

EFL Teachers' and Students' Beliefs in Teaching and Learning English Speaking Skills in the Multilingual Classrooms: Teachers and First Year Students at Wolkite University in Focus

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Received: 30 March 2022; Revised: 26 May 2022; Accepted: 27 May 2022; Published: 11 June 2022

Abstract

This study aimed to investigate EFL teachers' and first year students' beliefs in teaching and learning English speaking skills in the multilingual classrooms of Wolkite University. To this end, the research design employed for this study is descriptive survey design which makes use of quantitative method for data analyses. Therefore, the quantitative data were collected using a questionnaire from thirty-nine (39) teachers and two hundred fifty-one (251) students' that were selected using simple random sampling techniques. The quantitative data were analyzed using SPSS version 25. The results from the qualitative data analyses revealed that the teachers and students believe that teaching and learning English speaking skills is possible in multilingual EFL classrooms provided that appropriate pedagogy which entertains the linguistic diversity is applied. The teachers and students believe that teaching and learning English speaking skills in multilingual classroom by itself has no problem, but the inclusive pedagogy will matter to address teachers' and students' interests towards learning considering the existing linguistic diversities. This inclusive pedagogy helps teachers to let their students practice speaking skills. To overcome the challenges of teaching and learning English speaking skills in the classroom of linguistic diversities, multilingual pedagogy that maximizes teachers' teaching and students' learning capacity is recommended.

Keywords: English Speaking Skills; Multilingual Situation; Students' Beliefs; Teachers' Beliefs

Introduction

In Ethiopian context, classes at the university level are full of linguistic diversities. While teaching and learning English speaking skills is being conducted in multilingual classrooms (MLCs), managing linguistic diversity in higher education is a topic that has been given considerable attention (Danquennes, et.al, 2020). Among others, what the beliefs of teachers and students towards this diversity require answers.

Whether or not the teachers really speak only English language in the classroom necessitates investigation. In Ethiopian context, teachers use local language (Amharic or Afan Oromo) consciously or unconsciously in teaching and learning process in the MLCs. If this situation exists, which Ethiopian language do teachers use is the process of teaching because Amharic, Afan Oromo, Somaligna, Tigrigna, and other Ethiopian languages are there in the classrooms? To answer this question, the teachers' and students' beliefs should be clearly known because Nhapulo, (2013) said that understanding teachers' beliefs is understanding teacher classroom practice.

Students in Ethiopian University contexts are from various language backgrounds. They want their language to be used in the classes either by teachers or students themselves. Hence, their beliefs should be identified. This requires investigation because there is a silent conflict among student languages (Poudel, 2010).

Belief is the building block in all disciplines that deal with education. Hence, its role has paramount importance in accepting how teachers frame their work that is significant in realizing their teaching methodologies and their decisions in the classroom (Gilakjani & Sabouri, 2017). There is a consensus that teaching is mostly influenced by its practitioners and they will put their beliefs into practice. Teachers' beliefs need to be investigated before critically reflecting on their teaching practices, and in turn facilitate changes to teach more effectively (Lio, 2018). As a result, teachers' beliefs exert more influences than the teachers' knowledge on their classroom teaching, lesson plan, and pedagogical decisions in the classroom (Pajares, 1992).

Pedagogy of teaching and learning English speaking skills should get sufficient concern in the MLCs; it is interdependent on how teachers' adapt the way to encourage students' speaking skills, how they put their plans and procedures into practice in a classroom situations, and why they face difficulties in teaching speaking skills (Ahmed, 2018). The associations of teachers' perceptions and beliefs have an important link with their knowledge and knowledge of the setting; thus, they

need to be accounted for and examined (Hammer, 2018). In the class of linguistic diversities, a pedagogy that tries to engage all students should be used as much as possible.

Some researches that were conducted at the international level include the following. The study conducted by Zaidi, et al. (2017) on challenges of teaching the English language in a multilingual setting focus on government girls' secondary school. The result showed that teaching English is challenging due to linguistic diversity in the classroom. However, the research did not explain how linguistic diversity would be challenging to teach English and did not include male students as research participants.

