learners should do over several classes he may organize seven to eight learners in a group. The second teacher claimed that he forms groups with a maximum number of 5 students, but he pointed out that he prefers 2-4 students in a group while the third instructor stated that the numbers of students that he assigns in a group are 2-3 only unless otherwise the objectives of the tasks require him to assign more students in a group.

Although the instructors claim that they use smaller groups, classroom observations indicated that in practice instructors organize groups as big as seven students. This number roughly corresponds with the responses of focus group discussion held with the students. Although it is not possible to exactly decide what the ideal number of students should be assigned in a group, particularly in a foreign language classes groups size should not be too big as the intention is to get the learners to interact with the target language. If the group size is bigger all members may not have the opportunity to share their views using the target language. On

the other hand if they do not get the chance to express themselves in their groups there is nowhere that they can experiment with their language skills. Furthermore, if the groups are bigger, it is easier for those learners who prefer to remain hidden, as a result they don't participate. In connection to this Brown (2001) says that group work implies "small group work", usually groups of six or fewer students. Large groups defeat one of the major purposes for doing group work that is giving students more opportunity to use the target language for interaction. On the other hand Jacob and Hall in Richards and Renandya (2002) say that to obtain meaningful face to face observation the group size should be 2-4 members only.

As it has been already mentioned above, the instructors argued that they vary their group sizes from activity to activity. But during the classroom observation one of the instructors organized students in groups of seven and asked them to share their views "what could be the causes of disciplinary problems in the classrooms." This activity should be done in groups of two students such as in the activities like think share pair, timed share pair and three steps interview rather than having bigger groups of seven. Having smaller groups have the advantage of giving each learner an opportunity to use the target language as they allows more time for each learner. The other advantage of working in pair over working in seven is that the learners are forced to depend on each other while they work in pair. Furthermore, smaller groups (pair works) allow the instructors to create individual accountability.

The other instructor was observed telling the learners to form a group of five, of their own choice and the learners formed groups that ranged from four to seven students and he told them to discuss the reasons why people compliment each other. In this situation also the task would have benefited the students more, if it had been done in group of two or three learners. This is due to the fact that more students would have had the opportunity to practice the language and the smaller the number of students in a group, the more the students feel responsible to accomplish the activities.

With regard to what criteria the instructors use to assign learners to a particular group, almost all the learners according to the focus group discussion, reported that their instructors use the

order in their register. For example, if the intention of an instructor is to assign students to groups of five, the first five students in the register list are assigned to the same group and the other consecutive five students are assigned to the next group. The other way that the students who were interviewed said how they are assigned to a particular group by their instructors is based on a lottery system. This can be done through getting each learner to draw a card on which numbers or group names are written on, and those students who draw the same number or the same group name will form one group. Furthermore, the students stated that their English course instructors assign them to groups based on their sitting proximity in the classroom. In addition to these there are instructors who call one student to the front and ask him/her to select a member from the class and each selected also calls anybody he/she needs. The respondents revealed also that sometimes the instructors form groups through mixing male and female students.

Similarly all the three instructors who were interviewed also said that they sometimes use the register list in order to assign the learners to particular groups especially at times when they group students more than one class time. In addition to this, all the instructors confirmed what students said in their group discussion that they assign learners to a particular group based on their proximity in the classroom. However, one of the instructors reported that he gets the learners to draw lottery through writing numbers and assigning learners who take the same numbers to the same groups. The other teacher on the other hand, pointed out that he assigns learners to groups sometimes according to their preferences. Only one of the instructors stated that he assigns learners to groups based on mixed ability. As we can see from the responses of the students and the instructors it seems possible to say that the criteria used for grouping students are fall short in helping learners to be cooperative and learn together to achieve their common goals. All methods of grouping which are mentioned by the instructors and the students are simply random grouping.

If we see all grouping criteria used by the instructors one by one, we can see that they all are random grouping. For example, assigning learners into groups by using the order in which their names appear on the register is simply equivalent to random sampling and there is no any purpose that it serves to create cooperative learning. For example in this way of grouping

there is an opportunity to have all low achievers or high achievers or medium achievers in the same group. In addition to this, may be all girls, all boys, all from the same religion can be grouped together. Furthermore, if students are assigned to groups on a lottery basis, it is still random grouping. In this case also all high achievers, low achievers, and medium achievers could also be assigned to the same group. This method either does not promote cooperative learning either. For example grouping learners in this way may not secure positive interdependence and individual accountability. Assigning learners in a group according to their sitting proximity has all the drawbacks mentioned above and it can also give opportunities for close friends to be in the same group and this in turn creates situations in which the learners are off task. However, during classroom observations no teacher was seen using the above ways of grouping except grouping through proximity. They all told their students to get into their groups and explained what the learners needed to do in their groups.

However, group formation is a key part of the teacher's role in cooperative learning classes. Although there are different ways of grouping students in the classroom, there is no best way which all scholars agreed on. For example, Jolliffe (2007) suggested three ways of grouping students in the classroom. One of them is random selection of students who will form the same group. To do this students just draw cards on which group names or numbers are written on. The other way of group formation is through pupil's selection: on which the learners themselves select who they want to work with. But Jolliffe stated his reservations in grouping students this way because if students select each other according to friendship this may cause disciplinary problems and they can simply be off tasks. The other problem with this grouping method is that some students may not be selected by any group as a result it could be the cause for psychological problems. The third way of grouping is teacher selection which Jolliffe identified as it is the best way of forming groups to ensure the greatest effectiveness of cooperative learning. The aim is to mix ability, genders and skills to achieve heterogeneous groupings.

### 4.3 Positive Interdependence

Jacobs (2003) and Jolliffe (2007) state that there are some techniques which are recognized in helping instructors in creating positive interdependence among or between the learners while they work in their groups, these include: establishing mutual goals that learners should work on to achieve them, a joint reward system for achieving certain standard or above standard both as a group and individual members, shared materials and information; assigning roles such as summarizers, encouragers, elaborators etc. The practices of group work in the second year English focus of Jimma Teachers' College are analyzed against the techniques mentioned with the aim of assessing whether group work practice promotes positive interdependence.

**Table 1. Students' response on positive interdependence**

No	Items	Number of the respondents and percentage										mean
		Always(4)		Usually(3)		Sometimes(2)		Rarely(1)		Never(0)		
		Fre	%	fre	%	fre	%	fre	%	fre	%	
2	We share materials/resources to accomplish our tasks while we work in a group for a common goal.	13	33.33	11	28.20	12	30.77	1	2.56	2	5.12	2.82
3	Our English language instructors assign us roles that each of us play during group work. For example as a group leader, spokesperson, time keeper etc.	4	10.26	12	30.76	6	15.38	13	33.33	5	12.82	2.13
4	Our English language instructors inform us what the standards of success are for the whole group and individual members before we commence the group work	2	5.12	8	20.51	11	28.20	12	30.76	7	17.94	1.69
5	We are given certain joint award (such as bonus marks) for completing group assignment to the required standard or above the required standard.	1	2.56	3	7.69	4	10.26	6	15.38	26	66.66	0.69
6	We need each other's support, guidance and explanation while we work in a group.	13	33.33	16	41.02	7	17.95	3	7.69	1	2.56	3.00
	<b>Grand mean</b>											<b>2.03</b>

As it can be seen from item 2 of table 2, 33.33% of the respondents replied that they always share materials or resources during they work on group tasks which they have common goals. On the other hand, 28.20% of the student respondents revealed that that they usually share materials/ resources among themselves while they are working on group tasks for common goals. Whereas, 30.77% of the respondents indicated that they sometimes share materials/resources among themselves while they work on group tasks for which they have common goals. On the contrary, 2.56% of the learners reported that they rarely share materials among themselves when they are engaged on group activities for which they have common goals and 5.12% of them stated that they never share materials among themselves while they work on the group activities for which they have common a goal. Thus, it can be said that students share materials/ information among or between themselves when they work on group tasks for which they have common goal. Likewise, the students in the focus group discussion agreed that they share materials and information while they work in groups. This response contradicts with the response of some students in the questionnaire those who are about 38% of the respondents who indicated their responses as sometimes, rarely and never. During the discussion, the learners tried to justify that they share materials and information among themselves during group work because they use modules and other materials that teachers bring to their classroom for the sake of group work.

On the other hand, all the interviewed teachers reported that they only sometimes bring extra materials that learners use for group work to their classrooms. However, all the teachers argued that they use modules in all activities in the classroom and this helped them to make their learners share materials among or between themselves while they work in their groups. Moreover, the instructors argue that they know that their students share materials that they obtain from elsewhere such as from library to do their group assignments. However, only one teacher was observed using a page on which a dialogue was written and this was distributed among the learners one copy per a pair and they used the material to learn expressions for giving and accepting advice and were asked to write similar dialogue of their own. Apart from this no instructor was observed bringing materials that learners should use during group work.

When the learners are given materials which they share among themselves while they work together to achieve their common goals then their productivity could be enhanced.

With regard to item 3 of the above table, 10.26% and 30.76 % of the respondents reported respectively that their English language instructors always and usually assign them roles that they need to play while they work together in groups. On the other hand 15.38% of the respondents indicated that their English language instructors sometimes assign them roles that they need to play while, 32.5% of the respondents reported that their English language instructors rarely assign them roles. 12% of the respondents showed that their instructors never assign them roles that they should play during group work. The mean value of whether the instructors assign roles which each of the group members in group work play show 2.13 which is within the range of “sometimes”. It appears possible from the responses of the students to the questionnaire to say that the instructors do not frequently assign roles to the learners that they should play during group work to ensure positive interdependence among the learners.

On the other hand, all the four groups in the focus group discussion stressed that their instructors never assign them roles that they need to play during group work. However, one of the instructors claimed that he usually assigns leader and reporter roles. This teacher emphasized that he only assigns two roles that are “group leader and reporter”. Furthermore, the teacher said that he assigns these roles only to the girls in order to encourage their participation in group work. The other two teachers admitted that they never assign roles to the learners in order for them to have a particular responsibility in the group tasks. One of the two teachers said that it is a waste of time to bother himself trying to assigning roles that the learners to play. The classroom observation also seems to agree with the students’ response to the questionnaire, focus group discussion and instructors’ interviews that assigning roles to each member during group work was not a trend.

On the other hand, assigning roles only to one or two members of a group can have negative impact on students’ learning. This condition may create the feeling that the one or the two learners who have roles assigned may be considered by other learners to be more responsible

for the group task than the others who have no roles assigned and may feel less responsible for the group activity and therefore go off tasks. In addition to this it is against creating positive interdependence, because, teachers should assign roles to all group members so that all the members became responsible for the success of their own learning and the groups' learning. Jonson and Johnson (1994) say that each member of the group should be assigned complementary and interconnected roles that specify responsibilities that are needed in order to complete the joint task. Teachers create role interdependence among students when they assign them complementary roles such as reader, recorder, checker of understanding, encourager of participation, and elaborator of knowledge. Such roles are vital to high-quality learning. The role of checker, for example, focuses on periodically asking each group member to explain what is being learned. As one of the instructors pointed out assigning roles to the learners may take time but once the role is assigned it benefits teachers in different ways. For example according to Johnson and Johnson in Gillies, Ashman and Terwel (2008) when positive interdependence perceived, individuals realize that their efforts are required in order for the team succeed so that it is not possible to get those who do not pull their own weight and they have a unique contribution to make the groups' efforts. Therefore, teachers' time is saved because the learners care for their own learning and the may not source of disturbance.

