

**Addis Ababa University  
Faculty of Language Studies  
Department of English  
(Graduate Program)**

*An Exploration of the Perceptions and Practices of ELLIP-Trained  
Subject Area Instructors in Promoting Academic English Learning:  
The Case of Arba Minch College of Teacher Education*

**By: Winner Merid**



**June, 2011**

**Addis Ababa**

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Subject Area Instructors in Promoting Academic English Learning:  
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**A Thesis Submitted to the Department of English  
(Graduate Program)**

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Master of Arts in Teaching English as a foreign Language (TEFL)**

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## **List of Acronyms**

**BICS-** Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills

**CALP-** Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency

**CTE-** College of teacher education

**ELIP-**English Language Improvement Program

**ELT-** English Language Teaching

**HDP-** Higher diploma program

**MOE-**Ministry of Education

**SNNPR-** Southern Nations Nationalities and Peoples Region

## ***Abstract***

*This study was aimed at exploring the perceptions of ELIP-Trained subject area instructors towards promoting academic English Learning and assessing their practices in promoting academic English learning. The study attempted to see ELIP-Trained subject area instructors' perceptions and practices in relation to the English language improvement training (ELIP) they had taken.*

*To conduct the study, descriptive survey method was employed. The study was conducted in Arba Minch CTE and the data were gathered from 30 ELIP-trained subject area instructors and 120 respective students of these instructors. No sampling was used to draw instructors who would fill out the questionnaire, whereas systematic sampling was employed to determine student participants. The data collection instruments used were; questionnaire (for both instructors and students), interview (for instructors) and observation.*

*Qualitative and quantitative analysis were employed so as to analyze the data obtained through the instruments used in the study. The quantitative data were analyzed using percentage, mean and grand mean where as the qualitative data were categorized and described qualitatively in line with the items in the questionnaire. The findings of the study revealed that ELIP-trained subject area instructors have a moderate perception towards ELIP training. In spite of their high perceptions with regard to promoting academic English, ELIP trained subject area instructors practices were found to be low in terms of the provision of language use demanding situations which would promote academic English learning by students.*

*Finally, recommendations were forwarded based on the major findings. The points recommended were: the preparation of materials appropriate to the levels of the trainees; extending the scope of the ELIP training from helping instructors improve their English to empowering instructors to step in to promoting academic English learning in the content classrooms by the learners; organizing a regular forum discussion on how instructors can support learners improve their Academic English; collaboration between HDP and ELIP to enhance the learners involvement in class activities using English; provision of a reading and study skills training for learners in their first year in the college; and formulation of ways by concerned bodies on how to exploit the existing potential area in content areas for better academic English learning.*

# Chapter One

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Background of the Study

People's choice for studying a particular language is affected by different factors. Usually, students study a foreign language driven by some external factors. According to Bogale (1994), non-native speakers study foreign languages for various reasons. They study a particular language to achieve purposes such as meeting their communicative needs in a given areas of language use. Students' interest for studying a foreign language is determined by their needs in life and the social, academic, economic or political role that language plays. English language plays a significant role in the context of Ethiopia. Next to Amharic, the official language, English serves as a language of wider communication. It is used for achieving both international and domestic purposes. English language serves as the international communication tool for business and diplomacy, it is taught as a subject in the general education (grades 1-12), and it is used as medium of instruction in second cycle primary (with the exception of some regions), secondary and tertiary levels (Beyene, 2008; Marew, 2000).

Among the possible areas that demand the use of English language, the use of English as a medium of instruction takes the lions' share from the purposes it serves. All students who are involved in schooling are in one way or another expected to use English language to accomplish various activities in the entire process of learning. Thus, students purpose for studying the language is highly affected by the language demand needed to be successful in education. Bogale(1994) stated that Ethiopian students primarily study English in order to use it as a medium of communication especially in their academic endeavor. However, the purpose of studying English in the English classrooms seems to be different from the real purpose students study the language. Usually, English is considered as an independent subject on its own. Nevertheless, the reality is far from the current practice in the ELT classrooms. Since English is widely used to achieve academic goals, the teaching of English should be geared towards supporting learners to achieve the required level of language proficiency; preparing students for classroom instruction in English and for being able to make good use of textbooks written in the language.

For the majority of the students, however, there is a mismatch between the level of language ability achieved and the level of language ability required to handle classroom instruction and interaction in English in a particular grade level. More often than not students come to a certain grade level without fully being equipped with the language needed to accomplish the tasks in a certain subject area course. Short (1993) notes teachers can no longer rely on transfer of knowledge and skills as students learn English and then enter in a subject area class because so many students come to schools underprepared for the required grade level work. Therefore, it is important to consider there is always a gap to be bridged.

Crandall (1998) asserts “Content teachers cannot expect students to arrive in their classrooms fully proficient in academic English”. Though it is possible to roughly determine the standard of English necessary to handle classroom instruction, it doesn’t mean that the attained level of proficiency would enable the learner to be successful without working on improving his/her language skills. Mohan (1986), cited in Crandall (1998) states that in the real world, people learn language and content simultaneously. It is impossible to separate language learning from content learning, and content learning from language learning. Moreover, while learning subject area courses it is inevitable that students learn technical words, expressions and generally discipline specific language necessary to deal with the new content or the unique concept in the course. Therefore, teachers need to address both content and language learning in their classrooms.

Unlike the traditional lecture method of teaching, the modern learner centered approach to teaching highly advocates students’ personal active involvement in the classroom activities (and perhaps in activities beyond the classroom). In view of facilitating the shift from lecture to student centered approach, instructors in the college (Arba Minch CTE) have been given training; a Higher Diploma Program [HDP]. HDP is a teaching methodology training commonly offered for instructors in the higher institutions throughout the country. If instructors employ the principles they learnt in the HDP, the learner centered approach to teaching by itself provides students rich contexts to use and learn the language. Usually, instructors are made to attend HDP by the very year they are employed. As soon as they complete HDP, instructors join the English Language Improvement Program [ELIP] in the coming year. ELIP was launched in 2002 with the goal of improving the quality of education by raising the level of English of all teachers; both teachers of English and subject area instructors (ELIP Ethiopia, 2008; Ahmed, et al., 2005).

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Language plays a profound role in human communication in general and in education in particular. In the Ethiopian context, English language, which is the recognized medium of instruction of second cycle primary school and beyond seems to be at the heart of the curriculum and influences the learning in all subjects. Since language provides access to the materials and the learning experiences, English language is vital to learning (Tiruneh, 1997:10). Students' mastery of the medium of instruction, i.e. English language in this case greatly affects their mastery of the subject matter (Ashworth, 1985:44). Therefore, students need to develop their ability in the language to benefit from most of the learning opportunities in the school and beyond (Tiruneh, 1997). Papai( ) also states that students need to develop their English language abilities and become proficient in all language skills to benefit from academic lessons. In order to access information and succeed in the school system and perhaps beyond, students need to be able to read, write and understand academic texts as well as other varied genres from the major subject areas such as science lab reports and mathematics word problems. In addition, they need to be able to understand and discuss concepts in the content areas.

In Ethiopia, however, the quality of education is declining from time to time. Though there could be varieties of reasons for it, as it is a commonly heard complaint around content area instructors, one of the contributing factors is thought to be the decline of the learners' proficiency in the medium of instruction, English. Though teachers of English seem to be more responsible to help learners improve their English, they cannot do the entire job on their own due to different reasons. Hence, this requires collaboration between teachers of English and subject area instructors (Crandall, 1998). Subject area instructors also could influence or contribute to the language improvement of the learners (Abebe, 2003). Since English is used as a medium of instruction, the use of English in the process of content learning in one way or another contributes for the improvement of the students' academic English. This is what happens in the natural process of teaching and learning in the content classrooms. Unquestionably, it would be possible to increase the degree of influence or contribution through raising the awareness of instructors so that they can make some conscious efforts to engage learners use the language subsidiary to their major responsibility of teaching content.

The English language skills students gain from the EFL classrooms may not necessarily enable them to be effective in subject area courses because the kind of English taught in ELT classrooms is usually limited to basic English which enables students to maintain a basic communication. As Cummins points out students develop two types of language proficiency: basic interpersonal communication skills and cognitive academic language proficiency. Basic interpersonal communication skills is referred as social English and cognitive academic language proficiency is referred as academic English. In addition to developing their proficiency in social English, therefore, learners have to work on improving their academic English to be successful in education (Cummins, 1981, cited in Crandall, 1994; Goldstein and Liu, 1994).

The mastery of academic English is difficult and may take longer period of time than social English. Since the level of difficulty of learning one is different from the other, the amount of time needed to develop proficiency in these two varieties of English varies as well. Social language or basic interpersonal communication skills can be acquired in 1 to 2 years, but developing proficiency in academic English can take 5 to 7 years (Cummins, 1983, cited in Crandall, 1994).

Moreover, Crandall (1998:2) points out that the learning of academic English requires the use of academic English. Students learn academic language when they have something to think or to write about in that language. To develop academic knowledge and skills students need to have access to the language in which that knowledge is embedded, discussed, constructed, or evaluated. She also makes a strong claim that students cannot acquire academic language skills in a context devoid of content (Crandall, 1994, quoted in Crandall, 1998:2). Learning content in English provides different contexts for language learning, therefore, subject area instructors need to take responsibility to engage learners in using the language and support them whenever need arises.

In the current practice of teaching and learning, however, the subject area instructors' perceptions in promoting academic English learning and their practices seems to be unclear. According to the researcher's "informal" observation, subject area instructors appear to be less responsible in helping learners improve their academic English. English and Amharic (a

vernacular shared by the majority of students) are used in nearly equal proportion in the classrooms. Moreover, no assessment of the English language improvement program has been made so far in the college.

Concerning the available related local studies in the area, only few people have conducted research so far. The first research in the area was conducted by Tirusew in 1997. He studied the role of subject matter teachers in promoting English language learning. He found that though teachers are cognizant of the students' language deficiencies, they hardly engage students in writing and speaking skills in the assignments they give. The other accessible research in the area was conducted by Abebe mengesha in 2003 focusing on the awareness of subject area instructors about their contributions to the development of students writing skills. And he found that instructors are aware of their contributions to students' writing skills development.

Both studies mainly focused on the perceptions or awareness of subject teachers about their roles though Tirusew made an attempt to look at the teachers' practices. Since awareness in the area may not necessarily result in the required performance, it was found important to study the practice in accordance with the perceptions instructors have. With regard to this, Abebe (2003) explained the relevance of looking at the practices of subject area instructors in relation to their awareness; however, in the limitations of the study section he confessed the fact that he couldn't conduct classroom observations due to a time constraint. Thus, the present study focused on identifying ELIP-Trained subject area instructors' perceptions and practices in promoting academic English learning in the content classrooms. This research was conducted in Arba Minch College of teacher education, whereas the previous two researches were conducted in different study areas; one in Addis Ababa high schools and the other in Dilla University. These realities initiated the researcher to conduct a further study on the area. Moreover, in this study the instructors' perceptions and practices were investigated in light of ELIP training for academic staff.

The main purpose of this study was to investigate the perceptions and practices of ELIP-Trained subject area instructors in promoting Academic English learning. To this end, the study attempted to answer the following basic questions:

- What are the views of ELIP-trained subject area instructors about ELIP training?
- How do ELIP-trained subject area instructors perceive the English language ability of the learners to learn content through English?
- How do ELIP-trained subject area instructors perceive the nature and development of academic English?
- How do ELIP-trained subject area instructors see their role/responsibility in helping learners improve their academic English?
- To what extent do ELIP-trained subject area instructors support learners improve their academic English?

### **1.3 Objectives of the Study**

This study is aimed at exploring the perceptions of ELIP-Trained subject area instructors towards supporting learners improve their academic English and assessing their (subject area instructors') practices in promoting academic English learning. The study attempts to see the perception and practices of ELIP-Trained subject area instructors in relation to the ELIP training they have attended. Specifically, it aims to:

- Find out the perceptions of ELIP-trained Subject Area Instructors towards ELIP training.
- Examine ELIP-trained Subject Area Instructors' perception towards promoting academic English learning.
  - ✓ Find out how ELIP-trained subject area instructors perceive the English language ability of the learners to learn content through English.
  - ✓ Identify the perceptions of ELIP-trained subject area instructors with regard to the nature and development of academic English.
  - ✓ Find out how ELIP-trained subject area instructors' see their role/responsibility in helping learners improve their academic English.
- Assess ELIP-trained Subject Area Instructors' efforts to support learners improve their academic English.

### **1.4 Significance of the Study**

The result of this study is hoped to make salient contribution in the following instances:

- Raising awareness among subject area instructors about their potential in promoting the students' academic English learning.
- Producing valuable information to program developers and policy makers about the existing situation.
- Providing a general picture of the degree to which instructors and students use the English language in the classroom in the way it promotes academic English learning.
- Producing invaluable information for ELIP coordinators and College administration on how to mobilize instructors in supporting learners improve their academic English.
- Since a thorough study has not been carried out so far in the area, it could serve as a stepping stone for further studies on similar issues. Also, it may kindle interest in other researchers to undertake further study.

### **1.5 Delimitation of the Study**

This study is confined in Arba Minch College of teacher education. The results of the study would be more comprehensive if it enclosed other colleges and institutions across the teacher training colleges in SNNPR. To make the study manageable under the competence of the researcher, however, the researcher delimited the study to a single college; Arba Minch CTE. Arba Minch College is selected based on the researcher's acquaintance to the system in the college and its relative convenience to access the necessary data. The target populations of the study are all ELIP trained subject area instructors. Language instructors and those subject area instructors who have not completed the training by the time were not included in the study. Both perceptions and practices of ELIP trained subject area instructors were the focus of this research. The study also addresses the issue of instructors' views about the ELIP training since the perceptions and practices are to be seen in light of what they gained from the training.

### **1.6 Limitations of the Study**

Time, resource and distance are some of the constraints that influenced the researcher to plan in a narrow context. Concerning the availability of resources related to the area of study, finding previously undertaken works had been very challenging; however, the researcher tried his best to support the claims made with others' idea. The available time to accomplish the activities in line

with the stated objectives was tough. The study is an exploratory study; it limited itself to describing the existing situation in the college. Conclusions drawn from such a narrow context may not be boldly generalized to situations in other institutions. Hence, the applicability of the findings of this study should be seen in light of the above limitations.

## **1.7 Operational Definition**

### Academic English:

Academic English is the language necessary for success in school. It is related to a standards-based curriculum, including the content areas of math, science, social studies, and English language arts (Colorado, 2007).

Unless it is specifically mentioned as social/conversational English, the term English refers to academic English.

Instructors: in this study refers to teachers who teach in the college. In some occasions, however, the term teacher is used interchangeably with instructor.

Perception: A mental image or view towards certain activities.

Subject Area Instructors: Content teachers who teach subjects like mathematics, Biology, Geography, History, etc. For the purpose of maintaining uniformity, psychology and pedagogy are labeled under this category.

At times the word “instructors” has been used in place of “ELIP trained subject area instructors” to avoid unnecessary repetition. Unless it is specified as other subject instructors, the term “instructors” refers to “ELIP trained subject area instructors”.

## **1.8 Organization of the study**

The study is divided in to five chapters. The first chapter describes the background of the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, significance of the study, delimitation of the study, and limitations of the study. This is followed by chapter two which deals with the review of related literature. The third chapter discusses the research design and methodology of the study. The fourth chapter deals with the analyses of the data, findings and discussions. Finally, summary, conclusions and recommendations are presented in chapter five.

## Chapter Two

### 2. Review of Related Literature

#### 2.1 The Role of Language in Education

A very strong interrelationship exists among language, learning, and learners. For learning to take place in the actual classroom setting, both teachers and students employ language as a tool for teaching and learning. According to Ashworth (1985:35), "Language is a vehicle through which teachers teach and students learn." It is a medium through which the transfer of knowledge and skills are made possible. The development of a language proficiency in education is a key element for success in all learning. In order to learn a certain concept, learners need to make use of language. If students are to take charge of their own learning, they need to be guided and assisted with the ways of acquiring the necessary tools which enable them to do things by themselves. Successful education encompasses provision of effective language support for the learners. In any educational program, paying attention to the language of learning is crucial for the successful accomplishment of the program. Hence, learners should be supported to improve their language and offered opportunities to express themselves both in speech and writing and develop their reading skills.

Language has a central role in learning and it serves various purposes in education. Language, as a tool for communication is commonly used to understand and express ideas in the content area classrooms both by teachers and students. Teachers use language to give instruction, explain concepts and facilitate the learning in the classroom. When students are using the language to express their thoughts at the same time they are demonstrating their learning or understanding through effective communication. Language is also used as a means of receiving information from different sources such as their colleagues, teachers or written materials. In addition to its role in enabling teachers to express thoughts and helping learners demonstrate their learning, language serves as a means of learning new concepts (Bearne, 1998). What anyone knows or understands is not only expressed through language, but formed through language. Marland (1977) argues that the role of language in learning is not merely used as a tool for receiving information but also for forming and dealing with concepts. Marland describes that subject

knowledge is embedded in the words and phrases they are expressed with. In the course of learning, language can be used to organize ideas in a meaningful way, process thoughts, clarify our thinking, and explore new ideas. Bearne (1998:9) states:

*One of the functions of language in education is that it helps us to learn. We can work out ideas and reflect on them, record observations, capture and concentrate thoughts and so generate new ideas. When we give expression to new ideas we are not simply clothing already existing thoughts with words, but actively shaping the slippery material of concepts, pinning ideas down and putting them together so that we are satisfied with the cut and style of our thinking.*

Similarly, Marew (2000) also states that through the use of language in content classrooms students can assimilate a large amount of knowledge, concepts and skills. By reading, discussing and writing about different concepts students better understand school subjects.

A language education system has three components: learning language, learning about language, and learning through language. In the case of the third component students learn content through language and at the same time they learn, apply and retain language through content area study (Halliday; Tompkins and Hoskisson, cited in Abebe, 2003). Language is a bridge to learning content. Language development can be assisted by the use of the language of learning in the content classrooms. When students are engaged in learning content area courses, they are provided with an opportunity to master the non-linguistic content and develop their communicative competence. Therefore, any consensus about the role of language in the curriculum needs to be founded on a broad and informed view of language and offer a range of ways in which language development can be facilitated in the normal course of content learning (Bearne, 1998).

## **2.2 The Role of English in Education**

The English language has a significant role in the education sector of a number of countries in the world. It is the language of secondary and tertiary instruction where English is a native language in countries like the United States, Canada, England, and Australia, and also where

English is not a native language of the people in countries like Japan, Malaysia, Germany, Eastern European countries, and many Arab and African nations (Balizet, 2001). Ethiopia is one of the countries which uses English as a language of learning in the secondary and tertiary levels (Marew, 2000). It is possible to conclude to some degree that the English language has achieved a status of wider communication in the academic circles. According to Flowerdew (1994), cited in Balizet (2001), English is the international language of academic exchange. Most of the educational materials across the world are published in English. Scholars in Western countries like America and Britain every year produce new and innovative educational materials in English. Also, they publish new research findings in different fields of study. Access to these publications can only be made possible through developing the necessary proficiency in the language; whether learning English and/or using it as a means of learning content through it.

There is a common understanding among most educators about the importance of adequate English language proficiency for successful academic performance. Unless students acquire a certain level of proficiency in English, particularly proficiency in academic English, they will encounter problems in learning a subject matter course in English. Ashworth (1985:44) emphasizes the significance of the language of learning to academic achievement. He points out “The speed and efficiency with which students master the target language will affect the speed and efficiency they will master the subject matter.” Since language plays an indispensable role in the pursuit of producing competent content area learners, all teachers need to be aware of the impact of language in their classes and how they can support students’ subject mastery by using English in intentional ways.

### **2.3 Reasons for Expecting Subject Area Instructors to involve in promoting Academic English Learning**

In a learning situation where English is used as a medium of instruction, having the required proficiency in English is of a paramount importance. Students who are supposed to follow instruction in the English language need to have the language proficiency which enables them to handle classroom instruction and interaction in English. Such a widely spread expectation seems to be natural among many people (including subject area instructors), however, it lacks practicality; it remains to be idealistic. Usually the expectation and the observable situation in

natural settings seem to run in opposite direction. Short (1993) underscores the fact that in most cases many students come to schools underprepared for the required task in a certain grade level. The language that students acquire under the instruction of English teachers would not enable them to be effective users of the language in the content classrooms. There is always a gap between the language that students acquire due to instruction in language classrooms and the academic English required for success in academic content areas (Abedi, 2007, cited in Anstrom et al., 2010). It is unrealistic to expect students to learn all the discipline specific language in the traditional EFL classrooms.

On the other hand, from the language learning point of view, content area classrooms are ideal potential areas to enhance the development of the language of learning. Krashen (1982) suggests that a second/foreign language is most successfully acquired when the conditions are similar to those present in first language acquisition: that is, when the focus of instruction is on meaning rather than on form; when the language input is at or just above the proficiency of the learner; and when there is sufficient opportunity to engage in meaningful use of that language in a relatively anxiety-free environment. This suggests that the focus of the second language classroom should be on something meaningful, such as academic content, and that modification of the target language facilitates language acquisition and makes academic content accessible to second language learners.