Gandeel (2016) studied English language teachers' beliefs and practices regarding the teaching of speaking and the study indicated several factors that influence the relationship between beliefs and practices: e.g., nature of beliefs, course books and students' level but the research has a gap to show the students' beliefs on learning speaking skills. A belief about language learning of foreign language was studied by Altan (2006) and the findings indicated that students hold a range of beliefs with varying degrees of validity. This research did not explain the details of beliefs (negative or positive) that students might develop rather than saying a range of beliefs in general and it did not focus on the skills.

There are also some local studies that have been conducted in Ethiopia. For instance, the research conducted by Abera (2016) explores challenges linguistic minority learners experience in MLCs in Arba Minch Primary Schools where students from various linguistic backgrounds learn Amharic as a second language without focusing on specific language skills. On the other hand, Fuad et al. (2019) investigated the problems and possibilities of the multilingual classroom in Ethiopia. These researchers assess the problems and possibilities of multilingualism in primary schools and their finding indicates the existence of various problems.

Although several previous local and international studies have examined teachers' and students' beliefs in teaching and learning English speaking skills from different perspectives, the current study investigates EFL teachers' and students' beliefs in teaching and learning English speaking skills in the MLCs. The students are assigned to all public universities by MoE and they take similar courses. Except geographical locations and some facilities, every universities use harmonized curriculum and students centered approaches of teaching. Hence, among Ethiopian public higher education institutions, WKU was selected by convenient sampling techniques

because the progress in public universities is full of challenges (Alemayehu & Solomon, 2017). The current study investigates the following two objectives: What are the beliefs of EFL teachers in teaching English speaking skills in MLCs? What are the beliefs of EFL students in learning English speaking skills in MLCs?

Materials and methods

Design of the study

The main purpose of this study was to investigate EFL teachers' and students' beliefs in teaching and learning speaking skills in MLCs. Descriptive survey design is a procedure in quantitative research in which you administer a survey or questionnaire to a small group of people (called the sample) to identify trends in attitudes, opinions, behaviors, or characteristics of a large group of people (Creswell, 2012). Therefore, descriptive survey design has been selected and employed for the current study.

Participants

The participants of this study were 2021 G.C entry first-year students and instructors learning and teaching communicative English speaking skills at WKU. The researcher used Krejcie & Morgan's (1970) table for determining minimum returned sample size for a given population size for categorical data. In current study, the total population was 650 students and 42 teachers. The questionnaires were distributed to 300 students that were randomly selected and 251 students that were reacted to the questionnaires but 49 students didn't return the questionnaires. On the other hand, out of 42 teachers 39 responded while 3 of them didn't bring the questionnaires back.

Instruments

Questionnaire

The questionnaire is a widely used and useful instrument for collecting survey information and attitudinal questions are used to determine what people think (Dornyei, 2003). To answer the objectives of the study, the questionnaire was slightly adapted for both teachers and students from Beliefs about Language Learning Inventory i.e., BALLI (Horwith, 1987; Horwith, 1988) and Teaching and Learning International Survey (OECD, 2013).

The questionnaire has fifteen items that focus on teachers' and students' beliefs about foreign languages learning/teaching and the difficulty in teaching and learning the English language

speaking skills in MLCs. The items were prepared based on five-point Likert scales which are arranged from strongly disagree to strongly agree: where, 1= strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = uncertain, 4 = agree, and 5 = strongly agree to measure teachers' and student beliefs about teaching and learning English speaking skills in the MLCs. After the teachers and students filled out the questionnaire, the researcher computed Cronbach's alpha to check if all items were appropriate and with acceptable reliability ranges for teachers and students in the context of this study.

Validity and Reliability of Instruments

Validity

To keep the content validity of the current study appropriate, the researcher adapted the questionnaire developed by the scholars and made some modifications in consultation with the professionals of the area. Accordingly, the questionnaires for both teachers and students were adapted from Language Learning Inventory, i.e., BALLI (Horwith, 1987; Horwith, 1988) Teaching and Learning International Survey i.e. TALIS (OECD, 2013) with a slight modifications to align it with the objectives of the research in progress. The researcher took a proportional and adequate sample from the identified population of the study.

Reliability

There are four basic methods for estimating the reliability of empirical measurements (Carmines and Zeller, 1979). These are internal- consistency, test–retest, alternative form and split-half. Among these, the internal- consistency method was used to test the reliability of the instrument for the current study. The researcher used Cronbach alpha to compute the reliability test and found that the items were on acceptable reliability ranges for teachers and students (0.763 and 0.753 coefficients, respectively).