As it is apparent from item 4 of the same table, only 5.12% of the respondents replied that their English language instructors always inform them standard for success, both as the whole group and individual members while 20.51% of the respondents indicated that their English language instructors usually inform them standard for success both for the team as a whole and individual members before they commence working on the group tasks. The majority of the respondents which are 28.20% and 30.76% indicated sometimes and rarely respectively, that their instructors inform them standard for success both for the team as a whole and group member before they start working on the group tasks. The mean value the extent to which their teachers preset criteria for success both for team and individual members is 1.69 which is less than sometimes on the scale. From this, it seems logical, to say that the instructors under study do not sufficiently preset standards for success both for the whole team and individual members of the groups.

The focus group discussion with the learners showed no signs that instructors preset standards of success both for individual students and the whole team. The respondents reported that all what their instructors did before they start to work on their group tasks was to explain the instructions and the time when the group assignment should be submitted or presented if there is a presentation. Likewise none of the interviewed instructors replied that they preset standard for success both for the whole team and individual members. However, one of the instructors said his standard is for learners to interact while they work in groups. Nevertheless, this instructor admitted that he never communicates this to the learners before the students start to work on the tasks. During the classroom observation also no teacher was seen to communicate the standard of success both for the team and also for individual members of the groups. The instructors were observed only giving instructions for the tasks and pushing the learners to get into their groups and start work on the tasks at once. But if instructors manage to preset standard of success for both as individual members and a team, students perceive that they can achieve their learning goals if and only if all the members of their group also attain their goals. To this regard Kagan (2008) says to ensure that students believe they "sink or swim together" and care about how much each other learns, the teacher has to structure clear individual and mutual goals.

As it is evident from item 5 of the table above, only 2.56 % of the respondents replied that their instructors always give them joint award for completing the group assignments to the expected standard or beyond the standard. On the other hand, 7.69% of the respondents indicated that their instructors usually give them a joint award for accomplishing their group assignments to the standard and beyond the standard. Whereas 10.26% of them reported that they were sometimes awarded jointly by their instructors for accomplishing their group assignments to the standard or beyond the standard. On the other hand, 15.38% of the respondents said they were rarely jointly awarded by their instructors for accomplishing their group assignments to the required standard or beyond the standard. On the contrary, 66.66% of the respondents indicated that their English language instructors never award them jointly for accomplishing their group tasks to the standard or above the standard. It can be concluded from the students' responses to the questionnaire that instructors do not award the learners for doing their group tasks as they are expected and beyond they are expected to.



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The result of the focus group discussion also revealed that their instructors never set a standard for success and also they never assign any type of joint award for doing the group assignment to the standard and beyond the standard. Correspondingly, the instructors' responses also indicated that they are not in the habit of awarding learners jointly for performing well in their works. Moreover, it was not seen during the classroom observation while the teachers award learners jointly for doing their group works very well and also it was not seen when the instructors promise learners some type of joint award if they accomplish their group activities effectively. In relation to this, Johnson and Johnson (1994) argue that if we want to supplement goal interdependence we need to give joint awards to the learners for accomplishing the group tasks effectively. For example, if all members of the group score 90% correct or better on the test, each receives 5 bonus points. Sometimes teachers give students a group grade for overall production of their group, an individual grade resulting from tests, and bonus points if all members of the group achieve the criterion on tests. Regular celebrations of group efforts and success enhance the quality of cooperation.

With regard to needing each other support, guidance and explanations during group work, 33.33% of the respondents indicated that they always need each other's support, guidance and explanations while they work in a group while 41.02% of the respondents replied that they usually need each other's support, guidance and explanations while they work in a group. Whereas, 17.95% of the respondents replied that they sometimes need each other's support, guidance and explanation while they work in group. On the other hand, 7.69% of the respondents reported that they rarely need each other's support , guidance and explanation when they work in groups while 2.56% replied that they never need each other's support , guidance and explanations. The mean value of the extent to which the respondents need each other's support while they work in groups is 2.75 which is within the range of the scale of 'sometimes'. From this it seems that the learners usually need each other support, guidance and explanation. The focus group discussion with the learners indicated that they do not sufficiently need each other's support guidance and explanation. The students admitted that they are not concerned about each other's learning while they are engaged in group tasks rather their main focus is on completing the assignment by any means possible.

The instructors were also asked what they do in order to promote students to student support, guidance and explanation while they work in their group tasks. All the three instructors replied that so far they did not plan formally to structure tasks and students in the way that they need each other's support, guidance and explanations. However all of them stressed that they usually tell the learners that they should need each other's support, guidance and explanations. Nevertheless, this was not seen during classroom observation. When the teachers advise the learners need to seek each other's support, guidance and explanations. Moreover, the tasks were not also structured in the way that learners need each other's support, guidance and explanation. For example in one of the classes the learners were asked to work together in group of 5 to fill in the missing words from a paragraph by selecting from the words given in a list. The instructor merely explained the task and didn't structure in such a way that students need each other's support, guidance and explanations.

#### **4.4. Individual Accountability**

To promote individual accountability, students need to contribute equally to the group tasks. All members need to be volunteers to help group members and tutor each other until members understand the material or teams' answer and each group member pulls his own weight. Thus, under this section the extent to which the group work practiced in second year English focus at Jimma Teachers College is analyzed against the points mentioned above that may show the existence of individual accountability

**Table 2. Students' Response on Individual Accountability**

No		Frequency and percentage										mea
		Always(4)		Usually(3)		Sometimes(2)		Rarely(1)		Never(0)		
		Fre	%	Fre	%	fre	%	fre	%	fre	%	
7	Members contribute equally to the group tasks.	4	10.26	8	20.51	10	25.64	14	35.89	4	10.26	1.89
8	All group members are volunteers to help teammates.	6	15.38	9	23.08	12	30.77	8	20.51	5	12.82	2.13
9	We tutor each other until each group member understands the material or the answer for the group.	4	10.26	12	30.7	13	33.33	7	17.95	4	10.26	2.18
10	Each of us pulls our own weight while working in a group	1	2.56	10	25.64	17	43.59	10	25.64	2	5.13	2.00
	<b>Grand mean</b>											<b>2.05</b>

As it can be seen from table 3, item 7 only 10.26% of the respondents indicated that all members of the group always contribute equally to the group tasks. On the other hand 25.64% and 35.89% of the respondents replied respectively that group members contribute equally sometimes and rarely to their group tasks. The remaining 10.26% of the respondents indicated that group members never contribute to the group tasks equally. The mean value of the extent to which the group members contribute equally to the group task is 1.89 which means that it is within the range of rarely. Thus, it seems possible to say that group members are rarely volunteer to help each other in group activities.

Similarly during the focus group discussion, the students did not hide the fact that all group members do not participate equally in the group tasks. All the respondents in each focus group discussion reported that group work is always done by one or two members of the group and the rest of group members write their names at the end on the group tasks without having contributed anything at all to the group tasks. Moreover, the instructors were also asked what their feeling was about the equal participation of learners when they work in their group tasks and the instructors replied that they know that the learners do not participate equally in the group tasks. Especially when the group tasks is the one which spans more than one lesson and requires learners to complete outside the classroom. Moreover, the instructors identified that

group work is becoming tiresome due to the problem of unequal participation of the learners even if they are told to participate equally in the group tasks. However, equal participation among learners can be achieved not by telling the students to participate equally in the group tasks rather it can be ensured by structuring the tasks so that learners have to participate equally in the group tasks.

Kagan (2012) argues that similar appearing strategies up on analysis may have very different outcomes in equal participation. Kagan analyzed two strategies which for most of us are similar and interchangeable but when analyzed they are found to be produce different outcomes. These strategies are Think Pair Share and Timed Pair Share. In Think Pair Share, the instructors first tell the students to think about a topic, then the teacher instructs students to pair up and discuss their thoughts. Finally, the teacher calls on students one at a time to share with the whole class what was discussed. The teacher may call on students either to share their own thoughts or those of their partner.

In Timed Pair Share, the teacher first has students think about a topic. Then for a pre-announced time (often a minute), one student in each pair shares his/her thoughts while the partner just listens. Finally, the students reverse roles so the listener becomes the speaker and the speaker the listener, for the same amount of predetermined time.

Whereas there is nothing in Think Pair Share to make the speaking time equal between the pairs or during the class sharing time, Time Pair Share is carefully designed to make participation equal. Upon observation in Think Pair Share we find some students always doing most or even all of the talking, and other students doing little or none. Those who most need to practice speaking are those least likely to speak. This unequal participation is not possible with a Timed Pair Share because equal time is structured into the interaction.

In item 8 of the above table, 15.38% of the respondents replied that all group members always volunteer to help teammates while 23.08% indicated that all group members volunteers to help team mates while they work in their groups. On the other hand 30.77% of the respondents indicated that all group members sometimes volunteers to help teammates while 20.51% of the respondents reported that all group members volunteers to help teammates.

Furthermore, 12.82% of the respondents showed that all group members never volunteer to help the teammates. The mean value about how often the respondents are willing to help each other during group work is 2.13, which means that the learners sometimes help each other during group work. From this it can be said that students are not willing to help teammates to the required level. In the focus group discussion the students consolidated their response in the questionnaire. In the discussion the learners pointed out that there are group members who play distracting roles while they work in groups. For example, there are students who waste the team's time by coming up with different things which are totally irrelevant to the group tasks. Moreover, they made it clear that especially more able students are not willing to help others who are relatively weak in their academic performances rather they are more concerned with completing the group assignments quickly without ensuring that each group members understand. The instructors replied on the other hand that they think that the students are willing to help their teammates but they added that they do not know for sure whether the students are willing to help teammates. All the teachers stressed that they hadn't experienced learners refusing to help each other while they work in groups. During the classroom observation there was no problem seen of learners being reluctant to help team mates at least in the presence of the researcher. However, to ensure that learners are willing to help each other during group works the tasks need to be structured in such a way that the learners think that they 'swim or sink' together. For example, if the instructors set a test that each group member has to take and the results are averaged and are registered as a group result it will force all group members to help teammates. However, during the classroom observation nothing of this sort was performed by the instructors under study.

As it can be further seen from item 9 of the same table, 10.26% of the respondents indicated that group members always tutor each other until all the group members understand the material or answer for the group tasks while 30.7% and 33.33% of the respondents replied respectively that they usually and sometimes tutor each other until all group members understand the materials or answer for the group tasks. On the other hand, 17.95 % of the respondents indicated that all group members rarely tutor each other until all group members understand the material or the answer of the group while 10.26% of student respondents showed that all group members never tutor each other until all group members understand the

materials or answer for the group. The mean value is 2.18 which indicates that the respondents tutor sometimes each other until each member understands the materials or answer for the group. It seems clear from the responses of the learners to item 9 of the questionnaire that they sometimes tutor each other until each group member understands the answer to the group.

