

ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTE OF LANGUAGE STUDIES
DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES AND
LITERATURE: GRADUATE PROGRAMME

AN EXPLORATION OF TEACHERS' BELIEFS
AND CLASSROOM PRACTICES IN GRAMMAR
INSTRUCTION



YIRGALEM BEKELE MENGISTU

JUNE, 2009

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**AN EXPLORATION OF TEACHERS' BELIEFS
AND CLASSROOM PRACTICES IN GRAMMAR
INSTRUCTION: A FOCUS OF FOUR SELECTED
GOVERNMENT SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN ADDIS ABABA**

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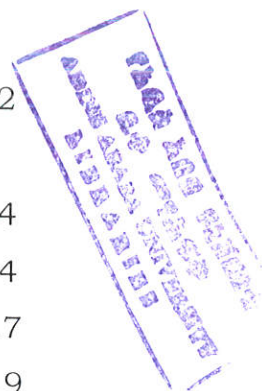
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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to explore English language teachers' beliefs about grammar instruction and classroom practices in government secondary schools in Addis Ababa. To attain this objective, based on survey method, four secondary schools were selected for the study. With this respect, English teachers of these schools were involved as subjects for data collection.

The data gathering instruments employed in the study were questionnaire, classroom observation and interview. The data obtained through the questionnaire were analyzed and discussed quantitatively whereas the data obtained through the classroom observation and the interview were analyzed and described qualitatively.

The results of the study revealed that most English teachers believed about the importance of grammar to language teaching, and they believed in paying greater attention to the pedagogical grammar teaching strategies proposed by research scholars. However, the result also showed that their perceived pedagogical beliefs were not practiced in the classrooms in most cases. The reason for this was time factors, problem of textbook syllabuses, bad classroom environment and lack of students' interest, lack of facilities and lack of students' language competence.

Finally, recommendations were made based on the results of the study. The points of the recommendation include: teacher education programmes should attempt to link teachers' personal pedagogical knowledge with empirical knowledge by introducing a course on pedagogical grammar; schools need to ensure teaching related facilities by establishing collaborative network with higher educations and non-governmental organizations (NGOS), and teachers and their colleagues should discuss each other to alleviate the challenges and worsening problems of English teachers.

CHAPTER ONE

1. Introduction

1.1. Background

Beliefs are central constructs in every discipline that deal with human behavior and learning (Fishebein and Ajzen, 1975; Ajzen, 1988). The formation of teachers' educational beliefs in language teaching and learning will exert an indiscernible effect on forming effective teaching methods and will bring about the improvement of teachers' language teaching (Horwitz, 1985).

For a language teacher, one of the determining factors is his/ her beliefs- the information, attitude, values, expectations, theories and assumptions about teaching and learning that teachers develop overtime, and bring with them to the classroom (Richards, 1998). In this regard, teachers' beliefs play a central role to their classroom practice.

Within second or foreign language education, teaching is also now viewed as a complex cognitive activity (Borg, 2003). In the areas of language teaching, teachers' beliefs have been examined to see how personal beliefs and knowledge of the pedagogical system of teaching influence the instructional practices and decisions of teachers in English as a foreign language teaching (e.g. Borg, 2003; Golombek, 1998).

As part of language area, grammar plays a pivotal role. Harmer (1991:23), tried to explain that the teaching of grammar is very crucial since it helps learners discover ways in which language is used, and it initiates them to raise their awareness about the creative use of grammar amongst other things. Theoretical assumptions give a comprehensive picture of grammar

teaching approaches, influential grammar paradigms in second and foreign language teaching and cognitive theories underlying the process of grammar acquisition. This notion portrays how grammar is central to language teaching and learning. Although grammar is central to the development of communicative competence, its teaching and learning has to be balanced by the teaching and learning of other domains such as beliefs to achieve appropriate language use. The underlying assumption is that English teachers are guided by mental acts that have been shaped by the knowledge and beliefs about teaching and learning grammar that they have accumulated through the years. This pedagogical knowledge operates as part of the teachers' pedagogical grammar.

Farrell (1999) examined the belief system of pre-service teachers of English grammar teaching in terms of its influence on teaching practice, and evidence to this suggests that these beliefs may be resilient to change. Similarly, Richards (2001:54) discovered that there is a belief for which grammar is central to language learning and indeed direct teaching of grammar is needed by their students.

Grammar acquisition is, therefore, seen as a complex cognitive skill, conceptualization and a number of processes about language teaching and learning which are situated within that person's wider belief system related to human nature, culture, society, and education and so on. It seems that the cumulative effect of this notion leads to a better understanding of how grammar learning takes place.

The teaching of grammar, thus, possesses not a single but of multidimensional perspectives accompanied by both personal factors as well as professional contexts. As personal factors, the beliefs of grammar teachers will have certain effect on the classroom grammar instruction. Grasping the knowledge of grammar instruction in terms of English teachers' point of view and finding the relationship between teachers'

beliefs and their practice would be worthwhile.

This concept reveals that the teaching of grammar should be viewed as a wider domain of perspectives. Researches proved that a focus on teachers' beliefs and their classroom practices is important, but such studies are very few in language areas (Clark and Peterson, 1986, cited in Pajares, 1992). The conception of grammar teaching seems narrower among language teacher educators; therefore, it would be sound to conduct a research in this context.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

It has been said so far that teachers' beliefs about grammar instruction play a central role for better understanding of how grammar learning takes place. This conception promotes a shift of emphasis towards the study of teachers' beliefs about grammar instruction. This study focuses on grammar instruction because language teaching is essentially under the claims and counter claims for and against the teaching of grammar. On the other hand, for most people, the essence of language lies in grammar. Grammar teaching has played an important role in language teaching and learning. Celce-Murcia (1985) claimed that no grammar will lead to the product of clumsy and inappropriate foreign language use, which means that grammar teaching is essential for language teaching. It is also noted that nobody can doubt to say that a good knowledge of grammatical system is essential to master a foreign language and it is also one of the most important parts of communicative competence. Therefore, one can conceptualize that grammar is a framework without which language cannot be structured and a message cannot be conveyed smoothly and fluently. However, grammar is one of the most controversial and least understood aspects of foreign language teaching although it has been the central aspect of foreign language teaching.

The major emphasis is targeted on the idea that grammar can no longer be viewed as central, autonomous, system to be taught and learned independently of meaning, social function and discourse structure (Celce-Murcia, 1991:476). This is being the reality, as some researchers indicated, most English teachers still teach grammar in more traditional way (focus on forms, the structuralist approach to language which focuses exclusively on linguistic forms neglecting the meaning they convey). This may be due to different factors. Therefore, the focus on form approach in which grammar teaching focuses on meaning and contextualized language use and social contexts with different pedagogical strategies should be used, and such views have gained more emphasis in the theory but in the classroom as well.

In the Ethiopian context, few researches have been conducted related to teachers' beliefs about the teaching of English as a foreign language. The one is done by Abiy Yigzaw (2000) on the relationship between teachers' expressed beliefs about oral error correction and classroom practices. The finding reveals that there is incongruence between what teachers think they do and what they actually do, and it was concluded that this discrepancy has an adverse effect on the instruction

The two recent similar researches in which the researcher of this study would like to base were conducted by Adugna Guade and Birhanu Beyene (2008) on teachers' beliefs about grammar instruction and classroom practices. The findings in these studies reveal that teachers' beliefs and their activities could affect pedagogical outcomes and it was generally concluded that teachers have good theoretical beliefs but mostly they do not practice in actual classrooms, and such disparities contributed to their shares to the deterioration of high school and college students' English proficiency. These studies focus on very important features of grammar teaching areas which are influential in language teaching

pedagogy. Most of the grammar points in these researches where English teachers required to reflect and or to respond include: grammar activities, grammar teaching materials, grammar teaching approaches, grammatical error correction, the role of grammar teaching, and the principles of traditional and communicative language teaching approaches. Both of the studies, however, do not seem to focus on teachers' beliefs about pedagogical strategies in grammar instructions and the role of grammar in language skills. In this regard, scholars such as Celce- Murcia (1985) proposed strategies for grammar instruction so that teachers of English as a foreign language need to consider and include in their grammar lessons. For instance, she noted that identifying learner variables and instructional variables is regarded as one of the pedagogical strategies in grammar teaching. As many scholars such as Slager (1973) and Celce-Murcia (1991) suggested, grammar teaching strategies are the most important part of language teaching pedagogy since these strategies are the major means of assisting English as a foreign language learners to achieve the goal of effective language learning. Hence, paying special attention to grammar teaching strategies becomes another important scope that language teachers and learners should take into account in the teaching and learning of English as a foreign language because these strategies provide complementary services to raise-up students' communicative competence though the above two studies treated the major points of grammar teaching. This is an indication of the wider perspectives that surround the teaching of grammar. Therefore, the researcher felt that grammar teaching is wide in its scope since it should be viewed in different angles and need to be studied in frequent and genuine manner. Thus, an exploration of English language teachers' beliefs about pedagogical strategies and classroom practices in grammar teaching seems important including the importance of grammar instruction in the teaching of English as a foreign language.

Thus, the researcher of this study is initiated to make an extension of the above two studies leaving what has been done and focusing on the different themes in order to fill the gap in the literature. Therefore, it seems imperative to conduct a research on teachers' beliefs about grammar instruction and pedagogical practices including assessing their beliefs on the role of grammar in language teaching.

1.3 .Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this study was to explore teachers' beliefs and their classroom practices in grammar instruction. The specific objectives of this study, therefore, include:

- a) to assess the kind of beliefs secondary school English teachers actually possess and utilize when teaching grammar.*
- b) to observe whether there is association between English teachers' knowledge of pedagogical strategies about grammar teaching and their perceived pedagogical practice.*

The following research questions have been formulated based on the above objectives to guide the research:

- a, What kind of beliefs do secondary school English teachers possess in grammar instruction?*
- b) Is there discrepancy between teachers' beliefs and actions? Why?*

1.4. Significance of the Study

Researches in teachers' beliefs and their findings indicate that the study of teachers' beliefs is critical to education and "it lies at the very heart of teaching" (Kagan, 1992, cited in Pajares, 1992:329). From this point of view, this study is hoped to have the following contributions:

- a) It may help for language teacher educators to explore their beliefs and to create awareness of the nature of teaching.*
- b) Teacher education programmers might be benefited from the insights of the research into English teachers' beliefs in grammar teaching and may gain more insight in their current grammar teaching practices.*
- c) It might be used as a knowledge base for language teachers to discover things that work best for their classroom practices.*
- d) It might serve as a starting point for those who would like to pursue further study in the area.*

1.5. Scope of the Study

In order to attain the objectives of the study (see 1.4), a study was conducted in four Addis Ababa government secondary schools namely: Miraf Primary and Secondary School, Medhanealem Comprehensive Secondary School, Yekatit 12 Preparatory School and Entoto Amba Secondary School.

1.6. Limitations of the Study

To secure qualified study, efforts were made by the researcher. But, various forms of limitations encountered while conducting the research. One of the major factors was time constraint. It was challenging for the researcher to conduct this study in not more than four(4) schools, and even to conduct pilot study, though there are 31 such similar schools in the city, Addis Ababa. The second problem was getting the target lesson (i.e., grammar lessons) in face-to-face teaching since in most of the sample schools, the lessons were delivered through plasma television; however, the researcher used non-plasma sessions designed by the schools. The other challenging factor to the researcher was the inconveniency created during data gathering process. That is some English teachers in the sample schools were not willing to participate in the study, especially, in filling out of the research questionnaire while others did not return the questionnaires. As a result, from 67 English teachers, only 42 of them participated in the study. In fact, these research pitfalls might affect the generalizability of the research. However, as Cohn and Manion (1994) have mentioned, there is a possibility of using 30 subjects as minimum sample size in statistical data analysis, and the sample size of this study exceeds this number. Thus, it is possible to gain relatively appropriate generality of the study.

CHAPTER TWO

2. Review of Related Literature

2.1 Definition of Beliefs

Researchers in different fields come up with different meanings for beliefs. Educational research community has unable to adopt a working definition for beliefs. Thus, scholars defined the concept of beliefs in different but slightly related ways. Abelson (1979) cited in Pajares (1992) defined beliefs in terms of people manipulating knowledge for a particular purpose or under a necessary circumstance. This notion potentially pinpointed that beliefs are dispositions to actions and major determinants of behavior although the dispositions are time and context specific. Borg (2001:186) also defined belief as *“proposition which may be consciously held, and evaluative in that it is accepted as true by the individual, and this , therefore, imbued with emotive commitment; further, it serves as a guide to thought and behavior”*.