Data analysis

To analyze the data obtained from the questionnaire, descriptive statistics was employed. In descriptive statistics, the data have to be organized in such a manner that the information can easily be used by the decision maker. Quantitative data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences SPSS version 25. The number of questionnaire papers returned was systematically organized in a table. Then, descriptive statistics such as frequency,

percentage, mean, and standard deviation were used to find the rating scale teachers and students forwarded about their beliefs.

Results and discussions

While reacting to whether teachers' beliefs in teaching English speaking skills in the MLCs is well, 10 (25.6%) strongly agreed, 15 (38.5%) agreed, and equally 10 (25.6%) were uncertain; whereas, 3 (7.7%) disagreed and 1 (2.6%) strongly disagreed.

Table 1. EFL Teachers' Beliefs in Teaching English Speaking Skills in the MLCs

S/ N	Statements/Related items	SDA		DSA		UNC		AG		SA	
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
1	I believe that I teach English speaking skills better in the MLCs	1	2.6	3	7.7	10	25.6	15	38.5	10	25.6
2	It is easier to teach to read and write than to speak and understand what students say in the MLCs	4	10.3	5	12.8	8	20.5	14	35.9	8	20.5
3	It is best to teach English speaking skills in mono-lingual speaking classrooms than in the MLCs	2	5.1	1	2.6	8	20.5	13	33.3	15	38.5
4	Teachers should draw their student's knowledge of native language while teaching English speaking skills in the MLCs.	4	10.3	7	17.9	10	25.6	11	28.2	7	17.9
5	If beginning students are permitted to make errors in English as a foreign language, it will be difficult for them to speak correctly later on in a MLCs	10	25.6	1	2.6	9	23.1	7	17.9	2	5.1
6	I believe that students learn best by finding solutions to English speaking problems on their own	-		3	7.7	5	12.8	21	53.8	10	25.6
7	Teachers' should allow students to think of solutions to practical problems themselves before the teacher shows them how they are solved	-		-		4	10.3	17	43.6	18	46.2
8	Students feel timid speaking English with others in diversified EFL classroom	-		3	7.7	6	15.4	14	35.9	16	41

9	In teaching English speaking skills, it is important to practice a lot in the MLCs	3	7.7	7	17.9	10	25.6	9	23	10	25.6
10	Students who speak more than one language are intelligent and they are capable of speaking English in the MLCs	-		1	2.6	13	33.3	17	43.6	8	20.5
11	The most difficult part of teaching English is how to make use of students' native language in the MLCs	6	15.4	3	7.7	8	20.5	15	38.5	7	17.9
12	Speaking skill is difficult to be taught in MLCs	5	12.8	8	20.5	12	30.8	8	20.5	6	15.4
13	Once students can carry on a conversation fluently, they don't need any special language instruction in the MLCs	11	28.5	8	20.5	10	25.6	8	20.5	2	5.1
14	Teaching English language speaking skills to multilingual speakers is easier because they can learn a new language at ease than those who know one language.	3	7.7	5	12.8	8	20.5	15	38.5	8	20.5
15	Multilingual pedagogical practices can maximize learners' capacity of learning English speaking skills in the MLCs.	1	2.6	7	17.9	7	17.9	9	20.5	16	41

Where: SDA refers to strongly disagree; DSA to disagree; UNC to uncertain; AG to agree and SA to strongly agree

The majority of the teachers agreed or strongly agreed. The data show the possibility to teach English speaking skills well in the MLCs provided that an appropriate pedagogy entertains the linguistic diversities (item no 1).

The teaching and learning of English speaking skills is best in mono-lingual classrooms than in the MLCs. Among the respondents of the present study to item no 3 in the table above, 13 (33.3%) and 15 (38.5%) of them strongly agreed and agreed. On the other hand, 8 (20.5%) of the teachers' were uncertain, 1 (2.6%) and 2 (5.1%) disagreed and strongly disagreed (Table1). The respondents' data show that teaching and learning English speaking skills is more practical in mono-lingual classrooms than in multilingual speakers' classrooms. This may imply that if the teacher and the student have shared language, they can use L1 to make teaching and learning process smooth.