Nevertheless, during the focus group discussion the learners totally denied the response that they gave in the questionnaire that they sometimes tutor each other until all group members understand the material or the answer for the group. They stressed that they never tutor each other with the intention of helping all group members master the materials or the answers of the group. They added that they are more concerned with completing the group assignments rather than struggling to tutor someone who fails to understand the materials or answers of the group. Further, they reported that no one asks the other group member to tutor him or her even if he /she does not know the answer of the group unless the teacher informs them that he may nominate any group member at random to answer a question. In this regard the instructors were asked whether they facilitate conditions to get the learners tutor each other until all group members understand the answer of the group. One of the instructors replied that he asks the more able learners, "what did you do about your brother or sister?" during the group work. The remaining two teachers said that they didn't have any idea whether they should facilitate suitable conditions to enable learners to tutor each other until all members of the group understand material or the group's answer. It was also observed that teachers didn't make effort to create a conducive environment to help for learners and ensure that there is no one who does not know exactly what his group members did to accomplish their group works. Moreover, no instructor was heard advising the group members to tutor each other if there is someone who fail to understand the answers for the group. Moreover, rather than telling learners to tutor each other in order to make all the group members understand the materials or answer of the group, the instructors should select the presenters randomly and also all members should be tested and the result of the group should be averaged.

In item 10 of the table above, 2.56% the student respondents indicated that each of the learners during their group work always pull their own weight while 25.64% of them indicated that each of them usually pulls their own weight. On the other hand, 43.59% and

25.64% of the respondents indicated respectively that each of them pulls their weight sometimes and rarely. Whereas, 5% of the respondents indicated that each of them never pulls their own weight. The mean value of the extent to which the learners pull their own weight during groups work is 2.00 which mean that the learners pull their own weight only sometimes. It appears possible to deduce from the students' responses above that the students do not pull their own weight to the required amount. This corresponds with the response which the learners gave during the group interview. Three of the groups reported that there was no such effort made by their instructors to control students who do not pull their own weight during the group work. On the other hand, the respondents made clear that group assignments are done only by one or two group members and others write their names on the group assignments at the end. However, one of the groups reported that their instructors used to tell them that it is unknown who might present the group assignment to the whole class and this forces at least some students who do not pull their own weight to read the assignment papers and try at least to prepare for presentations. The respondents added that in reality no instructor selected presenters randomly for group assignments but instead the instructors ask one or two questions related to group presentation randomly to one or two of the group members. If the questions are not answered there are teachers who do nothing to the points of the group and group member who could not answer the questions. With other instructors it is unknown what measures are taken for not answering questions which each group members should be able to answer had he/she participated effectively in group task.

However, the instructors are partly in disagreement with the learners' responses, in the sense that they are not totally ignorant in trying to ensure that all group members contribute their fair share to the achievement of groups' goals. Two of the instructors said that they sometimes inform students that they can assign anybody from the group for presentation on the behalf the group. Moreover, the two instructors claim that during presentation they and other students from different groups ask different questions in relation to group work to the groups who is presenting and anyone from the group can be called on to answer the questions. However, both of the instructors revealed that the biggest challenge which they face during group work is that many learners do not participate in group work. The remaining one instructor reported that although he knows that the group work is not done by all students so far he hasn't done

much to control those students who do not pull their own weight. One experience that this teacher shares is that once he gave group work and told all students that they should participate actively and should report how the answers for group is obtained. Then, the teacher corrected the group work and gave feedback to the students. After two days the teacher made some minor adjustments to the same work and gave it to the whole class to do individually on the activity and it was found that only a few students could score good grade when compared with the results obtained during group work.

However, the classroom observation was in total disagreement with students' responses and instructors' responses. During classroom observation, the situation was that the instructors form groups then they ask the learners to do the tasks in groups, two of the teachers went around the students and checked whether the learners were on the task and they came to the front of the class. With the third teacher he stayed at the front of the class he seemed busy doing something at his desk. After the students finish their work the teachers started to read the questions and the students put up their hands and answered the questions. No teacher was seen selecting learners randomly to answer the questions. There was no effort seen from the teachers' side to ensure that all group members participated equally. However, instructors in addition to assigning learners randomly to present group assignments, may also structure different ways of making learners responsible for their own personal learning and their group's learning. For example, Jonson and Jonson (1994) suggested different ways of structuring individual accountability such as: keeping the size of the group small. The smaller the size of the group, the greater the individual accountability may be: Giving an individual test to each student; observing each group and recording the frequency with which each member-contributes to the group's work; assigning one student in each group the role of checker. The checker asks other group members to explain the reasoning and rationale underlying group answers, Students teach what they have learned to someone else. When all students do this, it is called simultaneous explaining.

As it is clearly evident from the above table the grand mean value of individual accountability is (2.00) which means the students only sometimes individually accountable to group tasks.

48.72% of them said that they usually challenge each other's ideas and decisions when they work in a group. On the other hand, 25% of the respondents indicated that they sometimes challenge each other's ideas and decisions while they work in a group. Whereas 10.26% of the respondents replied that they rarely challenge each other's ideas and decisions while the other 10.26% replied that they never challenge each other's ideas and decisions while they work on group tasks. From this, it can be said that the learners do not challenge each other's ideas and decisions sufficiently while they work in their group assignments. Almost this is echoed in students' opinions during their focus group discussion. The students go on to highlight that their instructors never tell them that they should effectively challenge each other's ideas and decisions rather than telling someone's ideas and decisions for granted. Likewise, when they work in groups they are usually satisfied with information that they obtain from one group member especially when the member is one of the high achievers.

On the other hand, the instructors stated that they did not encourage the learners to challenge each other's ideas and decisions rather they were concerned mostly with the end product of group work. Moreover, one of the teachers reported that sometimes he discourages students from challenging each other because if he allows that there might be weak students who may be embarrassed by more competent learners. This was reflected during classroom observation when teachers were not observed encouraging learners to challenge each other's ideas and decisions while they work on group tasks. Moreover, during the observation it was seen that there were only two members speaking and the others were sitting in the circle but did not say anything except sometimes to speak in Afan Oromo or Amharic. As a result, it was not possible for them to challenge each other's ideas and decisions by communicating effectively with the target language. Moreover, the kinds of tasks that the teachers bring to the classroom are not ones which are very interesting or suitable for debate so that the learners are very conscious about the mistakes they commit when they give their opinion. Generally it is very important for the learners to challenge each other conclusion and reasoning in order to promote higher quality decision making and greater insight in to the problems being considered.

However, to ensure that each members of a group strengthened according to Johnson and Johnson (1999) students should be held individually accountable to do their share of work.

#### 4.5. Promotive Interaction ( Face to face Interaction)

In order to ensure promotive interaction ( face- to -face interaction) the learners need to challenge each other's ideas and decisions while they work in groups, they should encourage and facilitate each other's productivity and achievements when they work in groups . They must provide each other with efficient and effective help when they work in their groups and they need to use the target language for discussion. As a result to analyzed group work practiced in second year English focus at Jimma Teachers' College is assessed against those points mentioned above.

*Table 3. Students' Response on Promotive Interaction (Face –to Face –Interaction)*

	Items	Frequency and percentage										Mean
		Always(4)		Usually(3)		Sometimes (2)		Rarely(1)		Never(0)		
		fre	%	fre	%	fre	%	fre	%	fre	%	
11	We challenge each other's ideas and decisions while we work in a group.	4	10.26	19	48.72	10	25.56	4	10.56	4	10.26	2.49
12	We encourage and facilitate each other's productivity and achievement when we work in a group.	11	28.20	6	15.38	18	46.15	1	2.56	4	10.26	2.47
13	We provide each other with effective and efficient help while working in a group.	11	28.20	10	25.56	9	23.08	8	20.51	2	5.13	2.56
14	Whenever we work in a group we use English language for discussion.	1	2.56	4	10.26	10	25.64	13	33.33	12	30.77	1.26
	<b>Grand mean</b>											<b>2.19</b>

As it is clear from table 4, item 11 of the table above, 10.26% of student respondents replied that they always challenge each other's ideas and decisions while they work in a group while

On the same table item 12, it can be seen that 28.20% of the students replied that they always encourage each other's productivity and achievements when they work in a group while 15.38 % of them reported that they usually encourage each other's productivity and achievement during group work. On the contrary 46.15% of the respondents indicated that they sometimes they encourage each other's productivity and achievement while they work together on group work while only 2.56% of the respondents indicated that they rarely encourage each other's productivity and achievement while they work in a group. The remaining 10.26% of the respondents replied that they never encourage each other's productivity and achievement during group work. Thus, it seems that from the response given to item 12, that the students almost sufficiently encourage each other's productivity and achievement when they work in a group. On the contrary, in the focus group discussion they denied that they sufficiently encourage each other's productivity and achievement during group works. They revealed that they do not normally listen to each other when they work in groups. There are students who bring other irrelevant things which make the group members laugh rather than focusing on the group tasks. Hence in this situation, it may not possible to encourage each other's productivity and achievement. The other point made by the students during the focus group discussion was that there are students who focus on the language errors of others and who amuse themselves by hunting out the errors.

All the three instructors stated that they mostly council learners to encourage each other's productivity and achievements during group work. Especially one of the teachers stressed that he usually tells the learners that they should not pay much attentions to grammatical errors that the group member commits while he/she expresses him/herself in the target language rather they should pay attentions to the meaning intended. However, during the classroom observation none of the instructors' instructions indicated that the learners should encourage each other's productivity and achievement. To enable students to encourage each other's productivity and achievement, instructors must be able to structure tasks and assign roles that each member should play in such a way that learners perceive that they 'swim or sink' together.

With regard to item 13 of table 4, 28.20% of student respondents showed that they always provide each other with effective and efficient help while they work in group when compared with 25.56% those who indicated that they usually provide effective and efficient help when they work in a group. 23.08 % of the respondents on the other hand replied that they sometimes provide each other with effective and efficient help when they work in groups while 20.51% of them reported that they rarely provide each other with effective and efficient help when they work in group. The rest (2.56% of the respondents) said that they never provide each other with effective and efficient help during group work. From this it can be concluded that the students under study give each other effective and efficient help while they work in group. However, in the focus group, the learner contradicted the response they had given in the questionnaire. They argued that it is not possible to say that they give each other effective and efficient help where there are many students who do not pull their own weight and when most of the group work is done by one or two members only. They added that in those situations it was not possible to say that they give each other's effective and efficient help. On the other hand they indicted that, those who do the group assignments alone are not willing to support other to enhance their productivity and achievement on the group tasks.

On the other hand, the instructors were asked what they do in order to enable learners to give each other effective and efficient help to enhance each other's productivity and achievement. The instructors claim that they frequently advise learners to facilitate each other's productivity and achievements while they are engaged in group assignments. When instructors plan group work they should also plan to enable learners to provide each other with efficient and effective help during group work. For example, the instructors can plan group processing which is conducted while the group work is still in the process. During group processing, the learners may be asked to reflect on each other's contribution to each other's learning.

As it is apparent from item 14 of table 4 above, only 2.56 % of the student respondents indicated that they always use English language for their group discussions while 10% of the respondents responded that they usually use English language whenever they work on their group discussions. 20% of the respondents on the other hand, indicated that they sometimes use English whenever they are engaged on their group tasks while 33.33 of the respondents

indicated that they rarely use English whenever they work in a group activity. The remaining 30.77% of the respondents replied that they never use English language for discussion whenever they are working in their group tasks. Thus, it can be concluded that the respondents do not use English language for their group discussion while they work in their groups. Likewise the students admitted during the focus group discussion that they do not normally use English language to discuss their thoughts when they are engaged in group discussions. The students stressed that they switch to Afan Oromo due to the fact that they lack language for discussion and also they indicated that they do not want to be laughed at. However, they admitted that their English course instructors always advise them to use the target language while they discuss in their groups.

