

**ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY  
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES**

**LEARNER- CENTER INSTRUCTION IN TEACHER  
TRAINING INSTITUTES OF AMHARA REGION**

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**MAY, 2000**

**LEARNER-CENTERED INSTRUCTION IN TEACHER  
TRAINING INSTITUTES OF AMHARA REGION**

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**By  
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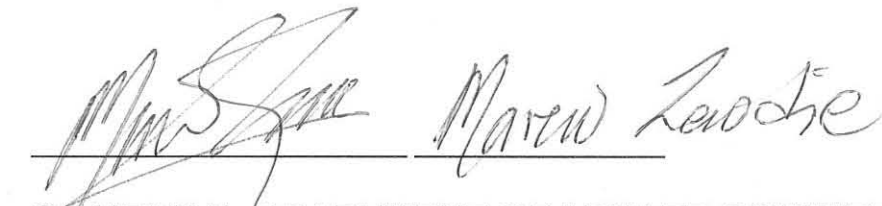
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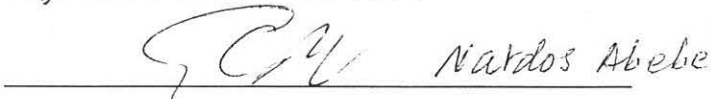
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## ABBREVIATIONS

The following acronyms appear in the text. Each of them is to be used with the meaning stated in front of it.

EC	-	Ethiopian Calander
EMMA	-	Educational Mass Media Agency
ICDR	-	Institute of Curriculum Development & Research
MOE	-	Ministry of Education
NETP	-	New Education and Training Policy
REB	-	Regional Education Bureau
TTI	-	Teacher Training Institute

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## ABSTRACT

*Teaching-learning process in Ethiopian educational institutions is intended to be more of learner-centered, for it would result in a better student learning.*

*In light of this assumption, this study was designed to test whether the teaching-learning process in TTIs of Amhara Region was oriented more towards learner-centered instruction or teacher-centered instruction. The study was also directed towards identifying problems encountered by the TTIs in applying learner-centered instructional methods.*

*To this effect necessary data was gathered using observation checklist having six major instructional dimensions, sublimented by questionnaire and photograph camera.*

*Observational data was secured from 13 randomly selected English Language Classrooms out of a total of 26 sections of the TTIs. Questionnaire data, on the other hand, was collected from 13 respondents (seven English Language Teachers, two Language Department Heads, and four Principals and Vice-principals) who are selected based on availability sampling. The collected data was then analyzed using percentage methods of data analysis.*

*The results of the study indicated that all dimensions of instruction, except class arrangement and resources, tended to associate more to teacher-centered instructional approach than learner-centered instructional approach.*

*It was also found out that poor institutional facilities, cynicism and sabotage of some personnel, teachers' lack of knowledge and skills on learner-centered teaching methods, and inadequacy of time were the major problems that hindered the teaching-learning approach from being more of learner-centered.*

*At last, exchange of experiences between TTIs, arrangement of continuous short-term in-service teacher education, and principals' commitment in improving educational facilities and fostering healthy educational environment are forwarded, as recommendations, to mitigate the problems.*

# CHAPTER ONE

## 1.1 Background of the Problem

Educational institutions are established with a view that they would help to address the needs and demands of the individual and the society at large. Individual and societal needs and demands are often reflected in the stated educational objectives of a given country.

The realization of these educational objectives requires the consideration of several questions such as what, how, why, when and whom to teach. The what of education (what to teach) and the how of education (how to teach) are but the basic ones (Clarizio, 1981:2). Walklin (1990:30) also added that "learning which is meaningful and relevant depends partly on what is taught, and partly on how it is taught". Of course, many educators, particularly of the past, attach a great value to and are more concerned with the what of education. But, the how of education is also as important as the what of education to achieve intended educational objectives. In connection with this, Azeb (1984:9) says: "...not only what one is taught but also how he is taught is of paramount importance in bringing about any change." Because it is hardly possible to materialize a planned curriculum unless we select and employ the teaching strategy that fits the purpose.

A close examination of existing literature on the area of instruction suggests the presence of two dominant instructional approaches, the teacher centered approach and the student-centered approach (Amare, 1998).

Of the two approaches, the learner centered instructional approach has won acceptance by many educational systems of different countries, including ours. However, it is the teacher-centered approach that prevails in classrooms of most educational institutions. Many reasons can be cited to this problem. One of them is lack of training of teachers in learner-centered methods. In order to practice learner-centered methods at school level would be teachers in TTIs must, first, pass through and be familiar with learner-centered teaching-learning methods.

Currently learner-centered teaching-learning methods are given emphasis more than ever before. In the new education and training policy, it is indicated that education will be directed towards the development of "the physical and emotional potential and the problem solving capacity of individuals" (Transitional Government of Ethiopia, Education and Training Policy, 1994:7). To materialize objectives such as this, the recommended strategy is stated as follows:

The teaching/learning process shall emphasize problem solving... Teaching need to be as much as possible coordinated and integrated with research and development (Transitional Government of Ethiopia, Education Sector Strategy, 1994:15)

The implication of this is that the teaching-learning process in Ethiopian Educational Institutions is required to be learner-centered. Because a learner centered instruction is characterized by problem solving, student participatory and inquiry oriented teaching-learning strategy (Borich, 1988).

Besides, English classrooms which are the focal subjects of this study are said to be convenient to make instruction trainee centered. Because they highly demand classroom interaction for the development of language skills -- speaking, writing, listening and reading. In addition, cursory observation suggests the learner-centeredness of the English language curriculum materials at TTI level. However, whether, the interaction (student centeredness of instruction) is as it ought to be or not requires investigation. Because reviewing related literature suggests the lack of studies made on the area.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

The main purpose of the study was to investigate the nature of instruction in TTIs of Amhara Region. The main intention was to identify whether the teaching-learning approach was trainee--centered or instructor-centered.