In reacting to teaching English speaking skills in the MLCs requires drawing students' prior knowledge of their local language (item no 4), 7 (17.9%) of the teachers' strongly agreed; 11(28.2%) agreed; whereas, 1 (2.6%) were uncertain, 7 (17.9%) and 4 (10.3%) of the teachers' disagreed and strongly disagreed respectively. This shows that several teachers agreed or strongly agreed to the necessity of drawing students' prior knowledge of their local language. The implication is that starting from students' experience may trigger them towards learning the target language, English speaking skills in this case, via the knowledge of their local language.

The students learn best when they find solutions to their English speaking skills problems on their own in the MLCs. In reflecting on this statement, 10 (25.6%) of the teachers strongly agreed and 21 (53.8%) agreed. On the other hand, 5 (12.8%) of the teachers were uncertain and 3 (7.7%) disagreed. As observed from item no 6, almost the responses of all teachers shows that they have agreed or strongly disagreed with the idea of triggering students to solve their speaking skills problems by their own.

The students feel timid while speaking English to others in MLCs (item no8). In response to this statement, 16 (41%) of the teachers strongly agreed; 14 (35.9 %) agreed; 6 (15.4%) were uncertain; 3 (7.7%) disagreed. The majority of the respondents' idea shows that many students feel timid during English speaking skills classes. This result implies that students do not have the exposure of the English language to exercise and develop their confidence.

In relation to the importance of practicing English speaking skills in MLC while teaching and learning speaking skills (item n_o 9), 10 (25.6%) of the teachers strongly agreed; 9 (23%) agreed; 10 (25.6%) were uncertain; 7(17.9%) disagreed and 3 (7.7%) strongly disagreed. This shows that the majority of the teachers agreed or strongly agreed upon the importance of practicing English speaking skills in MLCs. Since English language is a foreign language, practicing has paramount importance in developing the speaking skills. Moreover, exposing students to English practice may help them develop confidence to speak.

While the teachers show reaction to the ability to speak more than one language make the students speak better English in the MLCs (item n_o 10), 8 (20.5%) of the teachers strongly agreed, 7 (43.6 %) agreed, 13 (33.3 %) were uncertain and 1 (2.6 %) disagreed. The data show that the majority of the teachers agreed or strongly agreed that the more language students know the better they may learn new language.

How to use the student's mother tongue [MT] in the MLCs is difficult while teaching English speaking skills (item n_o11). Among the respondents of this idea, 7(17.9%) of the teachers strongly agreed, 15 (38.5 %) agreed, 8 (20.5%) were uncertain, 3 (7.7%) disagreed and 6 (15.4%) strongly disagreed. The data show the existence of difficulties to use students' MT in the multilingual classrooms. These difficulties of using the student's mother tongue may arise because of the linguistic diversities in the classroom.

Speaking skill is difficult to be taught in MLCs (item n_o 12). While reflecting on this statement, 6 (15.4%) of the teachers strongly agreed, 8 (20.5%) agreed, 12 (30.8 %) were uncertain, 8 (20.5%) disagreed and 5 (12.8%) strongly disagreed. The data show that the number of teachers who agreed or strongly agreed is almost similar to those who disagreed or strongly disagreed. This may imply that the teachers did not clearly understand the problem of teaching and learning English speaking skills because there are lacks of facilities to teach speaking skills, lack of exposure to English language etc. Therefore, the existence of these and the other problems makes speaking skills difficult than other skills; however, teachers reactions seem nearly similar.

Teaching English speaking skills to multilingual speakers is easier because they can learn a new language at an ease than mono-lingual speakers (item n_o 14). In reaction to this statement, 8 (20.5%) of the teachers strongly agreed, 15 (38.5%) agreed, 8 (20.5%) were uncertain, 5 (12.8%) disagreed and 3 (7.7%) strongly disagreed. According to this data, teaching English speaking skills is easier for multilingual students as they can learn a new language than those who know

one language. This result aligns with the idea that says the ability of nations to produce multilingual with advanced proficiency has become a key to global competitiveness (Brutt-Griffler, 2017).