Language teaching and content teaching have been considered as two separate entities. Snow, Met and Genesee; however, describe this attempt to address students needs as traditional approach because language and content teachers make their own effort in a disintegrated manner (1989). More often than not the language use in language classrooms is quite different from the purpose for which language is normally used. As Widdowson states a great deal of materials for the teaching of foreign languages present the language to be learned divorced from the real communicative purpose in contexts created only to teach the language(1978:53). An attempt to teach language in this way represents the language as a different phenomenon from learning a mother tongue.

In most cases, teachers of English are thought to be the sole responsible bodies for the development of the English language proficiency of the learners. According to Snarrski (1997), "Language awareness and development is often thought of as something that is associated only with the teachers of language." However, the practice opportunities students are provided with in language classrooms are limited in time and scope. He contends "--- the language to be practiced and developed is the medium of instruction for classes other than the language class." Content area classes are regarded as a rich source for language input. Hutchinson and Waters (1997), cited in Snarrski (1997) argue that much language learning takes place outside the language classroom.

The contexts in the content classrooms provide meaningful situations for language learning. Widdowsoen(1978) argues that language used in meaningful communicative environments is discourse rather than an artificial construct. For example, in science, students are expected to give adequate scientific explanations and well-argued accounts of experiments. These are real communication situations within formal education that call for genuine language use.

Owing to the inherent characteristics of language variation in different contexts, language use in school differs in some important general ways from language use outside of school. In different subject areas, different linguistic items occur naturally (Snow, Met and Genesee, 1989). Different subject areas are characterized by specific genres or registers. According to Ashworth (1985:44-45), "Different subject areas have their own special vocabularies and to a lesser degree special syntax with perhaps an emphasis on a particular language function." So by learning the school register or specific subject area registers through their occurrences in all the subject areas, a learner acquires a well-rounded grasp of those items (Goldstein and Liu, 1994).

Another reason for expecting subject area instructors to contribute is that content provides a substantive basis for language learning. As Snow, Met and Genesee (1989) point out content provides both a motivational and a cognitive basis for language learning. Since content in a subject area is usually interesting, worth learning, and of some value to the learner, content provides a motivational incentive for language learning. Language then will be learned because it provides access to content, and language learning may even become incidental to learning about the content. Content also provides a cognitive basis for language learning. Cognitive

development and language development go hand in hand and they are naturally paired in the first language acquisition. In learning subject-area courses, content provides real meaning in a specific defined context that is an inherent feature of naturalistic language learning. Meaning provides conceptual or cognitive hangers on which language functions and structures can be hung. In the absence of real meaning, language structures and functions are likely to be learned as abstractions devoid of conceptual or communicative value.

The traditional methods for teaching second/foreign languages often dissociate language learning from cognitive or academic development. In contrast to the case in the traditional EFL classrooms, the content-area classrooms provide ideal situation for learning academic English required to learn content because there is a natural connection between language use and learning academic subject matter: In content-area classrooms, language input is contextualized, enhancing the negotiation of meaning between teacher and student (Horowitz, 2008, cited in Anstrom et al., 2010; Snow, Met and Genesee, 1989).

The traditional language teaching approach which focuses on the language aspect with little attention to the content is not able to serve the language needs of the learners in the content classrooms (Short, 1994:582). Language teaching should serve the learners need for learning other subjects through English. Snarski (1997) reveals that the department of languages and communication is commonly called a “service department”. This implies that the learning in the language classroom is not an independent purpose on its own. Blanton (1992) states that, students’ real purpose in learning a foreign language in the English medium schools is to develop English and English-related skills which enable them to handle instruction in content classrooms. Mohan, cited in Blanton (1992:288) has to say the following:

*It is true that English is only a means to an End for most students ---: their purpose in studying English is to study other subject matter through the medium of English. It is also true that we teachers must make the best use of students’ time by concentrating on the kind of English and English related skills that will best serve their academic needs.*

### **The responsibility of English and content teachers in promoting academic English learning**

The vast majority of students need support with their English language skills, particularly academic language skills to succeed in their academic career. The question is whose job should be to teach them. There is no doubt that language teachers are the main responsible bodies to contribute for the development of the learners' English proficiency. However, the case requires alliance of subject teachers in order to satisfy the needs of the learners. Subject area teachers influence the language of their students while teaching them content in English though they may not think they are doing it. As Widdowson (1978:54) states, "Teachers of physics, chemistry, biology, geography and so on may not think of themselves as language teachers, probably because they conceive of language in terms of usage, but there can be no question that they are teaching use. They are, of course, teaching it as realized through the language system of the learner's own mother tongue." Roe et al., (2004) also reveal the possibility that any subject area teacher can help students enhance their language skills while they are teaching subject matter.

Since content classes have great language-teaching potentials, subject area instructors are expected to have a concern for the development of their students' academic English. As Marew (2000:64) states, subject area teachers "have a double responsibility". They are expected to help students "master the content of their subjects and develop the language skills required to learn the contents of their school subjects at the same time".

Different researches reveal that language learning through subject-matter learning is an effective way of learning the language of instruction (Snow, Met and Genesee, 1989). The use of English as a language of learning provides an opportunity for students to learn the language simultaneously with the content in the curriculum. It is necessary to give weight to the language of learning and make it the concern of all responsible educationalists. Teachers, as those who are in control of the teaching and learning process, can use this opportunity to foster student competence in the foreign language while helping learners advance in the knowledge of the subject matter.

As the number of students with different levels of language proficiency increases, challenges for the teacher will be unique with each student. Crandall (1998) has to say the following about the possible strategies that subject area instructors may possibly use for accommodating different levels of English Language proficiency in the classroom without “watering down” the curriculum. They can facilitate the learning of language in their classes by providing:

- a. Multiple opportunities to negotiate meaning and construct understanding through the use of multiple media (reading texts, writing assignments, class discussions),
- b. Repetition or rephrasing of difficult concepts or vocabulary;
- c. Multiple grouping strategies which promote cooperative learning, peer tutoring, and other learner-centered approaches and provide opportunities for instructional conversations, scaffolding, and support from more experienced peers or the teacher;
- d. Demonstrations and experiential learning to reduce dependence on academic language for conveying meaning and understanding;
- e. Visuals, realia, and other means of using concrete, embedded instruction as a bridge to the more abstract; and
- f. Graphic organizers and other pre- and post-reading and listening strategies to break concepts into manageable chunks and focus students’ attention on major concepts, rather than number of pages to be “covered”;

**Crandall (1998:7-8)**

### **Cooperation between subject-area and language teachers**

Ashworth (1985) asserts “Cooperation between language teachers and subject-matter teachers --- can increase [their efficiency in] language learning.” He points out that both language and content teachers can be a resource for one another. Language teachers who are helping students master the language of instruction are, in a sense, performing a service for their content area colleagues. Also, language teachers can act as a resource for other subject-matter teachers by providing an opportunity for subject-matter teachers to discover how language can be learned through subject-matter and how subject-matter can be learned through language teaching (Ashworth, 1985:45).

## **2.4 English Language Improvement program [ELIP]**

In addition to the formal education program, offering in service training for teachers will have a considerable effect on their performance as teachers. It is possible to increase their effectiveness through training. ELIP was designed to improve the English proficiency of teachers of different levels being cognizant of the role of language in education.

### **2.4.1 Background to ELIP**

The English Language Improvement Program (ELIP) was launched by the Ministry of Education in 2002 to tackle the low levels of English proficiency amongst teachers and students. However, at the beginning it was mainly aimed at upgrading the standard of English among teachers throughout the country. It is the product of a realization by the Government of Ethiopia that the level of teachers' English and the quality of teaching in Ethiopian schools was not of sufficiently high standard to produce a workforce capable of serving the needs of national development. ELIP is a component of the general teacher development program (TDP) (ELIP Ethiopia, 2008).

ELIP was mainly aimed at improving the English language proficiency of all teachers irrespective of their subject. The training included in-Service and pre-service training for teachers and students. Academic Staff development is also one of the areas ELIP training focused on. Generally, the training was given to academic and support staff and students.

### **2.4.2 Objectives of the Program**

Flippo(1984) cited in AL-Ajlouni et al., (2010) defines training as “the act of increasing the skills of an employee for doing a particular Job”. Unlike general education program, training is always aimed at filling a certain gap. Training is a system which feeds the needs, skills and knowledge of the people working in the organization. These skills and knowledge are acquired to fulfill a specific purpose or goal. Since training involves the identification of areas of weaknesses on the side of trainees, any sort of training needs to have clearly defined objectives.

The primary function of a training objective is creating a goal attainable by trainees during the training. Evaluating training will also help show how effective the training was at meeting its objectives (AL-Ajlouni et al., 2010). In other words, objectives of training serve as a reference

frame for evaluating the success and failure of the program through checking the achievement of the stated objectives.

The objective of ELIP is raising the English language ability of both English language teachers and teachers of other subjects through the medium of English. According to Ahmed et al., (2005), the ultimate aims were to enable all teachers:

- 1) to do their job effectively (particularly English medium teachers) by communicating effectively with their students
- 2) to have access to knowledge and information available in English, to make use of modern information and communication technology opportunities and to interact with their peers through this international language which is also a medium of instruction.

### **2.4.3 The Training**

From the outset, the Ministry of Education made it clear that the principal beneficiaries of the program would be the teachers themselves (Ahmed et al., 2005), however, since learners are the focus of any teaching and learning process, empowering instructors has an indirect mission of addressing the needs of the learners. Helping teachers develop their proficiency in English would enable them to be effective helpers of the learners.

The training was designed by the initiation from the government side which resulted from the realization in lower English proficiency of teachers. Teachers did not request the training rather it was imposed upon them by the government (Ahmed et al., 2005). Sometimes instructors are informally told that Higher Diploma and ELIP would serve as a license to continue to continue working in higher institutions. The training for the academic staff is held for four hours a week, within two days two hours of training each day.

The program was implemented jointly by the collaboration of different international organizations, institutions and regional and local stakeholders. Some of the key players in the program are:

- Federal Ministry of Education, Ethiopia
- British Council
- Pat McLaughlin, lead consultant

- 6 development partners: UK, Belgium, Finland, Ireland, Netherlands and Sweden
- College of St Mark and St John, Plymouth, which provided the IKELTAs and which jointly prepared the training materials
- Leeds Metropolitan University, which jointly prepared the training materials
- Regional Education Bureaus (REBs)
- ELIP Committee.

(ELIP Ethiopia, 2008; Ahmed et al., 2005:197)

## 2.5 Academic English

The term academic language is defined as: “the language used in the learning of academic subject matter in a formal schooling context; aspects of language strongly associated with literacy and academic achievement, including specific academic terms or technical language, and speech registers related to each field of study” (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages, 2003, quoted in Anstrom et al., 2010:34). Colorado (2007) identifies academic English as “the language necessary for success in school. It is a language register related to a standards-based curriculum, including the content areas of math, science, and social studies.” In the broadest sense, academic English refers to the language used in school to help students acquire and use knowledge (Bailey & Heritage, 2008, cited in Anstrom et al., 2010). Academic English is developmental in its nature; as the grade level increases the complexity in language use required to understand and deal with the content increases as well, with specific linguistic details that can be the same or vary across content domains (Anstrom et al., 2010).

Academic English can be viewed as part of the overall English language proficiency. It is referred to as a variety of English, as a register, or as a style, and is typically used within specific socio-cultural academic settings. It is commonly used in professional journals and books and characterized by the specific linguistic features associated with each academic discipline. Academic English includes many diverse sub-registers associated with different disciplines such as science, economics, and mathematics (Johns, 1997). It is not possible to “do” science, economics or mathematics with only ordinary language (Halliday & Martin, 1993, cited in Scarella, 2003). One must “do” discipline-specific work with academic and discipline-specific language. Academic English tasks include reading abstracts, getting down the key ideas from

lectures; writing answers to analytical questions, critiques, summaries, annotated bibliographies, reports, case studies, research projects, expository essays; and oral presentations; solving mathematical word problems without illustrations; and so forth. It includes a wide range of genres (Goldstein and Liu, 1994).

More often than not people equate academic English with academic reading and writing, however, different scholars have a contrary view to the widely spread conception among people. Ferris and Tagg (1996:31) reveal “though much work has been done in identifying academic literacy tasks, little attention has been paid to describing the listening and speaking tasks required by instructors in academic settings.” The fact that there hasn’t been a clear description of the aural/oral requirements to the degree of specificity achieved for reading and writing tasks might have resulted from the nature of the skills required by the instructors. Describing the academic aural/oral requirements is a complex task by the fact that “instructors’ expectations tend to be implicit, not always clear to the students, and perhaps not even apparent to the instructors themselves” (Ferris and Tagg, 1996).

### **2.5.1 Social vs. Academic English**

Cummins (1981b), cited in Goldstein and Liu (1994) pointed out the existence of two different types of English, the academic or Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP) and the conversational or Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS). BICS was considered social language (SL) and CALP the precursor to academic English.

BICS relies on contextual cues for transmitting meaning. BICS is formulaic, situation-bound or Context-embedded language. Social language (BICS) tends to be less complex and less abstract since the language is contextualized and rich in nonverbal cues, such as visual aids; pictures, real objects, facial expressions, and gestures. Fluency in BICS means the L2 speaker can manage everyday language, where the situation provides contextual support and the cognitive demand is relatively low. BICS are required for cognitively and linguistically undemanding tasks such as playing simple games, developing survival vocabulary, and engaging in everyday face-to-face interactions. Social language is used to build relationships and get things done in less formal settings, such as the home, parties, sporting events, shopping, and so on (Goldstein and Liu, 1994; Zwiers, 2008, cited in Anstrom et al., 2010).

Cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP) represents a different variety of language from basic interpersonal communication skills. CALP is typical of formal instruction. Academic language (CALP) tends to be more cognitively complex and abstract, lacking extralinguistic support and thus less reliant on contextual cues for meaning. It is needed, for instance, to read and understand textbooks, write essays and reports, and solve mathematical word problems. Since CALP occurs in reduced contextual support, it entails “the ability to use the [language of learning] both to understand complex, often decontextualized linguistic structures, and to analyze, explore, and deconstruct the concepts presented in academic texts.” A conversation with a friend about a recent sports event would involve much social language, whereas listening to a lecture on globalization would be more academic (Zwiers,2008, cited in Anstrom et al., 2010; Goldstein and Liu,1994).

The social-academic dichotomy is not uncontroversial or easily attainable. However, most scholars agree on several components that help differentiate them. Some of those components can be taught and are useful to learn, and some others are limited only to conscious language learning and deliberate memorization (Krashen & Brown, 2007, Cited in Diego, 2008).

According to Colorado (2007), social English is “the language of everyday communication in oral and written forms”. It is a kind of English that people use in “ordinary situations” (Diego, 2008) or non-academic contexts like; shopping in super markets; conversation in social gatherings; talking to a friend, etc. Since it is a language of everyday communication, people (children) who learn English as their first or second language start developing social English within a few months, especially this works for those who learn English as their first language. However, undoubtedly it is likely to take a couple of years before they fully develop social English in listening, speaking, reading, and writing. But in the case of people learning English as a foreign language, there is a great possibility that students might be exposed to academic English prior to social English.

Academic English and social English are not two mutually exclusive branches of the English language. In some respects, they share some common features and one can assist the development of the other but they are different in the functions they serve. Cummins, 2000, cited in Anstrom et al., 2010, stressed “the simultaneous acquisition and development of both in

school-age children with the distinction being in the degree of cognitive and contextual demands of language-use situations.” In acquiring academic English, students build on a language foundation that has been developing since early childhood in the home and broader cultural community (Zwiers, 2008, cited in Anstrom et al., 2010).

Attaining a considerable level of proficiency in both social and academic English is not an easy task. However, learning academic English is more demanding and complex than social English. One is needed to communicate and the other to succeed in academic settings at school. Learning both types of English well may take a relatively long period of time. Cummins (1983), cited in Crandall (1994), notes the mastery of CALP relatively difficult and takes longer period of time (from 5 to 7 years) than mastering BICS (which may take 2 years. However, it is important to note that students will learn at different rates, depending on a range of variables, including students' existing English proficiency, primary language literacy level, and the quality of the instruction they receive (Colorado, 2007).

### **2.5.2 The necessity for developing academic English**

Students come to school not only to learn how to communicate socially, but also to become academically proficient in English so that they can be effective in their academic career. The kind of English that students learn in the English lessons is more of designed to enable learners develop social English, especially courses designed based on functional syllabus focus on social English development. A student with social English proficiency may not necessarily have the academic English proficiency. Colorado (2007) points out “Learning social English is [only the beginning] because they can speak on the playground, talk to peers, and use everyday English does not mean that they are up to speed in academic English.” On the contrary, these students who have learnt the social English are not yet proficient enough to handle the subject matter in the curriculum. They lack the academic vocabulary needed to develop the content knowledge in English that they will need to succeed in schooling. By recognizing these two types of proficiencies, teachers can help their students' accelerate in academic English (Colorado, 2007).

### **2.5.3 Ways teachers can use to help students develop both social and academic English**

Colorado (2007) suggests teachers to assess and determine the learners' level of proficiency in their classes while teaching the content areas in order to help them develop both social and academic English without watering down the curriculum. The development of the learners' academic English can be facilitated by the use of social English they have already mastered. Teachers can involve students in meaningful social language that stimulates their academic English development. To ensure the smooth development of academic English, teachers may need to begin with social English. In their attempt to assist the learners academic English development, content area teachers as much as possible should use the learners' background knowledge; what they know and bring to school. In addition to using the learners' background knowledge, teachers can apply a number of contextual supports through visuals, maps, charts, manipulatives, music, and pantomiming. Gradually, content vocabulary can be added in the lessons to lay foundation for academic English mastery.

### **2.5.4 Characteristics of Academic English**

Although the academic-social dichotomy has been controversial since the beginning, there is agreement among scholars about what academic English is and the characteristics that conforms it (Diego, 2008). Academic English is so crucial for academic circles that students must develop their proficiency in academic English. According to Scarcella (2003), “---Without [the] knowledge of academic English, individuals may be excluded from participation in educated society and prevented from transforming it”.

The development of academic English is neither sequential, nor does it follow a predetermined pattern (Colorado 2007; Scarcella 2003). Academic language not only includes several dimensions of knowledge, but it also emphasizes the context where learning takes place. It is important for instructors to understand the nature of academic English and skills so that they can help students develop this through content study (Crandall, 1998). Educators need to be aware of all these dynamics in order to effectively support English language learners acquire the necessary skills to succeed in life and become productive members of society. Academic English entails multiple inter-related dimensions, components, and features. It includes cognitive, linguistic, and

social/psychological dimensions (Anstrom et al., 2010; Colorado, 2007; Diego, 2008; Scarcella, 2003).

### ***The Linguistic Dimension***

The linguistic dimension is very important in learning academic English. It includes: phonological, lexical, grammatical, sociolinguistics, and discourse components. Each of these components involves a large number of features. To use academic English; for example, learners must learn the phonological features of everyday English and new phonological features-including stress, intonation, and sound patterns. When students arrive in the content area classroom they may be familiar with most sound patterns of the English language, but they must learn new patterns when they learn academic words in the content areas.

### ***The Cognitive Dimension***

Academic English entails more than the linguistic dimension. It involves cognition. For instance, in order to interpret text readers must think about it. Cognition is also an important part of academic English. The cognitive dimension of academic English includes knowledge, higher order thinking, cognitive, and metalinguistic strategies (Scarcella, 2003).

### ***The Sociocultural/Psychological Dimension***

Learners must acquire sociocultural and psychological features more than the linguistic and cognitive dimensions in order to develop the required proficiency in academic English. Social and cultural norms, beliefs, values, attitudes, motivations, interests, behaviors, practices, and habits are involved in this dimension. They grow, take shape, and change in the larger social context where academic English happens.

## **2.6 Reading in the Content Areas**

### **2.6.1 The what of reading and what it involves**

Different people give different description about what the reading process entails. Despite the disagreement in the precise nature of the reading process, there are points of general agreement among reading authorities. One commonly shared view is that comprehension of written materials is the purpose of reading instruction. In fact, reading comprehension and reading are considered to be synonymous because when understanding breaks down, reading has actually not

occurred. According to Roe et al.,( 2004:9), reading comprehension is “an interactive process of meaning construction.” During the process of reading; the reader’s background knowledge structures (schemata), the information in the text, and the context in which the reading takes place all interact to produce comprehension.

Vacca and Vacca (2005) describe reading as a powerful means of communication which involves putting the language to use purposefully; whether it is to enjoy, to imagine, to solve problems, or to learn by clarifying and sharpening our thinking about a subject. It is one of the basic language skills, which facilitates students’ literacy in the content areas.

In order to read a text with greater level of comprehension, readers must be able to distinguish the internal organization of reading materials, understand the various writing patterns used to structure content materials, and understand the material at the appropriate cognitive levels. For example, for expository writing patterns may include cause-effect, comparison-contrast, sequence of events, or one or more of a variety of other organizations. Readers understand content better when they are able to follow the particular writing pattern and organization used. However, many students learning subject area courses in English face difficulty in handling the conceptual demands inherent in text material when left to their own devices to learn. Usually, a gap exists between the ideas and relationships they are studying and their prior knowledge, interests, attitude, cultural background, language proficiency, or reading ability. Thus, content area teachers need to be familiar with the types of writing patterns encountered frequently in their particular disciplines so that they can help students to understand these patterns (Roe et al., 2004).