This means that beliefs are a kind of conscious or unconscious human character which possess emotive commitment, and serve as a guide to thought and behavior.

Beliefs play an important role in many aspects of teaching though scholars defined differently. Pajares (1992) further argues that *“When beliefs are clearly conceptualized, and when their key assumptions are examined, they can be the single most important construct in educational research”*.

2.2 Teachers Beliefs about Language Teaching

Language teachers are closely linked to their values, to their views of the world and to their conceptions of their place with it (Williams and Burdon, 1997). In addition to this, they explain that language teachers' beliefs may be divided roughly in to three major groups:

*Beliefs about learners,
Beliefs about learning, and
Belief about themselves.*

Foreign language teacher educators cannot afford to ignore these beliefs, that is, the knowledge of their learners, about language learning and about themselves to a better understanding of their future teaching would be. And perhaps more importantly, they can include components to increase awareness of their learners' beliefs about language learning inline with the actual practice in the field.

Freeman (1996:359) states that language teaching has not been unique in paying little attention to the cognitive aspect of teaching and to the teacher as well. There has been a need to study, understand, in a sense to define teaching independent of its outcomes: this includes coming to and understand the role and person of the teacher, the place of language as a subject matter, and the role of diverse contexts and learners

2.3. Teachers' Beliefs about Grammar Instruction and Classroom Practices

Woods (1996:71) points out that teachers must be in guard against "claims allegiance to beliefs consistent with what they perceive as the

current teaching paradigm rather than consistent with unmotivated beliefs and their behavior in class". Teachers' actual practice may tend to be more on traditional grammar approach to grammar teaching, which is incompatible with the current (communicative) approach, though they have alternative method of grammar instruction. One of the reasons for such divergence of teachers' beliefs and their classroom practice is time factors that teachers reverence for traditional grammar instruction. For example, time is possibly one of the major external factors over which teachers have little or no control and that appears to affect the implementation of beliefs. Many of classroom instructions, therefore, not only influenced by their beliefs but also by the time they perceived they would have to complete an activity as outlined in the syllabus.

Another significant reason why teachers, who may express enthusiasm for alternative method of grammar instruction, but continue to employ the traditional approach to grammar teaching is the powerful emotion and attitudes attached to traditional grammar teaching and learning (Richards, Gallo and Renandya, 2001). They discovered, for example, that many of the respondents to their survey, although suggesting that they prepared materials and activities to teach English language in communicative way (deemphasize grammar instruction), they, nevertheless, reported that they still believe grammar is central to language learning in a way that "direct grammar teaching would result in more accurate language use" (Ibid).

Since language teachers' beliefs about successful teaching form the core of their teaching behavior as Richard, Gallo and Renandya (2001) noted, it is imperative to suggest providing opportunities for teachers to reflect on their work (e.g., Richards and Farrell, 2005) so that they can be encouraged to articulate and reflect on their beliefs while also investigating any discrepancies between their beliefs and classroom

practices.

A study by Borg (1999:25) reveals that grammar teaching is a truly “multi-faceted decision-making processes”. In discussing their practices in teaching grammar, the teachers, he worked with that they made decision about:

- Whether to conduct formal instruction at all,
- What language points to focus on,
- How to structure grammar lessons,
- How to present/ analyze grammar,
- What kind of linguistic practice activities to utilize; and
- How to deal with students’ grammatical errors.

Teachers’ decisions in teaching grammar in classes, according to Borg (1999), are influenced by their often conflicting beliefs about foreign language learning in general and grammar teaching in particular. Thus, grammar teaching remains the result of teachers’ instructional decisions existed in classroom realities and practices where the resolution of conflicts among competing cognitions, for the case, beliefs held by the teachers.

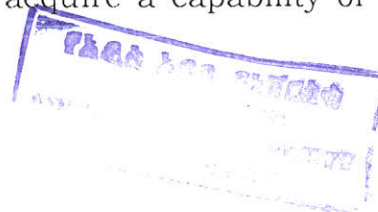
2.4. Why Grammar Teaching?

Though there are controversies throughout the history of language teaching, the teaching of grammar is an important part of language in everyday communication (Haregewoin, 2008:41). By citing Weaver(1996) and Cook(1994:3), she emphasizes the importance of grammar teaching as the most exciting areas of language teaching; it also plays a central role in the classroom activities and it can be considered as the core mental system of language. And most importantly, grammar can be taken as the heart of language teaching activities. This concept is described as “ Grammar...is the heart of all human activity declaring

war, writing a love poem or a prescription, sentence a prisoner to life imprisonment, advertising soap powder, praying...all would be effectively impossible without grammar" (Cook, 1994:1, cited in Haregewoin , 2008:42). It is also noted that grammar is a sound, structure and meaning system of a language. People who speak the same language are able to communicate since they intuitively share the grammar of the language (Brown, 2006). Harmer (1987:1) has asserted "Grammar is the way in which words change themselves and group together to make sentences". This is to mean that the grammar of a language informs what happens to words, when they become phrasal or negative, what order are used when we make questions or join two clauses to make one sentence (Tiglu , 2008:11).

Grammar gains its prominence in language teaching, particularly in English as a foreign language (EFL) and English as a second language (ESL), in as much as without a good knowledge of grammar learners' language development will be severely constrained. Practically, in the teaching of grammar, learners are taught rules of language commonly known as sentence patterns. According to Ur (1999), cited in Widodo (2006), in the case of learners, grammatical rules enable them to know and apply how such sentence patterns should be put together. Widodo (2006) also claims that the teaching of grammar should ultimately centre on the way grammatical items or sentence patterns are correctly used. In other words, teaching grammar should encompass language structure or sentence patterns, meaning and use.

Further, grammar is thought to furnish the basis for a set of language skills: Listening, speaking, reading and writing. In listening and speaking, grammar plays a crucial role in grasping and expressing spoken language (e.g. expressions) since learning the grammar of a language is considered as necessary in order to acquire a capability of



producing grammatically acceptable utterances in the language (Corder, 1988; Widodo, 2004, cited in Widodo, 2006).

In reading, grammar enables learners to comprehend sentence interrelationship in a paragraph, a passage and a text. In the context of writing, grammar allows the learners to put their ideas into intelligible sentences so that they can successfully communicate in a written form. Lastly, in the case of vocabulary, grammar provides a path way to learners how lexical items should be combined into a good sentence so that meaningful and communicative sentences and expressions can be formed (Widodo, 2006). In other words, by learning grammar, students can express meanings and communicative statements in the form of phrases, clauses and sentences. To sum, the centrality of grammar teaching is pillar since the teaching of foreign language skills and other aspects without grammar is impossible. Therefore, it cannot be ignored that grammar plays a central role in the teaching of language skills, including vocabulary teaching and in the designing of communicative tasks.

2.5 Grammar Pedagogy in Second and Foreign Language Teaching

2.5.1 Historical Background

Celce-Murcia (1991:460) notes that the historical doctrines of language teaching in general and grammar teaching in particular possess four methodological approaches:

- i) Audio-lingual approach,
- ii) Cognitive code approach,
- iii) Comprehension approach, and
- iv) Communicative approach

The audio-lingual approach represents the first attempt by U.S. Structural linguists to influence the teaching of modern foreign language. Grammatical structures were very carefully sequenced from basic to more complex (based on linguistic description) and vocabulary was strictly limited in the early stage of learning (Ibid). Audio-lingual proponents assumed that language learning was habit formation and over learning; then mimicry of forms and memorization of certain sentence patterns were used extensively to present rules inductively. A variety of drill types was practiced with the objective of minimizing (or preventing altogether) learners' errors, which were viewed as bad habits that would be hard to break if they became established; teachers were told that they should correct all errors that they were not able to prevent. The focus of instruction rarely moved beyond the sentence level (Ibid). One can understand from the explanation that the audio-lingual method of language teaching influenced how grammatical structures have to be taught. For that matter, linguistic elements were sequenced from simple to complex so that learners could master the simpler one first then they try to learn the more complex one. So, learning grammar was conceptualized as mimicry of forms and memorization of sentence patterns as habit formation.

The other methodological approach in reaction to the behaviorist features of audiolingualism was the cognitive code approach. The method was influenced by the work of linguists like Chomsky (1959, cited in Celce-Murcia, 1991) where language learning was viewed as hypothesis formation and rule acquisition, rather than habit formation. In this approach, grammar was considered important, and rules were presented either deductively or inductively depending on the preferences of the learners. Errors were viewed as inevitable by-products of language learning and as something that the learner and teacher could use constructively in the learning process. Error analysis and correction were

seen as appropriate classroom activities, with the teacher facilitating peer and self-correction as much as possible. The source of errors was seen not only as transfer from the first language but also as normal language development (Celce-Murcia, 1991:461).

The innovative features of the cognitive code approach were a new insight in the teaching of grammar. In other words, it is possible to say that the emergence of this approach can be viewed as another turning point in the areas of foreign language teaching because language teaching encompasses not only behavioral habit formation but also a cognitive process that involves hypothesis formation and rule acquisition of a learner. In addition, the view that error is the sign of learning a language and error correction as appropriate classroom activities is the sign of addressing the nature of language teaching. Hence, the cognitive code approach could contribute its insight to grammar instruction so that foreign language teachers and learners may gain knowledge from this approach and practice in their classroom situations.

Another methodological approach for language teaching was the comprehension approach. As Winitz (1981, cited in Celce-Murcia, 1991) explains, the comprehension approach represents the attempts of many methodologists working in the U.S during the 1970s and 1980s to recreate the first language acquisition experience for the second /foreign language learner. Regarding this approach, Celce-Murcia (1991:461) puts the idea that comprehension is primary that it should precede any production epitomizes this approach; the pedagogical offshoot is the view that comprehension can be best taught initially by delaying production in the target language while encouraging the learner to use non-verbal responses to demonstrate comprehension. Proponents of this approach believe that error correction is unnecessary, perhaps even counter productive, since they feel that errors will gradually self-correct as learners are exposed to ever more complex, rich and meaningful input in

the target language (Ibid). To this end, the comprehension approach focuses on understanding language input as a main method of foreign language teaching, and sowed the concept of gradual self-correction of errors by exposing the learners to more complex, meaningful input in the target language than providing formal error analysis and error correction.

The other major approach is the communicative approach, which came to the fore in the mid-1970s and originates in the work of anthropological linguists in the U.S (Hymes,1972) and functional linguists in Britain (Halliday, 1973), all of whom view language as an instrument of communication. Those who have applied this philosophy to language teaching (e.g., Widdowson, 1978; Wilkins, 1976, cited in Celce-Murcia, 1991) claim that communication is the goal of second or foreign language instruction and that the syllabus of a language course should not be organized around grammar but a round subject matter, tasks / projects, or semantic notions and/or pragmatic function. As Celce-Murcia (1991:462) points out that language instruction should be content-based, meaningful, contextualized, and discourse based (rather than sentence based), the teacher's role is primarily to facilitate language use and communication; and it is only secondarily to provide feedback and correct learner errors.

2.5. 2 The Current Challenge

Existing research, while not conclusive, suggests that some focus on form may well be necessary for many learners to achieve accuracy as well as fluency in their acquisition of a second or foreign language (Rutherford and Sharwood Smith, 1988). Indeed as Richards (1985) points out, there is no actual empirical evidence that proves "communicative" language classrooms- especially those that preclude

any learner focus on form -produce better language learners that do more traditional classrooms. In spite of the intuitive appeal and the anecdotal evidence supporting proposals exclusively communicative language teaching, there is equally appealing and convincing anecdotal evidence (Higgs and Clifford, 1982) that a grammarless approach whether comprehension-based or communicative-can lead to the development of broken, ungrammatical pidginized form of the target language beyond which students rarely progress.

Thus, while we wait a more satisfactory conclusion to this debate regarding when and how to teach grammar, it is clear that no one should dismiss grammar instruction altogether, for there is at present no convincing evidence that to do so would ultimately be beneficial to second or foreign language learners, especially those who need to achieve a high level of proficiency and accuracy (Celce-Murcia, 1991:462-3).

In here, the idea emphasizes how it is controversial whether to exclude focus on form and to make complete "communicative" classrooms without proved, empirical evidence in producing proficient language learner. If this is the case, one can not rely on communicative and/or comprehension approach since second or foreign language teaching holds grammatical structures, rules and forms which are crucial for second or foreign language acquisition of a learner and to use the language accurately and effectively. In sum, there is no way to ignore the inclusion of grammar instruction since it is important, especially, for those who need to use SL/FL proficient and accurate enough.