Regarding item no.15 which refers to the multilingual pedagogical practices, 16 (41%) of the teachers strongly agreed; 9 (20.5%) agreed; 7 (17.9%) were uncertain; 7 (17.9%) and 1 (2.6%) of the teachers disagreed and strongly disagreed consecutively as a remedy to rise students capacity to learn English speaking skills in linguistically diversified EFL classroom. The majority of the teachers agreed and strongly agreed on the relevance of multilingual pedagogical practices; using only English in the classroom can cause some problems (Kicir, 2013). Multilingual pedagogical practices may be renovated, involve changes and reforms in content, approaches, structures and strategies to meet the needs of a diversity of pupils and provide spaces for all to learn and work across differences (Rutar, 2014). Furthermore, the effects of increased globalization necessitate multilingual pedagogies which include discrete strategies addressing participation, content and language learning, and extended units of work that accommodate linguistic diversity (French, 2020).

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics of Teachers' Data on Beliefs

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Item 1	1	5	3.77	1.012
Item 2	1	5	3.44	1.252
Item 3	1	5	3.97	1.088
Item 4	1	5	3.26	1.251
Item 5	1	5	2.49	1.211
Item 6	2	5	3.97	.843
Item 7	3	5	4.36	.668
Item 8	2	5	4.10	.940
Item 9	1	5	3.41	1.272
Item 10	2	5	3.82	.790
Item 11	1	5	3.36	1.308
Item 12	1	5	3.05	1.255
Item 13	1	5	2.54	1.253
Item 14	1	5	3.51	1.189
Item 15	1	5	3.79	1.239
Average	2.47	4.27	3.5231	.54021

Where: The numbers show strongly disagree (1), disagree (2), uncertain (3), Agree (4) and strongly agree (5).

Table 2 shows the average mean scores of 15 items are 3.52 with Standard Deviation of .54 on the beliefs of teaching speaking skills in the MLCs, respectively. This indicates that the mean scores of thirty-nine teachers on fifteen items of the questionnaire are nearly the same on the beliefs of teaching speaking skills in the MLCs. The mean scores of the teachers who participated in the research are found to be nearly the same.

Table 3. EFL Students' Beliefs in Learning Speaking Skills in MLCs

S.	Statements/Related items	SDA		DSG		UNC		AG		SA		
		N	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
1	I believe that I learn English speaking skills better in MLCs	28	28	11.2	31	12.4	84	33.5	81	32.3	27	10.8
2	It is easier to learn to read and write than to speak and understand what the teachers say in the MLCs	17	17	6.8	70	27.9	65	25.9	70	27.9	29	11.6
3	It is best to learn English speaking skills in mono-lingual classroom than in a MLCs	36	36	14	69	27.5	52	20.7	55	21.9	39	15.5
4	It is necessary to know the custom, the culture and the ways of life in English speaking people to speak English appropriately in a particular context of the MLCs	35	35	13.9	54	21.5	67	26.7	64	25.5	31	12.4
5	Students should use their prior knowledge of the local language while learning speaking skills in a MLCs.	28	28	11.2	60	23.9	67	26.7	69	27.5	27	10.8
6	I want to learn English better because it can help me access information from around the world.	25	25	10	33	13.1	43	17.1	44	17.5	10	42.2
7	Learning English speaking skills helps me communicate with people from other countries because English is an international language	24	24	9.6	63	25.1	48	19.1	82	32.7	34	13.5
8	Students learn best by finding their own solutions to English speaking skills problems.	28	28	11.2	47	18.7	61	24.3	79	31.5	36	14.3
9	Students should be allowed to think of solutions to practical	25	25	10	45	17.9	62	24.7	66	26.3	53	21.1

	problems before the teacher shows them how they are solved.										
10	I feel timid speaking English with others in diversified EFL classroom	26	10.4	38	15.1	34	13.5	75	29.9	78	31.1
11	In learning English speaking skill, it is important to practice a lot in MLCs	25	10	42	16.7	80	31.9	69	27.5	35	13.9
12	Students who speak more than one language are intelligent and they are capable of speaking English in the MLCs.	37	14.7	63	25.1	56	22.3	62	24.7	33	13.1
13	While learning English speaking skills in the MLCs, how to make use of my native language is difficult.	15	6	60	23.9	64	25.5	69	27.5	43	17.1
14	Learning foreign language speaking skills in a multilingual speakers is easier because they can learn new language at an ease than those who know one language	24	9.6	64	25.5	48	19.1	73	29.1	42	16.7
15	Multilingual pedagogical practices can maximize student's capacity of learning English speaking skills in MLCs	31	12.4	35	13.9	56	22.3	89	35.3	40	15.9

Where: SDA refers to strongly disagree; DSA to disagree; UNC to uncertain; AG to agree and SA to strongly agree.