Vacca and Vacca (2005) point out that when texts are used as tools for learning in content classrooms, all teachers have a significant role to play in helping students comprehend and respond to information and ideas in text. In their attempt to determine the degree of responsibility of content area teachers, they state that helping students to become literate in the content areas doesn’t mean to teach them how to read or write or talk as might be the case in a reading or English classroom. As a result, playing such a role does not diminish the teacher’s role as a subject matter specialist. For a systematic and enhanced assistance of the learners, content area teachers need to know in particular what reading skills are necessary for successful reading of the materials in their particular disciplines, and they need to be capable of assisting

students in applying these skills as they complete their content area assignments (Roe et al., 2004).

According to Vacca and Vacca (2005), some of the classroom-related factors which influence content literacy in a given discipline are:

- *The learner's prior knowledge of, attitude toward, and interest in the subject;*
- *The learner's purpose for engaging in reading, writing, and discussions;*
- *The language and conceptual difficulty of the text material;*
- *The assumptions that the text writers make about their audience of readers;*
- *The text structures that writers use to organize ideas and information; and*
- *The teacher's beliefs about and attitude toward the use of texts in learning situations.*

(Vacca and Vacca, 2005:9)

### **2.6.2 The Role of Prior Knowledge in Reading Comprehension**

Prior knowledge refers to the experiences, conceptual understandings, attitudes, values, skills, and strategies a student brings to a text learning situation. Some skills of reading such as predictions and inferences people make about a certain topic are rooted in the person's 'knowledge of the world'. The activation and use of prior knowledge has an important place in reading comprehension. During the reading process, there is interplay between the reader's preexisting knowledge and the written content. Competent reading is an active process in which the reader calls on experience, language and schemata (theoretical constructs of knowledge related to experiences) to anticipate and understand the authors written language. Therefore, effective and efficient readers both bring meaning to print and take meaning from print (Roe et al., 2004).

Schema refers to how people use prior or world knowledge to organize and store information in their heads. Schemata represent complex networks of information that people use to make sense of new stimuli, events, and situations. Schemata related to the reading material must be activated if students are to comprehend material as fully as possible. Schemata activation is the mechanism by which people access what they know and match it to the information in a text. In doing so, they build on the meaning they have already brought to a learning situation. When students activate their prior knowledge and are able to make a link between them, schema functions in at least three ways. First, it provides a framework for learning that allows readers to seek and select

information that is relevant to their purpose for reading. Second, schema helps readers organize text information. Third, schema helps readers elaborate information (Roe et al., 2004; Vacca and Vacca, 2005).

### **2.6.3 The Role of Questioning in Reading Comprehension**

Questions are most frequently used in the classroom both by teachers and students. Teachers often employ questions to maintain interaction in the classroom. When questions are used as tools to guide reading comprehension at different levels, they help students not only to recall factual information but also to integrate information and put it to work for them-to make inferences, to reflect on what they have read, to make judgments, or to invent new ways of looking at the text material (Vacca and Vacca, 2005).

## **2.7 Writing in the Content Areas**

The ability to write clearly and effectively is an important requirement for students to succeed in a variety of writing situations in academic and nonacademic settings. There are different approaches to writing. Writing to learn is not the same as learning to write; but they are as flip sides of a single coin, the two support one another. In writing to learn approach, students focus on the content and use the language as a means of learning. Writing in the content areas is one of the contexts for writing. Because content area writing promotes different types of learning, students should be provided numerous occasions to write (Vacca and Vacca, 2005).

### **2.7.1 The role of writing in the Subject Areas**

Writing in the content areas brings a number of advantages for the learners. When content area teachers incorporate writing in all areas of the curriculum--social studies, math, science, vocational education, business, music, and physical education, students' benefit in three ways: they have a resource for better understanding content; they practice a technique which aids retention; and they begin to write better. It shifts the learners' roles from passivity to active engagement in lessons. Thus, incorporating writing-in the subject areas tends to change the nature of the classroom. As a result, teacher-centered classrooms become student centered. Rather than the teacher being the Great Dispenser of Knowledge, filling students' empty heads,

the teacher becomes a facilitator, aiding students' understanding (Roe et al., 2004; Vacca and Vacca, 2005).

Due to their preconceived notions of what the teaching of writing may entail, content area teachers usually have second thoughts about assigning writing in their classroom. By and large writing is not thought of as basic to thinking and learning about content fields. Atwell (1990), cited in Vacca and Vacca (2005) points out that although the role of language teachers is to guide students' development as writers, teachers of every discipline have to share in the responsibility of showing students how to think and write. When students engage in writing as a way of knowing, they are thinking on paper.

There are at least three good reasons for teachers to reconsider the role of writing in their classrooms. First, writing improves thinking. Second, it facilitates learning. Third, writing is intimately related to reading.

Writing is a tool for thinking. It helps develop thinking skills. There is no better way to think about a subject than to have the occasion to read and to write about it. Active learners are active thinkers, and one cannot write without thinking. As Murray (1980), cited in Vacca and Vacca (2005) explains writers engage in a process of exploration and clarification as they go about the task of making meaning. Writing facilitates learning by helping students explore, clarify, and think deeply about the ideas and concepts they encounter in reading. Writing can help readers explore what they know. Through writing, students come to terms with their own thoughts, solve problems, and discover new ideas (Roe et al., 2004; Vacca and Vacca, 2005).

Writing as a tool for communication is not only used as a means to communicate meaning to others-to be understood but also as a means of discovering and clarifying meaning to oneself, i.e., to understand. As Britton et al., (1975), cited in Roe et al. (2004) explain, "An essential part of the writing process is to explain the matter to oneself." Writing serves as a way into or means of learning, a way into understanding through articulating. People do not sit down to write about things that are already clear to them in their mind. Based on the assumption that students gain new knowledge by making associations with prior knowledge, the writing activities commonly

used in the content areas should give students the opportunity to assimilate information, and make connections (Roe et al., 2004; Vacca and Vacca, 2005).

Maimon (1988), cited in (Roe et al., 1990) suggests the frequent use of writing activities of various types, pointing out that such activities will help students become more fluent writers. Fluency is an aspect of writing that is achieved only with practice. It is likely that the advantages of writing as a tool for thinking are more available to fluent writers than to those who are not fluent. Vacca and Vacca (2005:357) also state “the more writers work with ideas put on paper, the more they are able to revise, rethink, and clarify what they have to say about a subject.”

### **2.7.2 Approaches to Writing in the Content Areas**

In content classes, writing is treated as a two-step process. Usually what happens is; a writing assignment is given to students, and the students write a paper and turn it into the teacher. Content area teachers do not focus on the process of writing to offer the necessary help in their need rather they seem to give much attention to the end result. This is an inadequate and inaccurate picture of what writing should be in the content areas. Students are not helped to develop their writing products, but they are graded on their effectiveness. Teachers need to know how to guide students through the writing process, regardless of the type of content (Roe et al., 1990).

### **2.7.3 The Need for Integrating Reading and Writing**

A classroom environment that supports reading and writing invites students to explore ideas, clarify meaning, and construct knowledge. When reading and writing are taught jointly, the union influences content learning in ways not possible when students read without writing or write without reading. When teachers invite a class to write before or after reading, they help students use writing to think about what they will read and to explore and think more deeply about the ideas they have read (Vacca and Vacca, 2005).

According to Shanahan (1984), cited in (Roe et al., 1990), reading and writing have the obvious link of being written language skills. They are concerned with communication: readers consider the author’s purposes and believability, and writers the needs of their audiences. Both reading

and writing involve purpose, commitment, schema activation, planning, working with ideas, revision and rethinking, and monitoring. As Vacca and Vacca (2005) point out reading and writing can be considered as two sides of the same coin. In the written language modality, the reader works to make sense from a text, whereas the writer works to make a text sensible.

Many content area classes exhibit a noticeable lack of writing activities. This situation is unfortunate since both reading and writing are valuable learning techniques for students in these classes (Roe et al., 2004; Vacca and Vacca, 2005).

## **2.8 Vocabulary in the Content Areas**

In broader sense, academic vocabulary encompasses words which students must comprehend in order to access the concepts associated with a particular discipline, and also use them in order to demonstrate their acquisition of these concepts (Anstrom et al., 2010). For a better understanding of what academic vocabulary is and its range, it would be sensible to look at the categories developed by different scholars. Calderon et al., 2005, cited in (Anstrom et al., 2010) developed a classification of academic vocabulary. According to these people, academic vocabulary has three tiers. “The first tier is non-academic, conversational vocabulary such as flower or sleep; the second consists of general academic words such as however or illustrate; and the top tier is composed of content-specific, technical vocabulary[-words unique to a content area] such as organism or rectangle.”

The above classification reflects the scholars attempt to conceptualize academic vocabulary. The categorization was made on the bases of the frequency in the use of the terms and the cross-disciplinary use of the terms. Some of the words are found to be used frequently in different fields whereas others are very technical, with a limited use in a specific field of study. Nevertheless, it is not possible to put all the words in these categories in the way it works for people in different disciplines.

For a discipline to be regarded as a separate field of study, it must have some unique features which identify it from the other field of studies. The unique features in each discipline could be manifested through the nature of the content, the focus area of the field of study and the language used to communicate the ideas. As Ashworth (1985:44-45) points out “Different subject areas

have their own special vocabularies.” Each discipline has some special content to deal with and communicating different views on any issue in the area entails the use of terminologies specific to that particular discipline. Vacca and Vacca (2005:265) further underscores the point as, “Vocabulary is as unique to content area as fingerprints are to a human being. [And] a content area is distinguished by its language, particularly the technical terms that label the concepts [underlying] the subject matter. ”

Vocabulary has a significant place in learning subject area courses regardless of the field of study though the vocabulary required varies from field to field. Vocabulary in the content areas is not considered necessary as an end in itself rather it is a means which facilitates the effective use of other language skills. As Roe et al., (2004:219) state “Vocabulary development is a key ingredient in successful reading and writing activities.” The development of vocabulary knowledge and concepts is essential for students to comprehend and think critically about texts in the content areas. In other words, there is a strong connection between vocabulary knowledge and reading comprehension. For instance, if students are not familiar with most words they find in print, they will unquestionably have problem in understanding what they are trying to read. Especially, technical vocabularies are likely to bother students who are not familiar with the content they are studying in the academic discipline (Vacca and Vacca, 2005). The same holds true for writing.

If teachers consider themselves as responsible helpers of the learners in their learning, they must do something with the language of the content areas they teach. Nevertheless, they often “reduce instruction to routines that direct students to look up, define, memorize, and use content specific words in sentences” (Vacca and Vacca, 2005:265). In doing so, teachers block the ideal opportunity to learn vocabulary subsidiary to the learning of content. Such practices, according to Vacca and Vacca “divorce the study of vocabulary from an exploration of the subject matter. Learning vocabulary becomes an activity in itself-a separate one-rather than an integral part of learning academic content.”

As Roe et al., (2004) state students learn word meanings through “experience, word association, discussion, concept development, contextual analysis, structural analysis, and use of a dictionary and a thesaurus.” For the majority of teachers, however, teaching vocabulary often means

assigning a list of words rather than supporting learners explore word meanings and relationships that contribute to students' conceptual awareness and understanding of a subject. The practice of teaching vocabulary in the form of list is based on the ill-founded notion that the acquisition of vocabulary is separate from the development of ideas and concepts in a content area (Vacca and Vacca, 2005:266).

Anderson and Freebody (1981), cited in Vacca and Vacca(2005:267) suggest, "Every serious student of reading recognizes that the significant aspect of vocabulary development is in the learning of concepts, not just words." This implies the fact that much vocabulary development takes place when students are learning concepts.

Content area vocabulary must be taught well enough to remove potential barriers to students' understanding of texts in content areas. Teaching words well means giving students multiple opportunities to learn how words are conceptually related to one another in the texts they are studying. Teaching words or enabling learners to be equipped with the necessary vocabulary brings several advantages to the learners. According to Vacca and Vacca (2005:266), "teaching words well removes potential barriers to reading comprehension and supports students' long-term acquisition of language in content area." In addition, teaching words well entails helping students make connections between their prior knowledge and the vocabulary to be encountered in the text, and providing them multiple opportunities to clarify and extend their knowledge of words and concepts during the course of study (Vacca and Vacca, 2005).

Content teachers can help students comprehend content materials by teaching them the meanings of key vocabulary terms. Pre-teaching academic vocabulary is one way increasing the learners' familiarity and understanding of the concept. Thus, teachers should begin lessons by introducing not only the main ideas of the lesson, but also the few words which are necessary to understanding the basic concepts presented. In this way, key vocabulary is pre-taught within context while the bulk of the new words are taught as instruction becomes more detailed. Anstrom et al., (2010) list three other instructional keys for teachers. They suggest teachers to use previously taught words throughout instruction and structure activities so that students must use them; to teach authentic, non-simplified academic vocabulary; and to teach how to use new words and structures in addition to meanings.

## **Chapter Three**

### **3. Research Design and Methodology**

This chapter discusses the research design and methodology that were employed to achieve the main objectives of the study. Specifically, it describes the study site and population, the sample and sampling techniques, the data collection instruments and procedures of data collection, the sources of data, and the methods and procedures of data analysis used in the study.

#### **3.1 The Method Employed**

The main purpose of this study was to explore the perceptions and practices of ELIP-trained subject area instructors in promoting academic English learning. To achieve this goal descriptive survey method was employed. The design of this study is of a non-experimental type. The method was selected based on the assumption that it helps to gather adequate information on the issue under study. The necessity for conducting a descriptive study comes when people want to know about features of a situation or phenomenon. As Johnson and Christensen (2004:347) state, “The primary purpose of descriptive research is to provide an accurate description or picture of the status or characteristics of a situation or phenomenon.” Descriptive research is conducted to determine the existing status of an area of study. In explaining contexts for conducting a descriptive study Johnson and Christensen pointed out that mostly researchers conduct descriptive research to find out about the attitudes, opinions, beliefs, behaviors, and demographics of people (2004:347). Thus, this study limited itself to describing the current perceptions of instructors and the existing practices in the College.

#### **3.2 Study Site and Population**

This study was conducted in Arba Minch College of Teacher Education. Arba Minch is located 505kms from the capital, Addis Ababa, in the south. Arba Minch CTE is one of the four teacher education colleges in the Southern Nations Nationalities and Peoples Region [SNNPR]. In the college, English serves as a medium of instruction in learning subject area and supportive professional studies courses. Employees in the college fall under two categories; the

administrative and support staff, and the academic staff. This study, however, is concerned with the academic staff only, particularly ELIP trained subject area instructors.

### **3.3 Sample and Sampling techniques**

The academic staff of the college is constituted from a total of 108 instructors; both teachers of English and Subject area instructors. However, the academic staffs who were available in the college during the academic year 2010/2011 were 75. Among these, the target population of this study was all ELIP-trained subject area instructors. All language instructors; instructors of English, Amharic and other vernacular languages were excluded from the study for the study is limited only to subject area instructors. In addition, a number of subject area instructors, of whom the majority are ELIP-trained were not around for reasons of pursuing their graduate studies in different universities in the country. In addition, instructors who had been attending the program in the academic year 2010/2011 were not included in the study, except few people who had to take some completion hours of training in place of the missed sessions in previous years.

During the data collection, 30 ELIP-trained subject area instructors were found to be working in the college. In order to find relevant data for the study, all the 30 ELIP-trained subject area instructors were taken. In other words, no sampling was done to select samples for the distribution of questionnaire for instructors due to the accessibility and reasonable size of the study population. Quota sampling was employed, however, to determine those who would respond to the interview from the 30 instructors who were involved in the completion of the questionnaire for instructors.

In order to determine those who would participate in the interviewees, the researcher informally discussed with the potential informants to check their convenience and willingness to participate in the interview. Then simple random sampling was employed to specify those who would participate in the interview. However, in one of the departments the only ELIP trained instructor was made to participate directly. Based on this 5 (17.85%) instructors were selected.

In addition, 120 students were selected by systematic sampling. The questionnaire for students contains questions only related to the instructors' practice in promoting academic English learning. The information from the students was used to cross check the data which ELIP-trained

subject area instructors reported regarding their practices in section six of the questionnaire for instructors.

Since students are included in the study with the purpose of crosschecking the instructors' responses about their own practices, the selection of sample students was done in accordance with the instructors. A total of 120 sample students were drawn. That means 4 students were made to fill out the questionnaire concerning each instructor. In order to draw those four students, first one of the groups that each instructor was teaching was selected randomly and then four students from the randomly selected classes were selected using systematic random sampling.

**Table [3.1]: ELIP-trained Subject instructors by department**

Department		Number of ELIP-Trained Instructors
Mathematics		2
Chemistry		5
Biology		4
Physics		3
Professional Studies (13)	Psychology	5
	Pedagogy	8
ICT		1
Social Sciences-History		1
Sports and Physical Education		1

### **3.4 Instruments and Procedures of Data Collection**

There are different factors which affect the quality of the result of a research. Among these, mostly the validity and reliability of a research can be highly affected by the diversity of the data gathering instruments and the researcher's skill to refine the data. Reliance on a single data gathering technique will result in a gap in the required information. In order to carry out this study, both qualitative and quantitative data were gathered. In this study the data gathering instruments used were: questionnaire, interview, and observation. Questionnaire was employed as a main data gathering instrument whereas interview and observation were used to triangulate the data gathered through the questionnaire. Triangulation was used so that more reliable information could be obtained in a variety of methods. In research, the significance of triangulation comes when researchers want to deepen their understanding of the phenomenon or situation through accessing multiple perspectives rather than relying on information from just a single source or point of view (Johnson and Christensen, 2004).

#### **Questionnaire**

Two sets of questionnaires were developed both for instructors and students. The questionnaires were primarily developed in order to obtain the necessary information which would enable to meet the objectives of the study. Concerning the construction of items in the questionnaire, some of the items in the questionnaire were adapted from Tiruneh (1997), some of the items related to the views of ELIP trained subject area instructors were adapted from Ahmed, Almaz, & Judith (2007) and others were designed based on the literature review.

The questionnaires for instructors had six parts. The first part of the questionnaire was intended to gather background information. The second part of the questionnaire consisted of items that are intended to collect information on the perceptions of ELIP-trained subject area instructors towards ELIP training for academic staff. The third part was on instructors' perceptions of the English language ability of the learners to learn content through English. In the fourth part of the questionnaire instructors were asked about their perceptions towards the nature and development of academic English. The fifth section was on instructors' perceptions towards their responsibility of helping learners improve their academic English and the sixth part asked instructors about their practices.

With regard to the question formats, the items in the instructors questionnaire have two different forms; open-ended and closed-ended. It comprised 39 closed-ended and two open ended items. In the case of the close-ended items in the questionnaire, the Likert scale had been employed so that it would be possible to figure out the perceptions of instructors from the range of possible responses. A likert scale provides a series of statements or graded response to a question to which subjects can indicate degrees of agreement or disagreement (Bordens and Abbott, 1988). However, the Likert scale does not measure the attitude by itself but it helps to rate a group of individuals in descending or ascending order with respect to their attitudes towards the issues under investigation (Kumar, 2005). Secondly, mainly close-ended items were included in the questionnaires to boost the response rate of the questionnaires. In the case of open-ended questions, the items were constructed in the way that they lend themselves to subjective responses. Open ended items allow the subject to provide a response in his or her own words. Such information may be more complete and accurate than the information obtained with a more restricted format (Bordens and Abbott, 1988).

The questionnaire for students was intended to crosscheck the data obtained from instructors under the sixth section of the questionnaire for instructors. Thus, students were asked only about the instructors practices. The questions were more or less similar to the items in the instructors' questionnaire.

### **Interview**

Interview was conducted to triangulate the data gathered through questionnaire. Prior to the data gathering, a semi-structured interview schedule had been prepared to obtain relevant information from ELIP trained subject area instructors. Interview was conducted with 5 subject-area instructors; 1 Chemistry, 1 Biology, 1 Mathematics, 1 psychology and 1 History instructor. Respondents were informed that the research was essential and their participation was very important for the integrity of the study. Before conducting interview, to establish trust and rapport the respondents were told, the purpose for conducting the research and their responses would be confidential (Johnson and Christensen, 2004). The interviews lasted for 15-30 minutes and during the interview, all responses were recorded using a tape recorder.

Similar to the areas addressed in the instructors' questionnaire, interview with instructors included issues like; perceptions of ELIP-trained subject area instructors towards ELIP training for academic staff, instructors' perceptions of the English language ability of the learners to learn content through English, instructors' perceptions towards the nature and development of academic English, instructors' perceptions towards their responsibility in supporting learners improve their academic English and instructors' practices. However, the interview items were not as specific as that of the questionnaire items. They were relatively general and designed to elicit responses including justifications which would enrich and complement the data collected through the questionnaire.

### **Observation**

Using a questionnaire and interview may provide a rich data, however, what the subjects say they do and what they actually do may not necessarily match. Therefore, the shortcomings should be complemented by using additional tool. Hence, classroom observation was employed as an instrument of data collection to examine as to how instructors actually use and engage students to use English as a vehicle while dealing with various activities in a content area classroom. In order to assist the gathering of information through observation, a checklist was prepared. Finally, the observation was conducted soon after the return of the questionnaire and the interview had been conducted. Regarding the depth and breadth of the observations made, a total of six instructors were observed while teaching in the classroom. Each observation lasted for one hundred minutes, which is considered to be a double session. As the classroom observation was carried out with the purpose of crosschecking, supplementing and enriching the data gathered through questionnaire and interview, the classroom observation helped the researcher to check whether there is a gap between what instructors perceive and what they actually do in the classroom.