2.5.3 Grammar Instruction

2.5.3.1 Inductive Versus Deductive Approaches

A deductive approach is derived from the notion that deductive reasoning works from general to specific. As Widodo (2006) states, in this approach, rules, principles concepts or theories are presented first and then their applications are treated. When we use deduction, we reason from general to specific. Dealing with the teaching of grammar, the deductive approach, can also be called rule-driven learning in which a grammar rule is explicitly presented to students and followed by practice applying the rule. This approach has been the bread and butter of language teaching around the world and still enjoys a monopoly in many course books and self-study grammar books (Fortune, 1992). The deductive approach maintains that a teacher teaches grammar by presenting grammar rules, and then examples of sentences are presented. Once learners understand rules, they are told to apply to rules given to various examples of sentences.

In the case of the application of the deductive approach, therefore, Thornbury (1999:32, cited in Widodo, 2006) outlines some guidelines for when the rules are presented. Among them are:

- i) *The rules should be true;*
- ii) *The rules should show clearly what limits are on the use of a given form;*
- iii) *The rules need to be clear;*
- iv) *The rules ought to be simple;*
- v) *The rules need to make use of concepts already familiar to the learners; and*
- vi) *The rules ought to be relevant.*

Nonetheless, the deductive approach has its own advantages and disadvantages. Widodo (2006) lists the following advantages and disadvantages of the deductive approach:

Advantages

- i. The deductive approach goes straight forwardly to the point and can, therefore, be time saving;
- ii. A number of rule aspects (for example, form) can be more simply and clearly explained than elicited from examples;
- iii. A number of direct practice /application examples are immediately given;
- iv. The deductive approach respects the intelligence and maturity of many adult learners in particular and acknowledges the role of cognitive processes in language acquisition; and
- v. It confirms many learners' expectations about classroom learning particularly for those who have an analytical style.

Disadvantages

- i. Beginning the lesson with a grammar presentation may be off-putting for some learners, especially younger ones;
- ii. Younger learners may not be able to understand the concept or encounter grammar terminology given;
- iii. Grammar explanation encourages a teacher fronted, transmission style classroom, so it will hinder learner involvement and interaction immediately;
- iv. The explanation is seldom as memorable as other forms of presentation (for example, demonstration); and
- v. The deductive approach encourages the belief that learning is simply a case of knowing the rule.

Teachers of a foreign language could make a judgment about what kind of grammar rules they ought to teach based on the suggested guidelines in presenting the rules. It is also worth noting here that the deductive approach fosters pedagogical implication in grammar teaching the fact that gaining a vivid description of its advantages and disadvantages promotes awareness of the nature and problems of grammar instruction, and helps to trigger an alternative mechanism for effective grammar instruction. To this end, though the approach is surrounded with drawbacks, it is not without important substances for grammar pedagogy.

The other influential method of grammar instruction is the inductive approach. An inductive approach comes from inductive reasoning starting that a reasoning progression proceeds from particular (that is observations, rules, laws, concepts or theories) (Felder and Henrique, 1995). In short, when we use induction, we observe a number of specific instances and from them infer a general principle or concept.

In the case of pedagogical grammar, most experts argue that the inductive approach can also be called rule discovery learning. It suggests that a teacher teaches grammar starting with presenting some examples of sentences. In this sense, learners understand grammatical rules from the examples. The presentation of grammatical rules can be spoken or written. Long and Richards (1987, cited in Widodo, 2006) explain that the inductive approach tries to utilize the very strong reward value of bringing order, clarity and meaning to experiences. This approach involves students' active participation in their learning. In addition, the approach encourages a learner to develop his/her own mental set of strategies for dealing with tasks. In other words, this approach attempts to highlight grammatical rules implicitly in which the learners are encouraged to conclude the rules given by the teacher. Similar to the deductive approach, the inductive approach offers advantages and disadvantages. Widodo (2006) puts the advantage and disadvantage of this approach as follows:

Advantages

- i) Learners are trained to be familiar with the rule discovery; this could enhance learning autonomy and self-reliance;
- ii) Learners' greater degree of cognitive depth is "exploited";
- iii) The learners are more active in the learning process rather than being simply passive recipients. In this activity, they will be motivated;
- iv) The approach involves learners' pattern recognition and problem solving abilities in which particular learners are interested in this challenge; and
- v) If the problem solving-activity is done collaboratively, learners get an opportunity for extra linguistic practice.

Disadvantages

- i) The approach is time and energy- consuming as it leads learners to have the appropriate concept of the rule;
- ii) The concepts given implicitly may lead to the learners to have the wrong concepts of the rule taught,
- iii) The approach can place emphasis on teachers in planning a lesson;
- iv) It burdens the teacher to design data or material taught carefully and systematically; and
- v) The approach may frustrate the learners with their personal learning style, or their past learning experience (or both) would prefer simply to be told the rule.

To this end, being exposed to the deductive and inductive approaches will help for EFL/ ESL teachers and learners to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the approaches. In addition, grammar teachers could gain the awareness not to stick on a particular approach as the only means for grammar instruction. Therefore, teachers are needed to be eclectic in their approach in grammar teaching.

2.5.3.2. Integrative Grammar Teaching (the EEE method)

The integrative grammar teaching, which is also known as exploration, explanation and expression, is proposed by Sysoyve (1999). The major concern of the integrative grammar teaching is combining a form- focused grammar teaching with a meaning-based focus.

In the research of Sysoyve (1999), the concept of integrative grammar teaching (EEE method) was noted:

Exploration is the first stage of integrative grammar teaching. This stage is characterized by "inductive learning". Students are given sentences illustrating a certain grammar rule and are asked as a group to find the pattern and, and with the help of the teacher to formulate the rule...

Explanation is the second stage of learning. As students find sequences or patterns in the examples they used during the exploration stage,

the teacher or the students can summarize what was previously discovered, now focusing on the form...

Expression is the third and the last stage of the process. After discovering certain grammatical patterns in the exploration stage and getting to know the rules in the explanation stage, the students start practicing the production of meaningful utterances with each other in communication and interactive tasks...

This method is also important for language teachers to update their teaching in the context of grammar because the integrative method of grammar teaching is a new paradigm in the area of English as a foreign language teaching. This in turn raises their awareness to pedagogical strategies for grammar instruction and fosters a better understanding of the practical classroom orientation.

2.5.3.3 The Notion of Communicative Competence

As a result of communicative revolution in language teaching, it has become increasingly clear that grammar is a tool or resource to be used in the comprehension and creation of oral and written discourse rather than something to be learned as an end in itself. When learned not very useful to learners as they listen, read, speak, and write in their second or foreign language. Indeed, as Canale and Swain (1980) have posited, communicative competence consists of four components, only one of each involves grammar:

- i) Sociolinguistic competence (i.e., appropriacy): The speaker or the writer shows how to express the message in terms of the person being addressed, the overall circumstances and purpose of the communication.
- ii) Discourse competence: The selection, sequence, and arrangement of words and structures are clear and effective means of expressing the speaker / writers intended message.

- iii) Linguistic competence (i.e., accuracy): The forms, inflections, and sequences used to express the message are grammatically correct.
- iv) Strategic competence: The speaker /writer has effective and unobtrusive strategies to compensate for any weaknesses he or she has in the above three areas.

Celce-Murcia (1991:466) emphasizes that in many person-to-person communications, socio-linguistic appropriacy and discourse competence are more important than grammar accuracy, provided that the grammar used is not inaccurate to the point of miscommunicating the intended message; communication is the overriding concern. However, there are situations where a reasonable degree of accuracy is also critical.

In order for English as a second or foreign language teachers to consistently present grammar as serving some higher-order objective, Celce-Murcia and Hilles (1988) suggest that grammar should never be taught as an end in itself but always with reference to meaning, social factors, or discourse-or a combination of these factors. Larsen-Freeman's (1991, cited in Celce -Murcia, 1991:467) position is similar: She sees form, meaning and function as three interacting dimensions of language; the classroom teacher must decide in which dimension the students are experiencing the greatest learning challenge at any given moment and respond with appropriate instruction.

2.5.4. Pedagogical Strategies for Grammar Instruction

2.5.4.1. Identifying Learner and Instructional Variables

A strategy proposed by Celce-Murcia (1985) provides guidelines to assist teachers in deciding to what degree they ought to deal with grammar in their own classes.

An observant EFL teacher knows that individuals learn in different ways; some learners consciously or unconsciously, have an analytic style and learn best by formulating and testing hypothesis or "rules". Other learners have a holistic style and learn best by experiencing, gathering, and restructuring relevant data but doing little or no apparent analysis. Celce-Murcia (1991:463) points out that young children, for example, are by necessity more holistic in their approach to learning than adults. This suggests that age is an important learner variable in helping ESL/EFL teachers to decide the extent to which they should focus on forms.

She further contends that the proficiency level of the learners is also a factor. If the ESL students are beginners (regardless of age), there is little justification on focusing on form, beyond presenting and practicing the obvious form-meaning correspondence in context. This is because when one is beginning to learn something completely new and different, one tends to initially approach the new "object" holistically for a time before feeling ready to do any meaningful analysis. However, if the learners are at the intermediate or advanced level, it may well be necessary to provide form-related feedback and correction in order for the learners to progress (Ibid).

The educational background of the students is another learner variable. If students are pre-literate with little formal education, then it is probably not very productive to focus excessively on form; on the other hand, if the students are literate and well educated, they may become frustrated and annoyed if the teacher does not provide adequate opportunity for them to focus on the formal aspects of the target language, which would, of course, include correction of their error and answers to their questions (Celce-Murcia, 1991:463-4).

The needs to focus on form also changes according to the educational objectives that ESL teachers must address. In this regard, Celce-Murcia (1991:464) indicates that when one is teaching a receptive skill such as listening or reading, it is distracting and irrelevant to emphasize grammar unduly since these receptive skills require competence primarily in the area of word recognition and semantic processing. However, if the teacher is focusing on productive skills (i.e., speaking and, in particular, writing), then the formal accuracy can become an important concern because rules of pedagogical grammar are essentially rules of production.

Finally, if the learners immediate goal is survival communication, formal accuracy is of marginal value, on the other hand, if the learner wants to function as an academic, a diplomat, or a business executive, then a high degree of formal accuracy is essential (Ibid).

2.5.4.2. Teaching Grammar as Meaning

Teaching grammar as meaning holds the ideal of presenting grammar with many fully illustrated and well demonstrated examples and learners are asked to describe other similar situations. Celce-Murcia (1991:467) tries to show this in the teaching and practicing the correct use of the prepositions 'in' and 'on' in the following examples:

- 1a. Bob put the book in the box. / The book is in the box
- 1b. Bob put the book on the table. / The book is on the table.
- 2a. Ann threw the ball in the basket. / The ball is in the basket.
- 2b. Ann threw the ball on the floor. /The ball is on the floor.

A sufficient number of good, clear examples will be enough for some learners; others will also find it useful to know quite explicitly that "in" favors the placement of objects in three dimensional containers and "on" favors the placement of objects on two dimensional flat surfaces (Ibid).

2.5.4.3 Teaching Grammar as Social Function

An example of grammar used in the service of socially appropriate messages is the use of certain modal auxiliaries as to express politeness when one is requesting a favor. When they make requests, ESL/EFL learners need to know that “would” is more polite than “will” that “Could” is more polite than “can”:

“(Will/would) you open the floor?”

“(Can/could) I talk to you for a minute?”

To this end, Celce- Murcia (1991: 467-8) indicates that learners must become aware of the possible consequences of the wrong modal form in a request: The addressee may conclude that the non-native speaker is being inappropriately abrupt, familiar, or rude even when this is not at all the social message intended. Sufficient practice with intended social messages in dialogues, role plays, and simulations (as well as careful observations of native-speaker behavior and/or elicitation of native-speaker preferences with reference to specific request situations) will help establish the link between grammar and socially appropriate behavior.

2.5.4.4. Teaching Grammar through Context

Jepersen (1904) cited in Slager (1973:1) insists “We ought to learn a language through sensible communication”. If communication is to be sensible, he goes on to say, it must involve, even from the first day of possible, a certain connection in the thoughts communicated in the new language.