Correspondingly two of the instructors said that they always advise the learners that language for communication can only be learned through using the target language for communication purposes. However, all the teachers reported that the learners tend to use Afan Oromo during their group discussions because they do not have average English competence. One of the teachers replied that he lays a firm foundation for good interaction in his class through developing students' confidence to use English they have to express themselves no matter how broken their English. Moreover, he revealed that he tells the learners the more they practice the more they learn language and the students are not afraid of the teacher. The same teacher added that he walks around the class and sees how the students are working together on their group tasks. On the contrary, during classroom observation only one of the instructors was seen advising his students to make use of the target language to accomplish their group tasks. Moreover this instructor went around the class and whenever he heard students using native language he reminded them that it is an English class. The other two teachers were not seen advising the learners stick to the target language. On the other hand, the learners were seen using Afan Oromo to discuss their group tasks. Whenever, the instructors come around the learners either kept silent or they code switched into English from Afan Oromo.

#### 4.6. Social Skills

To develop social skills, the learners need to be trained in how they can provide each other with support, resolve conflict and how to communicate effectively and efficiently while they work in a group to promote social skills. They also need to encourage each other by giving each other positive feedback or words of encouragement. Moreover, the learners must trust each other while they work in their groups. Hence in this section the extent to which group works practiced in second Year by English focus students and teachers at Jimma Teachers' College in promote social skills were assessed.

*Table 4 . Students' Response on Social skills*

no	Item	Frequency and percentage										Mean
		Always(4)		Usually(3)		Sometimes(2)		Rarely(1)		Never (0)		
		fre	%	fre	%	fre	%	fre	%	fre	%	
15	We are provided with training on social skills such as how to support each other, resolve conflicts, and how to communicate effectively and efficiently by our instructors while we work in a group.	-	0	6	15.38	9	23.08	9	20.08	16	41.02	1.15
16	We trust each other while we work in a group.	12	30.76	16	41.02	8	20.51	4	10.26	-	0	2.97
17	We encourage each other by giving positive feedback or words of encouragement while we work in a group.	-	0	7	17.95	15	38.46	18	46.15	-	0	1.77
<b>Grand mean</b>												<b>1.96</b>

As is apparent from the table above, item 15, none of the respondents indicated that they were always provided with training on social skills such as how to support each other, resolve conflicts and how to communicate effectively and efficiently by their instructors while they work in a group. Whereas 15.38% of the respondents reported that they were usually given training by their instructors on how they support each other, resolve conflicts and how to communicate effectively and efficiently by their instructors during group works.23.08% of the

respondents on the other hand indicated that they were sometimes provided with training on how to communicate effectively and efficiently during group work by their instructors while they work in groups. The other 23.05 % of the respondents replied that they were rarely given training on how they support each other, resolve conflicts and on how they effectively communicate with each other by their instructors . 41.02% of the respondents on the other hand indicated that they were never given training on how to support each other, resolve conflicts and how to communicate effectively and efficiently by their English language instructors. Hence, it seems possible to say that the students under study have never had any training on social skills by their instructors such as on how they support each other, on how to resolve conflicts and how to communicate effectively and efficiently with each other while they work in groups.

Moreover, the learners conformed in their focus group discussion that they had never been given training on social skills such as on how they support each other, resolve conflicts and on how they effectively and efficiently communicate using the target language. On the other hand, all the three instructors replied that they advise the learners to be good to each other while they work together in their groups. But none of them claimed that they gave training for learners on how to resolve conflicts and on how to give each other positive and constructive feedback while they work in groups. During classroom observation, this kind of training or advice relating to the behavior expected from the learners while the learners work in groups was not observed. However instructors need to give explicit training for learners on how the communicate effectively and efficiently while they work in their group activities. In relation to this Johnson and Johnson (1995) says in order for learners to coordinate efforts to achieve mutual goals students must get to know and trust each other, communicate accurately and unambiguously, accept and support each other and resolve conflicts. Putting socially unskilled students in a group and telling them to cooperate does not guarantee that they have the ability to do so effectively. We are not born instinctively knowing how to interact effectively with others. Interpersonal and small-group skills do not magically appear when they are needed. Students must be taught the social skills required for high quality collaboration and be motivated to use them if cooperative groups are to be productive.

As we can further see from item 16 of table 4, 30.77% of the respondents replied that they always trust each other while they work in a group while 41.02 % of them reported that they usually trust each other while they work in a group. On the other hand, 10.26% of the respondents indicated that they sometimes trust each other while they work in groups. None of the respondents reported that they never trust each other while they work in a group. As a result it can be said that the students under study trust each other when they work in groups. The response from the focus group discussions with the students seem to agree with response given in the questionnaire. Three of the focus groups indicate that, though there are some conflicts when students work in groups, they trust each other while they work in their groups. In relation to this, the instructors were asked if there is anything that they do in order to promote trust among the learners when they are engaged in group assignments. All the three teachers reported that although they did not explicitly plan to assist learners to trust each other, they always advise the learners as the whole class and in person to trust each other while they work in groups.

Nevertheless, instructors should more than merely advice learners to trust each other, rather this is only possible through structuring common goals that the learners could achieve only through working together and through making each learner feel that he/she achieves his/her goals only when the other group members also achieve theirs.

As is further clear from item 17 of the table above, none of the respondents identified that they encourage each other by giving positive feedback or words of encouragement during group work while they work in a group. 17.95% of the respondents on the other hand said that they usually encourage each other by giving each other positive feedback or words of encouragement while they work in groups. But, 38.46% of the respondents replied that they sometimes encourage each other by giving positive feedback or words of encouragements while they work in groups. Many of the respondents (46.15%) revealed that they rarely encourage each other by giving positive feedback or words of encouragements while they work in group and none of the respondents indicated that they never encourage each other by giving positive feedback or words of encouragements.

From this it is possible to conclude that the learners do not encourage each other by giving positive feedback or words of encouragements. The learners confirmed in their focus group discussion that they did not sufficiently encourage each other by giving positive feedback or words of encouragement. A result of this lack of encouraging each other is the source of conflict in group work. On the other hand, the instructors insisted on that they give learners advice and as a result they do not think that the learners fail to encourage each other through words of encouragement. It seems that it is important to train learners on their social skills for example like on how the learners forward their comments, criticize others' opinion, on how they totally reject each other's ideas without hurting each other's feeling etc.

#### **4.7. Group processing**

Effective group work is influenced by whether or not groups reflect on (i.e., process) how well they are functioning. Group processing exists when a group periodically reflect on how well they plan and act to improve their group while the group is in process. Each group members' actions are described as being helpful or as unhelpful while the group work is still in process. Instructors can intervene to assist learners while they are in their groups work and instructors can assess individual contributions.

**Table 5. Students' Responses on Group Processing**

no	Item	Frequency and percentage										mean
		Always(4)		Usually(3)		Sometimes (2)		Rarely(1)		Never(0)		
		fre	%	fre	%	fre	%	fre	%	fre	%	
18	We periodically reflect on how well we plan and act to improve our group work while the group work is on process	7	17.95	10	25.56	13	33.33	10	25.56	-	0	2.41
19	We periodically describe what member action is helpful and which is not unhelpful while we are in process of completing our group assignment.	6	15.38	11	28.20	7	17.95	9	23.07	6	15.38	1.92
20	Our English course instructors intervene to assist while we are working in the groups inside and outside the classroom.	5	12.82	6	15.38	16	41.02	4	10.26	8	20.51	1.89
21	Our English language instructors always assess individual contributions in a group.	-		7	17.95	13	33.33	15	38.46	5	12.82	1.59
<b>Grand mean</b>												<b>1.95</b>

As it is evident from table 6, 17.95% of the respondents identified that they always periodically reflect on how well they plan and act to improve their group work while the group work is in process while 25.56% of them indicated that they usually periodically reflect on how well they plan and act to improve their group while the group work is still in process. Furthermore, 33.33% of the student respondents revealed that they sometimes periodically reflect on how well they plan and act to improve their group work while the group work is still on process. Whereas, 25.56% of the respondents said that they rarely periodically reflect on how well they plan and act to improve their group work while the group work is on process. None of the respondents, indicated that they never periodically reflect on how well they plan and act on group work while the group work is in process. From this it can be said that the students under study fail to periodically reflect on group work sufficiently while the group work is on the process. The focus group discussion goes further and indicates that the learners have no awareness of reflecting on the group tasks in the process. To see how well the works are planned and acted when the group work is still on process. On the other hand,

the students make clear that there is no regular meeting time for the group members to work on the group tasks under the teachers' supervision.

Likewise almost all the three teachers admitted that they do not have any idea of getting all the learners reflect on how well the learners plan and act on group tasks while the group task still on progress. But one of the instructors said that even if he does not arrange a regular time for the groups meetings, he tells his learners to bring their problems which they might face while they work on group tasks. The other two reported that they hadn't considered whether they should assess group work while it is in progress. However, one of the teachers was observed intervening to see if the students were on the right track or not. But the other two teachers were not seen attempting learners to reflect on what they planned and how they acted so far. However, reflection that students have to make while the group is still in process is very important in order to help learners come up with high quality work. Besides it gives the instructors different opportunities to collect a lot of information about the learners and how the groups achieve to what extent. In relation to this, Richards and Rodgers (2001) say that group processing has a number of advantages. Group processing allow the group to improve its work together continuously over time .Also it enables the group focus on group member's contributions in order to increase individual accountability.

Item 19 of the above table also makes it clear that 15.38 % of the respondents reported that they always periodically describe what member actions are helpful and which actions are unhelpful while they are completing their group assignments.28.20% of the respondents on the other hand replied that they usually describe periodically what members actions are helpful and which are unhelpful while they are completing their group assignments. Moreover, 17.95% of them indicated that they sometimes periodically describe what actions of members are helpful and which actions are unhelpful while they are completing their group tasks while 23.08% of the respondents indicated that they rarely periodically describe what actions of group are helpful and which actions are unhelpful while they are working on their group assignment. The reminder 15.38% of the respondents reported that they never periodically describe what members' actions are helpful and which ones are unhelpful while they are completing their group assignments. From this it seems possible to conclude that

students under study only sometimes reflect on what members' actions are helpful and what member actions are unhelpful. Nevertheless, the students' responses from the focus group discussion almost totally contradict with their responses to the questionnaire as they stressed that they never reflect on what member actions are helpful and which actions are unhelpful while the group work is still in progress.

All the groups identified that reflecting on actions of the members is not a culture and it is not known even to the learners. The teachers also admitted that it is not their practice to get the learners to reflect on each other's actions in the group work when they are still in the process of accomplishing their group task either to see how well they planned and acted or to describe what actions are helpful and what actions are unhelpful. None of the teacher was observed while they ask the learners to describe actions which are helpful and which are unhelpful while the students are working on their group tasks. However, students need to discuss actions that help or hinder the group and how to continue or change. This is important because while teachers systematically observe the cooperative learning groups they can see what students do and do not understand as they explain to each other how to complete the assignment. Johnson and Johnson (1994) explain that there are two levels of group processing: small group processing and whole class group processing. In order to ensure that small group processing take place teachers allocate time at the end of class section for each cooperative group to process how effectively members worked together.