### **Procedures of Data Collection**

Pilot study was carried out far ahead of the main data collection so as to check out the quality of the instruments. For the purpose of the pilot study 5 ELIP trained subject area instructors attending the masters program in Addis Ababa University were made to fill out the

questionnaire. They were asked if there were ambiguous items and for their general comments on the items. Based on the pilot study some defective items were rewritten in unambiguous ways and others were excluded.

### **3.5 Sources of Data**

The study was conducted in Arba Minch CTE. Hence, the sources of data were ELIP trained subject area instructors and their respective students in the college. The data necessary for the study were primary data, which the researcher collected through questionnaire, interview and classroom observation. Using the instruments, both quantitative and qualitative data were gathered from the subjects of the study.

### **3.6 Methods and procedures of Data Analysis**

Prior to undertaking the analysis, a careful inspection of the raw data was made and the data were prepared for analysis. From the 30 questionnaires distributed to ELIP trained subject area instructors, 29 were returned (with a response rate of 96.67%). Accordingly, out of the 29 completed questionnaires, one was rejected on the ground that it was filled out without care. Similarly, concerning questionnaire for the learners, out of 120 questionnaires distributed for the respective students of ELIP trained subject area instructors, all the questionnaires were returned (with a 100% response rate). Among the returned questionnaires, three were rejected on the ground that they were incomplete and filled in carelessly. Likewise, the recorded interview data were transcribed and made ready for analysis. Moreover, the data from classroom observation were converted into tabular form for quantitative analysis.

Most of the items in the questionnaires were constructed using a five point Likert scale with numerical values of 5, 4, 3, 2, and 1. Some items were positively worded and others were negatively worded. Concerning the favorable or positively worded statements, each response was associated with points (Strongly Disagree=1, Disagree=2, Undecided=3, Agree=4, and Strongly Agree=5). For the negatively worded statements, the items were scored in the opposite order as (Strongly Disagree=5, Disagree=4, Undecided=3, Agree=2, and Strongly Agree=1). To this end,

to compute the mean scores, the assigned numerical values were multiplied by the corresponding frequency, summed up together and then divided by total sample size/the total population in this case.

**Table 3.2: The computation of mean value**

	1[SD]		2		3		4		5[SA]		
	5*		4*		3*		2*		1*		
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	X
	0	—	1	3.57	0	—	14	50	13	46.43	4.39
*	17	60.71	8	28.57	2	7.14	1	3.57	0	—	4.46

The mean for favorable items was computed as:

$$\begin{aligned}
 X &= (0 \times 1) + (1 \times 2) + (0 \times 3) + (14 \times 4) + (13 \times 5) \\
 &= 0 + 2 + 0 + 56 + 65 \\
 &= 123 / 28 \\
 &= 4.39
 \end{aligned}$$

\* The mean for negatively worded statement/unfavorable item was computed as:

$$\begin{aligned}
 X &= (17 \times 5) + (8 \times 4) + (2 \times 3) + (1 \times 2) + (0 \times 1) \\
 &= 85 + 32 + 6 + 2 + 0 \\
 &= 125 / 28 \\
 &= 4.46
 \end{aligned}$$

For analyzing the data gathered through the instruments, both quantitative and qualitative techniques were employed. The data collected through the different instruments were analyzed according to the characteristics of the data obtained. Frequency, percentage and for some of the items mean scores were used to analyze the quantitative data collected by means of the close-ended questions in the questionnaire. First, the data were tabulated and then analyzed by using frequency, percentage and mean scores. On the other hand, the data from the interview were categorized and described qualitatively in line with the items in the questionnaire.

## Chapter Four

### 4. Presentation and Discussion of Data

#### Introduction

As stated in the earlier chapters, the primary purpose of this study was to explore the perceptions and practices of ELIP-trained subject area instructors in promoting academic English learning. In order to attain the stated objectives of the study, the researcher employed three instruments of data collection. Specifically, the instruments used to gather data were; questionnaire, interview and observation. To get detailed primary data for the completion of this study, two sets of questionnaires were distributed both for instructors and students of the respective ELIP-trained subject area instructors. While the questionnaire for instructors was designed to obtain overall data which reflects their perceptions and practices in promoting academic English learning, the questionnaire for students was limited to the instructors' practices only. Interview was conducted with 5 instructors and 6 instructors' lessons were observed during the actual teaching learning process in the classroom.

Therefore, the data analysis and interpretation which follows henceforth is based on questionnaire completed by ELIP-trained subject area instructors and students of the respective instructors, interview with instructors and classroom observation.

The analysis of the data was done in accordance with the stated basic questions. First, a brief description of the characteristics of the informants is presented. Then ELIP-trained subject area instructors' responses about their perceptions towards ELIP training for academic staff follows. Next, instructors' perceptions of the English language ability of the learners to learn content through English is presented and discussed. After that, instructors' responses about their perceptions towards the nature and development of academic English is presented and discussed. Then responses for instructors' perceptions towards their responsibility of helping learners improve their academic English and finally instructors' practices as reflected by instructors themselves, by their respective students and results of the classroom observation are presented and discussed.

The data collected through questionnaire was organized in a tabular form, whereas the data gathered through interview and observation were analyzed based on the similarity of responses with the corresponding items in the instructors' questionnaire.

#### 4.1 Characteristics of respondents

This part provides the general characteristics of ELIP-trained subject area instructor respondents to the questionnaire.

**Table [4.1.1] Characteristics of ELIP-trained subject area instructors**

Sex			Service year			Academic title			Year attended ELIP training		
	f	%		f	%		f	%		f	%
Female	1	3.57	Less than 5 years	14	50	Assistant Professor	-	-	2003/04	-	-
Male	27	96.43	6-10 years	7	25	Lecturer	11	39.29	2004/05	-	-
			11-15 years	3	10.71	Assistant Lecturer	16	57.14	2005/06	1	3.57
			More than 15 years	4	14.29	Graduate Assistant I	1	3.57	2006/07	5	17.86
						Graduate Assistant II	-	-	2007/08	8	28.57
									2008/09	5	17.86
									2009/10	6	21.43
									2010/11	3	10.71

As indicated in table [4.1.1] among the 28 ELIP-trained subject area instructors who gave their responses to the items in the questionnaire, 27 of them (that is, 96.43%) were male and only 1 (that is, 3.57%) was female. Half of the respondents 14 (that is, 50%) have a teaching experience less than five years. 7(25%), 3(10.71%) and 4(14.29%) have a service year of 6-10 years, 11-15 years and more than 15 years, respectively. Concerning the academic status of the respondents, 16(57.14%) were assistant instructors, 11(39.29%) were lecturers and 1(3.57%) was graduate assistant I. Among the respondents only 1(3.57%) instructor attended the training in 2005/2006, 5(17.86%) in 2006/2007, 8(28.57%) in 2007/2008, 5(17.86%) in 2008/2009, 6(21.43%) in 2009/2010 and 3(10.71%) attended ELIP training in 2010/2011.

## 4.2 The views of ELIP-trained subject area instructors about ELIP training

This section presents the perceptions of ELIP-trained subject area instructors towards ELIP training. However, all of the items are not regarding instructors' perceptions. Some of the items are concerned with the training in general. Since subjects of the study were specified as ELIP trained subject area instructors with the assumption that the training has made some contributions and might have changed the way they think and in turn affected their practices, investigating this area has been considered relevant for the overall study.

### The ultimate objectives of ELIP training for Academic Staff

This questionnaire item was designed to find out the perceptions of instructors towards the ultimate objectives of ELIP for academic staff. According to AL-Ajlouni et al., (2010), "Training is a technique which properly focuses and directs towards the achievement of particular goals and objectives of the organization." Therefore, to pave a way for the better achievement of the objectives of training, trainees need to have a clear picture of the objectives of the training because the trainees' conception of the necessity and purpose of the training program may greatly affect their motivation to participate actively and enthusiastically in the training.

**Table [4.2.1]: The ultimate objectives of ELIP training for Academic Staff as perceived by ELIP-trained subject area instructors**

List of the possible objectives of ELIP training for academic staff	f	%
<i>a. Enabling instructors to be effective users of the English language when teaching content area courses</i>	24	85.71
<i>b. Enabling trainees to communicate effectively with foreigners</i>	2	7.14
<i>c. Enabling instructors to be effective users of the English language in different social situations</i>	14	50
<i>d. Helping instructors improve their English skills so that they can help learners improve their English too</i>	20	71.43
<i>e. Expanding trainees' ability to access materials written in English in the course of their professional development</i>	7	25
<i>f. Enabling trainees to be autonomous, lifelong learners of the English Language</i>	3	10.71

As table [4.2.1] shows, 24 instructors (that is, 85.71%) reported that the ultimate objective of ELIP training for academic staff is enabling instructors to be effective users of the English language when teaching content area courses. Out of the 28 instructors, 20 (that is, 71.43%) reported that 'helping instructors improve their English skills so that they can help learners improve their English too' is the second most frequently perceived ultimate objective of ELIP training for academic staff. The third most frequently indicated objective of ELIP training as shown in table [4.2.1] by 14(50%) of the instructors is helping instructors to be effective users of the English language in different social situations. 7 instructors (that is, 25%) reported that ELIP training for academic staff is aimed at Expanding trainees' ability to access materials written in English in the course of their professional development. On the other hand, only 3 instructors (that is, 10.71%) and 2 instructors (that is, 7.14%) indicated enabling trainees to be autonomous, lifelong learners of the English Language and enabling trainees to communicate effectively with foreigners are the ultimate objectives of ELIP training for academic staff, respectively.

The majority of instructors believe that ELIP training for academic staff is directed towards improving the English language proficiency of the academic staff so that they can perform their tasks effectively as teachers in the way it ensures students' learning. Also, a significant number of instructors agree that empowering instructors through helping them improve their English skills is not limited only to improving the instructors' English rather it extends to the extent of helping instructors to be involved in promoting the learning of Academic English in the content area classrooms by students. In other words, the training is not mainly meant to benefit instructors in meeting their personal language needs detached from their job as professional teachers rather it is aimed at facilitating the teaching-learning process particularly through the effective use of English as a medium of instruction. Since learners are the central focus of the overall instructional process, to make students beneficiary instructors need to engage learners in accomplishing various classroom activities using the language of learning.

### **Trainees' beliefs about the benefits of ELIP for academic staff**

The place of English in the Ethiopian context is mostly confined in the academic circles, where English is used as a medium of instruction. To accomplish their tasks, both teachers and students

need to have a reasonable competency in the language. Due to a range of possible reasons, however, teachers and students work under a limited proficiency of the language. The language teaching approaches employed to teach these instructors throughout their school life, the availability of materials which would contribute for the learning of the English language, exposure to English Medias, poor reading habits and other related factors might have contributed for the existence of the current situation. In addition to this, the competence and the confidence of the majority of Ethiopian students have been greatly affected by the teaching methodology employed in the classrooms. This is to mean that usually teachers take control over the activities in the classroom; students are considered to be passive receivers than being involved in the classroom activities. This may reduce students' exposure to the language and this in turn may severely affect their confidence and competence to use the language.

Any training program which is launched with the aim of bridging this kind of gap is believed to bring some sort of advantage for the candidates attending the program. Regardless of the quality of the training, perhaps the candidates benefit from the training through mere exposure to the use of the language. However, it is evident that it is possible to make the trainees more beneficiaries through designing the training based on the needs of the trainees, setting clear and attainable objectives, using appropriate materials which enable to meet the objectives, conducting assessment of the program at different stages and taking remedial actions accordingly.

Regarding the benefits of the training interviewed instructors had to say the following:

*[I<sub>1</sub>] The benefits of ELIP for academic staff I think are many but to say some: The first, I think is to promote the speaking or communicative ability of the instructors or the academic staff. Secondly, it encourages the staff to communicate publicly. You know one of the problems of our staff is fear nobody wants to talk in front of other staff member or other colleague in the compound. So, ELIP gives chance for instructors I think to break this trend; to avoid fear or being shy, and to talk in front of other people.*

[I<sub>1</sub>] stated the benefits of ELIP for academic staff as the one which promotes the improvement of the communicative ability of instructors, particularly the oral communicative ability of the candidates. From this it is possible to understand that much attention had been given for the improvement of the skill of speaking. ELIP also promotes the use of English among instructors

in the college compound through building their confidence and exposing them to talk to each other or discussions during ELIP sessions.

[I<sub>2</sub>] *ELIP helped me to improve my skills of teaching in many aspects, especially on how to use some relevant words which are very much clear to my students.---therefore, ELIP has overall advantages and it helped me to improve the overall instructional process and the way how to use appropriate language for my students.*

Beyond the improvement of the English language, ELIP makes instructors to have some concern about their language use in the classroom. [I<sub>2</sub>] reported ELIP helped him to adjust his language use in accordance with the learners' level of understanding.

[I<sub>3</sub>] *Some of the benefits we gained from the training are; it helped us to have good communication with staff and it helped us to write on different ideas based on the topics given for us.*

[I<sub>3</sub>] Emphasizes ELIP helped him to have good communication, which is to mean oral conversation with staff; and it provided them opportunities to write on different topics.

[I<sub>4</sub>] *We have got training on how to write, how to communicate and the likes. I think we have got so many benefits from the ELIP training. ---language is a skill. Since it is a skill one can develop it through practice; through talking to each other, talking to the tutor. We were also made to write on certain topics. In my opinion, we were given with such exposure and we have got a lot of experience from the ELIP.*

[I<sub>5</sub>] *ELIP program provides several advantages for instructors especially to deliver their lessons in the classroom through the English language. The first one is you know ELIP is most of the time speaking based so it gives instructors enough time to have conversation. It provides opportunities for instructors to develop their English language skills. Language is a skill and we develop skills when we use the language. The other advantage of ELIP program is-it makes instructors to develop confidence when they speak with their colleagues.*

In conclusion, concerning the benefits instructors gained from ELIP training, all the five interviewed instructors reported that it provided them several opportunities to practice, especially speaking in English and developing their confidence. They also indicated that the training; provides several advantages for the instructors especially to deliver their lessons in the classroom through the English language, on how to use appropriate language to the level of the learners. It provided them a lot of experience to the trainees and they indicated that they benefited a lot from the training.

## **Instructors' perceptions of the relationship between language and content**

Concerning the relationship between language and content learning all the five interviewed instructors reflected the same attitude. They emphasized the fact that language and content are highly integrated. They had to say the following with regard to the relationship between language and content:

*[I<sub>1</sub>] In Ethiopia the medium of instruction is English. Therefore, in order to communicate well any instructor has to enhance or develop his/her language. In my opinion, the role of language in content teaching is very high. For instance, I am a History teacher; if I do not know English, how can I teach the content? It is too difficult. So, language and content teaching are very much related as to me. --- Also, in content learning students need to know English because the content itself is written in English. So in order to understand what is written they have to know English well.*

*[I<sub>2</sub>] Since English is the medium of instruction, everybody must be active in the areas of English. English has a great link with quality because students must know English vocabularies to understand what is written in the books. If they have problems or some gaps in their English language capacity, they may miss information when they read materials. On the other hand, if students are capable of understanding texts which are written in English, this may result in a better achievement in the academic area courses. Thus, this in turn may have an impact on the quality of education.*

Language and content are highly interrelated that the level of the language proficiency attained greatly affects content learning. [I<sub>2</sub>] associates the role of language in content learning up to the extent of its effect on the quality of education.

*[I<sub>3</sub>] There is a strong relationship between language and content. The curriculum is designed in English and to teach that content instructors need to have a good knowledge of the subject area and the English language. ---Knowledge of the language has direct impact on content teaching and learning.*

*[I<sub>4</sub>] The medium of instruction is very crucial to address the content for our students. Since language is a means of communication, if someone is not good at communication he/she cannot express what he knows for his students.*

*[I<sub>5</sub>] I think students need to develop both their knowledge of the content and the language because in order to understand content, first students should 'understand the language'. Unless*

students understand what is written, they cannot understand the content. Therefore, students need to have the language skills necessary to learn content.

### ELIP trained subject area instructors' Perceptions towards ELIP Training

This part discusses instructors' responses of their perceptions towards ELIP training for academic staff. Instructors were asked about the objectives of the training, the organization of the training, the relevance of the training to their language needs, the focus of attention given for different skills, and the contribution and influence of the training up on them.

**Table [4.2.2]: Instructors Perceptions towards ELIP Training**

Item	Responses										
	1[SD]		2		3		4		5[SA]		X
	5*		4*		3*		2*		1*		
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	
1. The objectives of the training have been made clear for the trainees.	3	10.71	4	14.29	5	17.86	11	39.29	5	17.86	3.39
2. ELIP for academic staff is a well developed and organized training in terms of the materials.	3	10.71	7	25	9	32.14	6	21.43	3	10.71	2.96
3. The training materials are relevant to my language needs.	2	7.14	6	21.43	5	17.86	14	50	1	3.57	3.21
4. A fairly balanced attention is given for the development of; listening, speaking, reading, writing, and vocabulary.	1	3.57	10	35.71	7	25	9	32.14	1	3.57	2.96
5. Methods used in the training are relevant to content classroom teaching.	1	3.57	2	7.14	6	21.43	16	57.14	3	10.71	3.64
6. The training has made me more careful in my language use when teaching content in the classroom.	0	—	5	17.86	7	25	13	46.43	3	10.71	3.5
7. The training has made me feel more responsible in supporting learners to improve their English.	0	—	4	14.29	8	28.57	14	50	2	7.14	3.5
8. The training hasn't made a significant contribution to the improvement of my English skills.*	8	28.57	13	46.43	3	10.71	3	10.71	1	3.57	3.86
<b>Grand mean</b>											<b>3.38</b>

\* -indicates a negatively worded statement

With regard to the first item, as table [4.2.2] indicates 16 instructors (that is, 57.14%) agreed that the objectives of the training had been explicitly made clear for them before they commence on

the training. 5 instructors (that is, 17.86%) reported that they are not sure whether or not the objectives of the training had been made clear for them. On the other hand, 7 instructors (that is, 25%) reported that the objectives of the training had not been made clear for them at any stage of the delivery of the program.

Though the fairly majority of instructors (that is, 57.14%) agreed the objectives of the training had been made clear for them, the report from the remaining 42.68% indicates that there had been a gap in clearly communicating the objectives of the training to the candidates. The mean value of the instructors' responses (3.39) ranges from undecided to agree. This indicates that instructors slightly agree to the point. The responses from the open ended items on the questionnaire also revealed that there had been problems with formulating and communicating the objectives of the training. In one of the open ended items, instructors were asked to list problems related to ELIP training. Accordingly, the absence of clearly stated objectives and failure to communicate the objectives were the third most frequently mentioned problems (see table 4.2.3). One of the respondents for the same item in the questionnaire had to say the following:

*“The lessons delivered during the sessions were not clearly set in order. So the trainees could not anticipate the coming lesson. It seems something happening randomly. Objectives of each session lessons are not clearly made known to the trainees.”*

Having a clear understanding of the objectives of the training would increase the motivation of the trainees, help them to be focused and evaluate their achievement relative to the objectives of the training throughout the delivery of the training. However, the results indicate the presence of some kind of gap in clearly stating and communicating the stated objectives.

Concerning the second item in table [4.2.2], which asked instructors about the quality of the training materials used for the training, 9 instructors (that is, 32.14%) reported that the materials used for the training are well developed and organized. In contrast, 10 respondents (35.71%) indicated that the training was not well developed and organized in terms of the materials used in the training. Including 9 instructors (that is, 32.14%) those who reserved from agreeing or disagreeing to the statement, 19 respondents (67.86%) are hesitant about the quality of the materials used in the training, in terms of development and organization. The mean score for this

item falls around 2.96, which ranges from disagree to undecided. This probably happened due to the concentration of one third of the respondents around the middle for the fact that they are uncertain about the quality of the materials used.

Commenting on the organization of the materials used, one of the respondents to the open ended item on the questionnaire said, *“The lessons were not clearly set in order---it seems something happening randomly.”* One of the interviewees [I<sub>3</sub>] also revealed that *“The activities, which were given, were more of general, i.e. talking about general issues –in my opinion the lessons were not purposefully designed to enhance the development of a particular aspect of the language. The training must focus on specific issues.”* From this one can easily understand that usually instructors were given points of discussion and they were made to discuss on those issues; without a defined objective for doing that particular activity. At times ELIP training was considered only as a situation for instructors to talk in English.

The other interviewee [I<sub>2</sub>] had to say the following regarding the training materials: *“The lessons were enjoyable but the materials were scarce. There was scarcity of materials; the audiovisual Medias and some other materials were not sufficient.”*

In contrast to the other participants, one of the interviewees [I<sub>4</sub>] said the following about the materials used for the training; *“the material contains different parts. I think it is ‘more advanced’ and it contains so many things in it. So it is a well developed material for ELIP training.”* Though this deviates from the other responses, it is must to respect the respondent’s idea for the way people perceive things is different and individual difference is always there. The material which appears to be appropriate for one may not necessarily sound the same for the other.

When taking into account the majority of the respondents, however, it would be possible to conclude that there was a gap in the provision of resources, diversity of the activities used for the training, and the overall organization of the lessons.