Slager (1973:2) says "The most obvious way to avoid a list of random and disconnected sentences, of course, is to create a realistic context, or situation, to which all of the model sentences are related." In many areas of language teaching, there is a great gap between theory and practice. It is one thing to accept the idea that we must have meaningful context for our language practice. Contextualization is not as easy as it may sound. Most of our current texts (at least those that are the most sophisticated and the most widely used) are planned around a carefully selected, sequenced set of grammatical structures. This means in effect, that textbook writers are constantly searching for the right context in which to practice these structures. The result is the many situations that at first promise to be very useful in terms of students' interest and need do not always match up with the grammatical structure to be learned. To be put another way there is often a conflict between grammar and situation (Ibid).

2.5.4.4.1. Some General Assumptions of Contextual Grammar Teaching

Slager (1973:2-4) lists ten assumptions of contextualization, most of which are widely accepted (if not always followed consistently) by textbook writers. The list is merely suggestive and tentative. He suggests the following conditions:

i) *The situation should be relevant and immediately useful.*

He says that pilots should talk about airplanes; mechanics should talk about engines and machines.

ii) *The content should reflect the level of sophistication of the students and his knowledge of the world.*

To put it in another way, he maintains, the content can be quite advanced even though the grammatical structure is fairly simple. Stevik

(1971:65 cited in Slager, 1973:3) makes this point when he says "Any topic may be treated at any degree of linguistic difficulty."

iii) *The language should at all times be natural*

Slager says "I can think of no situation in which native speakers answer a set of yes-No questions with complete statements" to state this idea.

- iv) *The sentence should have truth value*
- v) *For beginning students especially, the sentences should be 'light'.*
- vi) *If characters appear, they should be readily identifiable, with characteristics and abilities easy to remember.*
- vii) *There should a variety of "language samples".*

This holds the idea that while consistency in format is admirable, the fact remains that some structures occur naturally and frequently in conversation (Me, too, I don't do you?) and others are more likely to occur in exposition, narration and description. Some textbook writers appear to assume that any language can be suitably presented in dialogue form (Ibid).

viii) *In setting up dialogues, the writer (or the teacher) should always keep "the social dimension" in mind.*

This idea portrays the social status of each speaker. Otherwise, the students will have no possibility of learning the important distinction between formal and informal speech.

- ix) *The language sample should be short enough for the students to remember it easily but long enough to provide sufficient practice on the new structure.*
- x) *In devising contexts, the writer (or the teacher) should be careful to include sentences that can be used for vocabulary development and communication activities.*

In sum, it is obviously noted that the assumptions are vital for grammar instruction which could serve as pedagogical strategy, and foreign language teachers may use them as an input for effective grammar teaching.

2.5.4.5. Integrating Grammar Teaching into Task-based Approach

Task-based teaching approach, also called task-based learning which was put forward in the 1980s derives its idea from the process syllabus. It can be regarded as one particular approach to implement the broader “communicative approach”. Nunan (1999:24) defines task-based teaching as “an approach to the design of language course in which the points of departure is not an ordered list of linguistic items, but a collection of tasks.” If this is the case, a teaching method should put tasks at the centre of the methodological focus.

Edward and Willis (2005) summarize the various definitions of task-based learning as follows:

- The learners principles on exchanging and understanding meanings, rather than or practice of pre-specified forms or patterns.
- There is some kind of communicative purpose or goal set for the task, so learners know what they are expected to achieve by the end.
- Tasks can involve any or four skills, e.g. a text-based task to generate reading, note taking and discussion.

In task based learning (TBL) the emphasis is very much on learning by doing. Edward and Willis (2005) suggest that instead of beginning with the grammar we would begin by teaching words and phrases relevant to the topic of the task set and asking learners to carry out tasks which encourage learners to make their own best. They further maintain that with this approach, the job of the teacher is four fold. There is a need:

- To create tasks which require learners to make spontaneous use of what language they already have. There is also a need to provide positive

encouragement as they do this, accepting their success in making meanings, and playing down their grammatical shortcomings.

- To allow learners time to reflect on the language they have used, in completing a task, and to improve on it.
- To make sure that learners have plenty of exposure to language in use, both written and spoken
- To provide learners with samples of language which will provide appropriate insights and with guidance which will enable them to extend their grammar and vocabulary in useful ways.

Task based teaching is not targeted to a focus on grammatical accuracy with meaning as a by product but a focus on meaning with a grammatical development as a by-product. Instead of producing learners who can with a considerable hesitation, produce an accurate sentences but who cannot communicate with any fluency, we would produce communicators, and provide them with the means and motivation to develop a more and more accurate grammatical system (Edward and Wills, 2005).

Task-based language teaching provides learners with the opportunities to experiment with and explore both spoken and written language through tasks designed to engage learners in authentic, practical and functional use of language for meaningful purpose. Willis (1996) divides the procedure of task-based language teaching into three stages: The pre-task, task cycle and the language focus. In the pre-task, Willis maintains, the teacher introduces the topic and gives students with clear instruction on what they will have to do at the task stage and might help the students to recall some language and may be useful for the task. The pre-task stage can also often include playing a recording of people doing the task.

The task cycle consists of three elements: task, planning and report. Students complete a task in pair or groups using the language resources that they have as the teacher monitors and offers encouragement,

students prepare a short oral or written report to tell the class what is happening during their groups. Meanwhile, the teacher is available for the students to ask for advice to clear up any language questions they may have. They, then finally report back to the class orally or read the written report. The teacher chooses the order of when students will present their reports and may give the students some quick feed-back on the content (Willis, 1996).

In the language focus stage, students put their emphasis on the meaning of their language; while on the third stage, they focus their attention on form. This stage includes two steps-language analysis and language practice. In the language analysis the teacher highlights relevant parts from the text of the recording for the students to analyze. He may ask students to notice interesting features with this text. The students identify and think about particular features of language form and language use. In the language practice, the teacher finally selects language area to practice based up on the needs of the students and what emerged from the task and report phases. The students do practice activities to increase their confidence and make a note of useful language. Through doing various exercises, the students learn to use and memorize the useful words, phrases, structures and grammar rules so as to consolidate their mastery of the language form (Wills, 1996).

2.5.4.6. Conceptualizing Error Correction

In the teaching of ESL/EFL, errors are the most anticipated phenomena. It has been said so far that for ESL/EFL, errors are regarded as normal, and for learning to take place there should a probability of errors. At all stages of second or foreign language learning, students produce incorrect language both in written and spoken forms, which may not be made by

the native speakers. This may be attributed to different factors, but grammatical errors are the most influential ones.

Burt and Kiparsky (1974, cited in Celce-Murcia, 1991:470) note that there are local errors produced by second language learners such as an omitted article or a superfluous prepositions. They claim that such local errors do not usually cause problems with communication, and they contrast such relatively innocuous local errors with global errors such as faulty word order or the use of wrong logical connectors. In their conclusion, the global errors contribute to miscommunication and thus, require correction much more than local errors do.

Error correction might be problematic for the reason that the question of how, what and when to correct students' errors need to be resolved first. According to Celce-Murcia and Hills (1988), it is impossible to correct every error a student makes. They claimed that correcting errors in grammatical structures that are being taught at the moment might be corrected in some way; otherwise, immediate correction of students' errors could be problematic. They maintained that comprehensibility should be the major concern to correct grammatical error; therefore, such kinds of errors are global and should be corrected because it creates miscommunication through the language whereas local errors (i.e., those errors are tolerable). Global errors are said to be in the higher hierarchy than local errors.

To conclude, though there is no a fully-fledged body of research evidence that specifically shows overt grammatical correction by the teacher in the classroom, there is evidence to suggest that various other forms of attention and treatment of grammatical errors has an impact on learners. Therefore, it is prudent for EFL/ESL teacher to engage in such treatments, as long as there is communication flow, of maximizing



student self-correction, and of sensitivity considering the affective and linguistic place the learners are in (Brown, 1994:354).

2.5.5. Other Pedagogical Strategies

Some scholars such as Ellis (2002), cited in Widodo (2006) also recommended some other important grammar teaching strategies that English language teachers should make them part of their beliefs. Among these strategies, most of them are stated as follows:

- i) *Relate Knowledge Needs to Learning Goals*
- ii) *Apply Higher Order Thinking Skills*
- iii) *Provide Plentiful, Appropriate Language Input*
- iv) *Use Predicting Skills*

These strategies were designed to support English language teachers by enlightening the concept of procedural knowledge (i.e., knowledge that enables a student to apply a rule of grammar in communication) and declarative knowledge (i.e., enables a student to describe a rule of grammar and apply it in pattern practice drills). In this regard, the concept “*Relate Knowledge Needs to Learning Goals*” has been explained as that students who plan to use the language exclusively for reading journal articles need to focus more on the declarative knowledge of grammar and discourse structures that will help them understand those texts. Students who plan live in country need to focus on more procedural knowledge that will help them manage day to day oral and written interaction. Similarly, in applying higher order thinking skills, the emphasis is teaching students how the language works and giving them opportunities to compare it with other languages they know and this allows them to draw on critical thinking. As complementary strategy,

providing plentiful, appropriate language inputs used to assist students to pay attention to the relationships among form, meaning, and use for specific grammar rule, and roughly tuned input that allows students to encounter the grammar rule in a variety of contexts. And, making students use their predictive skills allows students to anticipate the forms and structures they will encounter in a given communication task because different communication types can be characterized by the clusters of linguistic features that are common to those types verb tense and aspect, sentence length and structure, and longer discourse patterns all may contribute to the distinctive profile of a given communication type. For example, a history book and a newspaper article will use short sentences and a discourse pattern that alternates between subjects and perspectives.

CHAPTER THREE

3. Methodology

3.1. The Research Design

As obviously stated in chapter one, the main objective of this study was to explore English language teachers' beliefs about the different aspects of grammar instruction and classroom practices. For this, the researcher followed both quantitative and qualitative research methods in order to get sound conclusions from the study. This chapter, therefore, enunciates the methodological considerations taken by the researcher to put the study into effect. For careful design of the study, the researcher consulted necessary resources followed by incorporating valuable comments suggested by his advisor. By and large, the chapter focuses on the selection of the sample schools, the description of the subjects, justification of the selection of the schools and the subjects, the data collection instruments employed for the study and the procedures followed to analyze the collected data and the type of research methods he employed to analyze the data (i.e., quantitative and qualitative). For clarity and simplicity, the researcher treated all these aspects bit by bit.

3.2. The Selection of Sample Schools

The samples of this survey study were four schools: Miraf Primary and Secondary School, Medhanealem Comprehensive Secondary School, Yekatit 12 Preparatory School and Entoto Amba Secondary School. All of these schools are owned by government and are located in Addis Ababa. Even though there are a total number of 31 government secondary schools in Addis Ababa, the researcher included only four schools because of different factors (see 1.6). And the reason for taking only

government schools as a focus of study was to avoid inconsistency over the result of the instruments employed for the study and to derive appropriate conclusion as much as possible. Therefore, only government schools were taken to be samples in which the necessary data were collected. The selection of the sample schools was based on the nearness of their position to the residential address for the researcher and to the Addis Ababa University he was attending. He realized this as an opportunity to facilitate the study and to get model researches for the successful accomplishment of the study. Besides, the researcher thought that this might help him to communicate with these schools frequently when need arises.

3.3. Subjects of the Study

The subjects of this study were English language teachers from the selected sample schools. The researcher chose only English language teachers instead of incorporating students in the study because he imagined that this is beyond the scope of the study and timeline though exploring students' beliefs towards to grammar teaching is important. Therefore, English language teachers of these schools were selected. There are 67 English teachers who are teaching grade nine (9) to grade twelve (12) in these schools. Their number in each school is 11, 15, 19 and 22, Miraf Primary and Secondary School, Entoto Amba Secondary School, Yekatit12 Preparatory School and Medhanealem Comprehensive Secondary School, respectively. Although there were primary English teachers in Miraf Primary and Secondary School, they were not included in this study since the researcher wanted to study only secondary school teachers. Therefore, among 67 English teachers of these schools, only 42 of them were involved in the study, especially, in filling out the questionnaire. The reason for this was that some of the teachers were not willing to participate in the study at all and the rest of them did not

return the questionnaire. However, the response rate of 42 participants was 63 %. This sample size exceeds the number of 30 which Cohn and Manion (1994) describe as a minimum for useful statistical analysis.

As the researcher found it difficult to include all of the target population to conduct the observation and the interview, smaller samples of the participant teachers were involved. Therefore, the researcher interviewed five teachers (5) from three secondary schools (Miraf =2, Medhanealem =2 and Yekatit12 =1) and observed five (5) teachers from three secondary schools (Miraf=3, Yekatit 12=1 and Emtoto Amba=1). With regard to selecting teachers for participation in the observation and interview, the researcher's intention was to approach the participants on friendly terms so that it would not be embarrassing to ask them to contribute to the research. Thus, the researcher of this study conducted the observation and the interview based on the consent of the voluntary teachers of the aforementioned schools.