Moreover, groups need to describe what member actions were helpful and not helpful in completing the group's work and make decisions about what behaviors to continue or change. This processing is important for reasons such as: enabling learning groups to focus on maintaining good working relationships among members; facilitating the learning of cooperative skills; ensuring that members receive feedback on their participation; ensuring that students think on a metacognitive level as well as the cognitive level, and providing the means to celebrate the success of the group and reinforce the positive behaviors of group members. In addition to small-group processing, the teacher should periodically engage in whole-class processing. When cooperative learning groups are used, the teacher observes the groups, analyzes the problems they have worked on together, and gives feedback to each

group on how well they are working together. The teacher systematically moves from group to group and observes them at work. A formal observation sheet may be used to gather specific data on each group. At the end of the class period the teacher can then conduct a whole-class processing session by sharing with the class the results of his or her observations. If each group has a peer observer, the results of their observations may be added together to get overall class data.

Item 20 of the table above further makes clear that 12.82% of the respondents indicated that their English language instructors always intervene to assist while they are working in groups inside and outside the classroom while 15% of the respondents indicated that their instructors usually intervene to assist while they are working in groups inside and outside the classroom. On the contrary, 41.02% of the respondents indicated that their English course instructors sometimes intervene to assist them while they are working in groups inside and outside the classroom. 10.26% of the respondents on the other hand, revealed that their instructors rarely intervene to assist them while they work in group inside and outside the classrooms while 20.51% reported that their instructors never intervene to assist them while they are working on their group assignments inside and outside their classroom. As a result it can be said that English language instructors who are under this study do not sufficiently intervene to assist the learners while they are working on their group assignments. Similarly the learners in the focus group discussion stated that their instructors do not often intervene to assist learners while they are working on their group tasks inside the classroom.

On the contrary, they made clear that their instructors never assist them outside the classroom while they are engaged in the group activities at all. Two of the teachers on the other hand claimed that they usually assist their student while they are working on their group tasks. But the third teacher on the other hand agreed with the learners' response in that his assistance is not sufficient. Two of the instructors were observed walking around the learners to assist with their group work in the classroom. But the third teacher waited until the learner finished their group work and discussed the answers with the learners and finished the class.

As can be seen from item 21 of the table above, none of the respondents reported that their English language instructors assess their individual contributions in a group work while 17.95% of the respondents identified that their English language instructors usually assess individual contribution to a group. Whereas, 38.46% of the respondents indicated that their sometimes assess individual contributions in a group while 12.82% of the respondents said that their instructors never assess their individual contributions in a group. From the responses of the questionnaire it seems possible to say that individual contributions of the students' to the group task are not sufficiently assessed by their instructors. The focus group discussion seems to reflect responses of the questionnaire in that three of the group stated that instructors sometimes tell them that the presenter for the groups could be any one of the members and therefore everybody should get ready for the presentation. However, in practice the instructors do not randomly assign learners to present the group assignments randomly and the learners know that even if the teachers make it clear beforehand that anyone might be called for group presentation, the teachers forget and the chance is given for relatively high achievers. The fourth group totally denied that teachers never assess individual contribution to the groups' achievements.

On the contrary two teachers who were interviewed argued that they assess individual contribution of the students through assigning students randomly to present group work. The third teacher reported that he does not normally assess individual contributions apart from asking students accidental questions which any member from the group is required to answer. However, the classroom observation revealed that teachers do not assess individual contributions either through assigning learners randomly to present the group assignments or by throwing accidental questions to any group member as they indicated in their interview. Group accountability exists when overall performance of the group is assessed and the results are given back to all group members to compare against a standard of performance. Individual accountability exists on the other hand when the performance of each individual member is assessed and the results are given back to the individual and the group to compare against a standard of performance. Johnson and Johnson (1994) say that cooperation resulted in higher achievement when individual accountability was used. Individual accountability can be structured in one of the following ways:

**Random checking:** is posing a question or problem and randomly calling on a specific individual to give an explanation after talking about the question or problem in a group.

**Signature on the team assignment:** students are asked to sign the paper or report to indicate that they have contributed

**Individual contributions to team report:** If a team has worked to assemble an oral report, individual members might be asked at random to present a part of the report. Another approach would be to ask that each team member presents at least a portion of the oral report. For example, individual accountability was ensured by having each person give his/her own oral report. The grade for the project was based partially on the group effort, and partially on the individual oral presentation.

**Checker:** In a team, the role of a checker is to ask each member individually whether they understand the design, solution, or explanation that the team has just constructed. The checker may ask for some demonstration of understanding.

#### **4.8. Data Presentation of Items with Open Ended Format**

In item 22 the learners were asked open ended question on what practical advantages they get from working in groups, and the summary of what they wrote is presented below:

- a) Group work helps them to share skills and knowledge among themselves.
- b) Group work can help them develop their social skills
- c) It helps them to get genuine feedback from their peers.
- d) It encourages shy learners to share their views which when the discussions are with the whole class may be difficult
- e) It helps many learners pass who otherwise may fail.
- f) It improves communication skills.

From what the students listed about the advantages that they get from working in groups it seems possible to say the learners know the advantages of group work. However, there is also a misunderstanding about the advantage of group work. Because one of the things that the learners pointed as the advantage of group work is that it helps the learners to pass which

implies that there are students who hide themselves in groups and get points which they do not deserve.

In item 23 the learners were asked to list the practical disadvantages of working in groups in the college. Their responses are summarized below:

- a) Group members do not participate equally in a group tasks
- b) There are students who are not willing to help each other.
- c) There are group members who are not punctual or absent from group meetings.
- d) Teachers do not assess individual contributions.
- e) Teachers do not give them immediate feedback when compared to more prompt feedback for individual works and sometimes they are not shown even their marks
- f) Group work has been the sources of conflicts.
- g) Group works is mostly done by one or two group members only and the others write their names at the end
- h) Teachers randomly assign learners to groups
- i) Teachers are concerned with the end result and they do not care about the process.
- j) It encourages dependence as many students do not pull their weight
- k) English language is not used for group discussions.

#### **4.9. Text Analysis**

In this section group activities which were selected from Spoken English II were presented and analyzed in line with the five basic principles of cooperative learning. In the analysis only some sub elements of cooperative learning for each cooperative learning principles were used for analysis due to the fact that the other sub elements of the basic principles of cooperative learning were not allow themselves to be analyzed by just looking into the contents of the activities and the instructions of the activities. For the text analysis only three units of the module were selected through random sampling method. Unit one, unit three, and unit five of the module were the only units which were considered for the analysis. The activities were analyzed mainly by paying particular attention to their instructions and the language contents of the activities.

### **4.9.1. Positive interdependence**

To know whether the tasks that were presented in Spoken English II promote positive interdependence, the tasks' instructions and contents were evaluated against some basic sub elements of positive interdependence such as assigning roles to the learners; setting criteria of success both for the whole group and individual members; and whether the tasks were structured in the way that they enable learners to need each other to accomplish the tasks. The intention here is to determine whether these important sub elements of positive interdependence exist or not.

**Table 6. Text Analysis – Positive Interdependence**

Unit	Language content	No. of activities	Tasks instructions	Assigning role suggested		Criteria for success suggested		Tasks structured	
				yes	no	yes	no	yes	no
One	Opening and closing conversation								
		1	in small group discuss how to complete the following conversation by using "WH" question beginners		x		x		x
		2	Complete the following conversation with your partner .Use the verbs given in the brackets.		x		x		x
Three	giving instructions	3	Work in group and discuss the difference between formal and informal styles of opening and closing conversations, greetings, invitations etc.		x		x		x
		4	In pairs, write two conversations with one formal closing and the other informal closing, and act out in the class as a role- play		x		x		x
		5	In pairs, practice the expressions given above. be careful to make your tone of voice polite – if you sound rude then the formal language no longer polite		x		x		x
Five	Asking for and offering help	6	Work in small groups or pairs. give each other clear instruction on the how to do the following things		x		x		x
		7	Work in small groups or pairs. give each other clear instruction on the how to do the following things		x		x		x
		8	Work in a group of three to rearrange the following dialogue Write it out in correct order and act it with your partner for the class as a role play		x		x		x
<b>Total</b>					<b>8</b>		<b>8</b>		<b>8</b>
<b>%( percentage)</b>					<b>100</b>		<b>100</b>		<b>100</b>

As it can be seen from table 6 none of the instructions and language contents that are presented in all the three units of Spoken English II suggested that the students should be assigned roles that they should play as they work in their groups. For example as it can be further clear from activity 1 of unit one the students are ordered to discuss how they can complete the conversation given by using “Wh” question beginners that may help them open conversation. This activity neither in its instruction nor in its content suggest that students should be assigned complementary roles that they should play during group work. Furthermore, the instruction for activity 2 also fails to show any implications for role assignment of the learners. Moreover, in activity 3 the students are instructed to discuss in groups to identify the difference between formal and informal styles of opening and closing conversation without being told that they should play particular roles. All the remaining activities which are presented in the above table fall to suggest that roles should be assigned to the learners.

With regard to presetting criteria for success the table makes clear that, none of the instructions and the language contents of the tasks in Spoken English II revealed that they suggest criteria of success both for individual members and for the whole group. For instance, from activity 1 we can see that the learners are only told that they should discuss in their groups on how they complete the conversation by using “ Wh” words but it is not suggested in the tasks instruction that the learners should attain certain criteria.

Furthermore, in connection to structuring the tasks in the way that students need each other’s support, the table further makes clear that none of the group activities in the three units of Spoken English II are structured in the way that they encourage learners to need each other’s support. In order to structure tasks to promote positive interdependence learners need to be encouraged in different ways. One of which is dividing roles that each group members should play in order to accomplish the group tasks. Unless all group members play their parts the group work cannot be effective. The other one is that the learners need to have common goal to which they should work hard together. Moreover, the group members need to identify themselves with specified identity. In this accord Johnson and Jonson ( 1994) states that positive interdependence may be structured by enabling the learners perceive that they achieve their learning goals if and only if all the members of the groups achieve their goals. Positive

interdependence can also be structured through providing each member of a group only portion of resources/ information necessary for the task, the members resources need to be combined. The third way of structuring positive interdependence is through assigning learners roles they play. Hence, it seems possible to say that the instructions and language contents used in the module Spoken English II do not promote positive interdependence.

#### **4.9.2. Individual Accountability**

In order to promote individual accountability we need to keep the group size as small as possible, give individual test for each learners, randomly select group presenter for a group, observe group and record the frequency with which each member contribute, have students teach what they learned in their group, assign roles, use structures like Jigsaw, Number heads, round table, Timed share pair types of activities, and base team score on individual achievement. However, it seems impossible to decide whether the students take individual test, whether group members selected randomly for presentation, etc by just looking into the tasks. Hence the analysis is made against group size, types of activates whether the tasks require the learners teach what they learned to others.