As the third item in table [4.2.2] shows 15 respondents (53.57%) reported that the training materials were relevant to their language needs. On the other hand, 8 respondents (28.57%) indicated the training materials were not relevant to their language needs. 5 instructors (17.86%)

remained neutral regarding the relevance of the training materials for their language needs. The mean score falls around 3.21, which ranges from undecided to agree. This indicates that instructors mildly agree to the fact that the materials used were relevant to their language needs.

Naturally, a group of people in a class is likely to have different ability groups; some very strong, others average or medium, and some others weak students. Since these are a group of subject area instructors taking a language improvement training, the existence of different ability groups is unquestionable. One way to address the needs of different ability groups in a class could be exposing students to different materials with different levels of difficulty.

Results from interview are presented as follows:

**[I<sub>1</sub>]** *I think we used one material, that material doesn't go with us because it is designed for elementary teachers. Besides, it has things that we are not familiar with. For instance, it states about foreign places, foreign culture. So it is sometimes difficult to understand such places and such cultures in our context.*

**[I<sub>5</sub>]** *There were materials but I don't think that the materials were appropriate to the levels of the instructors who were attending the program; --- The materials were not appropriate to the levels of the instructors. So some instructors' felt that they had been wasting their time because they felt what they were doing was below their level. They need a little bit advanced from what they have already acquired.*

Concerning the relevance of the materials used in the training a range of different responses have been reflected from the respondents. As indicated above, the result from the questionnaire revealed that 53.57% thought the training materials were relevant to their language needs. In line with this, one of the interviewees **[I<sub>4</sub>]** indicated that the materials were relevant but they still have some deficiencies or drawbacks. In contrast to this, two of the interviewees strongly asserted that the materials used in the training were not appropriate to the levels of the trainees. From these it is possible to conclude that the materials were to some extent relevant for the trainees language needs but they were not of appropriate level to the trainees.

Item 4 in table [4.2.2] asked instructors about the attention given for the development of different language skills. Accordingly, 10 respondents (35.71%) reported that a reasonably balanced attention was given for the development of listening, speaking, reading, writing and vocabulary. On the contrary, 11 respondents (39.29%) indicated that the focus given for the development of

listening, speaking, reading, writing and vocabulary was not reasonably fair. 7 instructors (25%) remained neutral from either agreeing or disagreeing to the statement. The mean score falls around 2.96, which ranges from disagree to undecided. The result from the questionnaire does not enable to make any sort of conclusion. Therefore, it is a must to look into what interviewees said regarding this issue.

[I<sub>1</sub>] *ELIP is a place where one can develop his language, his English skills. ---but ELIP is restricted only to speaking. I think I haven't seen any other skills-writing, reading---we read some passage, but I don't think it was intended for improving our reading skill because the aim of that reading as well was also to initiate talking, to encourage talking. So in my view it is better if ELIP extends its service to reading and writing.*

[I<sub>2</sub>] *we had to practice listening activities but it was not given emphasis by ELIP center at the time. Less attention was given for listening, that was the problem. There was just intensive training time for speaking; responding to questions orally, and writing, but less emphasis was given for listening.*

[I<sub>3</sub>] *It must not focus only on some particular skills---much attention was given for speaking, of course, there was some writing. --- So it must contain all skills.*

[I<sub>4</sub>] *Much attention was given to improve speaking skill. In most cases it is speaking; writing was also there but it was not that much. I think there were also two or three listening lessons. But I remember one which was from a tape recorder; there were some gaps so we had to fill the gaps, there were also some comprehension questions to be answered based on the listening material.*

[I<sub>5</sub>] *Especially there was no material for listening. There were reading and writing sessions but the material was only for reading. Most of the time ELIP sessions focus on speaking. I think we had a good speaking practice time.*

From the results of the interview, it is possible to conclude that much attention was given for the development of speaking skill. The trainees testified that they had a good speaking practice. In some ways they enjoyed the presence of speaking activities, but they are equally dissatisfied with the neglect of or by the lesser attention given for other skills. Giving a prime focus for the development of speaking skill may have its own justification. It may not be logical to expect the treatment of all skills in a similar fashion with equal attention given for all. Some of the skills could be given much attention and others might be given lesser attention according to the purpose of the program. However, here it is important to note that language skills exist in an integrated manner. The development of one skill can be enhanced by the development of other

language skills. For instance, having a good listening skill or reading skill is believed to enhance the expressive power of the person in either speaking or writing. Thus, it is not logical and wise to focus only on a single skill.

Item 5 asked instructors were asked about the relevance of the methodology used in the training. As table [4.2.2] shows 19 instructors (67.86%) indicated the method of teaching employed in the delivery of the training were relevant to teaching in the content area classroom. On the other hand, 3 instructors (10.71%) reported that the methods used in the training were not relevant to content classroom teaching. 6 respondents (21.43%) refrained from both agreement and disagreement to the statement. The mean falls around 3.64, which ranges from undecided to agree. This implies that a reasonably significant number of instructors are in favor of the methods employed in the training. However, it is important to note that the remaining instructors are not content with the methods employed.

One of the interviewees had to say the following about how ELIP helped him improve his teaching skills.

**[I<sub>2</sub>]** *ELIP helped me to improve my skills of teaching in many aspects, especially on how to use some relevant words which are very much clear to my students. It helped me to adjust my pace of instruction. I was recommended by the trainer to minimize my pace. The trainer [a particular volunteer by the time] was observing my class frequently and he was giving me good information on how to improve my skills. Therefore, ELIP has overall advantages and it helped me to improve the overall instructional process and the way how to use appropriate language for my students.*

As item 6 in table [4.2.2] shows, concerning the influence of the training on their language use during content teaching in the classroom, 16 instructors (that is, 57.14%) reported that the training made them to be careful in their language use when teaching content in the classroom. On the other hand, 5 instructors (that is, 17.86%) revealed that the training hasn't made them to be careful in their language use when teaching subject area course in the classroom. In other words, the training has not positively influenced these people with regard to their own language use in the classroom; they continued teaching in the same way they had been teaching. 7 respondents (that is, 25%) neither agreed nor disagreed to the point raised. The mean score for this item falls around 3.5, which ranges from undecided to agree.

From this it could be possible to conclude that the training made some instructors to be cautious about their language use in the classroom. It is necessary, however, to consider others who still haven't been influenced by the training.

Item 7 asked instructors the extent to which ELIP training made them feel responsible in supporting learners improve their English. Accordingly as table [4.2.2] indicates, 16 instructors (that is 57.14%) revealed that the training made them feel more responsible in supporting learners improve their English. On the contrary, 4 instructors (that is, 14.29%) reported that the training has not made them to feel more responsibility for supporting learners improve their English concurrent with content teaching. 8 respondents (that is, 28.57%) remained neutral regarding the influence of the training on their feeling of responsibility to support learners improve their English. The mean score for this item falls around 3.5.

Though 57.14% of the instructors indicated that the training made them to feel more responsible in supporting, the presence of the remaining 42.86% indicates that during the training much work hasn't been done in relation to their potential in supporting learners improve their English.

As item 8 in table [4.2.2] shows, 4 respondents (that is, 14.29%) indicated that the training hasn't made a significant contribution to the improvement of their English language skills. On the other hand, 21 instructors (75%) reported that the training has made a contribution to the improvement of their English skills. 3 respondents (that is, 10.71) withhold from reflecting their stand point with regard to the contribution of the training. The mean for this item is 3.86. It ranges from undecided to agree and it is much closer to the agreement scale.

Whatever the quality of the training, the majority (that is 75%) of the instructors indicated that the training contributed for the improvement of their English language proficiency. This implies that they obtained something from the training. In conclusion, as indicated in table [4.2.2] the calculated grand mean for all the 8 items is 3.38. It falls in the range between undecided and agree. This indicates that ELIP trained subject area instructors have a moderate perception towards ELIP training.

For the question “Were you informed that you could contribute to the improvement of the learners English, specially the language specific to your field of study?”

The first informant [I<sub>1</sub>] revealed that the training didn't overtly focus on encouraging instructors to support their learners in the content classrooms. But they were informally informed that they could contribute to the betterment of the students English. Here, informally means they discussed about it incidentally while they were discussing about some other thing. It was not treated as a separate objective to be addressed during the training.

*[I<sub>1</sub>] Actually informally we discussed on such matter; the importance of teachers other than English teachers in promoting language, English language in the class but it was not formally. The trainers told us to help our students to talk in English.*

The other informant [I<sub>2</sub>] indicated [A particular volunteer who worked in the English Language Improvement Center at a particular time] had been observing the classes of willing instructors. However, the classroom observation was not considered as one of the requirements for the completion of the training. Besides, it was not done with an intention of evaluating the language use of instructors rather it had been arranged by a free agreement between the trainer and some of the candidates.

*[I<sub>2</sub>] The trainer [A particular volunteer] was observing the trainees' classes frequently by making appointment. Anyhow he was urging us to improve our students' English in our class times.*

Generally, a very slight attempt had been made to increase the awareness of subject area instructors with regard to their potential to support learners improve their English. Since the training was not conducted by the same trainer there had been irregularities and lack of uniformity. Trainers of different times had been producing different lessons and including them in the training material when they felt it was necessary for the trainees.

### **Problems related to ELIP training and suggested areas of improvement as reflected by instructors**

On the open ended part of the questionnaire, instructors were asked to list problems they think are barriers to the success of ELIP training and suggest areas of improvement. The results obtained are presented in frequencies as follows:

**[Table 4.2.3] Problems related to ELIP training as reflected by instructors**

<i>No.</i>	<i>Problems observed by ELIP trained subject area instructors</i>	<i>Freq</i>
<i>1.</i>	Lack of training materials	<i>9</i>
<i>2.</i>	The materials are not well organized	<i>6</i>
<i>3.</i>	Lack of motivation among instructors / The negative attitude of instructors towards the training	<i>5</i>
<i>4.</i>	There were no clearly defined objectives/ The objectives of the training were not clearly stated and communicated to the trainees	<i>5</i>
<i>5.</i>	Less attention is given by the college management body [and the trainers] to facilitate the program	<i>4</i>
<i>6.</i>	Heavy work load of instructors	<i>3</i>
<i>7.</i>	Lack of incentives	<i>3</i>
<i>8.</i>	The training is seasonal than persistent activity / Lack of follow-up after the training	<i>3</i>
<i>9.</i>	The training is not based on need assessment; need assessment was not done	<i>2</i>
<i>10.</i>	Achievement in ELIP training are not measured	<i>2</i>
<i>11.</i>	The whole training is not coincided with instructors' role in classroom teaching	<i>2</i>
<i>12.</i>	The difficulty level of the training is very low	<i>2</i>
<i>13.</i>	Time allotted for the training is not enough/ time should be added	<i>2</i>
<i>14.</i>	Equal attention was not given for all skills	<i>2</i>
<i>15.</i>	Lack of awareness among instructors regarding the importance of the training	<i>2</i>
<i>16.</i>	Sometimes ELIP training time overlaps (clashes) with the regular class time	<i>2</i>
<i>17.</i>	Trainees are not encouraged to improve their skills by themselves and by their own pace	<i>1</i>
<i>18.</i>	Foreign culture is highly reflected in the materials	<i>1</i>
<i>19.</i>	Practical aspects of the English skills were given less attention	<i>1</i>

As can be seen in the above table problems related to: the scarcity and organization of training materials, the motivation of instructors, and the absence of clearly defined objectives are among the most frequently indicated problems

Instructors were also asked to signify areas which need improvement in the ELIP training. Accordingly, responses from both interview and open ended questionnaire items are presented bellow.

#### **What needs to be improved regarding ELIP training for academic staff?**

Instructors strongly suggested the development of materials appropriate to their levels, organizing awareness raising programs, making the training inclusive of all the language skills, and continuous follow up are some of the most frequently suggested points. Results from interview and open ended questionnaire items are as follows.

[I<sub>1</sub>] *In my view it is better if ELIP extends its service to reading and writing. The focus or the scope of ELIP has to be widened to include writing and reading. Besides, it is better if there is some kind of exam. ---I think it should also persist. For instance, we have taken ELIP training and we finished-there was no follow up; nobody asks us what we are doing or how we improve, how ELIP helps us to improve our English. -----Instructors who are attending ELIP didn't think they got something new except building up what they know already. ---When I hear in the compound some instructors do not like ELIP because they think they expected someone to teach them either new words or grammar something like that---but if they are told the objectives of ELIP that will be good.*

**[Table 4.2.4] Areas of improvement in ELIP training**

<i>No.</i>	<i>Areas of Improvement</i>	<i>Freq</i>
1.	There should be a well organized training material; training material need to be developed and provided for the trainees; the contents of the training areas need to be improved	14
2.	In order to change the attitudes of the trainees, awareness raising programs need to be designed and conducted. Promoting and encouraging instructors to join the ELIP training	6
3.	Need assessment should be conducted	4
4.	There must be a continuous follow-up; provision of additional continuous support <i>on individual's</i> weak sides	4
5.	Work load should be reduced from instructors	4
6.	There should be clear objectives; and objectives should be clearly communicated	4
7.	All skills need to be treated equally; time should be reasonably distributed for different	4
8.	There should be portfolio [like HDP]	3
9.	The college should give more attention to the training	3
10.	Provision of incentives	3
11.	The training needs to be in line with teachers role in class/ the training needs to be modified to conform to the college context	2
12.	Commitment on the part of the trainees	2
13.	The training time should be adjusted according to the time table of the trainees to avoid clash.	2
14.	The difficulty level has to be increased	2
15.	Achievements need to be measured at the end of the training program	2
16.	Extending the training time up to two years	2
17.	Peer classroom observation should be taken into account	1
18.	Interesting activities should be incorporated in the training materials	1
19.	The training should only be conducted by Ethiopians	1
20.	The skills of the trainers; a devoted, punctual and skilled trainer should be assigned to the trainees	1
21.	Experience sharing opportunities with other sister colleges and professionals should be organized	1

One of the interview respondents [I<sub>3</sub>] had to say the following:

*There was no follow up of that program. Once a program has been implemented, it is necessary to assess its impact---there was no such kind of impact assessment. So there should be follow up and impact assessment. ---and the program has to be designed in the way that it enables academic staff to use English effectively in their field.*

### 4.3 ELIP-trained subject area Instructors' perceptions of the English language ability of the learners to learn content through English

In this section, results from questionnaire and interview are presented and discussed. Items 1 through 7 on the questionnaire are concerning students ability to learn content through English as perceived by ELIP-trained subject area instructors.

**Table [4.3.1] Students ability to learn content through English as perceived by ELIP-trained subject area instructors**

Item	Responses										
	Very Low		Low		medium		High		Very High		X
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	
1. <i>critical listening skills</i>	2	7.14	11	39.29	13	46.43	2	7.14	0	–	2.54
2. <i>Identifying main ideas from supporting details while taking notes from lectures</i>	2	7.14	13	46.43	10	35.71	3	10.71	0	–	2.5
3. <i>Using grammatically correct and meaningful sentences</i>	8	28.57	10	35.71	9	32.14	1	3.57	0	–	2.11
4. <i>Reading texts with a satisfactory comprehension</i>	1	3.57	11	39.29	13	46.43	3	10.71	0	–	2.64
5. <i>Expressing ideas freely and clearly In speech</i>	9	32.14	14	50	3	10.71	1	3.57	1	3.57	1.96
6. <i>Using words in their appropriate contexts</i>	5	17.86	13	46.43	8	28.57	2	7.14	0	–	2.25
7. <i>Expressing ideas clearly in writing</i>	4	14.29	16	57.14	6	21.43	1	3.57	1	3.57	2.25
<b>Grand Mean</b>											<b>2.32</b>

The first item in the above table shows, 2 respondents (that is, 7.14%) reported that their students have high critical listening skills. On the other hand a total of 13 respondents (that is, 46.43%) reported that students have low critical listening skills necessary to understand content in the

subject area classroom. 13 respondents (that is, 46.43) rated their students' English listening skills as medium. The mean value for this item falls around 2.54, which ranges from low to medium. This May be due to the concentration around the middle; i.e., 13 respondents rated their students listening skills as a medium.

This implies that students have problems of understanding content in English; either listening to a lecture by their instructor or listening to their colleagues during discussions in the classroom. This in turn calls for support from both teachers of English and teachers in English.

With regard to the second item, 3 respondents (that is, 10.71%) reported that students have a high ability to identify main ideas from supporting details. 15 respondents (that is, 53.57%) indicated that the majority of students have problems with identifying main ideas from supporting details, while 10 respondents (that is, 35.71%) rated the learners ability to identify main ideas from supporting details as a medium. The mean score is 2.5. It is a low score which ranges from low to medium. Since instructors rated students' ability to identify main ideas from supporting details lower than expected, it is possible to infer that they believe students need assistance to develop this particular skill.

The identification of main idea from the supporting details has something to do with the learners' ability of writing a summary. It is one of the most important skills students are required to have for success in education. Thus, this skill can be promoted by subject area instructors through asking students to write summary of the discussion points or by making students to read books on a certain topic and asking them to write the summary. Before they write the summary they need to identify the main points in the text. Therefore, in this way students can be given opportunity to practice the identification of main ideas from supporting details.

Item 3 asked instructors about students' ability to use grammatically correct and meaningful sentences. As indicated in table [4.3.1] concerning the learners ability of using grammatically correct and meaningful sentences only 1 respondent (that is, 3.57%) indicated learners have high ability, while 18 respondents (that is, 64.29%) reported that students have low ability to construct grammatically correct and meaningful sentences. The remaining 9 respondents (that is, 32.14%)

reported that students have moderate ability of constructing grammatically correct and meaningful sentences. The mean score for this item falls around 2.11, which is a lower score.

Subject area instructors are not expected to explicitly teach the construction of grammatically correct sentences as many of the interview informants mentioned. However, they can be models for their students in doing that and they can also provide students with different opportunities which demand the construction of sentences both in spoken and written modes of communication.

Based on the above information it is possible to conclude that students have a major problem related to the construction of grammatically correct and meaningful sentences.

As the forth item in table [4.3.1] shows 3 respondents (that is, 10.71%) reported that students have high ability to read texts with satisfactory comprehension, while 12 respondents (that is, 42.86%) reported students have low ability to read texts with satisfactory comprehension. The remaining 13 instructors (that is, 46.43%) rated the learners' ability to read texts with satisfactory comprehension as medium. The mean score for this item falls around 2.64, which ranges from low to medium. In line with this, one of the interviewees revealed that he stopped providing a reading assignment to students because of their low reading abilities. He said the following about his experience:

**[I<sub>1</sub>]** *I used to give a reading assignment for students to read in advance, before the discussion in the class. Although they read it they do not understand the idea. They only expect me to explain for them. Once "I tried and it didn't work---"*

Vacca and Vacca (2005) describe reading as one of the basic language skills, which facilitates students' literacy in the content areas. Supporting learners improve their reading skills promotes independent learning by students. Those students who have a good reading skill are not likely to wait their instructor to explain the concept for them rather they can dig and understand by themselves. Including those students who have been rated by 13 instructors (46.43%) to have a medium reading skill to understand texts with satisfactory comprehension other students who have been rated by 12 instructors (42.86%) to have a low reading skill need support to be effective and successful learners.

As item 5 in table [4.3.1] shows regarding the learners' ability to express their ideas freely and clearly in speech, 2 instructors (that is, 7.14%) reported that students have high ability to express their idea freely and clearly in speech. On the other hand, 23 instructors (that is, 82.14%) indicated that students are weak at expressing their idea freely and clearly in speech. The remaining 3 instructors (that is, 10.71%) reported that students are neither good nor bad at expressing their idea freely and clearly in speech. The mean score (1.96) is a low score. It falls in the range between very low and low.

Based on the above finding it could be possible to conclude that the majority of students have great problem with communicating their ideas in speech.

Students' inability to express their ideas orally may not be considered the only area of the language they are weak at. It might be associated with problems in the other areas of the language. Unless students have the ability to understand a written concept from a text or what they have heard from others, they cannot reply or comment without a proper understanding of the material. In addition to this, students may lack the experience or exposure which may highly affects their confidence to talk to others in English.

There is no any other means that instructors expect their students to come to content classrooms with a good speaking skill. This requires collaboration between English and subject area instructors with the aim of providing various opportunities for students to develop their competence and confidence to speak in English.

In table [4.3.1] item 6 indicates, 2 instructors (that is, 7.14%) reported that students have a high ability of using words in their appropriate contexts, while 18 instructors (that is, 64.29%) revealed that students have low ability of using words in their appropriate contexts. 8 respondents (that is, 28.57%) reported that students are medium in their ability to use words in their appropriate contexts. The mean score of this item (2.25), which is a low score, falls between low and medium. This indicates that a significant number of students, possibly the majority of students face problems with using words in their appropriate contexts both in speech and writing.

These students need support in enriching their vocabularies and familiarizing them with different uses of the words in different situations and contexts.

As table [4.3.1] item 7 shows, 2 instructors (that is, 7.14%) indicated students have a high ability to express their ideas in writing, while 20 instructors (that is, 71.43%) rated the students ability to express their idea clearly in writing as lower than the required level. The remaining 6 respondents (that is, 21.43%) reported that students have a medium ability in expressing their idea clearly in writing. The mean score for this item (2.25) ranges from low to medium; and even it could be rounded to low.

Students' problems with writing greatly affect their learning of content in English. Thus students should be guided and supported on how to use writing as a tool for content learning. Learners can be helped to enhance their mastery of the content through writing. As Vacca and Vacca state "The more writers work with ideas put on paper, the more they are able to revise, rethink, and clarify what they have to say about a subject (2005:357)."