3.4. Data Collection Instruments

3.4.1. Questionnaire for Teachers

A questionnaire was designed to assist English teachers in revealing implicitly their personal beliefs about grammar instruction. The questionnaire has two sections. Section one provides information about teachers' beliefs about the importance of grammar teaching. Section two focuses on teachers' beliefs about pedagogical strategies in grammar instruction. The first section of the questionnaire categorized in table 1 which contains nine belief statements. The second section of the questionnaire was categorized in table 2 which contains twenty-two (22) belief statements. In both of the sections, a Likert-type scale was used which is the most widely used method of scale construction because it is simple, versatile, and reliable method and no judges are required

(Kumar, 1999). In fact, a Likert-scale was originally developed to measure the respondents' favourable or unfavourable attitude towards the subject of interest. However, as Bernat (2008) asserts, its scope has been extended to wider cognitive and affective variables including beliefs. The researcher, therefore, used a Liker-scale by taking the above considerations into account.

3.4.2. Classroom Observation

The aim of classroom observation was to identify key instructional episodes in the teachers' approaches to grammar teaching based on the two major themes, i.e., the statements in table 1 and 2 of the questionnaire study. The researcher chose to employ classroom observation for the study because it provides a clear picture of what the actual teaching and learning process looks-like (Selinger and Shohmy, 1989). It is also believed that observation is a very important data gathering tool because "it enables researchers to document and reflect systematically upon classroom interactions and events as they actually occur rather than we think over (Burns, 1990:80). Therefore, the observation results help for the researcher to compare the English language teachers' beliefs and their practices, and to come up with appropriate conclusion.

Due to the nature of the study, as it was stated, conducting classroom observation was compulsory to attain the objectives in the study and to make workable and sound conclusions. For that matter, only grade 9 and 11 grammar lessons were observed since grade 10 and 12 lessons had been already winded up in all sample schools before the process of collecting the data for the study started. To start the observation, a checklist was designed by the researcher based on the views recorded in the questionnaire. During the observation, the researcher ticked against

the statements in the observation checklist as “observed and not observed” behavior.

3.4.3. Interview for Teachers

For the purpose of this study, it was decided to use semi-structured interview. The main objective of the interview was to make the respondents reflect the factors that influenced their instructional decisions in grammar teaching in the actual classroom practices. The questions in this interview focus mainly on the reasons for the divergence of teachers’ beliefs and classroom practices. The second purpose of the interview was to support the close ended questionnaire results in both sections (i.e., table 1 and 2,) and the observation findings.

The questions in this interview were prepared in English language hoping that the researcher might face little difficulty to communicate with the respondents while conducting the interview since all of the participants were secondary school English teachers. Besides, he realized that translating the respondents’ reflections is time consuming as regards little time to do so.

To conduct an interview, as Nunan (1992) notes, there are two ways of collecting responses from interviews (i.e., recording and note-taking). The writer of this study, thus, refers to use note-taking methods as option.

3. 5. Data Collection Procedures

In the data collection procedures, the researcher first administered the questionnaire to the participants. And then, after collecting the questionnaire from the respondents, he started conducting the classroom observation. While gathering the questionnaire data, the researcher did not disclose any information about the classroom observation that he

would do after the completion of the questionnaire data gathering process. This was done deliberately because the respondents might modify their classroom behavior, and the actual classroom practices might be turned to artificial. This creates inconsistency over the results of the observation and puts the validity of the study into question.

Having finished gathering the necessary information from the classroom observation, the researcher compared the results of the observation with the results of the questionnaire to identify items indicating the divergence of teachers' classroom practices from their beliefs. On the basis of this result, the researcher reshaped the questions and prepared them for interview and began to ask the respondents to reflect on the questions.

3.6. Methods of Data Analysis and Discussions

As the data gathered were both quantitative and qualitative in nature, the data obtained from the close-ended Likert scale questionnaire was analyzed using quantitative method involving a simple statistical data analysis (percentage and mean). This is because "Simple statistical measures such as percentages and means ... reduce the volume of data, making it easier to understand" (Kumar, 1999:223). The classroom observation findings and the interview responses were analyzed qualitatively.

The quantitative data was tabulated and subsequent discussions were made after each table. The discussions of the tabulated data were based mainly on the related literature, i.e., chapter two of this study.

For clarity and suitability of the data analysis and discussion, the data in the questionnaire was grouped in to two major sections. The first section was the analysis of teachers' beliefs about the importance of grammar instruction. The second section was the analysis of teachers' beliefs

about the pedagogical strategies in grammar instruction. Under each section there are sub-title themes which contain items which have similar content. With a 5- point Likert scale, the mean score of each items and the percentage of the options were used in the analysis to realize the teachers' beliefs and their implications in each item.

The 5- point Likert scales were changed in to three based on Peacocks' (1999) suggestions, by combining 'strongly agree and agree' as one and 'strongly disagree and disagree' as one scale. This was done for ease of reporting. And the numerical data presented by percentage and mean scores have been rounded to the nearest hundredth for interpretation.

To analyze and interpret the data gained from classroom observation and interview, a qualitative method was used. A careful attempt was made to sort out the major points of the subjects' opinions and comments in the interview. After identifying the common core points, most of the subjects' views were paraphrased and some of them were described as they were stated by the respondents.

The data gained through each instrument was analyzed (i.e., either quantitatively or qualitatively) and discussed separately to show the implications of the result in each instrument in clear and simplistic manner. This helped the researcher to organize and sum up the results and / or the implications of both quantitative and qualitative data to come up with relatively accurate conclusions.

CHAPTER FOUR

4. Analysis of Data and Discussion of Results

As already been indicated in chapter one, the major purpose of this study was to Explore English Teachers' Beliefs about grammar instruction and classroom practices. Under this main objective, the specific objectives were:

- To assess the kind of beliefs secondary school English teachers actually possess and utilize when teaching grammar.
- To observe whether there is association between English teachers' perceived knowledge of pedagogical strategies and pedagogical practices in classrooms.

To achieve these objectives, as it was stated in chapter three, data was collected from the subjects using questionnaire, classroom observation interview. And the responses of these instruments were analyzed and discussed.

This chapter, therefore, contains the results and discussions of the data gathered through the questionnaire, the classroom observation and the interview.

4.1. Results and Discussions of the Questionnaire

As has been stated in chapter three of this study, in analyzing and interpreting the responses of the participants in the questionnaire, the researcher grouped the questionnaire items (statements) in to two broad categories. The first category contains teachers' beliefs about the importance of grammar teaching. Nine belief statements (items) are listed

in this section, which require English teachers' reaction to each statement with a scale of 5,4,3,2 and 1, strongly agree, agree undecided, disagree and strongly disagree, respectively. All of the items in this section were analyzed and discussed in Table 1. The second category contains English teachers' beliefs about pedagogical strategies in grammar teaching. There are twenty-two (22) belief statements (items) comprising different theory based grammar teaching strategies and were analyzed and discussed in Table 2 in same way as the analysis and discussions of table 1 of the questionnaire. For simplicity of the study, the researcher calculated numerically the percentage of the respondents in each item to obtain the appropriate figure. The mean score of each item was also calculated to attain favorable conclusion. Moreover, the cumulative mean scores of the two sections (i.e. table 1 and 2) were calculated to see the overall result of each section in the questionnaire understudy.

Table 1: Teacher's Beliefs about the Importance of Grammar Teaching

Item	Strongly Agree = 5		Agree = 4		Undecided = 3		Disagree = 2		Strongly disagree = 1		Total		Frequency mean Score
	Fre	%	Fre	%	Fre	%	Fre	%	Fre	%	Fre	%	
1.1	18	42.86	17	40.48	3	7.14	3	7.14	1	2.38	42	100	4.00
1.2	11	26.19	20	47.62	4	9.52	6	14.27	1	2.38	42	100	3.81
1.3	6	14.27	9	21.43	6	14.27	15	35.71	6	14.27	42	100	2.85
1.4	15	35.7	18	42.86	5	11.90	3	7.14	1	2.38	42	100	4.00
1.5	2	4.76	8	19.01	4	9.52	21	50.00	7	16.70	42	100	2.45
1.6	14	33.33	23	54.76	3	7.14	2	4.76	-	-	42	100	4.17
1.7	15	35.71	18	42.86	5	11.90	3	7.14	-	-	42	100	3.93
1.8	10	23.81	17	40.48	9	21.43	6	14.27	-	-	42	100	3.74
1.9	12	28.57	22	52.35	4	9.52	4	9.52	-	-	42	100	4.00

Grand Mean=3.67

Statements of the items in the table above are:

1.1=I believe that grammar teaching is important for language teaching and learning.

1.2=I believe that grammar teaching is important for language teaching and learning.

1.3=Teaching grammar rules is important because it enables students to apply and use the English language.

1.4=If students get enough chance of practicing using the language, they do not need to learn grammar.

1.5=Teaching grammar is essential for teaching other language areas such as the skills and vocabulary.

1.6=As far as students are exposed to communicative activities in the language, there is no way to teach grammar.

1.7=In reading, grammar helps learners to comprehend (understand) ideas through sentence relationships.

1.8=To put ideas into intelligible sentences in writing, there is a need to teach grammar.

1.9=In speaking, grammar fosters an opportunity for learners to produce acceptable utterances in the language.

The analysis and discussions of Table 1 is indicated as follows:

4.1.1. Teachers Beliefs about the Importance of Grammar Teaching

4.1.1.1 Teachers' Beliefs about the Importance of Grammar to Language Teaching (Items 1.1, 1.2, 1.3 and 1.5)

1.1. As can be seen in the table 1, (35) 83.37% of the respondents agreed, (3) 7.14% (percent) of them were not certain and (4) 9.52% of them disagreed with 4.00 mean score to the statement "I believe that grammar teaching is important for language teaching". Here, as the finding indicates, most of the respondents agreed but insignificant number of them failed to decide and very few of them disagreed. This implies that the great majority of high school and preparatory English teachers hold the belief that grammar is important for language teaching and learning. Regarding this finding, Haregewoin (2008:41-42) emphasizes the importance of grammar teaching as being the most exciting area of language teaching; it is playing as a central role in language classroom activities which could be considered as the core mental system of language. Cook (1994:1, cited in Haregewoin, 2008:42) says, "Grammar ...is the heart of all human activity declaring war, writing a love poem or a prescription, sentence a prisoner to life imprisonment... all would be effectively impossible without grammar."

1.2. With a similar reference, the teachers were asked whether they believe about the statement "Teaching grammar rules is important because it enables students to apply and use the English language". To this statement, (31) 73.81% responded agree, (4) 9.52% responded undecided and (7) 16.65% responded disagree. This result portrays that not all but many English teachers believe that it is very important to teach grammar because it enables language learners to apply and use English as a foreign language. The result supports

the view of Ur (1999), cited in Widodo (2006) which says that in the case of learners, grammatical rules enable them to know and apply how much sentence patterns should be put together. Widodo (2006) also claims that the teaching of grammar should ultimately centre on the way grammatical items or sentence patterns are correctly used. In other words, teaching grammar should encompass language structure or sentence patterns, meaning and use. In addition, Thompson (1996:11) notes that grammar is not only the rules of how words can be combined in a sentence but different choices to be made in which combination to use for effective communication. In this regard, grammar is a means by which people organize messages in a communicative activity as effectively as possible (Atkins, Hailom Bantayirga and Nuru, 1995 and Tudor, 1996:209).

1.3. To the contrary, the respondents were asked to react to the statement "If students get enough chance of practicing using the English language, they do not need to learn grammar". For this, (15) 35.70% responded agree, 14.27% responded undecided and (21) 50.00% responded disagree. The result seems to imply that considerable number of teachers might believe in the exclusion of grammar teaching to students and small numbers may be uncertain but many English teachers do not accept this view. But, as the result indicates, there is a tendency of rejecting this view. Conversely, they fairly believe the importance of grammar in the language.

1.5 To the statement "As far as students are exposed to communicative activities, there is no way to teach grammar", (10) 23.77% of the respondents agreed, (4) 9.52% of them failed to decide and (28) 66.70% of them disagreed. Here, from their reaction, few respondents agreed as compared with the number of respondents who disagreed though few of them did not decide. This implies that many English teachers do not think that exposing students only to communicative activities is enough unless grammar is taught.