### **Research Questions**

To achieve the major objective described above the study mainly focused on answering the following questions.

1. What do the classroom lay-out and seating arrangement look like?
  - a. Are most of the classrooms equipped more with movable desks and chairs than fixed desks?
  - b. Are most of classroom sessions arranged in clusters of desks, students facing one another, or in traditional rows?

2. What is the "format" of instruction?
  - Is teaching directed to "class divided into groups" more frequent than teaching directed to the "whole class"?
3. Who is the dominant figure in classroom-talk?
  - a. Is the ratio of student-talk to teacher-talk greater?
  - b. Is the ratio of student-led recitation to teacher - led recitation greater?
4. How is student class activity?

Is the proportion of students' time working on projects/class works, and different practices more than students' time taken by a) listening to teacher, radio, etc; b) watching film; c) taking tests?
5. How is student evaluation conducted?
  - Does the teacher encourage students to evaluate their learning?
6. What problems do TTIs encounter in attempting to implement a learner-centered instruction?

### **1.3 Significance of the Study**

Although a student-centered instructional approach has won great acceptance by many educators, in practice, it has remained anomalous for a long time (Amare, 1998).

These days a learner-centered instructional approach is given a top emphasis (Transitional Government of Ethiopia, Education and Training Policy, 1994). However, the practice is not well evaluated so far. This study

is, therefore, helpful in assessing the current state of learner-centered instruction at TTI level. More specifically, the study is believed to be useful in the following aspects.

1. To provide answers to the basic questions described above.
2. It would help concerned bodies (such as instructional leaders, instructors, policy makers and other education personnel) to have a better recognition about the state of learner-centered teaching-learning in the Teacher Training Institutes of Amhara Region.
3. Conclusions drawn from the analysis and recommendations forwarded will contribute to the improvement of teaching-learning in TTIs.
4. It would also help concerned personnel to be aware, in advance, of the common problems that could hamper the practice of learner-centered instruction.
5. It would also provide important data and information for those who would pursue further study in the area of teaching-learning, in general, and learner-centered instruction in particular.

#### **1.4 Delimitation of the Study**

There is no educational level restriction in the application of a learner-centered teaching-learning strategy. It is required to be applied at every level of the education system with possible variations required by each level. However, the researcher decided to limit his study to TTI level.

Two main reasons necessitated this decision. First, the researcher believes that a student-centered teaching-learning approach should start at teacher training level. Because would be teachers could not be learner-centered instructors unless they pass through it while learning. Teachers teach the way they were taught than they were told how to teach. They would imitate more of what they "saw" than what they "heard" and "read" (Amare 1998:44). Second, the researcher's belief that the preparation of a learner-centered teaching methodology training module by Bedru Kedir (1998) to teachers, particularly at TTI level, would facilitate his study.

Being convinced by these two reasons, the researcher delimited the study to focus on TTI level. Currently, there are about 10 TTIs in five regions of Ethiopia (Ministry of Education, Education Management Information System, 1998). It is, therefore, difficult for the researcher to conduct a study in all of these TTIs because of constraints like researcher's inability of vernacular languages, inadequate time and other resources.

Hence, the study was limited to one region, Region 3 (Amhara), which has two TTIs. The region was selected purposely because of two reasons.

1. Language convenience (for the researcher speaks and writes better in Amharic than any other vernacular languages); and
2. The presence of colleagues of the researcher in the two TTIs which would facilitate the access to and collection of information.

## 1.5 Limitation of the Study

Observational study is expensive in terms of both time and expertise. It might be prudent to observe a wider sample of sections and subjects. As a result this study was limited to 13 sections and one subject though it would have been more comprehensive had other subjects been included.

In addition, because of lack of related literature of Ethiopian nature, the researcher relied more on foreign literature. Despite these shortcomings, however, it was attempted to make the study as complete as possible.

## 1.6 Operational Definition of Concepts

For the sake of clarity and consistency, the following terms are defined in accordance with the context they are used in the study.

**1. Instruction** any deliberation in the teaching-learning process which is intended to promote the learning of teacher-trainees in a formal setting.

**2. Learner-centered Instruction** is an instructional approach where:-

- (a) chairs and tables are light and moveable and the seating arrangement is in clusters of desks or around a table rather than in rows;
- (b) teaching is directed towards "classes divided in to groups" rather than to whole class;
- (c) learners are engaged in individual and small group work activities;
- (d) learners interact each other and with the teacher;
- (e) the process of significant discussions and reaction led by learners;

(f) learners have more freedom to move, express opinion and needs, ask questions and respond to questions; and (g) learners evaluate their progress, and the teaching-learning process as well.

3. **Teacher-centered instruction** is instructional approach where:-
  - (a) chairs and tables are fixed and the seating arrangement is in rows;
  - (b) teaching is directed to whole class;
  - (c) the major role of learners is to listen to teachers talk and radio, and watch films;
  - (d) the teacher talks much, most discussions and recitations are led by a teacher;
  - (e) learners must request and get permission from the teacher to ask, answer, express opinion and move about; and
  - (f) evaluating students' learning is completely the authority of the teacher.
4. **Teacher Training Institute (TTI)** an institution responsible for the training of would-be teachers of the First Cycle (grades 1-4) of Ethiopian primary education.

## CHAPTER TWO

### 2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

#### 2.1 The Nature of Teaching/Instruction

The informal practice of teaching existed long time ago, since the creation of man on earth (Chauhan, 1979). A relatively systematic treatment of it, however, can be traced to the time "when tribal priests systematized bodies of knowledge and cultures" (Saettler, 1968:11).