**Table 7 Text Analysis- Individual Accountability**

unit	Language content	No. Activities	Instructions of the tasks	Group size		Teach what learned to others		Jigsaw, number heads, round table, etc.	
				yes	no	yes	no	yes	no
One	Opening and closing conversation	1	in small group discuss how to complete the following conversation by using " WH" question beginners	x			x		x
		2	Complete the following conversation with your partner .Use the verbs given in the brackets.	x			x		x
		3	Work in group and discuss the difference between formal and informal styles of opening and closing conversations, greetings, invitations etc.		x		x		x
		4	In pairs, write two conversations with one formal closing and the other informal closing, and act out in the class as a role- play	x		x			x
Three	giving instructions	5	In pairs, practice the expressions given above. Be careful to make your tone of voice polite –if you sound rude then the formal language no longer polite	x			x		x
		6	Work in small groups or pairs. give each other clear instruction on the how to do the following things	x			x		x
five	Asking for and offering help	7	What favors or help were the people involved in each of the above dialogues asking for this? Study and practice in pairs the following expressions which are frequently used to ask for help from others.	x			x		x
		8	Work in a group of three to rearrange the following dialogue. Write it out in correct order and act it with your partner for the class as a role play	x	x	x			x
		<b>Total</b>		<b>7</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>6</b>		<b>8</b>
	<b>%(percentage)</b>			<b>87.5</b>	<b>12.5</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>75</b>		<b>100</b>

As it can be seen from table 8 above, 87.5 % of the instructions and the language contents used for group works in Spoken English II suggest the use of smaller groups whereas 12.5%

of the instructions and the language contents in the module of Spoken English II on the other hand do not suggest smaller group size. On the other hand only 25% of the tasks in Spoken English II suggest that students should teach others what they have learned in their respective groups while 75% of the instructions and language contents in the module Spoken English II do not suggest that students need to teach others what they learned in their groups. However, none of the activities in the module are structured with activities like jigsaw, round table, number heads, time pair shared, three steps interview etc.

As it is further clear from the table, 5 of the activities suggest pair work while another one indicates that pair work or group of three should be used and still the other one suggest small group though the number is not known. On the other hand only activity 4 and 8 suggested that students should role play their work in front of the whole class. Hence from these it seems possible to conclude that the activities presented in Spoken English II do not sufficiently support individual accountability.

#### **4.9.3. Promotive interaction (Face to face Interaction)**

Promotive interaction occurs when learners challenge each other's idea and decisions while they work in groups; when learners encourage and facilitate each other's productivity and achievement while working in group; when students provide each other with effective and efficient help and when there is face to face interactions. However, it is impossible to decide by just having look into the tasks that students challenge each other's ideas and decisions; the extent to which learners encourage and facilitate each other's productivity and the extent to which learners give each other efficient and effective help. But it is possible to say whether face to face interaction exists or not by merely looking at the tasks. Hence, it is only whether face to face interactions exist or not which is analyzed in here.

**Table 8. Text Analysis – promotive Interaction( Face-to- Face Interaction)**

<i>unit</i>	<i>Language content</i>	<i>No.of activities</i>	<i>Instructions of the tasks</i>	<i>Face- to face interaction</i>	
				<b>yes</b>	<b>no</b>
one	Opening and closing conversation				
		1	in small group discuss how to complete the following conversation by using ” WH” question beginners	x	
		2	Complete the following conversation with your partner .Use the verbs given in the brackets.	x	
		3	Work in group and discuss the difference between formal and informal styles of opening and closing conversations, greetings, invitations etc.	x	
		4	In pairs, write two conversations with one formal closing and the other informal closing, and act out in the class as a role- play	x	
three	giving instructions	5	In pairs, practice the expressions given above. be careful to make your tone of voice polite –if you sound rude then the formal language no longer polite	x	
		6	Work in small groups or pairs. give each other clear instruction on the how to do the following things	x	
five	Asking for and offering help	7	What favors or help were the people involved in each of the above dialogues asking for this? Study and practice in pairs the following expressions which are frequently used to ask for help from others.	x	
		8	Work in a group of three to rearrange the following dialogue Write it out in correct order and act it with your partner for the class as a role play	x	
	<b>Total</b>			<b>8</b>	
	<b>% ( percentage)</b>			<b>100</b>	

As it can be seen from the above table 100% of the tasks' instructions and contents of the language suggest face to face interactions between or among the learners. All the activities ordered the learners either to discuss or practice in pairs or groups. Hence, it seems possible to say that the activities in Spoken English II promote face to face interactions between or among the learners.

#### **4.9.4. Social Skills**

To cultivate social skills as it is already mentioned in literature review section students must be given training on how effectively communicate while they work in groups, on how they resolve conflicts , and how they give each other effective feedback. Moreover, teachers can also design activates that help learners enhance their social skills. Hence, the instructions of the tasks and the contents evaluated against the elements of expected behaviors that suggested in the instructions and contents of the tasks. In addition to this if there are roles which are assigned to the learners while they work in their group tasks may also assists to evaluate whether the course writers tried to cultivate the social skills of the learners such as leadership, trust-building, conflict-management, constructive criticism, encouragement, compromise, negotiation, and clarifying.

**Table 9. Text Analysis - Social Skills**

unit	Language content	No. Activities	Instructions for the tasks	Suggested group behavior		Role assignment suggested	
				yes	no	yes	no
one	Asking for and offering help	1	in small group discuss how to complete the following conversation by using " WH" question beginners		x		x
		2	Complete the following conversation with your partner .Use the verbs given in the brackets.		x		x
		3	Work in group and discuss the difference between formal and informal styles of opening and closing conversations, greetings, invitations etc		x		x
		4	In pairs, write two conversations with one formal closing and the other informal closing, and act out in the class as a role- play		x		x
three	giving instructions	5	In pairs, practice the expressions given above. be careful to make your tone of voice polite –if you sound rude then the formal language no longer polite		x		x
		6	Work in small groups or pairs. give each other clear instruction on the how to do the following things		x		x
five	Asking for and offering help	7	What favors or help were the people involved in each of the above dialogues asking for this? Study and practice in pairs the following expressions which are frequently used to ask for help from others.		x		x
		8	Work in a group of three to rearrange the following dialogue Write it out in correct order and act it with your partner for the class as a role play		x		x
					<b>8</b>		<b>8</b>
<b>(% percentage)</b>					<b>100</b>		<b>100</b>

As it can be seen from the above table 100% of the instructions and language contents of the activities presented in Spoken English II do not suggest expected behaviors that learners need

to show while they work in their groups. Likewise, as it can be seen further from the table 100% of the instructions and the language contents of the activities do not suggest the assignment of roles that learners need to play. Hence, it seems possible to say that the activities designed for group works in spoken English II do not support social skills.

#### **4.9.5. Group processing**

One of the elements of cooperative learning is group processing. Group processing is mainly concerned with students' self-assessment and assessment by the teachers while the group works are on progress rather than assessing the end product of group work. Some of these activities include: reflecting periodically on how well the students plan and act to improve group work, periodically describing what members' actions are helpful and which are unhelpful and teachers, interventions to assist learners work. As a result, instructions and contents of the tasks are used to decide whether they suggest that students periodically reflect on their plans and the actions of each member to improve learning while the group work is in the processes.

**Table 10 Text Analysis Group processing**

unit	Language content	No. activities	Tasks instructions	Suggested reflection on group plan		Reflection to describe member: action	
				yes	no	yes	no
one	Opening and closing conversation	1	in small group discuss how to complete the following conversation by using " WH" question beginners		x		x
		2	Complete the following conversation with your partner .Use the verbs given in the brackets.		x		x
		3	Work in group and discuss the difference between formal and informal styles of opening and closing conversations, greetings, invitations etc.		x		x
		4	In pairs, write two conversations with one formal closing and the other informal closing, and act out in the class as a role- play		x		x
three	giving instructions	5	In pairs, practice the expressions given above. be careful to make your tone of voice polite –if you sound rude then the formal language no longer polite		x		x
		6	Work in small groups or pairs. give each other clear instruction on the how to do the following things		x		x
five	Asking for and offering help	7	What favors or help were the people involved in each of the above dialogues asking for this? Study and practice in pairs the following expressions which are frequently used to ask for help from others.		x		x
		8	Work in a group of three to rearrange the following dialogue Write it out in correct order and act it with your partner for the class as a role play		x		x
					<b>8</b>		<b>8</b>
	<b>%( percentage)</b>				<b>100</b>		<b>100</b>

As it can be seen from the above table 100% of the tasks that are in spoken English II do not suggest that students should reflect on group activities to see how well they plan and acted while the group work is in progress. Similarly it can be seen from the above table that 100% of the instructions and language contents that in spoken English II fail to suggest description of members' actions to improve group learning. Thus it seems possible to say that group tasks presented in spoken English II do not suggest the use of group processing.

## Chapter Five

### Conclusions and Recommendations

#### 5.1. Conclusions

The study was carried out to assess the extent to which group work practiced in Jimma Teachers College by second year English focus students and instructors in promoting cooperative learning. The specific objectives of the study were:

1. To evaluate whether group work practices in class under study promote positive interdependence.
2. To assess whether individual students assume individual accountability when they work in groups at class under study.
3. To identify whether the group works used in the class under study promote interactions among learners.
4. To examine whether group work is organized in such a way as to promote social skills.
5. To assess whether group members use group processing periodically to improve learning.

In order to attain the objectives of the study, relevant data were collected through questionnaire, focus group discussion, interview, classroom observation and text analysis of the module Spoken English II. The sources of the data were second year English focus students and instructors who were teaching in class under study at Jimma Teachers College. The data were analyzed with the aid of descriptive statistics (frequency, percentage and mean). Based on the discussions of the data the following conclusions were drawn:

1. It seems that the size of the groups that the instructors organize were bigger to provide sufficient opportunity to the learners practice their language skills. Furthermore, the learners seem to be assigned to the groups only randomly without paying any particular attention to mix them based on their ability, sex, ethnicity, religion, etc. to make the groups heterogeneous.
2. The study showed that the learners share materials /information among themselves while they work in groups when they have common goals.
3. The study found out that the instructors do not assign roles to each of the learners to get them participate actively during the group work. Moreover, the instructors do not preset success criteria both for individual members and the whole group and the instructors seem that they do not award learners for performing better in their group tasks.
4. The study found out that the learners seem not to give each other sufficient support, guidance and explanations while they work in their groups. It appears from the result of the study that
5. The study revealed that the learners do not contribute equally to the groups' tasks while they work on their group tasks. This seems that due to the instructors fail to structure the tasks in the way learners contribute to the group tasks equally. Furthermore, all group members not seem to be volunteers to help team members.
6. The study showed that many of the learners did not pull their own weight while they work in groups .One of the main reasons for the students to be free riders was that they were not assigned complementary and interconnected roles that specify responsibilities that they need to play in order to complete the joint tasks.
7. It seems that from the result of the study group members do not tutor each other until all members of the group understand the materials or answer of the group.
8. From the results of the study, it seems that the learners do not sufficiently challenge each other's conclusion and reasoning in order to promote higher quality decision making and greater insight in the problems being considered. Further, the learners do not encourage each other's productivity.
9. The result of the study disclosed that the learners did not use English language to discuss their group tasks while they work in their groups.