4.1.1.2 Teachers' Beliefs on the Role of Grammar Teaching in Language Skills (1.4, 1.6, 1.7, 1.8 and 1.9)

The majority of teachers (78.56%) showed their agreement to item 1.4, which reads us "Teaching grammar is essential for teaching other language areas such as the four skills and vocabulary". This implies that most English teachers (high school and Preparatory) favour the importance of grammar teaching for other language areas such as the four skills and vocabulary. In this regard, it is noted that grammar is essential for a set of language skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing; in listening and speaking, grammar plays a crucial role in grasping and expressing spoken language (Corder, 1998; Widodo, 2004, cited in Widodo, 2006). Besides, students have to be given a chance to practice and produce language that is structurally accurate, but teachers should not forget the value of allowing students to discover the structure on their own in reading and listening since learning to use a language takes repeated exposure to structures and vocabulary as well as opportunities to practice it (Larson-Freeman, 1997). Therefore, for effective use of the language skills, teachers should work on grammar with their students.

Moreover, a number of respondents (88%) favoured item 1.6 i.e., many teachers thought that in reading, grammar helps learners to comprehend (understand) ideas through sentence relationships. This figure shows that the highest majority of English teachers believe that grammar teaching is essential for students' reading ability for the reason that the knowledge of grammar enables the students to comprehend ideas through sentence relationships. In fact, few of them might be resistant to accept this view. In relation to this, it is evidenced that teachers do not always present grammar items at sentence level alone. They can teach in a reading text, and this facilitates learner' understanding of the text in the context of grammar at discourse level (Noonan, 2004).

Similarly, as the teachers' responses in the item 1.7 of the above table show, most teachers agreed the belief of putting ideas into intelligible sentences in

writing as important part of grammar teaching with 3.93 mean score. The result implies that though not all but many English teachers have the belief of teaching grammar as important for learners to put ideas into effective sentences during writing. Of course, considerable number of teachers might not think so.

1.8 In the same token, respondent (teachers) were asked their reaction to the statement "In speaking, grammar fosters an opportunity for learners to produce acceptable utterances in the language". In their responses, (27) 64.29% of them agreed, (9) 21.43% of them were neutral and (6) 14.27% of them disagreed with 3.74 mean score. Here, the finding indicates that greater number of high school and preparatory teachers seem to believe in the importance of grammar for learners' speaking skills because it furnishes a chance of producing appropriate and acceptable utterances in English language. It is true to infer from the result that some teachers might have different opinion as opposed to the majority of them.

1.9. To the statement "Grammar helps learners to combine lexical items (words) to form meaningful communicative sentences," the respondents reacted: (34) 80.92% agree, (4) 9.52% undecided and (4) 9.52 disagree with 4.00 mean score. This result supports the idea "Grammar is the way a language manipulates and combines words (bits of words) so as to form longer units of meaning (Ur, 1988:1).

As can be noted from the result, it is possible to say that the vast majority of high school and preparatory English teachers have positive thinking towards the importance of grammar teaching for vocabulary items because it helps students to form meaningful, communicative sentences. All in all, the cumulative mean score of the items in table 1 is 3.67. This seems to imply that most high school and preparatory English teachers have favourable beliefs towards the importance of grammar teaching.

Table 2: Teachers' Beliefs about Pedagogical Strategies in Grammar

Teaching

Items	Strongly agree =5		Agree = 4		Undecided = 3		Disagree = 2		Strongly disagree		Total		Frequency mean score
	Fre	%	Fre	%	Fre	%	Fre	%	Fre	%	Fre	%	
2.1	20	47.62	10	23.81	7	16.70	5	11.90	-	-	42	100	4.07
2.2	8	19.01	26	61.90	7	16.70	1	2.38	-	-	42	100	3.98
2.3	3	7.14	9	21.43	8	19.05	18	42.86	4	9.52	42	100	2.73
2.4	18	42.86	18	42.86	2	4.76	4	9.54	-	-	42	100	4.19
2.5	1	2.38	2	4.76	5	11.90	23	54.76	11	26.19	42	100	2.02
2.6	14	33.33	22	52.38	6	14.29	-	-	-	-	42	100	4.19
2.7	21	50.00	20	47.62	-	-	1	2.38	-	-	42	100	4.45
2.8	11	26.19	15	35.71	7	16.70	9	21.43	1	2.38	42	100	3.69
2.9	25	59.52	16	38.10	1	2.38	-	-	-	-	42	100	4.55
2.10	24	57.14	15	35.71	2	4.76	1	2.38	-	-	42	100	4.54
2.11	2	4.76	4	9.52	8	19.05	20	47.62	8	19.05	42	100	2.33
2.12	12	28.57	21	50.00	4	9.52	5	11.9	-	-	42	100	3.95
2.13	8	19.01	18	42.86	10	23.81	6	14.27	-	-	42	100	3.67
2.14	19	45.24	18	42.86	3	7.14	1	2.38	1	2.38	42	100	4.26
2.15	13	30.95	13	30.95	7	16.7	9	21.43	-	-	42	100	3.72
2.16	6	14.27	17	40.48	10	23.81	6	14.27	3	7.14	42	100	3.40



2.17	16	38.10	19	45.24	3	7.14	4	9.52	-	-	42	100	4.12
2.18	15	35.71	18	42.86	4	9.52	2	4.76	3	7.14	42	100	3.93
2.19	12	28.57	17	40.48	5	11.90	6	14.27	2	4.76	42	100	3.74
2.20	13	30.95	23	54.76	5	11.90	1	2.38	-	-	42	100	4.14
2.21	13	30.95	18	42.86	7	16.70	4	9.52	-	-	42	100	3.95
2.22	17	40.48	18	42.86	5	11.90	1	2.38	1	2.38	42	100	4.17

Grand Mean=3.80

Statements of the items in the table above include:

2.1=It is important to identify the type of students we teach in grammar class.

2.2=It is necessary to focus on the instructional variables such as the educational objectives in grammar teaching.

2.3=In grammar class identifying our students and focusing on instructional variables has little value.

2.4=Grammar should be taught as meanings with many illustrated examples.

2.5=It can be effective to teach grammar without meaningful examples.

2.6=Grammar should be taught with a socially appropriate manner as for example the teaching of polite expressions like 'may', 'might', etc.

2.7=We must have meaningful context for grammar teaching.

2.8=In grammar instruction the language teaching and learning needs to be natural as a child learns to use the language.

2.9=Giving students with a variety of language samples is good in grammar teaching.

2.10=It is good to include grammatically correct sentences to develop both vocabulary and communicative activities.

2.11=Giving a variety of language samples in grammar instruction is boring and time consuming.

2.12=Setting meaningful tasks in grammar instruction is better in language use than practicing in pre-specified forms and patterns.

2.13=Focusing on meaning with grammatical development as a by-product is more advantageous than focusing on grammatical accuracy with meaning as a by-product.

2.14=I believe that meaningful tasks in grammar instruction provide learners with the opportunities to explore both spoken and written language in authentic, practical and functional use of the language.

2.15=I believe that there is a probability of errors in grammar learning.

2.16=I believe that grammatical errors are influential in English language learning.

2.17=Correction of students' errors is important.

2.18=Though it is not possible to correct every error, there is correction of grammar errors being taught at the moment.

2.19=Errors that cause miscommunication in the language should be corrected in grammar instruction.

2.20=To teach grammar, it is important to relate the knowledge needs of the learning goals i.e., identifying the purpose for which grammar is learned.

2.21=I believe in the importance of giving opportunities for learners to compare how language works with other languages.

2.22=I believe that making students use their predictive skills for grammar learning facilitates their language development.

The findings and the discussions of the responses in table 2 are stated as follows:

4.1.2. Teachers' Beliefs about Pedagogical Strategies in Grammar Teaching

4.1.2.1. Teachers' Belief about Identifying Learner and Instructional Variables (Items 2.1, 2.2 and 2.3)

Item 2.1 used to elicit the teachers' beliefs whether or not identifying the type of learners they teach is important in grammar class. Many of them (71.43%) showed its significance whereas very few (11.90%) disagreed with 4.07 mean score. In light of the percentage and the mean score, it is possible to state that many English language teachers tend to believe that to teach grammar effectively it is important to identify the type of students they teach in class. The result also shows that significant number of English teachers might have different opinion about the view. Concerning this, Celce-Murcia (1985) notes that an observant EFL teacher knows that individuals learn in different ways; some learn best by formulating and testing hypothesis or "rules". Others have a holistic style and learn best by experiencing, gathering and restructuring relevant data but doing no apparent analysis. Therefore, the result of this statement is supported by such evidence in the literature and, hence, EFL teachers need to consider the learner variables while teaching grammar in classroom contexts.

2.2.To the statement "It is necessary to focus on the instructional variables such as the educational objectives in grammar teaching," (34) 80.91% of the respondent teachers agreed, (7) 16.70% of them did not decide and (1) 2.8 % of them disagreed with the mean score of 3.98. The result from this statement seems to portray that most high school and preparatory English teachers believe that focusing on instructional variables such as the educational objectives as one of the most important pedagogical grammar teaching

strategies. This supports the view that in listening or reading, it is distracting and irrelevant to emphasize grammar unduly since these receptive skills require competence primarily in the area of word recognition and semantic processing. However, if the teacher is focusing on productive skills (i.e., speaking and, in particular, writing), then the formal accuracy can become an important concern because rules of pedagogical grammar are essentially rules of production (Celce-Murcia, 1991:464). Thus, a close examination of the educational objectives is important to secure effective grammar instruction.

Conversely, item 2.3 was meant to explore the beliefs of the respondents by asking that in grammar class, identifying their students and focusing on instructional variables has little value. In their response, (12) 28.57% agreed, (8) 10.05% undecided and (22) 52.38% disagreed with 2.73 mean score. As is shown in from the percentage figure, more than half of the respondents disagreed. This implies that there is a belief among English teachers in the importance of focusing on identifying student types and educational objectives as a strategy for grammar instruction.

4.1.2.2. Teachers' Beliefs about Teaching Grammar with Many Illustrated Examples and as a Social Function (Item 2.4 and 2.5 and 2.6)

Item 2.4 aimed at assessing the teachers' beliefs that grammar should be taught with many illustrative examples. The result reveals that almost all (85.72%) of them favoured the view and the mean score is 4.19. This indicates that English language teachers have good beliefs towards the view. Analogous to this result, Widodo (2006) has noted that plentiful, appropriate language input (i.e., incorporating many examples in grammar teaching) makes develop both declarative knowledge and procedural knowledge). This language input requires students to pay attention to the relationships among form, meaning and use, and allows students to encounter the grammar rule in a variety of contexts (Ellis, 2002, cited in Widodo, 2006). It is also suggested that in too

many controlled textbook activities, learners merely engage in mechanical transformations of the target language grammar structure, which they can manipulate without even understanding the grammatically correct sentences. And this enables them to perform well on tests/ quizzes administered directly after a lesson “taught”; important illustrative examples with semi-controlled activities need to be given for learners (Nunan, 1999). A sufficient number of good, clear examples will be enough for some learners.

On the contrary, in item 2.7 of the above table, teachers were asked to reflect their agreement or disagreement on the effectiveness of teaching grammar without meaningful and illustrative examples. On this base (3) 7.14% reacted agree, (5) 11.90% reacted undecided and (34) 80.95% (percent) reacted disagree with 2.02 mean score.

One can argue from the information that most high school and preparatory school English teachers do not believe the effectiveness of grammar teaching without meaningful, illustrative examples.

4.1.2.3. Teachers' Beliefs about Teaching Grammar as Social Functions

2.6 To the statement “Grammar should be taught with a socially appropriate manner as for example, the teaching of polite expressions like “may”, “might”, etc,” the respondents reacted: (36) 85.72% agree, (6) 14.29% undecided with the mean score of 4.19. This result helps for one to deduce that most English teachers have positive view towards keeping the social concern in grammar teaching. This supports the idea of Slager (1973:2-8) who claims that any language can be suitably presented in dialogue form and “In setting up dialogues, the writer or the teacher should always keep the social dimension in his mind.” In support of this, Littlewood (1981:21) has commented that in the early stage of learning, acceptability may mean more than a reasonable degree of accurate pronunciation in grammar. Later, it increasingly comes to include producing language which is appropriate kinds of social situation. In this

the majority of English teachers have a positive belief towards the view. Regarding on this, Littlewood(1981:17-18) has explained that many aspects of language learning, including grammar learning, can take place only through natural process which operate when a person is involved in using the language for communication. In the designing of grammar lessons, it is important to create optimum conditions for natural language learning. Moreover, Willis (1998) describes the three essential conditions for natural language learning: exposure to the target language in both spontaneous and planned language, in spoken and written form; opportunities to use the target language for expressing meaning both in private and public situations, and motivation to engage with and try to understand the exposure, and to use what they know to communicate what they mean.