A more formal approach of teaching, on the other hand, may be associated to the time of Jusuits, 16<sup>th</sup> c. (NEK-International Consultancy, 1999). According to this author, Jusuits opened schools and teacher training colleges in Europe and began to select, train and supervise teachers of theology and philosophy.

Since then, many educators approached teaching scientifically and attempted to formulate a universally applicable concept of teaching. However, they could not come up with single and common definition of teaching, because of several difficulties associated to it.

One major difficulty arises from the vagueness of difference it has with the term "instruction"; the other comes from the many variables so interrelated to it (Anderson and Burns, 1989).

At the most general level, some educators (for example, Good as quoted by Anderson and Burns, 1989:) said "instruction is synonymous with teaching." In a specific sense, according to Anderson and Burns (1989), conflicting views exist:

while some educators consider instruction as a subset of teaching (i.e., as one of several teaching acts), others regard it as inclusive of teaching (i.e, teaching as one component of instruction).

Many educators, however, prefer the latter definition of instruction. Weil and Murphy (1982: 890), for example, considered instruction as "a broad term that may encompass most of the activities taking place in the classroom and the school as well as many activities taking place in the home".

Anderson and Burns (1989) also share this conception of instruction. Their argument is that "most teacher behaviors, student behaviors and teacher-student interactions occur more within the larger context of instruction" than teaching (p.9).

Concerning the concept of teaching, several authors forwarded their own definitions.

Amidon (1966) defines teaching as teacher-student interaction which mainly involves talk. Flanders et al (1970) considers teaching as an interactive process where there is a reciprocal influence between the teacher and students. Gage (1978) defines teaching as an activity directed at helping another person to learn. Anderson and Burns (1989) tend to accept Klauer's (1985) conception of teaching who regards it as an interpersonal activity in which two or more people learn. This interpersonal activity, as to Klauer quoted by Anderson and Burns (1989), can be two way where both the teacher and students talk and influence each other.

From the aforementioned definitions of teaching, it is possible to extract three common and important features: activity, interpersonal, and purposefulness.

- a. **Activity** - teaching is an activity; it is an action a person can observe it taking place (Robertson as quoted by Anderson and Burns, 1989).
- b. **Interpersonal** - "teaching is an interpersonal activity...; involves interactions between a teacher and one or more students" (Klauer as quoted by Anderson and Burns, 1989:7).
- c. **Purposefulness** - teaching is conducted with a purpose; it is directed towards learning. Though the term "teaching" does not imply that learning has taken place, it does imply that learning is intended (Anderson and Burns, 1989).

Out of these three common features of the different definitions of teaching, it is possible to develop a single definition. This can be stated as "teaching is an interpersonal, interactive activity, typically involving verbal communication, which is undertaken for the purpose of helping one or more students learn or change the ways in which they can or will behave" (Anderson and Burns, 1989:8). This definition seems to be the best, for it combines the three common features of the varied definitions of teaching.

In addition, for the sake of clarity in conceptualizing instruction different authors examine it by dividing into components; although the components are not mutually exclusive.

A summary of components of classroom instruction as conceptualized by different authors is illustrated in table 2.1.

**Table 2.1: Primary Components of Classroom Instruction**

Anderson & Burns	Gump	Weil/Murphy	Barr/Dreeben	Stodolsky	Cuban
Subjected Matter	Concern		Curriculum content	Subject matter	
Task Demands	Student activity	Instructional activities	Intellectual and social demands	Cognitive level	Class activities
Instructional Format	Teacher leadership pattern	Source of instruction		Instructional format	
Grouping Arrangement	Group quality	Group Size	Class organization	Expected Student Interaction	Group instruction
Time/facing/coverage	Action sequencing	Duration	Content, coverage/pacing	Pacing	
Classroom behaviors and interactions	Teacher and student behaviors	Teacher and student behaviors	pattern of instruction	Student behavior and student involvement	Classroom talk
					Classroom arrangement
					Student movement

**Source:** Anderson and Burns (1989, p.10 & 180)

This study follows Cuban's model of conceptualizing classroom instruction, with little modification. It is selected because it best fits the investigation of the problem under question. That is "is the teaching-learning in the TTIs trainee-centered or not?"

### 2.1.1 Learning Theories

Talking about instructional methods without a touch upon theories of learning would seem illogical and unacceptable. Because it is learning theories that can help us to know the methods and techniques of teaching (NEK-International

Consultancy, 1999). The decisions that a teacher makes in the classrooms are based on the learning assumptions she/he holds; and the methods she/he uses reflect her/his assumptions about how students learn. In short, learning theories provide a basis for the choice of instructional methods.

There are varied types of learning theories whose classification is based on different criteria. The most remarkable bases of classifying learning theories are shown in Table 2.2.

**Table 2.2: Classification of Learning Theories**

Basis of Classification	Type of Learning or Learning Theories
the Process of Learning	Trial and error, insight, training, imitation, and memorization, Farrant, 1980)
The output of learning	Affective, cognitive, and psychomotor (Ibid)
the Research findings on Learning	Stimulus-respondent, contiguity, operant, observational and cognitive (Gage and Berliner as quoted by Gage (1978).

Learning, according to distinguished scholars such as Herbart, Piaget, Gesell and Skinner as quoted by Farrant (1980), is considered as a process that progresses in stages. Table 2.3 depicts the summary of stages of learning developed by these renowned educators.