Instructors were asked to rate their students language ability to learn content through English. This question was raised for the interview respondents involved in the study. They had to say the following regarding their students ability to learn content in English.

The first respondent [I<sub>1</sub>] revealed the presence of different ability groups in the classes. He classified students in three different groups; some with good ability, some medium and others who highly require support to understand concepts. He, however, emphasized that all of them need support to understand the concepts in a lesson.

[I<sub>1</sub>] Half-half; *some students even understand when I speak for the first time, there are students who need repetition and also there are students who need translation. So it is difficult to rate the status of students---There are students who understand English and who ask in English. There are students, who use and try to improve their English, but there are also students who understand what you say but are afraid of replying in English. They reply in Amharic or in their language that is the problem---I think there are students with different status; some students are good, some ---somehow need support-actually all of them need support.*

The other three respondents, i.e., [I<sub>2</sub>], [I<sub>3</sub>], and [I<sub>5</sub>] ranked their students language ability to learn content in English as low, even one of them said their ability is very-very low. The interviewed instructors reported that students' lack of ability to understand concepts in English forces them to use Amharic to help students understand the concept.

[I<sub>2</sub>]*Students' ability- I can say low. They have problems in understanding content especially when the teacher speaks only in English.*

[I<sub>3</sub>]*I can say it is very low, very low. That is why most of the time we use Amharic.*

[I<sub>5</sub>]*I can say it is low. I can say students have big problems in language. It is low because most of the time they do not understand what we say.*

The computed grand mean of the seven items regarding students' ability to learn content through English is 2.32. This value indicates that students have a low ability since it ranges from low to medium. The result of the interview also supports the result obtained through the questionnaire. Therefore, it is possible to conclude instructors perceive students have low ability to learn content through English and they need assistance in this direction.

#### **4.4 ELIP-trained subject area instructors' perceptions towards the nature and development of academic English**

In this section more of the data gathered through questionnaire are presented and discussed. Only a few data gathered through interview are incorporated to support the claims made by instructors on the questionnaire. Concerning the questionnaire, items 1 through 8 are concerned with ELIP-trained subject area instructors' perception towards the nature and development of academic English.

**Table [4.4.1] ELIP-trained subject area instructors' perceptions towards the nature and development of academic English**

Qn. Item No.	Responses										
	1[SD]		2		3		4		5[SA]		X
	5*		4*		3*		2*		1*		
	f	%	f	%	f	%	F	%	f	%	
1. Each discipline has a relatively special vocabulary (language) to deal with content in the field of study.	0	–	0	–	3	10.71	15	53.57	10	35.71	4.25
2. The learners' mastery of content is highly affected by their language proficiency, particularly their academic language proficiency.	0	–	0	–	1	3.57	15	53.57	12	42.86	4.39
3. Having a well developed proficiency in social/conversational English [the language of everyday communication] facilitates the development of academic English [the language necessary for success in school].	0	–	1	3.57	4	14.29	15	53.57	8	28.57	4.07
4. Academic English is likely to be acquired/learned easily as compared to conversational English.*	1	3.57	9	32.14	7	25	9	32.14	2	7.14	2.93
5. The learning of academic English requires the use of academic English in real contexts such as using the language in the content classroom.	1	3.57	1	3.57	3	10.71	17	60.71	6	21.43	3.93
6. Content classes have great language-teaching potentials.	0	–	4	14.29	9	32.14	14	50	1	3.57	3.43
7. Language is best learned when the focus is on the content rather than on the language.	2	7.14	10	35.71	12	42.86	3	10.71	1	3.57	2.68
8. Subject-area instructors' involvement in supporting learners fosters the development of academic English.	1	3.57	0	–	0	–	16	57.14	11	39.29	4.29
<b>Grand Mean</b>											<b>3.75</b>

\*-indicates a negatively worded statement/ unfavorable item

As table [4.4.1] shows, regarding item 1, 25 respondents (that is, 89.29%) reported that each area of study has special language to deal with content in the field of study. 3 respondents (that is, 10.71%) neither agreed nor disagreed to the statement. None of the respondents disagreed regarding the presence of discipline specific language in each field of study.

In different subject areas, different linguistic items occur naturally (Snow, Met and Genesee, 1989). Different subject areas are characterized by specific genres or registers. Since a field of

study needs to have a special unique feature which identifies it from other disciplines to be considered as a separate field of study, it is inevitable that it comprises some unique languages necessary to deal with the content.

The majority of instructors, (that is 89.29%) agree to the idea that each field of study has its own discipline specific language. The mean score for this item (4.25) falls in the range between agree and strongly agree. One of the interviewees [I<sub>5</sub>] also indicated the presence of discipline specific language. He stated “--- *there are subject related words or terms.*” Accordingly, the result implies a very significant proportion of the instructors are aware of the existence of discipline specific language in the course they offer to their students. The awareness they have regarding the issue may have a positive impact on their readiness to acquaint learners with those discipline specific languages.

The second item asked instructors about the effect of language ability on content mastery. Regarding the role of language in content mastery, 27 instructors (that is, 96.43%) reported that the learners' language proficiency significantly affects their mastery of the content. Only one instructor (that is, 3.57%) remained neutral and none of the instructors disagreed to the point.

Many educators highlight the role of language for success in content learning. Unless students acquire a certain level of proficiency in English, particularly proficiency in academic English, they will encounter problems in learning a subject matter course in English. In line with this Ashworth (1985:44) emphasizes the significance of the language of learning to academic achievement. He points out that “The speed and efficiency with which students master the target language will affect the speed and efficiency they will master the subject matter.” This indicates that for successful content learning students need to have the necessary language ability which enables them to understand the content.

The calculated mean value for this item is 4.39. It is a very high score and it falls in the range between agree and strongly agree. Thus, regarding the relationship between the level of language proficiency and content mastery, ELIP trained subject area instructors seem to have a view commonly shared by scholars in the area. They have a good understanding of the effect of the language of learning in content learning and mastery.

Concerning item 3 in table [4.4.1], the majority of instructors, 23 (that is, 46.43%) indicated that having a well developed proficiency in social/ conversational English facilitates the development of academic English, while only 1 instructor (that is, 3.57%) disagreed to the point. The remaining 4 instructors (that is, 14.29%) neither agreed nor disagreed to the statement. The mean score for this item (4.07) ranges from agree to strongly agree.

Academic English and social English are not two mutually exclusive branches of the English language. To some extent, they share common features and one can assist the development of the other but they are different in the functions they serve. The development of the learners' academic English can be facilitated by the use of social English that they have already mastered. Accordingly, the results indicate that the vast majority of ELIP trained subject area instructors are aware of the role of social English for the development of academic English proficiency.

As shown in table [4.4.1] with regard to the fourth item, 11 respondents (that is, 39.29%) share the idea that academic English is likely to be acquired easily as compared to conversational English. On the other hand, 10 respondents (that is, 35.71%) took a different ground to the first group of respondents who agreed to the point. 7 instructors (that is, 25%) took a middle ground; they neither agreed nor disagreed to the point. Learning both types of English well may take a relatively long period of time. Cummins (1983), cited in Crandall (1994), asserts that the mastery of academic English is difficult and may take longer period of time than social English. The mean score for this item falls around 2.93; it ranges from undecided to agree. It is not possible to make conclusion boldly based on the data at hand. Yet instructors do not seem to have a clear understanding of the level of difficulties of learning Academic and social English.

Item 5 asked instructors about a relatively better context for learning academic English. As indicated in table [4.4.1] with regard to this item, 23 respondents (that is, 82.14%) reported that the learning of academic English requires the use of academic English in the content area. On the other hand, 2 respondents (that is, 7.14%) indicated the learning of academic English doesn't require its use in real contexts. 3 respondents (that is, 10.71%) neither disagreed nor agreed to the statement. Similarly, the mean score falls around 3.93, which is in the range of the agreement

scale. This indicates that instructors have an understanding that the use of English language in content classrooms promotes the development of academic English.

Regarding the language teaching potentials of the content area classes, as shown in table [4.4.1] 15 respondents (that is, 53.57%) reported that content classes have great language teaching potentials, while 4 respondents (that is, 14.29 %) indicated that content classes do not have great language teaching potentials. 9 respondents (that is, 32.14%) refrained from agreeing or disagreeing to the point.

Content area classes are regarded as a rich source for language input. In contrast to the widely accepted belief that language classes are good situations for language practice, Snarrski (1997) contends that “the language to be practiced and developed is the medium of instruction for classes other than the language class.” Hutchinson and Waters (1997), cited in Snarrski (1997) also argue that much language learning takes place outside the language classroom.

The calculated mean value is 3.43, which falls in the range between undecided to agree. Accordingly, it could be possible to conclude that concerning this item instructors have a moderate perception towards the language teaching potentials of content classrooms.

Concerning item 7, as indicated in table [4.4.1] 4 respondents (that is, 14.29%) reported that language is best learned when the focus is on the content rather than on the language itself. 12 respondents (that is, 42.86%) have a contrary view to the idea that language is best learned when the focus is on the content rather than on the language. These instructors believe that maintaining focus on the language enables learners to learn the language better. The remaining 12 respondents (that is, 42.86%) neither agreed nor disagreed to the point. According to Krashen (1982) second/foreign language is most successfully acquired when the conditions are similar to those present in first language acquisition: that is, when the focus of instruction is on meaning rather than on form; and when there is sufficient opportunity to engage in meaningful use of that language. The mean score falls around 2.68, which is in the range of the disagreement scale. From this it is possible to conclude that a significant proportion of instructors, including those who refrained from both agreement and disagreement believe that overt language teaching which

involves explicit explanation about the language contributes a lot for language learning than learning content through English. Thus the results from the questionnaire imply instructors have some sort of confusion regarding how language is best learned.

However, from the interview held with subject area instructors a different idea has been reflected. When instructors were asked to refer to their own experience as a student and reply either learning English as a subject or learning other subjects through English contributed a lot to the current language proficiency they have. Two of the instructors reported that learning other subjects in English contributed a lot to the improvement of their English.

[I<sub>1</sub>] *Learning History through English helped me a lot than learning English as a subject. --- When I was a student, in the high school and lower grades even I hated English because I didn't understand English. When we were learning our English teachers used to tell us some mathematical English-Subject plus verb plus---kind of thing, but they themselves do not speak outside the classroom.*

[I<sub>2</sub>] *I have been taking everything starting from elementary school up to now through the medium of English. Personally, I believe that the subject area courses greatly contributed to the improvement of my English language skills than the English courses because the English courses were very few.---The teachers were giving much emphasis to grammar and we were not given any ground to speak, debate and to write on different issues*

As indicated in table [4.4.1] instructors' response to item 8 shows, 27 instructors (that is, 96.43%) reported that their (subject area instructors) involvement in supporting learners improve their English promotes the development of the learners' proficiency in academic English, while only one respondent reflected a contrary view in relation to the point. Regarding this item all of the respondents have taken sides, in other words most of them agreed and one disagreed to the point. Similarly, the mean score is 4.29, which is a very high score and it falls in the range of the agreement scale. Based on the results, it is possible to conclude that the vast majority of instructors believe that their involvement in supporting learners improve their Academic English will make a significant difference.

In conclusion, instructors indicated that academic English has some special features than social English and their involvement in supporting learners improve their academic English is necessary and that would bring some effect on the students learning of academic English. The

calculated grand mean (3.75) ranges from undecided to agree, however, since it is close to 4 it would be possible to conclude that instructors have mildly high perceptions towards the nature and development of academic English.

#### 4.5 ELIP-trained subject area instructors' perceptions towards their role/responsibility in promoting learners improve their academic English

In this section, data from the questionnaire and interview with regard to instructors feeling of responsibility in promoting academic English are presented and discussed. Items 1 through 4 are intended to elicit ELIP-trained subject area instructors' perceptions towards their role/responsibility in promoting academic English acquisition.

**Table [4.5.1]: ELIP-trained subject area instructors' perceptions towards their responsibility in supporting learners improve their academic English**

Qn. Item No.	Responses										
	1[SD]		2		3		4		5[SA]		X
	5*		4*		3*		2*		1*		
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	
1. Teachers of English (English teachers) are the only responsible bodies to help learners improve their academic English.*	17	60.71	8	28.57	2	7.14	1	3.57	0	–	4.46
2. Subject-area instructors should contribute in acquainting learners with discipline specific language.	0	–	1	3.57	0	–	14	50	13	46.43	4.39
3. Subject-area instructors have a double responsibility; both teaching the content and supporting learners improve their English.	0	–	1	3.57	2	7.14	16	57.14	9	32.14	4.18
4. Subject teachers should not be expected to do anything about the language since they are content teachers.*	15	53.57	13	46.43	0	–	0	–	0	–	4.54
<b>Grand Mean</b>											<b>4.39</b>

\*-indicates a negatively worded statement/ unfavorable item

The first item asked instructors if English instructors are the only responsible bodies to help learners improve their academic English. Accordingly, only one respondent (that is, 3.57%) reported that English teachers are the only responsible bodies to contribute for the development

of the learners' academic English proficiency. In contrast to this, the majority of respondents, 25 (that is, 89.29%) indicated that teachers of English are not the only responsible bodies to contribute for the improvement of the learners' academic English proficiency. The remaining 2 respondents (that is; 7.14) neither agreed nor disagreed to the point. The frequency and percentage results indicate that subject area instructors have shown strong disagreement to the statement "English teachers are the only responsible bodies---". Similarly, the mean (4.46), which is a very high score falls in the range between agree and strongly agree. From this it would be possible to infer that subject area instructors have a great feeling of responsibility to support learners improve their English.

The interviewed instructors had to say the following regarding the responsibility of English and subject area instructors:

*[I<sub>1</sub>] English teachers need to take a leading role, however, subject area instructors also need to play their role in supporting learners to improve their English.*

*[I<sub>2</sub>] It is not the responsibility of only language teachers; I think language teachers should play a great role.---However, everyone must play a great role to improve the language of his/her students.---Since English is the medium of instruction, all stakeholders must help students develop their English, especially academic English. In my understanding, writing and speaking skills are mostly improved by content area teachers.*

*[I<sub>3</sub>] Every teacher, every instructor is responsible.*

*[I<sub>4</sub>] It is not only expected from the English teachers, other subject teachers are also expected to provide opportunities for students by asking questions, giving assignments and the likes. Each and every instructor is expected to do that.*

*[I<sub>5</sub>] I feel both can take their parts. English instructors can help students, at the same time subject area instructors can take their parts. Because English may be one course in the semester most courses may be other courses. These courses are also delivered in English language. So I think the English courses shouldn't be the only courses which students learn the language but other subjects which are delivered in English can have their own contribution for the improvement of the students English. In the subject area courses students have broader and enough time to practice or to use the language. Therefore, Subject area instructors also have a responsibility; I can say great responsibility for students' improvement of the language. ----I feel great responsibility is placed on subject area instructors. Subject area instructors can create opportunities for students to use the language; to speak the language, to write in the language and even to answer questions by using the language, to write report and present reports or to*

*make presentation by using the language. So we need to provide opportunities for students to use the language in different situations.*

The results of the interview held with instructors have shown that all of the interviewed instructors believe that the task of supporting students improve their English should not be left only for English teachers. They strongly emphasized the fact that subject area instructors also need to play a corresponding role in supporting learners improve their English.

Regarding the role of subject area instructors in acquainting learners with discipline specific language, as indicated in table [4.5.1] the majority of instructors 27 (that is, 96.43%) agreed to the idea that subject area instructors should contribute in familiarizing learners with discipline specific language, while 1 respondent (that is, 3.57%) expressed disagreement concerning the point. None of the respondents took a middle ground with regard to this item. The mean score for this item falls around 4.39, which is a very high score and it indicates the instructors' strong agreement to the point. With regard to the first item indicated in table [4.4.1] instructors were asked about the existence of discipline specific language in each area of study. In relation to this item, 25 respondents (that is, 89.29%) reported each area of study has special language to deal with content in the field of study. Therefore, strong correlation seem to exist between the responses of subject area instructors regarding the existence of discipline specific language and their responsibility in acquainting learners with discipline specific language.

Concerning item 3 indicated in table [4.5.1], 25 respondents (that is, 89.29%) reported that subject area instructors have a double responsibility of teaching content and supporting learners improve their English. Marew (2000:64) states, subject area instructors "have a double responsibility". They are expected to help students "master the content of their subjects and develop the language skills required to learn the contents of their school subjects at the same time". On the other hand, only 1 instructor (that is, 3.57%) expressed disagreement in relation to the issue raised. 2 respondents (that is, 7.14%) unable to come to the point of either agreement or disagreement. The mean score falls around 4.18, which is a high score and it indicates the instructors' strong agreement to the point. Based on the above data, it could be possible to conclude a significant proportion of instructors feel they have a double responsibility.

Regarding item 4, all respondents 28 (that is, 100%) expressed their disagreement to the statement, “Subject teachers should not be expected to do anything about the language since they are content teachers.” This implies that all ELIP trained subject area instructors believe that they are expected to contribute to the improvement of the learners English. The mean falls in the disagreement scale around 4.54, which is a very high score. Conversely, this indicates that subject area instructors have a strong belief that they should be involved in supporting learners improve their English.

In relation to the possible ways subject area instructors can support students improve their academic English; one of the interview informant instructors had to say the following:

[I<sub>1</sub>] *There are some ways. My subject has some core vocabularies. Most of the time historians use language, words that express war, relationship, trade, diplomacy and something like these. There are some vocabularies, some words, so I can help them by giving them the other meaning of the word. Even sometimes I encourage my students to study English to know, to understand the lesson; even I tell them to go back and start from ‘what is sentence’. I do this because I think that is their problem. In such a way teachers may help students to learn or develop academic English. ---It is possible to help students. ----I think there is much to be done. I think encouraging students to read and providing them with sources---by giving them sources we can help them improve their reading as well as by giving marks sometimes that may encourage students. ---- I started once asking students, I give them chance to read and come and the 1<sup>st</sup> 10 minutes or 5 minutes in the session I give them chance to write what they read and I collect that. I tried for sometime but it is difficult. It is difficult to give them always. In such a way we can also motivate our students to read more.*

[I<sub>1</sub>] believes that subject area instructors can support learners through providing them some points of discussion or presentation. He said he usually asks them to speak out what they have on their mind before discussing or explaining the point to them. Nevertheless, he reported that he doesn’t frequently employ different active learning techniques “like the ones we have learned in HDP” because of the vastness of the portions to be covered.

In general, the grand mean for all the four items on the questionnaire (4.39) and the instructors' responses from the results of the interview indicate that instructors have a strong or high perception towards their responsibility in supporting learners improve their English.

#### **4.6 The practice of ELIP-trained subject area instructors in promoting academic English learning**

In this section, items 1 to 11 in the questionnaire for instructors and items 1 to 13 in the students' questionnaire are concerned with the practice of ELIP-trained subject area instructors. In content learning, language is not given a prime focus; however, for it gives access to the content it has a paramount effect on content learning and mastery. In view of the fact that English is a medium of instruction, both instructors and students undoubtedly use English in the classroom and outside the classroom to accomplish various academic tasks. Nevertheless, the degree to which English language is used to deal with content varies from one situation to another. It greatly depends on the kinds of activities set as a means of ensuring the learners mastery of the content. Since instructors are the one who take control over the teaching and learning process, it is worth looking at their practices; both their own use of the language and the extent to which they engage learners to accomplish tasks in the language with the purpose of achieving content mastery.

**Table [4.6.1]: The practice of ELIP-trained subject area instructors in promoting academic English as reflected by the instructors themselves**

Qn. Item No.	Responses									
	Always		Frequently		Sometimes		Rarely		Never	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
<i>1. I provide students with various opportunities to use English in the classroom both individually and in group.</i>	2	7.14	15	53.57	10	35.71	1	3.57	0	–
<i>2. I encourage the use of English in the classroom.</i>	8	28.57	12	42.86	7	25	1	3.57	0	–
<i>3. I help learners activate their prior knowledge and make connections between their prior knowledge and the content to be encountered.</i>	8	28.57	15	53.57	5	17.86	0	–	0	–
<i>4. I use simple English to ensure the learners understanding of the content.</i>	16	57.14	12	42.86	0	–	0	–	0	–
<i>5. I ask different levels of questions to prompt learners reflect their ideas.</i>	8	28.57	17	60.71	3	10.71	0	–	0	–
<i>6. I explicitly teach key vocabulary in the content area classroom.</i>	4	14.29	6	21.43	10	35.71	7	25	1	3.57
<i>7. I use and let students use Amharic or other vernacular language in the classroom.</i>	4	14.29	4	14.29	13	46.43	4	14.29	3	10.71
<i>8. I correct the students English when necessary (when it interferes with meaning).</i>	5	17.86	14	50	6	21.43	3	10.71	0	–
<i>9. I consider language use as criteria when evaluating students' oral presentation and written exams or assignments.</i>	4	14.29	11	39.29	8	28.57	2	7.14	3	10.71
<i>10. I provide a reading assignment related to the course to the learners.</i>	0	–	9	32.14	8	28.57	5	17.86	6	21.43
<i>11. I provide a writing assignment related to the course to the learners.</i>	0	–	2	7.14	7	25	14	50	5	17.86

As indicated in table[4.6.1] concerning item 1, which asked instructors how often they provide opportunities for students to use English in the classroom and outside the classroom, 2 (7.14%)instructors reported they provide opportunities always, 15 (53.57%) frequently, 10 (35.71%) sometimes, 1 (3.57) rarely. Students were also asked about their instructors' provision of different opportunities for them to use English in the classroom and outside the classroom. As indicated in table [4.6.2] 13students (11.11%) reported that their instructors provide opportunities always, 26 (22.22%) frequently, 31 (26.5%) sometimes, 43 (36.75%) rarely and 4 (3.42%) never provide them opportunities to use the language in the classroom and outside the classroom both individually and in groups.