4.1.2.6. Teachers Beliefs about Teaching Grammar with Variety of Language Samples (Items 2.9 and 2.11)

With regard to giving students with a variety of language samples, the data was analyzed in item 2.9, and the result indicates almost all (97.62%) the respondents agreed. This finding can be helpful to suggest that language teachers believe in the importance of language variety in grammar teaching as a strategy. The result supports the view that to teach grammar there should a variety of language samples because some grammatical structures occur naturally and frequently in conversation (e.g. Me, too, I don't, do you?) and others are more likely to occur in exposition, narration and description (Slager, 1973). This confirms the necessity of providing language samples to students of English as a foreign language in order to teach grammar effectively.

2.11. To the contrary of item 2.9, teachers were asked their response that giving a variety of language samples in grammar instruction is boring and time consuming. The result includes: (6)14.28% agreed, (8) 19.05% undecided and (28) 66.67% disagreed with 2.33 average score of the item. This would imply that only few high school as well as preparatory school teachers believe by



supporting the statement. But more teachers seem to believe to the opposite of this view which confirms the results of item 2.9 despite few teachers might refrain from responding in either of the case.

4.1.2.7. Teachers' Beliefs about Setting Meaningful Tasks for Teaching Grammar (Items 2.12, 2.13 and 2.14)

In the same scenario, item 2.12 of the above table asked the respondents' beliefs whether setting meaningful tasks is better in language use than practicing with pre-specified forms and patterns. Here, (33)78.57% agreed, (4) 9.52% did not decide and (5) 11.90% disagreed with 3.95 mean score.

As can be stated in the finding, it is possible to suggest that many English teachers seem to believe that providing meaningful tasks to students in grammar sessions is more important than focusing on practicing using a pre-specified form for better language use. But this is not always to mean for all English teachers as the result indicates; few might not believe in the same way as the majority of them do.

2.13. In the same token, the teachers were asked their reaction to the statement "Focusing on meaning with grammatical development as a by-product is more advantageous than focusing on grammatical accuracy with meaning as a by-product". The finding includes: (26) 61.87% agree, (10) 23.81 % undecided and (6)14.27% disagree with 3.67 average score of the item. This reveals that many English teachers have a good belief towards the statement even though considerable number of teachers might be uncertain because of different reasons and significant number of them might not accept the view. This finding confirms the suggestions of Edwards and Willis (2005). They asserted that instead of beginning with a grammar, we would begin by teaching words and phrases relevant to the topic of the task set and asking learners to carryout tasks which encourage learners to make their best.

2.14 Similar to item 2.12, the respondents reacted to the statement “I believe that meaningful tasks in grammar instruction provide learners with the opportunities to explore both spoken and written language.” For this, (37) 88.10% responded agree, (3) 7.14% responded undecided and (2) 4.76% disagree with 4.26 mean score of the item. This seems to indicate that most teachers hold positive view to the statement.

4.1.2.8 Teachers’ Beliefs about Incorporating Sentences that Can Be Used for Vocabulary Development and Communicative Activities (Item 2.10)

Item 2.10 is concerned with assessing English language teachers’ beliefs about inserting grammatically correct sentences in order to develop both vocabulary and communicative activities. As the result indicated most of them (92.85%) agreed with 4.54 mean score and this could imply that the highest number of high school and preparatory English teachers have a positive belief towards the importance of incorporating grammatically correct sentences as a strategy to develop vocabulary and communicative activities.

4.1.2.9 Teachers’ Beliefs about Conceptualizing the Grammar Error Correction (Items, 2.15, 2.16, 2.17, 2.18 and 2.19)

Items 2.15, 2.16, 2.17, 2.18 and 2.19 ask about how English teachers conceptualize error correction. In item 2.15, they responded to the statement “I believe that there is a probability of errors in grammar learning”. Based on this, (26) 61.87% reacted agree, (7) 16.70% reacted undecided and (9) 21.43 reflected disagree with 3.72 mean score.

Similarly, in item 2.16, to the statement “I believe that grammatical errors are influential in English language learning”, the teachers responded: (23) 54.75 %agree, (10) 23.81% undecided and (9) 21.41 % disagree with 3.40 mean score.

In the same token, in item 2.17, to the statement "Correction of students' errors is important", the respondents (teachers) reacted: (35) 83.34% agree, (3) 7.14% undecided and (4) 9.52% disagree with 4.12 mean score.

In item 2.18, the respondents were supposed to react whether there is a need to correct grammatical errors at the spot (immediately). The result includes: (33) 78.57% agreed, (4) 9.52% failed to decide and (5) 11.90% disagreed. And the mean score is 3.93.

Similarly, in item 2.19, the teachers responded to the statement "Errors that can cause miscommunication in the language should be corrected in grammar instruction". The finding includes: (29) 69.05% agree, (5) 11.90% undecided and (8) 19.03% disagree with 3.74 mean score.

The findings of the above items confirm the different writers' views about the concept of grammatical error correction. For this, writers such as Edge (1989:1) believes that making error is "a part of learning...and correction is a part of teaching; Celce-Murcia and Hills (1998) believe that it is difficult to correct every errors and they suggest that correcting errors in grammar structure being taught at the moment might be important. Otherwise, there should be stages for correcting grammatical errors. Moreover, most writers such as Edge (19989) agree on the need for grammar error correction, but they believe in correcting errors which hinder communication through the language in most cases.

In sum, from the results, including the mean scores of the items, it is possible to say that most high school and preparatory English teachers have a good concept of error correction and this, therefore, shows that they hold positive beliefs towards error correction as a tool of pedagogical strategy in grammar teaching.

4.1.2.10 Teachers' Beliefs about the Importance of Relating the Knowledge Needs of the Learning Goals

With regard to item 2.20, most of the respondents (85.71%) showed their favourable beliefs on the needs of relating the knowledge needs of the leaning goals in grammar teaching. This matches with the idea suggested by Ellis (2002, cited in Widodo, 2006) who said that students who plan to use the language exclusively for reading journal articles need to focus more on the declarative knowledge of grammar and discoursed structures that will help them understand those texts. Students who plan to live in a foreign country need to focus on more procedural knowledge that will help them manage day to day oral and written interaction (Ellis, 2002, cited in Widodo, 2006).

4.1.2.11 Teachers' Beliefs about Comparing How English Language Works with Other Languages in Grammar Teaching

Furthermore, in item 2.21 of the above table, the respondent were asked whether they believe in the importance of giving opportunities for learners to compare how the language works with the other languages. To this statement, the respondents forwarded their reaction (31) 73.81% agree, (7) 16.70% undecided and (4) 9.512% disagree with 3.95 mean score. This finding shows that many English teachers have favourable beliefs towards the necessity of comparing how English language works with other languages.

4.1.2.12 Teachers Beliefs about Considering Students Predictive Skills in Grammar Teaching (Item2.22)

At last, in item 2.22, the teachers responded to the statement "I believe that making the students use their predictive skills for grammar learning facilitates language development". From the total respondent teachers, the majority (35) 83.86% of them agreed, few of them (57) 11.90% did not decide and very few of



them (27) 4.76% disagreed. This shows that most teachers think that encouraging their students to use predictive skills helps them to facilitate language development.

To this end, this finding supports the view that different communication types can be characterized by the clusters of the linguistic features and these contribute to the distinctive profile of a given communication type. For example, a history book and a newspaper article will use short sentences and discourse pattern; a history textbook will use complex sentences and will follow a timeline in its discourse structure. Awareness of these features allows students to anticipate the forms and structures they will encounter in a given communication task (Ellis, 2002, cited in Widodo, 2006).

All in all, the cumulative mean score of all items in table 2 is 3.8. This result indicates that most high school and preparatory school English teachers possess favourable beliefs towards to the strategies of pedagogical grammar instruction.

4.2. The Results and Discussions of the Classroom Observation

To arrive at appropriate conclusion, the researcher of this study also observed preparatory and high school English teachers whether they apply the different strategies for grammar teaching as pedagogical tools. For this, as already been indicated in chapter three, observation checklist was designed to see the practical aspects of the teachers' reaction in the questionnaire. The result of the observation was not as such similar with the result of the questionnaire.

Having examined the observation check list of all the observed teachers, the researcher refined the themes of the findings. The themes focus on whether or not the observant teachers followed explicit grammar teaching, whether they used communicative activities, whether they followed natural grammar

teaching and learning, whether or not they employed language varieties and contexts, whether they provided tasks and how they corrected students' grammatical errors.

During the observation time (i.e., from April 10-21/2009) the researcher observed the participants whether they actually practice their perceived beliefs. Based on this, most observed teachers except one used continuous explicit grammar teaching with very few illustrative examples. For example, teacher 1 first revised the previous session which was the same topic that he taught during the observation and it was about the past perfect tense. He started writing the form of the past perfect tense on the black board, and he explained the function of this tense. He used few examples from grade 9 textbook after explaining everything about it. Similarly, teacher 2, teacher 4 and teacher 5 followed the same procedure. Unlike these teachers, teacher 3 approached his students differently. He greeted his students; he revised the previous session by asking them to give examples of past perfect tense their own. Then, he wrote different examples of this type. He let them again discuss in pairs and in groups in order to make use of the grammar they learnt in the language.

Again, all of the teachers did not use communicative activities; they followed little natural mode of grammar teaching and learning with fixed set of language samples bounded with textbooks in the absence of language varieties and contexts.

Teacher 1, for instance, kept on explaining the rule and functions of past perfect tense dominating the whole period talking by himself. He did not give any communicative activities that lead students to use the language. Similarly, teacher 5 simply started introducing the type of conditional sentences and she went on explaining the form and uses of conditional sentences type 1. Regarding on this, she asked her students few oral questions. But, she did not give any activities related to conditional sentences type 1 in order to make the students engage in using the language.

Finally, except teacher 3, the other teachers were busy of correcting students' grammar errors immediately. For example, after explaining everything about past perfect tense, teacher 1 and teacher 4 asked their students to tell their own sentences. While the students were making an error, the teacher automatically corrected the students' errors at the spot. They were not seen asking their students to correct their grammatical error either in the form self or peer correction.

In general, most of the observed teachers did not practice effectively the different strategies perceived as their beliefs which are the most important part of grammar teaching pedagogy stated by research scholars.

4.2. The Results and Discussions of the Interview

To attain the objectives of the study, as has already been noted in chapter three, the researcher of this study also made interviews on the possible reasons for some of the divergence noted above (see 4.2) between stated beliefs and the actual classroom practices. From the respondents' reaction, the major themes identified as the reasons of the discrepancy between their perceived beliefs and actions include: time factors, problem of textbook syllabus, bad classroom environment (i.e., bad conduct of students), lack of students' interest, lack of facilities in schools and lack of students' language competence.

Time is possibly one of the major external factors in which teachers have little or no control and that appears to affect the implementation of beliefs as the teachers indicated. As discussed in 4.1.2.2, the teachers believed in the importance of presenting grammar with variety of language samples. However, during classroom observation (see 4.2) they kept on focusing routine language samples. The researcher asked the respondents the possible reasons for this.

For example, teacher 1 reflected by saying:

It is very interesting if grammar is presented with different sorts of language samples since students would have the chance of learning grammar items in different contexts. But the major problem is time limitation. I have no time to do this since my work load is too much.

Like teacher 1, teacher 2 also forwarded similar view. He said that a focus of language variety in grammar teaching is good but it is very difficult to adapt language materials related to grammar items within a short period of time. As a result, he only use language sample found in the textbooks to go along the given timeline.

Similarly, teacher 3 reflected by saying:

e...h, I mean different samples enable students to practice in the language with different circumstances. But, I don't think this can be possible in my classes because this needs lots of time and energy.

In the same manner, teacher 4 reported:

"Well...I by myself strongly believe in using variety of language samples in grammar teaching but this is possible if I have been given much time and encouragement".

Like the other teachers, teacher 5 mentioned that teaching grammar with variety of language samples is an interesting strategy to let students learn grammar with good motivation. However, this remains ideal unless I am given ample time for preparing such activities.