**Table 2.3: Stages of Learning**

Stage of Learning	According to Herbart	Piaget	Gesell	Skinner
1	Preparation	the sensory motor stage (0-2-yrs)	Paying attention	Learning is a series of experiences. Each learning experience is a stimulus that produces behavioral response.
2	Presentation	the intuitive stage (2-7 yrs)	gaining interest	
3	Association	the concrete-operational (1-11yrs)	Developing skills & understanding	
4	Systematization	the formal-operational (11-15yrs)	Experimenting	
5	Application		Applying learning	

**Source:** Farrant (1980:107-117)

Out of these proposed stages of learning, the stages forwarded by Gesell seems to be more relevant to learner-centered instructional approach, and hence discussed, further in the ensuing paragraphs.

**Paying Attention:** this refers to the cruciality of learners' careful listening observation, reading, and active thinking in order to acquire experience. The teacher, in his/her part, must also play a role in making the learning material appropriate to the age and experience of learners; a teacher can also raise and maintain the attention of his or her students by enriching the classroom with local materials which could, at the same time, provide relevant experience to learners.

**Gaining Interest:** interest is the engine of every human activity. It is the force that determines how much effort an individual should put into her/his learning. Unless a learner is interested to learn, teaching, whatever smart it is, remains fruitless. In other words, as Farrant (1980) put it, the battle is half-won if the learner develops interest to learn.

The implication of this to a teacher is that she/he must know what motivates learners to learn and how to apply the strategies of motivation.

Motivation to learning can be categorized into two broad classes: externally imposed motives and self imposed motives (Farrant, 1980; and Brandes and Ginnis, 1986).

External motives include the fear of a firm teacher (for example his punishment), and the hope of reward after achievement of good exam results. Externally imposed motives often result in shallow degree of learning.

Self imposed motives, on the other hand, refer to the "physical, intellectual or psychological needs of an individual which initiates her/him for learning" (Good, 1973:375) and in contrary to externally imposed motives, they go deep into the personality of the learner; they provide the learner with stronger support for learning than externally imposed motives (Brandes and Ginnis, 1986).

The problem, however, is that such motives often do not emerge at first; the teacher may have to supply it first. To do so, she/he has to depend on her/his ability of using the aim of her/his students. Because motivation is closely linked with aims and goals of individuals (Farrant, 1980).

In addition, connecting the new learning area with what learners already know is advantageous in raising learners internal motivation to learn (Ausebel as quoted by Brandes and Ginnis, 1986).

Seen generally, internal motives are better than external motives for effective learning; and this is what learner-centered educators argue for. But, in "the absence of any other kind, externally imposed motives are necessary and useful" (Farrant, 1980:115). Brandes and Ginnis (1986: 116) also share this view when they say "wisely used both can be effective and stimulating".

**Developing Skills & Understanding:** once learner's interest to learning is aroused, what should follow is the practice of developing skills. As to Farrant (1980:116) "skills are physical and mental abilities, the development of which require a higher degree of coordination between body and brain". The acquisition of skills is possible by continuous and repeated activity of the learner. Because, "Through activity, experience is more readily acquired, skills are more quickly learned and new learning encourages involvement . . ." (Farrant, 1980:116).

**Experimenting:** Once a learner possessed knowledge of skill his immediate desire is to experiment, or to practice it: this continues until they are fully integrated with his previous experience.

The implication of this for teacher educators is to use teaching-learning methods and techniques which are oriented more towards practicing or experimenting knowledge and skills. These might include micro-teaching, peer-teaching, practice teaching, debating, role playing, games, panel, etc in her/his instructional repertoire. These teaching-learning techniques seem, particularly, relevant in language teaching. Because all of them require the conscious activity of the learner; she/he has to exercise writing a text, speaking properly, listening actively, and reading skillfully. The very act of carrying out these exercises lead to learner development in language skills (speaking, reading, listening and writing).

**Applying Learning:** Gessel's last stage of learning refers to the relevance of learning to the practical world that learners are going to face, after graduation. The basic assumption that underlies this final stage of learning is that "the ultimate value of knowledge lies in using it" (Farrant 1980: p.117). That is, the skills, knowledge, and attitudes that a learner has learnt must be applicable to the actual world.

### **2.1.2 Trends and Prospects of Research on Teaching and Learning**

Scientific research on teaching has a short history. It was started during 1950s. The main purpose of research during these periods was to determine the criteria that could be used to identify effective teachers and effective teaching (Anderson, and Burns, 1989), Since then, the study of teaching has attracted many educators for it is found to be one of the most important variables that would determine students' learning (Wittrock, 1986).

A number of researches were also conducted, after the end of 1950s. Seen generally, the main purpose of these researches were to establish relationships among factors like teacher characteristics, teaching behavior, teaching strategies and learning out comes.

The assumption that underlies these researches was that students' learning is highly dependent on the quality of instruction that instructors provide (Anderson and Burns, 1989).

Most investigations conducted during the last few decades were directed to the formulation of models of teaching that would have direct impacts on the learning of students (Bellon, et al, 1992). These studies, according to Doyle (1983), were conducted on the belief that effective teacher behaviors and teaching skills could be identified and taught to trainees so that their learning achievement would be enhanced.

As to research trends on teaching in Ethiopia, MOE conducted a study in 1986 (Tekeste, 1990). Others conducted on the teaching of specific subject areas such as Teacher-pupil Interaction in English Language Classrooms (Abdulkader, 1983) and in Mathematics Classes (McCaul, 1994); Questioning Techniques of TTI Instructors (Biadgelign Adem, 1995); Strategies of Learning in Mathematics (Zekaria Yusuf, 1996); Effective Use of Explanation Technique (Elias Nasir, 1996); and Analysis of Geography Instruction (Abdulaziz Hussien, 1999).