Whether or not the students' beliefs of learning English speaking skills in the MLCs is well (item no 1), 27 (10.8%) strongly agreed; 81 (32.3%) agreed; whereas, 84 (33.5) were uncertain; 31 (12.4%) disagreed and 28 (11.2%) strongly disagreed (Table3). The response of the majority of the students showed that they have positive beliefs; however, there are linguistic diversities in the classrooms.

In their responses to learning English speaking skills is best in mono-lingual classroom than in the multilingual classrooms (item no 3), 39 (15.5%) of the students strongly agreed; 55 (21.9%) agreed; 52 (20.7%) were uncertain; 69 (27.5%) disagreed and 36 (14%) strongly disagreed. The responses from the students show that the number of students who strongly agreed or agreed is nearly similar to the number of students who strongly disagreed or disagreed to the statement. This implies that students have positive beliefs while learning English speaking skills regardless of the existence of the number of language they can speak (either mono-lingual or multi-lingual). In response to speaking English appropriately in a particular context of MLCs requires knowing the customs and culture of English language speaking people (item no4), 31 (12%) of the students strongly agreed; 64 (25.5%) agreed; 69 (26.7%) were uncertain; 54 (21.5%) were disagreed and 35 (13.9%) strongly disagreed (Table 3). The response shows that the numbers of students who have agreed or strongly agreed and disagreed or strongly disagreed are nearly similar. This result may indicate that speaking English appropriately is important regardless of knowing the custom and culture of the English speaking people. Once the students are equipped with proper knowledge of speaking English, they can use the language in the required context. Students want to learn English language because it can be helpful to access information from around the world. In their reflection on this statement, 106 (42.2%) of the students strongly agreed; 44 (17.5%) agreed. On the other hand, 43 (17.1%) were uncertain; but, 33 (13.1%) disagreed and 25 (10%) strongly disagreed (item no 6). The responses of the majority of students indicate that they want English language to access the necessary information from every corner of the world.

Regarding the issue of English as an international language (item no7), 34 (13.5%) of the students strongly agreed; 82 (32.7%) agreed; 48 (19.1%) were uncertain; 63 (25.1%) disagreed and 24 (9.6%) strongly disagreed. The majority of the students agreed or strongly agreed about the

relevance of learning English speaking skills. This indicates that students have understanding of the role of English language at international level.

In reacting to whether students need to be allowed to think of solutions to their practical problems before their teacher shows them how to solve it (item no 9), 53 (21.1%) strongly agreed; 66 (26.3%) agreed and 62 (24.7%) were uncertain; 45 (17.9%) disagreed and 25 (10%) strongly disagreed (Table 3). The responses from the majority of the students also support the idea of allowing students to solve their problems by their own efforts.

In response to whether or not students felt timid while speaking English to others in the MLCs (item no10), 78 (31.1%) strongly agreed; 75 (29.9%) agreed; 34 (13.5%) were uncertain. On the other hand, 38 (15.1%) disagreed and 26 (10.4%) strongly disagree. The responses show that the majority of the students agreed or strongly agreed with the statement. This result indicates the absence of practicing speaking skills which may help the students develop their confidence to speak.

When the students' reacted to the ability to speak more than one language made them speak better English in the MLCs (item no12), 33 (13.1 %) of the students strongly agreed; 62 (24.7%) agreed; 56 (22.3%) were uncertain; 63 (25.1%) disagreed and 37 (14.7%) strongly disagreed. The responses of the number of students who agreed or strongly agreed with this statement are nearly similar to those who disagreed or strongly disagreed. This may imply that the ability to speak better English is not be determined by the knowledge of more than one languages.

In responding to while learning English speaking skills in the MLCs, how to make use of my native language is difficult (item no 13), 43 (17.1%) of the students strongly agreed; 69 (27.5%) agreed; 64 (25.5%) were uncertain; whereas, 60 (23.9%) disagreed and 15 (6%) strongly disagreed. The response of the majority of the students showed that the existence of difficulties in how to use one's own native language in the multilingual classrooms. This result is supported by empirical and theoretical knowledge that advocates mother tongue (MT) should be incorporated by teachers in FL classrooms (Timor, 2012).