**Table [4.6.2] Students' perceptions towards instructors' practices in promoting academic English learning**

Qn. Item No.	Responses									
	Always		Frequently		Sometimes		Rarely		Never	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
1. Provides students with different opportunities to use English in the classroom and outside the classroom individually and in groups	13	11.11	26	22.22	31	26.5	43	36.75	4	3.42
2. Encourages the use of English in the classroom	21	17.95	29	24.79	44	37.61	19	16.24	4	3.42
3. Helps students activate their prior knowledge and make connections between their prior knowledge and the content to be encountered	31	26.5	28	23.93	33	28.21	24	20.51	1	0.85
4. Uses simple English which is easy for me to understand	62	52.99	26	22.22	17	14.53	10	8.55	2	1.71
5. Asks different levels of questions to prompt learners reflect their ideas	25	21.37	37	31.62	32	27.35	21	17.95	2	1.71
6. Teaches [explains] the meaning of key vocabulary in the content area classroom	23	19.66	34	29.06	33	28.21	18	15.38	9	7.69
7. The instructor speaks in Amharic or other vernacular language during lessons	20	17.09	29	24.79	32	27.35	25	21.37	11	9.4
8. The instructor allows students to speak in Amharic or other vernacular language during class discussions.	27	23.08	34	29.06	19	16.24	21	17.95	16	13.68
9. Corrects the students English when necessary ( when it interferes with meaning)	15	12.82	18	15.38	25	21.37	46	39.32	13	11.11
10. gives a reading assignment	19	16.24	23	19.66	35	29.91	28	23.93	12	10.26
11. gives a writing assignment to the learners	17	14.53	21	17.95	27	23.08	43	36.75	9	7.69
12. Considers language use as a criteria when evaluating students oral presentation	46	39.32	37	31.62	23	19.66	7	5.98	4	3.42
13. Considers language use as a criteria when evaluating students written exams or assignments	49	41.88	26	22.22	21	17.95	13	11.11	8	6.84

Other than the results from the questionnaire, instructors were also interviewed about how often they provide opportunities for students to use English in the classroom. The responses obtained from [I<sub>1</sub>], [I<sub>3</sub>], and [I<sub>5</sub>] are presented bellow.

[I<sub>1</sub>] said he usually asks students to speak out what is on their mind before discussing or explaining the point to them. Nevertheless, he revealed that he doesn't frequently employ different active learning techniques. "I think I am not doing like the active learning techniques

we have learned in HDP” because of the vastness of the portions to be covered. He also had to say the following:

[I<sub>1</sub>] *In our case, it is difficult to give discussion points because, for instance, I usually give them a reading assignment to be read in advance, before the discussion in the class. Although they read it they do not understand. They only expect me to explain for them. If I give them discussion points to share their ideas, they do not take it for learning. They do not think they were given opportunity to learn. That is the problem. In History much is talking. Actually, we also give them reading assignment. We also give them chance to reflect their ideas, and to write report to be presented in the classroom.*

[I<sub>3</sub>] *I rarely give chance for students because the content is very vast. If ‘you’ give some kind of group work or pair work, ‘you’ are wasting time. That means it is difficult to cover all the content. I rarely give them group activities and assignments, but this, of course, may not help them improve their language but at least it may provide some opportunities to the exchange of their ideas.*

[I<sub>5</sub>] *Of course, it depends on the content that I am teaching. When I feel that the topic is important for students to discuss on; to raise their views or ideas I will make them to do that. After the discussion, I make them to evaluate which one was better.*

The result from observation revealed that only one of the six ELIP trained subject area instructors provided students multiple opportunities to use English in the classroom. All the five instructors highly controlled the lessons. They acted as a sole knowledge dispenser in the classroom. Much of the class time was occupied by instructors’ lecture, thus students were not actively involved in the classroom activities. Nevertheless, there was some kind of teacher led questioning and answering.

In contrast to the observed five classrooms, one of the lessons was so different in the organization of the activities and the learners’ involvement in the classroom activities. The instructors’ presentation was full of questioning and answering. Students were arranged to sit in groups for discussion. At the end of the discussion, each group reflected the points of their discussion through their representatives. Finally, the presentation was followed by whole class discussion led by the instructor.

The very instructor who provided opportunities for students to use English in the classroom had to say the following in responding to the interview:

**[I<sub>2</sub>]** *I think in my part I always help my students to use English when they are doing some activities, group works. I give chances in many circumstances; I give them individual tasks, group tasks and pair tasks. Therefore, when they have completed their tasks in the group, I encourage them to speak in English.*

From the results presented above it could be possible to conclude that, ELIP trained subject area instructors do not usually provide rich contexts for students the use of English language. Though there may be exceptional instructors like [I<sub>2</sub>], as the result from other respondents indicate the majority of instructors do not engage learners to perform different tasks by using the language.

As indicated in table [4.6.1], 8(28.57%) instructors reported that they always encourage the use of English by the students, 12 (42.86%) frequently, 7 (25%) sometimes, and 1 (3.57%) rarely. As shown in table [4.6.2] students were also asked about how often their instructors encourage them to use English in the classroom. With regard to this 21(17.95%) students indicated that their instructors always encourage them to use English, 29(24.79%) frequently, 44(37.61%) sometimes, 19(3.42%) rarely, and 4(16.24%) never encourage them to use English in the classroom.

On the interview [I<sub>4</sub>] and [I<sub>5</sub>] said that they sometimes encourage students to use English in the classroom while [I<sub>3</sub>] reported he does not worry about the medium, which means he doesn't encourage students. Results from the interviews have been presented below:

**[I<sub>3</sub>]** *I usually ask questions. Usually I ask either in English or Amharic, I do not worry about the medium whether it is English or Amharic. I give attention to the answer but I don't ask them to answer in English or in Amharic. --- If 'you' give group discussion for your students unless 'you' control the medium of instruction they may use not only Amharic but also other languages.*

**[I<sub>4</sub>]** *Our main focus is on the content matter but sometimes we encourage them to respond using the medium of instruction-English.*

**[I<sub>5</sub>]** *I do this [encourage students to use English] sometimes. Sometimes what students are trying to tell in English becomes complicated and difficult to understand. So when what they want to say is not understandable, I ask them to say it again in English. If their idea is still not clear, I will make them to tell their idea in Amharic.*

Based on the results of observation, regarding the role of instructors in encouraging the use of English in the classroom, 2 of the instructors made an attempt to encourage learners use English

in the classroom, while 4 of the instructors didn't make any effort to encourage the use of English by the students.

Providing students with different activities to be carried out in the classroom or outside the classroom is one way of encouraging the use of English. When students perform different activities in the classroom their exposure to the use of the language increases. In this regard, creating an interactive environment has much to do with encouraging the use of English. On the other hand, some of the instructors were using Amharic, even when they were asking questions. When the instructors commonly used Amharic, students were observed to answer the questions in Amharic too. However, there were special occasions when the instructors asked questions in Amharic few students answered the questions in English.

In conclusion, ELIP trained subject area instructors are found to be less concerned about encouraging students to use English through engaging them in different activities in the classroom. Instructors and their students reported that ELIP trained subject area instructors sometimes encourage the use of English. However, even this might not be a deliberate action by the instructors.

With regard to the third as shown in table [4.6.1] ELIP trained subject area instructors were asked as to how often they help learners activate their prior knowledge. Accordingly, 8(28.57%) instructors indicated they help always, 15 (53.57%) frequently, 5 (17.86%) sometimes help learners activate their prior knowledge. In line with this, as indicated in table [4.6.2] students were also asked how often their instructors help them activate their prior knowledge. Accordingly, 31(26.5%) students said instructors help them activate their prior knowledge always, 28(23.93%) frequently, 33(28.21%) sometimes, 24(20.51%) rarely and 1(0.85%) never. Regarding subject area instructors efforts in supporting learners activate their prior knowledge, the result of the observation indicated that 4 instructors made attempt to help learners activate their prior knowledge, while 1 instructor made a moderate attempt; the remaining instructor never helped learners activate their background knowledge.

According to the results, 15 (53.57%) of the instructors claimed they frequently help learners activate their prior knowledge. 33(28.21%) of the students said their instructors help them activate their prior knowledge. The results of the observation also indicated that instructors

made some effort to help learners build on what they have already mastered. Therefore, it could be possible to conclude that instructors' practices are of satisfactory level.

With regard to item 4, which asked instructors about the complexity of English ELIP trained subject area instructors use for instructional purposes, as indicated in table [4.6.1], 16(57.14%) of them reported that they always use simple English, and 12 (42.86%) instructors indicated they frequently use simple English to ensure the learners understanding of the content. As shown in table [4.6.2] students were also asked as to the level of complexity of the English used by their instructors and 62 (52.99%) students reported that their instructors always use simple English, 26 (22.22%) frequently, 17 sometimes (14.53%), 10(8.55%) rarely and 2 (1.71%) never use simple English during instruction. Similarly, the results from the observation indicated in all the six lessons observed the instructors used relatively simple English. In conclusion, 16(57.14%) and 12 (42.86%) of the instructors and 62 (52.99%) and 26 (22.22%) of the students believe instructors very often use simple English which ensures the learners understanding of the contents. In addition to these, one of the interviewees [I<sub>3</sub>] said, "*Unless you use simple English it is difficult*". Therefore, it could be possible to conclude that instructors are aware of the English language difficulties of the learners.

As shown in table [4.6.1] item 5 regarding the type and variety of questions instructors ask their students in the content classrooms, 8(28.57%) instructors reported they always ask different levels of questions, while 17 (60.71%) frequently, and 3 (10.71%) indicated they sometimes ask different levels of questions. As indicated in [4.6.2] students were also asked about the levels of questions their instructors ask in content classes. Accordingly, 25 (21.37%) always, 37 (31.62%) frequently, 32 (27.35%) sometimes, 21 (17.95%) rarely, 2 (1.71%) never ask different levels of questions. On the other hand, the results of the observation revealed that three of the instructors were found to be asking different levels of questions, while the other three instructors were not found to be asking different levels of questions. Both instructors 17 (60.71%) and students 37 (31.62%) reported that instructors frequently ask different levels of questions. Although the result of observation seem to be a bit different from these, it is possible to conclude that the

instructors questioning is not consistently too hard or too easy. Thus, it could be taken as appropriate the level of the learners.

Item 6 asked instructors about subject area instructors attempt to explain the meaning of key vocabulary for the better understanding of the content, as indicated in table [4.6.1] 4(14.29%) instructors reported that they always explain key words, 6 (21.43%) frequently, 10 (35.71%) sometimes, 7(25%) rarely and 1 (3.57%) indicated he never explains key vocabulary. Similarly, as shown in table [4.6.1] students were also asked about how often instructors explain or teach keywords which are very essential for the understanding of the content. With regard to this, 23(19.66%) reported that their instructors always explain key words, 34 (29.06%) frequently, 33 (28.21%) sometimes, 18 (15.38%) rarely, and 9 (7.69%) students reported instructors never make an attempt to teach key words which are very essential for the learners understanding of the content.

One of the interviewees [I<sub>5</sub>] had to say the following about teaching key words:

*It is true that there are subject related words or terms. So when I teach students contents which include subject related terms, to make them understand what I am explaining for them I usually define what those terms are referring to because I believe that the simple integration of terms in sentences would not make sense-or enable students to understand the content I am delivering. For this reason, I usually define these terms because if they do not understand those core terms they may not understand the overall content or idea what I want them to understand.*

10 (35.71%) of the instructors said they sometimes explain key words and 34 (29.06%) of the learners reported their instructors frequently work on the meaning of key words. The result from observation indicated that 3 instructors explicitly explained the meaning of key words, while 3 of them were not seen doing that for the better understanding of the students. Based on the results, it might be possible to conclude that instructors make a moderate effort to explain key words in the content area classroom.

As item 7 indicates in table [4.6.1] ELIP trained subject area instructors were asked regarding the use of a language other than the medium of instruction. In relation to this 4(14.29%) instructors reported that they always use and let use students Amharic, 4(14.29%) frequently, 13 (46.43%) sometimes, 4(14.29%) rarely and 3 (10.71%) never. Similarly, as can be seen in table

[4.6.2] students were also asked as to how often their instructors use Amharic in content classrooms. Accordingly, 20(17.09%) students reported that their instructors always use Amharic, while 29 (24.79%) frequently, 32 (27.35%) sometimes, 25 (21.37%) rarely, and 11 (9.4%) never. On the other hand, regarding how often instructors allow students to use Amharic in content classroom, 27 (23.08%) reported that their instructors always let them to use Amharic, 34 (29.06%) frequently, 19 (16.24%) sometimes, 21(17.95%) rarely, and 16 (13.68%) never.

Regarding the use of Amharic interview respondents [I<sub>2</sub>] and [I<sub>3</sub>] revealed that the students' inability to understand content in English forces them to use Amharic together with English. What they said with regard to the issue is presented below:

*[I<sub>2</sub>] Students have problems in understanding content especially when the teacher speaks only in English. Sometimes 'you' have to mix some words from Amharic because they may face difficulties. ---They have a great problem of understanding English. ---You have to mix because they have adapted this style. Even though the medium of instruction is English, they used to learn the subjects in this style. They have adapted; they used to learn with the mix of other languages. That is why they have problem of understanding.*

*[I<sub>3</sub>]In fact, the material is written in English, but students are not good at understanding this language. So they better understand when I am teaching mixing English and Amharic or using Amharic only. The situation forces me to use other Medias just to make the content clear.*

The results from classroom observation indicated that with regard to the use of language other than the medium of instruction, only 5 instructors were found to use Amharic along with English in the classroom, while one instructor used very rarely. Since the lessons were controlled by instructors, instructors more of used English. Students were not provided with opportunities to express their idea but when students were asked questions they had a tendency to answer questions in Amharic.

As shown in table [4.6.1] concerning item 8, 5(17.86%) instructors reported that they always correct students English when it interferes with meaning, 14(50%) frequently, 6 (21.43%) sometimes, and 3(19.71%) rarely. With regard to students responses as indicated in table [4.6.2] 15(12.82%) reported that their instructors always correct their English, 18(15.38%) frequently, 25(21.37%) sometimes, 46(39.32%) rarely, and 13(11.11%) never correct their English. 14(50%) of the instructors claim that they frequently correct the students English, while 46(39.32%) of the students reported that their instructors rarely correct their English.

The results from classroom observation revealed that with regard to correcting the students English, only 2 instructors (33.33%) were found to correct their students English in the classroom. Since students were not provided with different opportunities to carryout various activities in the classroom, they were not exposed to a situation where they freely use the English language. Most of the sessions were directional; instructors had taken greater and in some cases complete control over the class time. In line with this, [I<sub>5</sub>] and [I<sub>1</sub>] had to say the following:

**[I<sub>1</sub>]** *When marking, for instance, when students write grammatically incorrect statement I try to correct---even in the classroom I give them chance to correct their statements. When they speak I usually tell them at least to modify their statement.*

**[I<sub>5</sub>]** *Sometimes I comment on the writings, but not usually on their speaking. When they write sometimes they make significant mistakes at that time I try to show them the way how to write it in a better way.*

From the results it would be possible to conclude instructors make some effort but it is not satisfactory in terms of degree and frequency.

As indicated in table [4.6.1] item 9 asked ELIP trained subject area instructors as to how often they consider language use as criteria. In line with this 4(14.29%) instructors reported that they always consider students language use when evaluating students, 11(39.29%) frequently, 8 (28.57%) sometimes, 2(7.14%) rarely and 3 (10.71%) never. As shown in table [4.6.2] students were also asked to reflect their idea regarding instructors' language consideration in evaluating them during oral presentation. Accordingly, 46(39.32%) students reported their instructors always consider their use of the language, 37(6.84%) frequently, 23(19.66%) sometimes, 7(5.98%) rarely, and 4(3.42%) never. Similarly, students were asked as to how often their instructors consider their language use as criteria when evaluating their written exam or assignment. In line with this, 49(41.88%) students reported that their instructors always consider language use when evaluating written exams or assignments, 26(22.22%) frequently, 21(17.95%) sometimes, 13(11.11%) rarely, and 8(31.62%) never. In general, 11(39.29%) instructors indicated they frequently consider language when evaluating students, while 46(39.32%) and 49(41.88%) students reported that their instructors consider language use as criteria when evaluating oral presentation and written exam or assignment, respectively.

With regard to using language use as criteria one of the respondents on the interview [I<sub>2</sub>] said the following:

*I do not give some official values but it may have some impact on my measurement. Because if somebody speaks good English you may have some bias but I do not take it as a criterion. Of course, I try to improve their English but I don't take it as one of my assessment criteria. But if my students speak in a better way I just give some more values because it is my preference. For those who speak good, nice, attractive English I do favor.*

The above respondent [I<sub>2</sub>] indicated that he does not give “official value” to the language use of the learners. This implies that he does not seem to be considering the ability of the learners to communicate ideas clearly but in actual practice he considers language use. He does not include language use in the list of his assessment criteria but he favors those with good English. This indirectly means that he considers language use as criteria but not outspokenly.

The other respondent [I<sub>5</sub>] had to say the following regarding the level of attention he gives for language use in evaluating students:

*I consider some aspect of the language, for example, I may not consider the grammatical aspect like subject-verb relationship but I consider the meaningfulness of sentences.*

[I<sub>5</sub>] reported that he considers certain aspects of the English language than all the areas of language. He indicated that he does not consider lower order level language errors like (grammar, spelling, vocabulary, punctuation). His focus is on the intelligibility of their English, which is a very acceptable way of considering the language.

It would be possible to conclude that instructors very often consider students language use as a criteria when evaluating both oral and written works.

As shown in table [4.6.1] regarding item 10, 9(32.14%) instructors claimed that they assign a reading task frequently, 8 (28.57%) sometimes, 5(17.86%) rarely and 6(21.43%) never. Similarly, as indicated in table [4.6.2] students were asked as to how often instructors give them a reading assignment ahead of discussion in the classroom. Accordingly, 9(16.24%) students reported that instructors provide a reading assignment always, 23(19.66%) frequently, 35(29.91%) sometimes, 28(23.93%) rarely, 12(10.26%) never.

One of the interview respondents, a mathematics instructor, had to say the following about giving reading assignment:

*[I<sub>3</sub>]In the case of mathematics it is difficult to give a reading assignment---not because of the language problem but because of the abstractness of the concept--- so there must be some kind of support from the teacher. ----The word problem is difficult not only for students but also for instructors because it needs critical thinking. Understanding a word problem requires a good knowledge of the language. Once the word problem is changed into equation form it is not difficult to solve the problem. The very difficult thing is, understanding the question. --- What we can do is to show them how to change the word problem into equation form. 'We' show them how to understand the problem. ---The language teachers are responsible for the construction of sentences, understanding the meaning of the sentence or writing equivalent sentence for the given sentence.*

He seems to withdraw his responsibility for supporting learners understand a mathematical word problem pointing to language instructors as the only responsible bodies. In contrast to [I<sub>3</sub>] the following respondent [I<sub>5</sub>] reported that he sometimes gives a reading assignment to the learners:

*Sometimes I provide a reading assignment. When I provide reading assignment I may not focus on the language, but on students understanding of the concept. I give them some highlights and make them to read and widen their understanding through reading. Finally, we will have to discussion in the classroom.*

9(32.14%) instructors frequently but 35(29.91%) students claim instructors sometimes provide a reading assignment. The results of the interview indicated instructors sometimes and rarely provide a reading assignment. The results of the observation indicated that only in one of the six sessions students were made to discuss on a reading assignment formerly given for them. In the other five classrooms students were not made to discuss or to do any activity. Hence, it would be possible to conclude that instructors provide an independent reading assignment sometimes if not rarely.

As item 11 shows in table [4.6.1] instructors were asked as to how often they provide a writing task related to the course they offer. In line with this, 2(7.14%) instructors reported that they frequently give a written assignment for students, 7(17.86%) sometimes, 14(50%) rarely, 5(25%) never. As can be seen in table [4.6.2] students were also asked regarding how often their instructors provide a writing task related to the course. In line with this 17(14.53%) students

reported that their instructors always provide them a writing task, 21(17.95%) frequently, 27(23.08%) sometimes, 43(36.75%) rarely, 9(7.69%) never.

*[15]I rarely provide a writing assignment. When I give a written assignment, my focus is on the way how they put or organize the points. But here the problem is that students do not have the skill to organize concepts by themselves. Even though they can develop their writing skills by doing this, they do not attempt to organize the ideas by their own.*

Both instructors and students reported that instructors rarely give a written task to the learners. However, writing in the content areas brings a number of advantages for the learners. Since it involves critical thinking writing helps learners understand the content better and also frequent use of writing activities of various types will help students become more fluent writers (Maimon, 1988, cited in Roe et al., 1990). According to the results from classroom observation, regarding class discussion on assigned writing, in none of six classrooms observed students were made to discuss on a writing assignment given earlier for them. Hence, based on the overall results it would be possible to conclude instructors very rarely provide a writing task for the learners.