10. The study further made known that the instructors did not provide any training on social skills such as on how to support each other, how they resolve conflicts, and how to communicate efficiently and effectively to the students. Moreover, it seems that although the learners trust each other while they work in groups they do not encourage each other's by giving positive feedback or words of encouragements.
11. The study identified that the learners do not reflect on how well they planned and acted while the group work was still on the process. Also they do not describe members' actions weather they are helpful or unhelpful to decide what actions/ behaviors to be continued and which actions not to be continued.
12. The study disclosed also that English language instructors did not intervene to assist learners while they work in their group tasks. It seems that the instructors did not fix time for group meeting.
13. The finding of the study also revealed that the instructors failed to assess individual contributions of each group members while they work in group.

In the final analysis it seems reasonable to conclude that practices of group work by Jimma Teachers' College English focus students and instructors were not promoting positive interdependence between or among the learners. The instructors did not practice assigning roles to the learners that they had to play, they did not set criteria for success both for the whole group and individual members and the learners did not receive any type of award for completing the group activities to the required level. In addition to this, it appears also possible to say that the practices of group work in class under study failed short in promoting individual accountability because the result of the study showed that students did not contribute equally to their group works, only very few learners used to pull their own weight and the learners did not tutor each other until every members understands the materials or answers for the group.

Moreover, it seems also that the group works fail short in promoting face to face interactions/ promotive interaction effectively because the learners failed to challenge each other and encourage each other's productivity. Furthermore, it was found that the instructors did not train learners explicitly on their social skills. Finally, it was found that there was no any practice of group processing while learners were engaged in their group works to help the

learners reflect on how well they planned and acted and also to assist them describe actions which were helpful and unhelpful to enable them decide on the actions to be continued and not to be continued.

## **5.2 Recommendation**

Based on the above conclusions the following recommendations are forwarded for instructors, researchers, and Teachers' Colleges.

1. The result of the study seems to indicate that instructors lack awareness on how they organize students in groups and how they need to structure tasks in the way that learners need each other's support to accomplish the group tasks. Hence, the instructors need to read relevant materials in order to update themselves with the principles of cooperative learning.
2. As it is apparent from the result of the study the instructors seem to be interested on the end product of the group tasks rather than the processes which the learners had to go through during the group work. Thus, the instructors should also pay attention to how groups organized, what role each member should play, what should be done if the learners perform better, how all members encouraged to contribute to the group success, how social skills cultivated etc.
3. As it was clear from the result of this study group work practiced in the college do not promote cooperative learning. As a result the colleges should run workshops that could enhance the abilities of the instructors in using cooperative learning.
4. Further research need to be conducted about the problems that the instructors and students are facing in implementing cooperative learning.

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14	Whenever we work in a group we use English language for discussion.				
E	<b>Social skills</b>				
15	We are provided with training on social skills such as how to support each other, resolve conflicts, and how to communicate effectively and efficiently by our instructors while we work in a group.				
16	We trust each other while we work in a group.				
17	We often encourage each other by giving positive feedback or words of encouragement while we work in a group.				
F	<b>Group processing</b>				
18	We periodically reflect on how well we plan and act to improve our group work while the group work is on process.				
19	We periodically describe what member action is helpful and which is not unhelpful while we are in process of completing our group assignment.				
20	Our English course instructors intervene to assist while we are working in the group inside and outside the classroom.				
21	Our English language instructors always assess individual contributions in a group.				

**Direction II :** Answer the following by giving short answers

22. Mention some advantages of working in a group. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

23. Mention some drawbacks of working in a group

\_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix- A

### Jimma University

#### Faculty of Social Sciences and Law

#### Department of English Language

#### Questionnaire to be filled by students

#### Afan Oromo Version

#### Rarratuu A

#### Bargaaffilee barattootan guutamu

#### Jallatamtoota Barattootaa:

Bargaafiin kun kan qophaa'e odeeffannoo haala hojiin garee Kolleejjii barsiisota Jimmaa Muummee Afaan Inglizii barattootaa waggaa lammaffaafii barsiisota koorsota Afaan Inglizii barsiisaniin hojiirra itti oola jiru sasabuuf. Odeeffannoon bargaffii kanan sasaabamu galma gahumsa qorannoo kanaatiif baayyee murteessadha. Kanafuu odeeffannoo dhugaarratti hunda'e akka kennitan isiin gaafachaa, odeeffannoon karaa bargaffii kanaatiin kennamu dhimma akkaadamii qofaaf kan oolu yoo ta'u icctiidhaniis kan qabamu ta'a.

Galatoomaa!

#### Qajeelfama waliigalaa:

- Maqaa Kee Waraqaa Bargaafirratti baressuun barbachisaa miti.
- Qajeelfama kennaman qofa hordofuun deebii kee kenni.

#### Odeeffannoo Dhuunfaa:

Umrii \_\_\_\_ Saala \_\_\_\_

**Qajeelfama I.** Yaadoonni hojii garee hojiirra oolchuun walqabatan kanaa gaditti tarreeffamanii jiru. Muuxannoo fi beekumsa kee isa akkaata hojileen garee mumme keessan keessatti hojiirra oola jiru irratti hunda'uun qixa deebii keetittiin mallattoo (✓) ka'uun deebii kee agarsiisi.

**Furtuu:** 4= yeroo hundumaa

1= yeroo xiqqoo

3= yeroo baayyee

0= goonkumaa

2= darbee darbee

Lak.	items	Safartuu				
		Yeroo hunda	Yeroo baayye'ee	Darbe darbee	Yeroo xiqqoo	Goon kumaa
A	<b>Argama Hojii Garee</b>					
1	Barsiisonni koorsiwwan Afaan Inglizii nu barsiisan hojiilee gareedhaan raawwataman nuu kennu.					
B.	<b>Wal-utubuu (positive interdependence)</b>					
2	Wayita hojiilee garee hojjennu meeshaalee ( kan akka kitaabaa, haandawitii fi kan kanafakkatan) waliin itti fayyadamna.					
3	Barsiisonni keenya kan koorsoota afaan Inglizii nu barsiisan wayita hojii garee hojjennu tokkoon tokkoon miseensa garee gahee maalii akka taphachuu qabnu duursanii nutti himu. Fakkeenyaaf, akka geggessaa gareetti , akka yeroo eegaa gareettiifii akka barressaa gareetti .					
4	Barsiisonni keenya kan koorsoota afaan Inglizii nu barsiisan ulagaa milkaa'ina akka garee guututtiifii akka miseensa tokkoon tookoon keeyatti maal akka ta'e hojii garee otoo hinjalqabiin dura nu beeksiisu.					
5	Barsiisonni keenya waan nu jajjabeessuu danda'an kan akka, qabxii dabalataa hojii garee keenyaa hanga staandardii( ulagaa) nuuf ka'aametti yookiin standardii(ulagaa)nuuf ka'ame olitti waan hojjanneef akka badhasaatti nuu kennu.					
6	Wayita hojii garee hojjennutti miseensonni garee ibsa, qajeelcha fi gargaarsa waliirraa barbaanna.					
C	<b>Itti gafatamummaa dhunfaa</b>					
7	Miseensonni garee hundi haala walfakkatuun hojii gareerratti hirmatu.					
8	Miseensonni garee hundi fedii walgargaaruu qabu.					
9	Amma miseensonni garee hundi hojii gareef kenname hubatanitti deebii akka gareetti kenname walbarsiisuun wal-hubachiisfna.					
10	Tokkoon tokkoon keenya gahee keenya hojii garee keessatti ni bahanna .					
D	<b>Promotive interaction</b>					
11	Yaadafi murtii dhunfaa misoonsota gareetiin kennamurratti walimormmina. (yaada dhiyaate bilcheessinu malee walirraa hinfudhannu.)					
12	Wayita hojii garee hojjennu bu'aa qabeessummaa keenyaafi milkaa'ina keenyaaf hundi keenya haala waliif mijeessina.					
13	Yeroo hojii garee hojjennutti gargaarsa bu'aa qabeessafii qindawaa ta'e waliif laanna.					
14	Yemmuu hojii garee hojjennutti afaan Ingliziitti fayyadamnee mari'anna.					
E	<b>Dandeetti Hawasummaa</b>					
15	Barsiisonni koorsoota afaan Inglizii nu barsiisan dandeettii hawaasummaa kan akka walitti bu'iinsa furuu, haala qinda'eefi bu'a qabeessa qabuun walii galtee uumufi akkata itti walgargaaranirratti leenjii nuu kennu.					
16	Wayitii hojii garee hojjennu wal-amantaa walirraa qabachuun hojjenna.					
17	Yemmuu hojii garee hojjennutti jechoota gagaariitti fayyadamnee yaad-gabbii ijaarsaa			95		

	waliif kennina					
F	<b>Garee Madaluu</b>					
18	Wayita hojii garee hojjennutti yeroo yeroon karoora keenyaafii raawwii keenyarratti calaqqee haala ittiin hojiin gree deema jiru irratti ni raawwanna.					
19	Yerroo yerootti rawwii miseensa gree kamii akka bu'aa qabeessa ta'eefi kamtu immoo akka bu'aa qabeessa hinta'iin yeroodhuma hojiirra jiruutti addeessuun gochaaleen itti fufuu qabaniifi kan itti fufuu hinqabne murteessina.					
20	Barsiisonni keenya otoo hojii garee hojjechaa jiruutti adeemsa keenya giddumaan akka dhiyeessinu nugaafatanii sana booda yoo adeemsi keenya sirrii hinta'iin akka qajeelfannu nu gaafatu.					
21	Barsiisonni keenya gumaacha miseensi tokkoon tokkoon hojii garee keessatti godhan ni madaalu.					

**Qajeelfama II.** Gaafilee armaan gadii deebilee gagababa kennuun deebisi.

1. Faayidaalee hojiin garee muumme kee keessatti qaba jettee yaaddu amma dandesse tarressi .

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2. Rakkinoota( hanqinoota) hojiin garee muumme kee kessatti qaba jettee yaadu amma dandesse tarressi.

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## Appendix - B

### Questions for students' focus group discussion

1. Do Your English language instructors use group as one of their strategies in your class? If your answer is yes what is the common group size they organize?
2. What criteria do your instructors use in order to assign you to a particular group? For example do they use your register list?
3. What do your instructors do in order to promote positive interdependence among you?
  - a) Assigning role?
  - b) Setting standards of success for both individual and group as a whole
  - c) Giving awards for preforming to the standard and above the standard.
  - d) Structuring tasks in the way that students need each other's support
4. What do your instructors do to enable all group members contribute to their skills and ability to achieve their group goals?
  - a) Equal participation
  - b) Whether all group members pull their own weight while working in a group
5. What do your instructors do in order to promote face to face interaction among you?
  - a) Do they encourage you to challenge each other's ideas?
  - b) Do they encourage you to provide each other efficient and effective support?
  - c) What do your instructors do to enable you tutor each other until each group member understands the group answer or the material?
6. What do your instructors do in order to cultivate your social skills that help you during group work?
  - a. Training on social skills for you?
  - b. Encourage you to provide each other positive feedback?
7. How do your instructors assess group works' progress?
  - a) How often do your instructors ask you to reflect on the group assignments during you are in progress of accomplishing the group assignment for the main reason of guiding them?
  - b) How often do your instructors intervene to assist you while you are working on the group tasks either inside or outside of the class?