Learning English speaking skills for multilingual speakers is easier because they can learn a new language at ease than mono-lingual speakers (item no 14), 42 (16.7%) strongly agreed; 73 (29.1%) agreed; 48 (19.1) were uncertain; whereas, 64 (25.5%) students disagreed and 24 (9.6%) strongly disagreed. The responses of the majority of the students indicate that multilingual speakers learn foreign language speaking skills better than mono-lingual speakers. This finding aligns with the

idea that says the ability of nations to produce multilingual with advanced proficiency has become a key to global competitiveness (Brutt-Griffler, 2017).

In response to whether multilingual pedagogical practices can maximize students' capacity to learn English speaking skills in the MLCs (item no 15), 40 (15.9%) of them strongly agreed; 89 (35.3%) agreed; 56 (22.3%) were uncertain; whereas, 35 (13.9%) disagreed; 31 (12.4%) of the student strongly disagreed. The responses of the majority of the students depict that multilingual pedagogical practices maximize students' learning capacity. In line with this result, Rutar (2014) explains that multilingual learning environments contain notices and printed resources in all the first and second languages of all the children attending the group or classroom.

Table 4. Descriptive Statistics of Student Data on Beliefs

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Item 1	1	5	3.19	1.136
Item 2	1	5	2.90	1.134
Item 3	1	5	2.97	1.302
Item 4	1	5	3.01	1.236
Item 5	1	5	3.03	1.181
Item 6	1	5	3.69	1.388
Item 7	1	5	3.77	1.380
Item 8	1	5	3.16	1.218
Item 9	1	5	3.19	1.221
Item 10	1	5	3.11	1.183
Item 11	1	5	3.56	1.341
Item 12	1	5	3.19	1.170
Item 13	1	5	2.96	1.272
Item 14	1	5	2.89	1.262
Item 15	1	5	3.29	1.245
Average	1.73	4.47	3.1939	.58571

Where: The numbers show strongly disagree (1), disagree (2), uncertain (3), Agree (4) and strongly agree (5).

Table 4 indicates that the mean scores of two hundred fifty-one students on fifteen items of the questionnaire. The mean scores are nearly the same about the beliefs of learning speaking skills in the MLCs. The average mean scores of fifteen items are 3.194 with Standard Deviation of .58 on the beliefs of learning and speaking skills in the MLCs, respectively. The mean scores of the students who participated in the study are found to be nearly the same.

Table 5. Comparing mean scores of teachers' and students' beliefs in teaching and learning English speaking skills in the MLCs

	Number	Mean	St. Deviation
Teachers	39	3.5231	.54021
Students	251	3.1939	.58571

As it can be seen from Table 5, the mean score of teachers who participated in responding to the beliefs of teaching speaking skills in the MLCs is 3.52 and the mean score of the students who participated in responding to the belief of learning speaking skills in the MLCs is 3.19 respectively.

Discussions

The main objective of the study was to investigate EFL teachers' and students' beliefs in teaching and learning English speaking skills in the MLCs. The following are the discussions and findings of this study.

EFL teachers' beliefs in teaching English speaking skills in the multilingual classrooms

Teachers believe that teaching English speaking skills is possible in multilingual EFL classrooms provided that an appropriate pedagogy, which entertains the linguistic diversities, is used or applied. The finding of Lio (2018) confirms this idea, stating that it is generally agreed that teaching is greatly affected by the belief of its practitioners.

The teachers' beliefs in drawing students' prior knowledge of their local languages are frequently observed. Teachers allow students to do so; whereas, very few would never allow their student's local language. However, there is a difference on how to draw students' prior knowledge or experience; it is very important for the teaching and learning process in the MLCs. Based on their beliefs, some teachers activate students' prior knowledge of local language and

others don't. These disparities among teachers make it difficult to identify where the beliefs of the teachers lie. In line with this, the finding of Hammond (2011) state that beliefs are challenging to identify and describe but can be ascribed through examining accounts of practice and are not predictive of behavior. On the other hand, beliefs do help to explain the framework in which judgments about teaching and learning are made.