Concerning the prospect of research on teaching, scholars have conflicting views. Some such as Hight and Forman and Chapman as quoted by Clarizio (1981:18) contend that educational "research may, if at all, contribute little in solving problems." Some others argue that it is practically impossible to conduct study that could contribute to the improvement of teaching. Hight, as quoted by Clarizio (1983:18), for example, states that teaching is not a science, it is an art. It is, as to him, "more like painting a picture or composing music than inducing a chemical reaction", and hence, conducting research is a futile exercise. Other pessimists, even, went on to the extent of saying: "The only constant in educational research is the continuity of ambiguity,... education moves forward in ignorance" (Gage, 1978).

Other scholars like Gage (1978); and Walberg et al as quoted by Clarizio (1981), however, hold optimistic view on research. Gage (1978) argues that research "has not proved to be altogether barren of a scientific basis for the art of teaching"; "educational research has... yielded useful knowledge about relationships between teaching behaviors and student achievement"(p.91).

Walberg et al as quoted by Clarizio (1981:18) also added 'recent reviews of research yield a number of consistent, positive result with definite policy and practical implications.' They argue that 'existing pessimism is due to examining the results of single studies rather than attempting to synthesize the research and discover convergent findings.' (p.18).

What comes in middle of these two contradicting views is cautious optimistic view -- a view which contends that research, indeed, can help the advancement of teaching, but "we should not hope grand solutions or universal panacea" (Forman and Chapman as quoted by Clarizio, et al 1981:18).

This view seems the most acceptable one for advancement in education, (and in any other field for that matter) as a result of impossibility of research results in an overnight; it requires time and effort of integrating individual research attempts.

## 2.2 Instructional Methods

The terms " methods", "techniques" and "approaches" are commonly found in literature of instruction. But, writers often use them confusingly, with out clear demarcation. In this study, however, these terms are used with the definitions given by NEK-International Constancy (1999). NEK-International Consultancy (1999:61-62) defines these terms, as applied to teaching-learning, as follows:

**Approach:** A set of assumptions dealing with the nature of teaching and learning.

**Method:** An overall plan in the systematic presentation of knowledge based upon a selected approach.

**Technique:** Specific activities manifested in the classroom that are consistent with the method and therefore in harmony with the approach as well.

Out of these terms, the frequently used term in most literature of instruction is "method"; and many scholars assert that teaching methods have their roots in Greece education. Those teaching methods associated with language and

literature, such as memorization and analogical reasoning, were the most emphasized teaching methods in that ancient time (NEK-International Consultancy, 1999:62).

However, after 1592, great educators like Comenius, Pestalozzi, Froebel, and Herbart emerged with the following scientific conceptions of teaching methods (NEK-International Consultancy, 1999:62).

- a) Comenius came up with ideas like "experience is a starting point; . . . content should be in relation to the learner's development; teachers should encourage discovery learning."
- b) Pestalozzi stressed that "teaching methods should be in accordance with the development pattern of children growth."
- c) Froebel emphasized "the self activity of the child."
- d) Herbart forwarded five teaching activities to be run in steps. These are: preparation, presentation, association, assimilation and application.

Generally, Farrant (1980:5) and Cuban in Anderson and Burns (1989:325) ascribed the movement from teacher-centered instruction to student-centered instruction to two main reasons. The first is the change in educational ideas; that is, the change of idea about child development, the role of the school, classroom authority, and subject matter in instruction. The second is the focus on and effective implementation of new teaching methods and least attention given to traditional methods of instruction.

Probably, students' revolt for the maintenance of their needs and interests in the school could be mentioned as a third reason (Ebel, 1981:4).

According to NEK-International Consultancy (1999:63), the new educational views of psychologists also influenced the conception of teaching and learning methods. Three major schools of thought emerged and influenced the conception of teaching methods. These are:

- a) the behaviorist school which believes that environment influence the learning behavior of learner;
- b) the humanistic school, which believes that the effectiveness of teaching methods depend on the quality of the relationship between a teacher and a learner for every individual is unique; and
- c) the cognitive school of thought, which emphasizes on the importance of "mental processes such as thinking, reasoning, and problem-solving" for learning.

In general, there are different views about how teaching takes place, and what can be implied from this is, the possibility of developing multiple teaching and learning methods. These multiple methods of teaching can be put into a continuum, the teacher-centered model and the student-centered model of teaching being found at the opposite extreme poles of the continuum (Brandes and Ginnis, 1986; and NEK-International Consultancy, 1999).

### **2.3 Classification of Instructional Methods**

An individual reviewing written materials on the area of instruction could come up with varied classifications of instructional methods, such as teacher centered vs student centered methods, direct instruction vs indirect instruction, conventional vs non-conventional methods, and traditional vs modern methods of instruction.

All of them, however, have a common basis of classification - the degree of learner participation in classroom teaching (NEK-International Consultancy, 1999:69).

Gage (1978:14), based on the number of learners at whom teaching is directed, has forwarded four categories where each of them consists of a set of teaching methods.

- A. Tutoring, seat work, and computer-assisted instruction: these are methods where teaching is directed at one learner at a time.
- B. Discussion methods, role playing, simulations, and games: methods where teaching is directed at 2 to 20 learners at a time.
- C. Classroom teaching (such as recitation): methods where teaching is directed at 20 to 40 students.
- D. Lecture, film shows, television and radio: methods where teaching could be directed at 40 or more learners.

Azeb (1984), on the other hand, assumes the presence of two broad categories of instructional methods: those that are used to process information (acquisition of knowledge); and those that are used to integrate theory and practice (application of

knowledge). The emphasis of a learner-centered approach seems to be on the second category because of a belief that mere emphasis on acquisition of knowledge will lead to "mechanical memorization" (Friere, 1992) or "second order change"/"pseudo learning" rather than "first order change"/ "true learning" (Whitlock, 1984:2).