## Chapter Five

### 5. Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations

This chapter deals with summary, conclusion and recommendations. In this section first, a summary of the overall study is given. Second, conclusions drawn from the major findings are presented. Finally, some possible recommendations are forwarded based on the findings of the study.

#### 5.1 Summary

The purpose of this study was to investigate the perceptions and practices of ELIP-Trained subject area instructors in promoting academic English learning in the content areas. In order to achieve this purpose, five basic questions were raised (see, page 6). To find answer to these questions the study went through several steps involved in undertaking research. Data were collected from ELIP trained subject area instructors in Arba Minch CTE and their respective students in the college using questionnaire (both for instructors and students [only on instructors' practices]), interview and classroom observation. The data obtained through the questionnaire were analyzed in frequencies, percentages, mean values and grand mean values. Qualitative analysis was employed for the data from the interview. Based on the analysis of the data, the following findings were obtained.

#### *I. ELIP-trained subject area instructors' perceptions towards ELIP training for academic staff*

1. Twenty four instructors (that is, 85.71%) reported that the ultimate objectives of ELIP training for academic staff is enabling instructors to be effective users of the English language when teaching content area courses while twenty (that is, 71.43%) instructors indicated helping instructors improve their English skills so that they can help learners improve their English too is the ultimate objective ELIP for academic staff (see, table 4.2.1).
2. Regarding the benefits instructors gained from ELIP training, all the five interviewed instructors reported that it provided them several opportunities to practice, especially speaking in English and developing their confidence. They indicated that they benefited a lot from the training.

3. ELIP trained subject area instructors pointed out the fact that language and content are highly integrated. They emphasized that language is very crucial for content teaching by instructors and content learning by students.
4. The results indicated that; ELIP training was not a well organized training in terms of the organization of the training in general and the materials used for the training in particular, extremely high attention was given for speaking and as a result other skills were put aside, the activities were not appropriate to the level of the candidates, and due attention was not given for raising the consciousness of instructors to support learners improve their Academic English during content teaching; however, they were “informally” told they could do that.

In conclusion, as indicated in table [4.2.2] the calculated grand mean for all the 8 items is 3.38. It falls in the range between undecided and agree. This indicates that ELIP trained subject area instructors have a moderate perception towards ELIP training. In spite of the above conditions, instructors reported the training made them more careful in their language use when teaching content and it made them feel more responsible in supporting learners improve their English, both with a mean value of 3.5(see, in table 4.2.2). Also, a 3.86 mean value was found (see, in table 4.2.2) regarding the contribution of the training for the improvement of their English.

## ***II. Instructors' perceptions of the English language ability of the learners to learn content through English***

The data gathered through both questionnaire and interview revealed that students have great language problems; and instructors rated students' ability to be very low (even according to some very-very low). The mean value obtained for the seven items regarding students' ability to learn content through English in the questionnaire range from 1.96-2.64. The computed grand mean of these items is 2.32 (see, in table 4.3.1).

## ***III. Instructors' perceptions towards the nature and development of academic English***

Subject area instructors believe that academic English has some special features which are different from social English. They indicated (with a 4.39 mean score, see table 4.4.1) that students' mastery of content is highly affected by their academic language proficiency. Moreover, 23 (that is, 82.14%) instructors reported that the learning of academic English

requires the use of academic English in real contexts such as using the language in content classrooms. Most important of all, subject-area instructors revealed that their involvements in supporting learners improve their English fosters the development of academic English. With regard to this a mean score of (4.29) was scored (see table 4.4.1). On the contrary, they indicated (with a 2.93 mean score) that the learning of academic English does not take much longer time compared to the time required to develop a social English proficiency. A grand mean of 3.75 was obtained from calculating the results of all the eight items.

#### ***IV. Instructors' perceptions towards their responsibility of helping learners improve their academic English***

ELIP trained subject area instructors reported that the responsibility of supporting learners improve their English, particularly academic English should not be left for English instructors. They feel that they have a double responsibility; both teaching the content and supporting learners improve their English. The mean scores for the four items range from 4.18-4.54 (see, table 4.5.1) and a grand mean of 4.39 was scored regarding the four items in the questionnaire. The interview data also yielded the same results.

#### ***V. Instructors' practices as reflected by instructors themselves and by their respective students***

Most of the classroom activities were controlled by instructors. Thus, students were not provided with opportunities to use the language.

ELIP trained subject area instructors do not usually provide rich contexts for students to use the English. The majority of instructors do not engage learners to perform different tasks by using the language.

## 5.2 Conclusions

The following conclusions are drawn based on the above findings.

1. ELIP trained subject area instructors believe that ELIP training is aimed at helping them improve their English for a better use during content teaching and supporting their students improve their academic English while using the language for content learning.
2. ELIP trained subject area instructors believe the training provided them several opportunities to develop their English language skills and they gained something from it.
3. Instructors have high perception towards the presence of strong relationship between language and content.
4. The training has a lot of limitations or a wide range of fundamental areas to be improved. According to the results, however, it could be possible to conclude that the training helped instructors improve their English; and influenced them to some degree to be careful in their own language use and to support learners improve their Academic English.
5. According to the results, instructors believe that their students have a low English language ability to learn content through English since the computed grand mean (2.32) (see, in table 4.3.1) ranges from low to medium. The results of the interviews also support the result obtained through the questionnaire. Therefore, it is possible to conclude that students have low ability to learn content through English and they need assistance in this direction.
6. Instructors indicated that academic English has some special features than social English and their involvement in supporting learners improve their academic English is necessary and that would bring some effect on the students learning of academic English. The calculated grand mean (3.75) ranges from undecided to agree, however, since it is close to 4 it would be possible to conclude that instructors have mildly high perceptions towards the nature and development of academic English.
7. The grand mean for all the four items on the questionnaire 4.39 (see table 4.5.1) and the instructors responses from the results of the interview indicate that instructors have a strong

or high perception towards their responsibility in supporting learners improve their Academic English.

8. In spite of their high perceptions towards the learners low ability to learn content in English and their role/responsibility in supporting learners improve their academic English, instructors actual practices with regard to helping students improve their English appears to be very low.

### **5.3 Recommendations**

Based on the above conclusions, the following points of action are recommended.

- Since it is the most frequently suggested area of improvement by instructors (see, table 4.2.4), material appropriate to the levels of the trainees needs to be prepared in line with clearly defined objectives of the training.
- In the current trends certificates are given based on mere attendance, however, achievements need to be measured; portfolio works, peer and tutor observation and a standard proficiency test should be administered at the end of the training.
- In order to raise the motivation of instructors towards the training, those who are high achievers on the test could be given a free opportunity to take internationally accepted tests of English such as TOEFL and ILTES. In other words, the college should cover all the costs required to take one of the international standard tests.
- Currently, the training has given much emphasis to improving the instructors' English. However, due attention should be given to equip instructors with the techniques and strategies which enable them to support learners improve their Academic English.
- In order to involve instructors in promoting academic English learning in their classrooms, there should be a continuous follow up. The college administration in collaboration with ELIP coordinators has to hold a regular forum discussion on instructors' views and the ways they can support students improve their Academic English. [Based on the points of agreement common direction need to be taken as to how to support learners.]

- The higher Diploma Program and ELIP should work in collaboration. Since HDP advocates students' active involvement in classroom activities, this provides a favorable environment that encourages the use of English in the classroom and perhaps beyond the classroom.
- The two most common reasons that instructors usually mention to stick to lecture method are students' inability to understand concepts by themselves and the vastness of the contents to be covered in a course. Since lecture greatly reduces learners' involvement in the classroom activities, it is wise to seek other ways which ensure students active involvement. To alleviate these problems students should be given a reading and study skills training (course) on their first year of education in the college. To accommodate the large number of students ELIP trained subject area instructors also could be given training so that they can be involved in training students.
- The findings indicated instructors strongly believe that content classes are potential areas for learning academic English; some indicated that learning content in English contributed a lot to the improvement of their English than learning English as a subject in ELT classrooms. Therefore, concerned bodies should devise ways on how to better exploit this potential area by raising the awareness of instructors and improving their practices.

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## **Appendix -1**

Addis Ababa University  
Faculty of Language Studies  
Department of English  
(Graduate Program)

### ***Questionnaire for Instructors***

This questionnaire is to be filled by ELIP-trained Subject-Area Instructors in Arba Minch College of Teacher Education. The aim of this questionnaire is to explore the perceptions and practices of ELIP-trained subject area instructors in promoting academic English learning. Each of the questions is about your experience and opinions about learning academic English in content classrooms. The success of the present study greatly depends on your genuine responses. Therefore, you are kindly requested to respond to all the items provided in the questionnaire.

#### ***In responding to the questions, please note the following:***

- 1. All the questions raised here are equally important to attain the objectives of the research. Failure to complete any of the items will affect the overall study, [therefore you are kindly requested to give your response for each item] ;*
- 2. There are no 'right' or 'wrong' answers;*
- 3. All your responses will be kept confidential and used only for academic purposes;*
- 4. Please put a check mark (✓) for questions with options, or write brief answers wherever necessary;*
- 5. You are not required to write your name.*

***Thank you in advance for your cooperation!***

**Part One: Personal Information**

**Instruction 1: Respond to the following items by putting a check mark (✓) in the box that best represents your choice.**

**Sex**            Male       Female

**Service year (in teaching)**

Less than 5 years

6-10 years

11-15 years

more than 15 years

**Your current academic title**

Assistant professor

Lecturer

Assistant Lecturer

Graduate Assistant I

Graduate Assistant II

**The academic year you have attended ELIP training**

2003

2004

2005

2006

2011

2007

2008

2009

2010

**Part Two: The questions in this section are designed to collect information on the perceptions of ELIP-trained subject area instructors towards ELIP training for academic staff.**

1) What do you think are the ultimate objectives of ELIP training for Academic Staff? Give your response by encircling the letters. More than one response is possible.

- a) Enabling instructors to be effective users of the English language when teaching content area courses.
- b) Enabling trainees to communicate effectively with foreigners.
- c) Enabling instructors to be effective users of the English language in different social situations
- d) Helping instructors improve their English skills so that they can help learners improve their English too.
- e) Expanding trainees' ability to access materials written in English in the course of their professional development.
- f) Enabling trainees to be autonomous, lifelong learners of the English Language.

**Instruction:** Please indicate your responses for the items below by putting a check mark (✓) in the appropriate box which corresponds to the choice that applies to your beliefs or by writing on the space provided where necessary. Use the rating scales;

**1= Strongly Disagree    2= Disagree    3= Undecided    4= Agree    5= Strongly Agree**

No.	Items	1	2	3	4	5
1.	The objectives of the training have been made clear for the trainees.					
2.	ELIP for academic staff is a well developed and organized training in terms of the materials.					
3.	The training materials are relevant to my language needs.					
4.	A fairly balanced attention is given for the development of; listening, speaking, reading, writing, and vocabulary.					
5.	Methods used in the training are relevant to content classroom teaching.					
6.	The training has made me more careful in my language use when teaching content in the classroom.					
7.	The training has made me feel more responsible in supporting learners to improve their English.					
8.	The training hasn't made a significant contribution to the improvement of my English skills.					

**9) What do you think are problems related to the implementation of ELIP training?**

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**10) What needs to be improved in the training?**

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**Part three: Questions on instructors' perceptions of the English language ability of the learners to learn content through English**

**Instruction:** Below are items which require you to reflect your beliefs about your students language ability in relation to the language needed to learn content through English. Please, respond to each item by putting a check mark (✓) in the box that corresponds to the choice that applies to your opinions.

No.	Items [language Skills]	Very Low	Low	medium	High	Very High
1.	critical listening skills					
2.	Identifying main ideas from supporting details while taking notes from lectures					
3.	Using grammatically correct and meaningful sentences					
4.	Reading texts with a satisfactory comprehension					
5.	Expressing ideas freely and clearly In speech					
6.	Using words in their appropriate contexts					
7.	Expressing ideas clearly in writing					

#### **Part Four: Questions on the nature and development of academic English**

**Instruction:** The following questions focus on your perception towards the nature and development of academic English. Here I am interested in your opinions, not the accuracy of your responses. Please, respond to each item by putting a check mark (✓) in the box that corresponds to the choices that apply to your beliefs. **Use the rating scales;**

**1= Strongly Disagree    2= Disagree    3= Undecided    4= Agree    5= Strongly Agree**

No.	Items	1	2	3	4	5
1.	Each discipline has a relatively special vocabulary (language) to deal with content in the field of study.					
2.	The learners' mastery of content is highly affected by their language proficiency, particularly their academic language proficiency.					
3.	Having a well developed proficiency in social/conversational English [the language of everyday communication] facilitates the development of academic English [the language necessary for success in school].					
4.	Academic English is likely to be acquired/ learned easily as compared to conversational English.					
5.	The learning of academic English requires the use of academic English in real contexts such as using the language in the content classroom.					
6.	Content classes have great language-teaching potentials.					
7.	Language is best learned when the focus is on the content rather than on the language.					
8.	Subject-area instructors' involvement in supporting learners fosters the development of academic English.					

#### **Part Five: Questions on instructors' perceptions towards their responsibility of helping learners improve their academic English**

**Instruction:** Indicate your responses to the following items by putting a check mark (✓) in the appropriate box that corresponds to your choice. **Use the rating scales;**

**1= Strongly Disagree    2= Disagree    3= Undecided    4= Agree    5= Strongly Agree**

No.	Items	1	2	3	4	5
1.	Teachers of English (English teachers) are the only responsible bodies to help learners improve their academic English.					
2.	Subject-area instructors should contribute in acquainting learners with discipline specific language.					
3.	Subject-area instructors have a double responsibility; both teaching the content and supporting learners improve their English.					
4.	Subject teachers should not be expected to do anything about the language since they are content teachers.					

**Part Six: Questions on instructors' practice**

**Instruction:** The questions in this section are designed to collect information on what you actually do in the classroom. Please, give your response by putting a check mark (✓) in the box which best represents how often you do each. **Use the rating scales;**

**1= Always    2= Frequently    3= Sometimes    4= Rarely    5= Never**

No.	Items	1	2	3	4	5
1.	I provide students with various opportunities to use English in the classroom both individually and in group.					
2.	I encourage the use of English in the classroom.					
3.	I help learners activate their prior knowledge and make connections between their prior knowledge and the content to be encountered.					
4.	I use simple English to ensure the learners understanding of the content.					
5.	I ask different levels of questions to prompt learners reflect their ideas.					
6.	I explicitly teach key vocabulary in the content area classroom.					
7.	I use and let students use Amharic or other vernacular language in the classroom.					
8.	I correct the students English when necessary (when it interferes with meaning).					
9.	I consider language use as criteria when evaluating students' oral presentation and written exams or assignments.					
10.	I provide a reading assignment related to the course to the learners.					
11.	I provide a writing assignment related to the course to the learners.					

**THANK YOU FOR RESPONDING!**

## **Appendix -2**

Addis Ababa University  
Faculty of Language Studies  
Department of English  
(Graduate Program)

### **Interview Questions for Instructors**

#### **Semi-structured Interview Questions for ELIP-Trained Subject Area Instructors**

1. What do you think are the benefits of ELIP training for academic staff?  
Are there any problems related to the training? What are the factors which contribute for poor quality of the training?
2. How do you see the relationship between language (the language of learning) and content learning?
3. Do you think your students have the necessary language proficiency to handle content instruction?
4. Do you see any difference between social (conversational) and academic English?  
Can you tell me what you know about the nature and development of the two?
5. How can subject area instructors support learners develop their academic English to ensure a better understanding of content?
6. How often do you provide opportunity for your students to discuss subject area concepts? Why? Do you encourage them to use English in their discussion? Do you think this helps them both master the content and improve their academic language proficiency?
7. How often do you assign reading or writing to your students? Why?
8. How do you respond to your students' problem in language use (both in spoken and written modes of communication)?
9. Do you pay attention to students language use when you mark a written assignment? If yes, what do you consider? And how do you give feedback in relation to language use?

**Thank you very much!**

**Appendix -3**  
 Addis Ababa University  
 Faculty of Language Studies  
 Department of English  
 (Graduate Program)

**Classroom Observation Checklist**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

College/School: \_\_\_\_\_

Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Year: \_\_\_\_\_

Subject: \_\_\_\_\_

Room Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Instructor: \_\_\_\_\_

Observer: \_\_\_\_\_

No.	Items	Yes	No	Sometimes	Comments
1.	<i>Provides learners with multiple opportunities to use English in the classroom</i>				
2.	<i>Encourages the use of English in the classroom</i>				
3.	<i>Helps learners activate their prior knowledge and make connections</i>				
4.	<i>Uses simple English to ensure the learners understanding of the content</i>				
5.	<i>Uses appropriate questioning techniques; asks different levels of questions to prompt learners reflect their ideas</i>				
6.	<i>Uses demonstrations, visuals, body language, manipulatives, realia... to ensure the learners understanding</i>				
7.	<i>Explicitly teaches key vocabulary</i>				
8.	<i>Uses and lets students use Amharic or other vernacular language in the classroom</i>				
9.	<i>Shows students step-by-step procedures and models thinking process</i>				
10.	<i>Corrects students English when necessary ( when it interferes with meaning)</i>				
11.	<i>Discussion on previously assigned reading to the learners</i>				
12.	<i>Discussion on previously assigned writing to the learners</i>				

**Appendix -4**  
Addis Ababa University  
Faculty of Language Studies  
Department of English  
(Graduate Program)

***Questionnaire for Students***

This questionnaire is to be filled by students of ELIP-trained subject area instructors in Arba Minch College of Teacher Education. The aim of this questionnaire is to assess the practices of ELIP-trained subject area instructors in promoting academic English learning. Each of the questions is about your experience and opinions about learning academic English in content classrooms. The success of the present study depends on your genuine responses. Therefore, you are kindly requested to respond to all the items provided in the questionnaire.

***In responding to the questions, please note the following:***

1. *All the questions raised here are equally important to attain the objectives of the research. Failure to complete any of the items will affect the overall study, [therefore you are kindly requested to give your response for each item] ;*
2. *There are no 'right' or 'wrong' answers;*
3. *All your responses will be kept confidential and used only for academic purposes;*
4. *Please put a check mark (✓) for questions with options, or write brief answers wherever necessary;*
5. *You are not required to write your name.*

***Thank you in advance for your cooperation!***

**Questions on students' perceptions towards instructors' practices in promoting academic English learning**

**Instruction:** The questions in this section are designed to collect information on what your instructor do in the classroom in relation to supporting students improve their academic English. Please, give your response by putting a check mark (✓) in the box which best represents how often your instructor does the following.

**Use the rating scales;**

**1= Always    2= Frequently    3= Sometimes    4= Rarely    5=Never**

No.	Items	1	2	3	4	5
1.	Provides students with different opportunities to use English in the classroom and outside the classroom individually and in groups					
2.	Encourages the use of English in the classroom					
3.	Helps students activate their prior knowledge and make connections between their prior knowledge and the content to be encountered					
4.	Uses simple English which is easy for me to understand					
5.	Asks different levels of questions to prompt learners reflect their ideas					
6.	Teaches [explains] the meaning of key vocabulary in the content area classroom					
7.	The instructor speaks in Amharic or other vernacular language during lessons					
8.	The instructor allows students to speak in Amharic or other vernacular language during class discussions.					
9.	Corrects the students English when necessary ( when it interferes with meaning)					
10.	gives a reading assignment related to the course					
11.	gives a writing assignment related to the course to the learners					
12.	Considers language use as a criteria when evaluating students oral presentation					
13.	Considers language use as a criteria when evaluating students written exams or assignments					

**THANK YOU FOR RESPONDING!**

**Appendix -5**  
**Addis Ababa University**  
**Faculty of Language Studies**  
**Department of English**  
**(Graduate Program)**

***Results from classroom observation***

<b><i>Focus areas of observation</i></b>	<b><i>yes</i></b>	<b><i>No</i></b>	<b><i>Sometimes</i></b>
<i>1. Provides learners with multiple opportunities to use English in the classroom</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>5</i>	
<i>2. Encourages the use of English in the classroom</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>4</i>	
<i>3. Helps learners activate their prior knowledge and make connections</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>4. Uses simple English to ensure the learners understanding of the content</i>	<i>6</i>		
<i>5. Uses appropriate questioning techniques; asks different levels of questions to prompt learners reflect their ideas</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>3</i>	
<i>6. Uses demonstrations, visuals, body language, manipulatives, realia... to ensure the learners understanding</i>		<i>5</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>7. Explains or teaches key vocabulary</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>4</i>	
<i>8. Uses and lets students use Amharic or other vernacular language in the classroom</i>	<i>5</i>		<i>1</i>
<i>9. Shows students step-by-step procedures and models thinking process</i>	<i>6</i>		
<i>10. Corrects students English when necessary ( when it interferes with meaning)</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>4</i>	
<i>11. Discussion on previously assigned reading to the learners</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>5</i>	
<i>12. Discussion on previously assigned writing to the learners</i>		<i>6</i>	

### Declaration

I, the undersigned graduate student, hereby declare that this thesis is my original work, and that all sources of the materials used for this thesis have been duly acknowledged.

NAME: Winner Merid

SIGNATURE:



A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of several overlapping loops and lines, is written over a horizontal line.

PLACE: Faculty of Language Studies  
Addis Ababa University

DATE OF SUBMISSION: 17/06/2011