The translanguaging as a mechanism of teaching and learning has got little attention in multilingual classrooms. Contrary to this finding, Yoshira (2012) found that the systematic use of L1 in the teaching of foreign languages has been increasingly embraced by researchers in the field of foreign language teaching because the teachers themselves need to challenge their own mono-lingual and mono-cultural mindset. To challenge mono-lingual and multilingual mind sets, there should be multilingual approaches that compel researchers and practitioners to 'challenge the monolingual principle' and thus to withstand the pressure of common beliefs about language learning and teaching (Woll, 2020).

Teachers have shown strong beliefs in multilingual pedagogical practices in MLCs because they can maximize students' capacity of learning English speaking skills, where multilingual environments exist by de facto. This finding is supported by Rutar (2014) that states multilingual learning environments should contain notices and printed resources in all L1 and L2 of all children attending the classroom. Hence, the knowledge of multiple languages make teachers and students have better access to learning new languages; being multilingual equips teachers and students with better language aids than mono-lingual teachers and students in teaching and learning situations.

EFL students' beliefs in learning English speaking skills in the multilingual classrooms
Students believe that they can learn English speaking skills better in multilingual EFL classrooms if they have exposure to the target language. This is supported by Sifakis's (2014) finding that states learners of English as a foreign language today must be trained in communicating with both native and non-native users around the world. Another argument concerning the necessity of learning English speaking skills comes from the finding of Diani, (2015), which confirms the same issue saying that due to political, economic, social, and cultural factors, the English language has achieved a global level of use; it is currently used as a common means of communication throughout the world.

The students believe that they need to have the chance to use their L1 at an optimal level because it serves them as a gateway to the world. In line with this finding, Al-Hinai (2011) summarizes the researchers' ideas and explained some of the advantages of L1 as follows: MT reduces learner anxiety and creates a more relaxing learning environment, it is a means of bringing the learners' cultural background knowledge into the class; it facilitates checking understanding and giving instructions. It also facilitates the task of explaining the meaning of abstract words and introducing the main differences in grammar and pronunciation between L1 and L2.

They also believe that appropriate speaking instruction while learning English speaking skills is important to learn properly in the MLCs. The appropriate instruction given to the students who are learning English speaking skills in linguistic diversity will lead them into having a good & right command of English which in turn help them communicate their ideas in English. It is commonly argued that the beliefs that learners develop and hold to be true about their capabilities and skills they possess have an immediate impact on their learning behaviors (Pajares, 1992; Zehra, 2007). Generally, having understood about the relevance of L1 use, students have developed a positive view about learning English speaking skills in the MLCs.

Students have depicted that lack of multilingual pedagogical practices can minimize student learning capacity; it is hard for a teacher to cope with the challenges on many occasions in MLCs (Zaidi, et al., 2017). Lack of pedagogical training for teaching a multilingual classes from teachers' side, lack of multilingual ability to accommodate diversity in MLCs, lack of personal experience in life and education, environmental situations, etc. may be some problems observed and may contribute to the inability of self-expression among and between teachers and students.

Conclusions

This study was designed to investigate what the EFL teachers' and students' beliefs are in teaching and learning English speaking skills in the MLCs. The investigation also aimed at proposing all-inclusive English speaking skills teaching and learning methods in the MLCs. Overall, the results proposed that the pedagogical approach in the teaching and learning of English speaking skills in MLCs should be guided by multilingual pedagogy accompanied by inclusive practices considering linguistic diversities. Teachers and students have developed positive beliefs on teaching and learning English speaking skills in the MLCs. However, the beliefs are good towards teaching and learning English speaking skills in the MLCs; there should

be an inclusive multilingual pedagogy that considers the students' linguistic diversities in the classroom. If the students' language gets attention, teaching and learning English speaking skills will become interesting, attractive, and interactive between teachers and students and among the students themselves.

Recommendations

Ethiopia is naturally a home to large number of languages with culturally and linguistically diverse nations. Thus, the classes in Ethiopian universities are becoming multilingual which equally necessitates multilingual pedagogies that treat all students as equally as possible. Teachers and students should develop their beliefs in a way that comply with the multilingual classroom situations. The natural existence of multilingual speaker in the multilingual environment also demands multilingual pedagogy to embrace and guide the current linguistic diversity at a moderate level.

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