Out of the aforementioned classifications of instructional methods, the most popular and dominantly used by many educators is the teacher-centered vs the learner-centered instructional methods.

A further consideration of this classification scheme, thus, seems to be necessary.

### **2.3.1 Teacher-centered Methods of Instruction**

The teacher-centered model of teaching is characterized by a situation where:

- emphasis is on theory rather than on practice;
- learning out put is considered more important than the process of arriving at it;
- instruction is directed to the 'whole class';
- the teacher is the center of classroom activities;
- the teacher is considered as all knowing;
- the teacher often talks much, (and that is why it is sometimes called 'chalk and talk' method);
- the teacher writes detailed notes of facts on the blackboard and students copy it passively;
- the teacher encourages learners to memorize facts from their textbook;

- the teacher asks students (almost in the form of obligation) to recite, repeat or reproduce what they have learnt;
- instruction follows a logical sequence of presentation which may include reviewing previous lesson, checking home work, presenting new subject matter, guided practice, and feed back, independent seat work, and finally evaluation of learners' performance, in written or orally (Plass, 1998; and Kaplan, 1990).

In addition to all the above, one basic feature of this teaching model is that of the teacher being ownership of the learning process; students and the teacher himself assume that he is responsible for students learning. In other words, "the authority to make and carry out decisions is placed almost entirely in the hands of the teacher (Brander and Ginnis, 1986:2). This is clarified by these same authors as follow:

The teacher . . . decides on the syllabus, chooses the methods, selects the resources, creates exercises and tasks, and decides when, where, how and even why things are to be done (p. 27).

In general, any teaching method in which the teacher is active and the learners are passive recipients of information can be called a teacher-centered model of teaching; and the most common teaching methods that can be included under this model are lecture, demonstration, and question and answer teaching method (NEK-International Consultancy, 1999).

### 2.3.2 Learner-Centered Methods of Instruction

The coining of the term 'student-centered learning', according to Brandes and Ginnis (1986: x), is attributed to Rogers (1965). A number of related terms also exist in literature of instruction. Brandes and Ginnis (1986:10) have listed many of these terms along with respective creators. These are: "Student-centered Learning (Rogers), Enquiry (Socrates), Experimental (Dewy), Humanistic (Weinstein), Confluent (Brown), Androgogy (Knowles), Progressive (Bennet), and Active Tutorial work (Button)".

One can also find other terms such as Active Learning, and Participatory Learning (Brandes and Ginnis, 1986); Engaged, Interactive, and Discovery Learning (Rogers, 1969); Child-centered instruction, Adaptive Instruction and Informal methods (Anderson and Burns, 1989:347).

According to Brandes and Ginnis (1986:10) "All of these terms have some common themes though they are not completely synonymous." However, they preferred the term student-centered, for "it best describes a system of providing learning which has the student at its heart." Yet, the problem with this term is that people misconceive it as an excessive student power which would result in unwarranted and damaging effect though it is a realistic response to what is known about the development, interest and characteristics of children (Farrant, 1980:128).

Another problem associated with this term is the lack of single universally applicable definition of student-centered instruction or learning. In relation to this McKeachie (1963: 556) said ". . . different people have meant different things by

student centered teaching". It varies from "classes in which the instructor lays out a course out line, makes assignments, and actively guides discussion, to classes in which almost all course planning is done" jointly and complete freedom to students reflected by such questions like "what would you like to talk about today?" (McKeachie, 1963: 553).

### **Assumptions Underlying Learner-centered Instruction**

Any scientific theory embodies assumptions and beliefs upon which it is based. Similarly, there are assumptions upon which the theory of learner-centered learning is based upon. Brandes and Ginnis (1986), based on the works of Carl Rogers and others, have noted the following assumptions of learner-centered instruction.

- A. An individual has the capacity to make any personal changes. That is, learners are not empty vessels; every individual with no brain damage and with the absence of learning obstacles, is capable of learning, reasoning, thinking etc.
- B. Positive regard produces respect and love among individuals, without any risk of losing control; it produces an atmosphere of acceptance and cooperation, "where a feeling of trust becomes so solid that it is evident in every word the students say to each other" (Brands and Ginnis, 1986: 56).
- C. A normal individual is willing to change and develop. She/he also has resistance and fear about changing.

- D. One cannot teach any one any thing. An individual is responsible for his behavior and learning. He can participate or not as she/he chooses. Learning cannot be made compulsory, real learning is the out growth of the willingness and effort of an individual.
- E. An individual has the capacity to discover within himself and learn from relationships that he observed from others.

### **Principles of Learner-centered Instruction**

Out of the basic assumptions of a given theory, it is possible to develop guiding principles. Similarly, Brandes and Ginnis (1986:12-17), based on the different progressive school of thoughts, have underscored the following principles.

**Responsibility:** Learners either in group or individually, have full responsibility for their own learning. They have responsibility for participating in choosing and planning the curriculum, initiating and directing their learning, and evaluating their progress. The implication of this is that the teacher should have trust on a learner that she/he can shoulder the responsibility of her/his learning provided that appropriate learning environment is made available. In this context, the teacher is required to play a role of facilitator and resource person rather than controller and imposer of tasks. This is to say that the teacher and learners conduct learning in a relatively free choice of topics that interest them rather than the teacher choosing and imposing learning tasks on student. Because "to impose from above is opposing expression and cultivation of individuality" (p.11).