## Appendix- B

### The Focus group discussion questions for students, Afan Oromo version

#### Gaffii Garee Barattootaaf

1. Barsiisonni keessan Kan Afan Ingilizii hojii garee isiin hojechisuu? Yoo deebiin eyyee ta'e miseensonni garee yeroo baayyee meeqa ta'u?
2. Barsiisonni keessan nama tokko gareetti ramaduuf ulagaa akkamii fayyadamu? FKN galmee maqaa kessanii?
3. Hojii garee keessatti akka wal-utubdaniif barsiisonni keessan maal godhu ?
  - a. Gahee miseensa hundaaf kennuu
  - b. Ulagaa milka'inaa miseensa tokkoon tokkoonii akkasumaas akka garee gutuutti dursanii beekisisuu
  - c. Badhasa sababa akka ulaagaattiifi ulagaa olitti waan barattoonni hojetaniif kennuu
  - d. Shaakala haala barattoonni waliin hojechuuf walibarbaadanitti jajjabeess qindeessuu
4. Barsiisonni keessan miseensonni garee hundi amma human isaniif amma dendeetti isanii hojii gareef akka gumachaanii bu'aa garaaf argamsiisan maal faa godhu?
  - a) walgixa hirmachuu
  - b) namni hundiigahee isarraa eegamu bahachuu
5. Barattoonni hojii garee keessatti akka isaan waliin haasa'an barsiisonni keessan maal godhu?
  - a. barattoonni akka yaada otoo hinxiinxaliin akka walirraa hinfudanne jajabessuu
  - b. barattoonni bu'aa qabeessummaafi milka'ina isaniif akka haala walii mijeessan gorsuu
  - c. miseensonni garee amma namni deebii garee hubatuutti walbarsiisaniif jajabessuu
6. Barattoonni hawasummaa hojii gareetiif barbachisu akka cimsataniif akka cimsatan barsiisonni gargaarsa isiniif godhan jira ?
  - a. leenjii hawasummaarrtti?
  - b. yaadigabbii gaarii akka waliif kennitanirratti jajabessuu
7. Barsiisonni keessan kan Afan Ingilizii hojiin garee otoo adeemsarra jiruu haala kamiin madaalu?
  - a) otoo hojii garee hojechaa jirtanii calaqee haala akkamiin akkahojech jiratan akkagootan gaafachuu
  - b) barsiisoonni kessan ammam hojii garee otoo hojechaa jirtanii daree keessattiis ta'ee dareen alatti gidduun dhufanii isiin gargaaru?

## Appendix- C

### Jimma University

#### Faculty of Social Science and Law

#### Department of English

#### Instructors Interview

1. How often do you use group work in your class? if you use what is the common group size that you organize?

**Instructor A**

Yes. I usually use group works in my classes. Many of the time I prefer group of 2-3 students unless the objectives needs me to have more students in a group.

**Instructor B**

Yeah. I often use group work in my classes. The maximum numbers of students that I assign in a group are five, not more than that, but I prefer 2-4 students in a group most of the time.

**Instructor C**

It is common practice in the college to use group work, it is not particular to me. I usually organize a group with maximum number of students are 5-6 students. But when the group work is the one that students take home is I assign 7-8 students in a group.

2. What criteria do use to assign a student to a particular group? For example do you use their register list?

**Instructor A**

In order to assign learners in a group I usually use students' proximity in their sits ,their name list (register list) and sometimes I tell them to assign themselves in their own preferences.

**Instructor B**

I usually assign learners to their groups in the proximity of their seats, their register list, and I mix students according to their abilities.

### **Instructor C**

Usually I assign learners to the group by using students register list, proximity of their seat and let them draw lottery.

3. What do you do to promote positive interdependence between or among students when they work in a group?
  - a. Share materials/information
  - b. Assigning role?
  - c. Setting standards of success for both individual and group as a whole
  - d. Giving awards for performing to the standard and above the standard.
  - e. Structuring tasks in the way that students need each other's support

### **Instructor A**

In order to promote positive interdependence among the learners I afraid I haven't done much . But my students share materials between or among themselves. Most of the time the learners use modules commonly and sometimes I bring materials to the classroom which the learners use in their groups in order to achieve their common goals. Also I often like to assign presenter and reporters roles to female students just to encourage them but do not other roles other than these. With regard to presetting criteria for success, I usually take as criteria when the learners are capable to interact with English language. But did not communicate the criteria to my learners. So far I haven't structured tasks in the way that the tasks encourage learners support each other during group work rather I advise learners to support each other. I did not give award for the learners for accomplishing the group tasks.

### **Instructor B**

I think my students share common materials among themselves while they work in groups in the classrooms and outside the classrooms. I know that my students share materials they find elsewhere like libraries. However to be honest it is not my experience to assign roles that learners play, not preset standard for success both for individual members and the whole group, not give joint awards for groups performed better in their group work, not structure tasks to enable learners support each other.

### **Instructor C**

My students share materials/information while they work in groups when they have the same goals. They share their modules and other materials which I sometimes bring to the classroom. I think it is wasting time to bother myself in assigning roles to the learners. Moreover I do not normally set criteria for success before the learners start working on the group tasks. I also do not give any award for the learners for doing good in their group tasks. Moreover, I don't have an idea even whether I should structure tasks to in order to help learners support each other's.

4. How do you ensure that all group members contribute to their ability and skill for the group's achievement?

- a. Equal participation
- b. Volunteers to help each other's
- c. Whether all group members pull their own weight while working in a group

### **Instructor A**

The biggest problem with group work is that all students do not participate even if you advise them to contribute equally to the group tasks. But when they are engaged I think they are volunteers to help each other. To ensure all students participation I randomly assign group presenters.

### **Instructor B**

The most head ach in group work is unequal participation of the learners in group tasks no matter how you advise them that they should all participate in group tasks. But when they are once started to work together I think they are volunteers to help each other, of course I can't know for sure that they are volunteers that to help each other.

### **Instructor C**

Equal participation is one of the biggest problems in group works. For my part I always tell them that they should equally participate in group tasks but no much improvement seen so far. Though I do not know for sure that the learners are volunteers to help teammates I feel that they are willing to help each other. I know that the students do not pull their own weight, but so far I did not do anything to solve this problem. Once I gave group work that the learners had to do in groups which I told the students that they all should understand how answers were obtained. Then I corrected and gave the result to the learners. After two days I gave the same activity with minor modification to the whole class to do it individually. The results obtained were surprising in that only few students scored high grade.

5. What do you do in order to promote interaction between or among your learners while they work in groups?

- a. Do you encourage learners to challenge each other's ideas?
- b. Do you encourage your learners to provide each other efficient and effective support?
- c. What do you do to enable learners tutor each other until each group member understands the answer.
- d. Using English for discussion

### **Instructors A**

Most of the time I do not tell them to challenge each other's ideas and decisions while my students work in groups. However, I always advise the students to encourage each other's productivity and achievements. Most of the time I tell them to pay their attentions to the ideas conveyed rather than the grammatical errors they commit. I also tell my students to use English for discussions but it is inevitable that they tend to use their L1. Normally I do not tell the learners to tutor each other until all members of the group understand the answer or material to the

group. But I always ask the more able learners question like “what did you do about your brother or sisters?”.

### **Instructor B**

To speak the truth I do not have an idea whether I should ask the learners to tutor each other until all members of the group understand the answer for the group. But in any ways to get all learners participated I tell the students that I may call any group member for the presentation. With regard to challenging each other’s opinion and decisions , I sometimes discourage that because the less abled learners may be embarrassed by the competent ones. I discourage using Afan Oromo whenever am in class particularly when they discuss in their groups because one of the purposes of using group work is to help the learners test their language in real like situations.

### **Instructor C**

I cannot say that I encourage my students to challenge each other’s opinions and decisions while they work on group tasks .But I advise the learners that they should encourage each other’s productivity and achievements during group work. Particularly I tell them that they should pay much of their attentions on the ideas conveyed. With regard of tutoring each other ... I admit that I did not encourage learners so far. I always tell my students that they should use English while they discuss in their groups no matter how their English is broken and that language could be learned through using it for its real purposes rather than learning the rules of the language only.

6. What do you do in order to promote social skills of your learners that can help them while they work in a group?

- c. Training on social skills for learners.
- d. Encourage learners to provide positive feedback by using words of encouragement.
- e. Do the learners trust each other.

**Instructor A**

No. I haven't given any training so far about the kinds of behavior that the learners has to disclose in their group works. Although I did not planned for it and make it formal I always advise learners to trust each other while they work in groups. In addition, I advise the learners to give each other positive feedback.

**Instructors B**

I haven't trained learners on social skills that may help them on their group works. But with regard to trusting each other and giving each other positive feedback while they work in their groups.

**Instructors C**

Frankly speaking I am not aware that whether I should provide my students training on their social skills that may help them in their group works. With regard to getting them trust each other and give each other positive feedback what I can do is advising them to trust each other and give each other's positive feedback while they work in their groups. And I always do that.

7. How do you assess group works' progress?

- a. How often do you ask your learners to reflect on their group assignments while they are in progress for the main reason of guiding them?
- b. How often do you intervene to assist learners while they work in group inside and outside the class?

**Instructor A**

It is not what practice asking learners to reflect on how the plan and acted and also each group members actions while the students are still in progress at my present. But I try to assess each group member's contributions and I also intervene to help the learners while they work on their group task in the classrooms. Also I assign group presenters randomly so that the learners may be forced to participate.

**Instructor B**

I never get the learners to reflect on their plans and actions while the learners are still working in their group tasks. But I try my best to assess individual contributions by assigning learners randomly present on the behalf the group.

**Instructor C**

No. I never get students reflect on the group at my presence while the group tasks are still on progress. I cannot really say much on individual member assessment. But I usually intervene to help learner while they are working on their group in the classroom

## Appendix- D

### Classroom Observation Check list

#### 1. Personal experience

Teaching experience of the teacher \_\_\_\_\_ Qualification (s ) of the teacher: \_\_\_\_\_

#### 2. General information

Date of classroom observation: \_\_\_\_\_ Name of the course: \_\_\_\_\_

Lesson Topic: \_\_\_\_\_ Group size \_\_\_\_\_

Objective(s) of the day lesson \_\_\_\_\_

Elements of cooperative learning		Observation
<b>Positive interdependence</b>	Share materials/ information	.
	Assigning learners to group	
	-Assigning Roles to students	
	-Room Arrangement:	
	-Task structure (types of tasks that students are required to do in groups)	
	-Criteria for Success both for the whole group and individual members)	
<b>Individual Accountability</b>	Assessment of members' individual learning	
	Volunteer to help team mates	
<b>Face to face interaction (promoting interaction)</b>	Face to face interaction (promoting interaction)	
	-Feedback provision	
	-Make use of the target language for discussion	
<b>social skill orientation</b>	Communication of expected behavior to the learners	
<b>Group processing</b>	-Teachers' intervention for Task Assistance:	
	Members describe actions of each other.	

**JIMMA UNIVERSITY**  
**COLLEGE OF SOCIAL SCIENCE AND LAW**  
**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE**

Approved by Examining Board:

Johannes Tefera      [Signature]      11 June 2012

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**Declaration**

I, the undersigned, declare that this thesis is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in other universities.

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Date of Submission: \_\_\_\_\_



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