Problem of text book syllabuses is another shortcoming that the respondents reasoned out as the major problem to practice what they believed to be essential grammar teaching pedagogy. As is discussed in 4.1.2.7, most English language teachers believed that providing meaningful tasks for students in grammar teaching helps students explore both spoken and written language. However, most of them did not apply it in their class according to the observation finding revealed. For this, teacher 1 justified the reason:

Tasks containing grammatical structures lead students to perform in the language by engaging them in different activities so that they could discover new grammar items their own. This fosters learning grammar by doing through the language. But, the major constraint in our context is text book syllabuses. The texts are not prepared in accordance with different tasks. This limits students' participation and involvement, and hinders them not to perform tasks related to grammar points.

Besides, teacher 2 reported in the same as teacher 1:

I think the problem of this is the problem of the activities in the textbooks. That is most of the units of English language text books of grade 9 and grade 11 contain few tasks and / or no tasks at all. Eh...what I mean is as an English teacher it is very difficult to reconcile what I believe is right and what I teach.

Similarly, teacher 3 suggested that providing tasks is the most effective ways of presenting grammar that enable students to develop confidence, to create cooperative mood, to make interaction and to build problem solving ability through the language. However, he said that most of the English language texts in secondary schools are not designed with different tasks and interesting activities. As a result, he fails to use tasks since he is forced to stick on the text books.

Again, teacher 4 tried to reason out this issue by saying:

Well...the reason for this is obvious. In my understanding, unmotivated and limited activities in the textbooks do not allow me to practice effectively in my classes. Therefore, I choose to remain focusing on the activities in the textbooks as the only means of grammar teaching.

Finally, teacher 5 responded that to make students actively involve in the language, providing tasks for them is important because as they workout the tasks, they would learn how to discover grammar items. If they loose this opportunity, they would find grammar learning is difficult and boring. But, these things are not straight forward unless conditions related to textbook syllabuses are considered. She said that her implementation of theoretical beliefs depend on the effectiveness of the textbook syllabuses that is the textbooks are not well designed to practice accordingly.

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CHAPTER FIVE

5. Summary of the Major Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1 Summary of the Major Findings and Conclusions

This exploratory survey study investigated the stated beliefs about grammar instruction and actual classroom practices of forty-two (42) teachers of English in four (4) government secondary schools found in Addis Ababa. By far, the study sought for answering the following research questions:

- *What kind of beliefs do secondary school English teachers possess in grammar instruction?*
- *Is there discrepancy between teachers' beliefs and actions? Why?*

The findings reveal that English teachers believed on the importance of grammar in language teaching. As the findings of the questionnaire show, they believed that grammar is important for language teaching and learning for the reason that to speak and to use the language accurately, to know the rules and patterns of the language and to construct correct and understandable sentence utterances, and in the language skills they believed on the centrality of grammar teaching since these language skills are structured through grammar and without this the language would be merely on a collection of words. This confirms the views that grammar is the "heart" of a language, the mental system of a language, and indeed it is the basis for a set of language skills (i.e., listening, reading, speaking, writing and vocabulary) (Cook, 1994, Weaver, 1996, cited in Haregewoin, 2008, and Widodo, 2006).

The teachers also believed in paying greater attention to the pedagogical grammar teaching strategies in many respects. In this regard, as the results of the questionnaire reveal, they believed that identifying learner variables as well as instructional variables is important because it assists teachers in deciding what degree they ought to deal with grammar in their own classes.

Similarly, the teachers believed that grammar needs to be taught using many illustrative examples; it should be taught along with the social dimension of the language use; it should be presented and learned through meaningful contexts; it should be presented with activities that facilitate natural language learning with a variety of language samples, and most importantly, they believed that setting meaningful tasks for teaching grammar is worthwhile because it provides learners with the opportunities to experiment with and to explore both spoken and written language through the designed tasks and to engage them in authentic, practical and functional use of the language for meaningful purpose as it is indicated in Edward and Willis (2005). Besides, they believed that correcting students' grammatical errors is significant and immediate correction of all kinds of errors is not a good way of error correction since there are local and global errors for which the global one is higher in hierarchy and should be corrected at the very focus. In the other way round, the teachers believed that relating the knowledge needs of the learning goals, comparing how the language works with the other languages and focusing students' predictive skills in grammar teaching is important.

In general, English teachers in this study relatively have good belief about the importance of grammar instruction to language teaching and they hold positive beliefs towards the different grammar teaching strategies. The current theories and language teaching philosophies also encourages and supports these beliefs. However, the observation findings suggest that teachers do indeed have a set of complex beliefs system that are sometimes not reflected in their classroom practices. As the researcher of this study observed, except one, most teachers used continuous explicit grammar teaching with few or no illustrative

examples without contexts with the absence of integration of tasks so that the students could not get the opportunity to explore grammar rules and to engage themselves in authentic, practical and functional use of the language for meaningful purposes. Moreover, most of the teachers were trying to correct every grammar errors immediately as they appear orally and/ or written. This shows and proves how some teachers reflected in the interview that all grammatical errors should be corrected though the majority of the respondents in the questionnaire did not react like-wise, and this might indicate their natural inclination towards error correction. These all in effect contribute to the poor quality of language teaching and learning.

The incongruence of the teachers' beliefs and their perceived pedagogical practices is not without reason. As the interviewees suggested, some of the divergences noted above between stated beliefs and actual classroom practices include: time factors, problem of textbook syllabuses, bad classroom environment and lack of students' interest, lack of facilities in schools and lack of students' competence in the language. These all in effect contributes to the poor quality of language teaching and learning, indeed.

5.2 Recommendations

The insights of the findings help for one to understand that teachers' beliefs about grammar instruction are plainly good but in most of the cases, these beliefs are not practiced in their classrooms. This indicates that theoretical principles become blurred in practice. These research findings are similar with the findings of the study conducted in west part of Hungary on the topic of "From Theoretical to Pedagogical Grammar: Reinterpreting the Role of Grammar in English Language Teaching" by Foki Livia (2006). Therefore, the incongruence between belief and practice should be an issue of teacher educators so that teachers become better equipped to reconcile beliefs and practices in order to provide more effective grammar instruction.

The researcher of this study, therefore, suggested the following recommendations in order to link the mismatch between teachers' beliefs and classroom practices:

- The results suggest that teachers' theoretically grounded knowledge of strategies for grammar teaching is not consistent with their practice. Therefore, teacher education programmes should attempt to link English language teachers' personal pedagogical knowledge with empirical knowledge. Introducing a course on pedagogical grammar in foreign language teacher education would be necessary to bridge the existing gap between theory and practice. This happens when the course could provide English language teachers with opportunities to make sense of the theory of grammar and grammar teaching by filtering it through experiential knowledge gained as teachers and as learners.
- Since language is dynamic in its very nature, its teaching demands human and material resources. Materials such as carefully designed textbooks, supplementary materials and others are mandatory to secure effective teaching. Therefore, the schools need to ensure these facilities. This may come to effect when collaborative activities are established with higher educational institutions and NGOs.
- Being an informed body of educational system, every member of schools should take responsibility and develop a sense of belongingness towards the attainment of quality education to ease the challenges and worsening problems that English teachers usually face in order to put their perceived beliefs into practice. To do this, teachers and their colleagues should discuss each other to alleviate the challenges. If it is above their control, they need to create frequent communication with teacher development programmes.

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Appendices

Appendix I

Addis Ababa University

School of Graduate Studies

Department of Foreign Languages and Literature

Questionnaire for Teachers

Dear Respondents,

I am conducting a research on Exploring Teachers' Beliefs and Their Pedagogical Practices in Grammar Instruction. The following questionnaire is designed to collect data for the study. Hence, your response will have much contribution to the success of the research work.

You are, therefore, kindly requested to read each item carefully and give your genuine responses. Concerning the information, you give me, I would like to assure you that all would be kept confidential and used only for the research purpose.

You are not required to write your name.

Thank You in Advance.

Table 1

1. Teachers' Beliefs about the Importance of Grammar Teaching.
 Indicate Your Answer by Putting a Tick Mark (✓) in One of the Boxes in Each Item.

No	Items	Response				
		Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1.1	I believe that grammar teaching is important for language teaching and learning.					
1.2	Teaching grammar rules is important because it enables students to apply and use the English language.					
1.3	If students get enough chance of practicing using the language, they do not need to learn grammar.					
1.4	Teaching grammar is essential for teaching other language areas such as the skills and vocabulary.					
1.5	As far as students are exposed to communicative activities in the language, there is no way to teach grammar.					
1.6	In reading, grammar helps learners to comprehend (understand) ideas through sentence relationships.					
1.7	To put ideas into intelligible sentences in writing, there is a need to teach grammar.					
1.8	In speaking, grammar fosters an opportunity for learners to produce acceptable utterances in the language.					
1.9	Grammar helps learners to combine lexical items (words) to form meaningful communicative sentences.					

Table 2**2. Teachers' Beliefs about Pedagogical Strategies in Grammar Teaching.**

No	Items	Responses				
		Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	disagree	Strongly disagree
2.1	It is important to identify the type of students we teach in grammar class.					
2.2	It is necessary to focus on the instructional variables such as the educational objectives in grammar teaching.					
2.3	In grammar class identifying our students and focusing on instructional variables has little value.					
2.4	Grammar should be taught as meanings with many illustrated examples.					
2.5	It can be effective to teach grammar without meaningful examples.					
2.6	Grammar should be taught with a socially appropriate manner as for example the teaching of polite expressions like 'may', 'might', etc.					
2.7	We must have meaningful context for grammar teaching					
2.8	In grammar instruction the language teaching and learning needs to be natural as a child learns to use the language.					
2.9	Giving students with a variety of language samples is good in grammar teaching.					
2.10	It is good to include grammatically correct sentences to develop both vocabulary and communicative activities.					
2.11	Giving a variety of language samples in grammar instruction is					

	boring and time consuming.					
2.12	Setting meaningful tasks in grammar instruction is better in language use than practicing in pre-specified forms and patterns.					
2.13	Focusing on meaning with grammatical development as a by-product is more advantageous than focusing on grammatical accuracy with meaning as a by-product.					
2.14	I believe that meaningful tasks in grammar instruction provide learners with the opportunities to explore both spoken and written language in authentic, practical and functional use of the language.					
2.15	I believe that there is a probability of errors in grammar learning.					
2.16	I believe that grammatical errors are influential in English language learning.					
2.17	Correction of students' errors is important.					
2.18	Though it is not possible to correct every error, there is correction of grammar errors being taught at the moment.					
2.19	Errors that cause miscommunication in the language should be corrected in grammar instruction.					
2.20	To teach grammar, it is important to relate the knowledge needs of the learning goals i.e., identifying the purpose for which grammar is learned.					
2.21	I believe in the importance of giving opportunities for learners to compare how language works with other languages.					
2.22	I believe that making students use their predictive skills for grammar learning facilitates their language development.					

Appendix II

Classroom Observation Checklist

Date of Observation _____

Name of the School _____

Code of the Teacher _____

Grade and Section _____

No	Items	Observed	Not observed
1	Lessons followed mainly on traditional approach, with explicit teaching of grammar rules and meanings without many illustrative examples.		
2	Grammar was taught as meanings with many illustrated examples.		
3	Lesson consisted of some form of communicative activities either as an introduction at the start of the lesson or as a practice during the lesson.		
4	Grammar was taught and learned as natural language.		
5	The teacher gave the students a variety of language samples.		
6	The teacher provided meaningful tasks to explore grammatical rules.		
7	The teacher focused accuracy.		
8	The teacher considered the social concern in providing tasks and activities.		
9	The teacher encouraged group discussion.		
10	Lessons were primarily teacher-centered where teacher engaged in giving instructions providing explanation.		
11	Teacher corrected all errors.		
12	Teacher encouraged self and peer correction of grammatical errors.		

Appendix III

Interview for Teachers

1. Most teachers believe that presenting grammar with a variety of language samples is important for students, but they do not practice in the classrooms. What do you think the reasons?
2. Most English teachers believe that providing tasks for students in grammar teaching helps them to explore both spoken and written language, but they do not in class. Why this is so?
3. Many teachers believe that immediate correction of grammatical errors is not good, but they are seen correcting every error at the spot. What reasons do you suggest?
4. Most teachers correct grammatical errors by themselves though they believe in self and peer correction. What brings this incongruence?

DECLARATOIN

I, undersigned, declare that this thesis is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other university, and that all sources of materials for the thesis have been duly acknowledged.

Name: Yirgalem Bekele Mengistu

Signature:



Place: Addis Ababa

Date of submission: June, 2009