**Relevance:** The subject matter to be taught should be relevant and meaningful to learners. The argument behind this is that it is more likely that "people will decide to learn when they see that a piece of learning is relevant" (p.18). Relevance calls for flexible learning aims, discipline that keep in touch of life problems or learning tasks that have some connection with students previous experience and learning that predominantly considers present life rather than remote future.

Taking note of the three assumptions raised by Brandes and Ginnis (1986:11) seems relevant here.

- "to emphasize on static aims and materials is to oppose acquaintance with a changing world" (Dewey as quoted by Ibid, p.11).
- "to emphasize on external discipline is opposing free activity",
- "to emphasize on preparation for more or less remote future is opposing making the most of all opportunities of personal life".

Making learning relevant to students can be accomplished in part by involving students in choosing the curriculum out of the specified syllabus. The logic behind this intention is that there would be no learner resistance to learning for they are doing what they have chosen to do so; and because<sup>of</sup> the assumption, accepted by many progressive educators, that "Good learners seem to know what is relevant to their survival and what is not, they are apt to resent being told what is good for them to know, (Postman and Weingartner as quoted by (Brands and Ginnis, 1986:15).

**Participation:** Learner involvement and participation are crucially important factors. Because, as Sampath et al (1984:10) put it, the learner should participate "whole heartedly" in the learning process if she/he is needed to be successful.

Learner participation and involvement in learning is advantageous because of the assumption that "... learning is the human activity which least needs manipulation by others" (Brandes and Ginnis, 1986:13).

In relation to this Lowman (1984) has noted that knowledge is not taught but learned. No instructor can make students learn unless they are interested and devoted. Dyer as quoted by Amare (1998) has been reflecting similar view when he says: "no one can teach any one else anything, in the sense of implementing knowledge or skills in passive student" (p.43).

Involvement of a learner in the learning process is also advantageous for it avoids the problems of punishment and reward system of teaching. That is the learner abandons his need for outside approval (which is common in the traditional classroom teaching) if she/he is fully involved in the learning process; learning is to be turned to an end in it self for the learner (Brandes and Ginnis, 1986).

The basic question here, thus, is how can a teacher attain learners' involvement in classroom teaching.

One major technique of involving learners is asking them questions preferably open ended questions rather than close ended questions (Brandes and Ginnis, 1986: and Borich, 1988). A learner-centered teacher allows any one to participate with out criticism even if she/he makes mistakes; he sees every mistake of a learner as a learning point rather than as a weakness (Brandes and Ginnis, 1986)

Ensuring class participation is also possible by enriching the classroom with local materials and audio-visual teaching materials which could be challenging to learners, and, at the same time, stimulating learners for active participation. Indeed, "audiovisual materials, if properly used, offer great opportunities for improving learning" (Sampath, et al, 1984: 32).

**Activity:** The basic assumptions embodied in the idea of activity for learning are: humans "learn best by doing, and find interest and enjoyment in activity" (Farrant, 1980:133) and "man develops himself through his own activity (Azeb, 1984:9). Furthermore, the common quotation noted by Farrant (1980: 134) seems to reflect this view: "I hear and I forget, I see and I remember; I do and I understand".

What can be inferred from this is that worthwhile learning is acquired through activity (or doing) though there are other methods of learning such as listening, reading, observing etc. Indeed, activity is the road to true knowledge, and "the greatest intellectuals have been those who learned primarily by doing (Dyre as quoted by Amare, 1998:46). However, sadly, there is an almost complete neglect of learning by doing in Ethiopian educational institutions (Amare, 1998); rote memorization is the prevalent learning method and the evaluation system calls for this.

**Interaction and Cooperation:** Similar to most jobs, effective learning requires cooperation or one another's help. Interaction between teacher and learners, and among learning groups enhances the effectiveness of the learning process as opposed to mere teacher's narration, verbalization or lecturing. In other words, there must be two way communication (between learners and the teacher) for teaching to be effective; there must be exchange of ideas. Because, without exchange of ideas, there can be no genuine communication, and without genuine communication, there can be no true learning.

Interaction and cooperation among the learning groups are particularly very relevant in language learning. Because they highly enhance the acquisition and development of language skills (speaking, listening, reading and writing). A teacher, hence, should encourage habits of helpfulness among learners (Farrant, 1980). This could be applied by employing group work and discussion methods of teaching.

**Individual Difference:** Every person is unique; her/his style of learning differs from others; that is, every person learns best in different ways and at different rates. For example "some people remember more easily if they can argue and talk through information; others prefer to do it on their own" (Brandes and Ginnis, 1986: 61).

So, the basic question is "why should we force them all into the same mould of learning" (Brands and Ginnis, 1986: 61) or why should we force them all "to go through the same steps of learning at the same speed" (Sampath et al, 1984:9).

If we are not providing mere lip service to the principle of individual difference, active students need to be allowed to move faster in their learning whereas the slow learners need to be provided more time. The implication to the teacher is that he "... should use individualized as well as small group instruction along with the traditional large group class instruction, arrange for a variety of alternative and varied learning experiences" to meet individual learning differences of the students (Sampath, et al, 1984:4).

**Multi-sensory Approach:** Individuals learn best if they use their senses. Because, as Sampath, et al (1984:5) put it, "our senses are gate ways to acquire knowledge". Utilization of more than one sense in learning is much more better than using a single sense. As research results revealed, on the average, a person remembers: 20 percent of what he hears, 30 percent of what he sees, 50 percent of what he see and hears, 80 percent of what he says, and 90 percent of what he says and do as (Sampath, et al. 1984).

The implication of this is that the teacher should use as many audio-visual teaching materials as possible in his teaching.

**Teacher-Student Relationship:** Chauhan (1983) asserts that the relation between students and teacher is an important factor that determines the classroom learning process and 'must be considered an important aspect of methodology' (p. 141). This is because education is not merely an information dispensing and absorbing process; it requires a comradeship of sharing and exchanging of experiences postlethwait in Sherma 1990). The learner-teacher relationship need to be not

only interactive but also egalitarian type; there should be no teacher-learner polarization; there should be almost no social and physical distance between the teacher and learners if learners are required to develop confidence and achieve the learning.

### **Rationale of Learner-Centered Methods of Instruction**

Some educators like McKeachie (1963) argue that comparative studies on the effectiveness of the student-centered methods of teaching and teacher-centered methods of teaching are full of controversies. Other writers such as NEK-International Consultancy (1999) however, contend that most research results on this same issue are in favour of student-centered methods.

Currently, most educators and countries including Ethiopia seem to be convinced by the latter view. Because they are strongly advocating for and incorporating student-centered methods of instruction in their educational policies as well as in their curriculum.

The basic rationale upon which the preference of student-centered methods to teacher-centered methods would include the following.

**Individual Difference:** proponents of student-centered teaching methods believe that a student-centered teaching method ensures learners preferences, interests and needs; and this by implication is maintenance of equality among learners. It avoids a class of superiority and inferiority; it rather fosters democratic ways of doing things, mutual respect, and egalitarian relationship between the teacher and students, and among students themselves.

A teacher-centered method on the other hand hardly considers learner individual differences. Good and Brophy (1989: 420) maintained this view when they say teacher who persist with whole class methods:

tended to leave high achievers under challenged, or in the case of foreign language classes, to use the high achievers as the steering group that determined the pacing of the class as a whole through the curriculum. Here, the high achievers appeared to be the only students who enjoyed the classes.

**Development of Whole Person:** Student-centered learning ensures self fulfillment, increase of empathy, release of potential, and increase of maturity -- in short, the development of 'whole person; a development not limited only to intellect (cognition) but also practical and affective aspects of learning.

Brandes and Ginnis (1986) further argue that learning is confluent, in student-centered methods. That is, "... the affective and cognitive domains flow together. While he is thinking, the learner is also feeling; while he is feeling, he is thinking" (p.14).

**Development of Confidence:** In a student-centered teaching, the teacher allows every learner to interact, values the views and opinions aired by learners, and treats them normally, even when they, in group or individually, make mistakes. As a result every learner in the class develops confidence - a feeling that "I am important person; able to determine my own fate, and able to learn independently as well as cooperatively" (Brandes and Ginnis, 1986).

**Creativity:** In a student-centered method of teaching the teacher emphasizes on eliciting divergent views and finding better ways of solving problems. This enhances the release of learners creative potential. Besides, it "ensures diversified products for it is not dependent on prescribed syllabus" (Brands and Ginnis, 1986:62).

**Transferable Skills:** Since the student-centered method of teaching focuses on practice and active methods of learning, the skills and knowledge acquired through it are helpful to function in a society, in general, and to meet the realities of classroom, in particular (Callahan and Clark, 1988). In other words, learners who pass through a student-centered method of learning can acquire skills and attitudes which enable them to live as a useful member of the community (Brandes and Ginnis, 1986).

**Improvement and Motivation of Teachers:** It is not only learners who are beneficiaries of student-centered methods of instruction, but also teachers. While the teacher contemplates and designs a wider alternative teaching-learning methods and techniques each day, she/he improves his professional knowledge and skills.

A competent student-centered teacher would also, undoubtedly, receive positive feedback from her/his students; and this motivates him/her to work diligently.

To conclude, it is possible to list many advantages of learner-centered methods of instruction. However, its contribution to the development of learner as a 'whole person', learner confidence, learner creative ability, transferable skills, improvement and motivation of teachers and its consideration of differences of learners are, but, the basic ones..

Inspite of all these rationale of learner-centered methods of instruction, it is its opposite approach - the teacher-centered method - which has been practiced and being practiced in school systems. Many schools and teachers are reluctant in adapting the learner-centered methods. Several reasons may be accounted to this.

One major reason is lack of structural change of the school and the classroom which suits learner-centered instruction. It is noted by Pearce as quoted by Amare (1998) that the physical arrangement of classroom furniture, to a great extent, determines the kind of teaching method to be used.

The second reason is lack of utilization of learner-centered methods in the teacher training institutes. Many teachers like and tend to teach in a teacher-centered methods, they themselves having been taught that way, and it is difficult to abandon the age-long way of teaching because habits die hard (Cuban in Anderson and Burns, 1989).

The third one is perception of teachers. Many teachers tend to stick to teacher-centered methods of teaching because they believe that these are more safer and comfortable than learner-centered methods. Learner-centered methods, according to them, are difficult because they would create anarchy and chaos for the teacher will lose ownership and power.

Related to this Brandes and Ginnis (1986:27) say: "many fear that teachers power, reputation and position will collapse if the teaching-learning functions which were possessed by a teacher are shifted to students and the group. They think, without these functions, the job would lose status and credibility" (p.27).

The fourth reason is teachers' need to get satisfaction. Teachers are qualified in their subjects; they know; and they are not satisfied until they have told their pupils what they know (Hargreaves as quoted by Brandes and Ginnis, 1986).

This implies that teachers stick to teacher-centered methods of instruction because they receive better satisfaction " through the control of children [learners], through the opportunity to perform in front of a captive audience with effective techniques" (Lipson as quoted by Amare, 1998:43).

The final reason is the culture of teaching itself which appears to tilt towards stability (Chauhan, 1979). The factor that has contributed to this is the attitude of the society. In the face of society, it is knowledge giver teacher who is more appreciable and valued than learning facilitator and resource person teacher (Brandes and Ginnis, 1986).

## **Basic Characteristics of Learner-centered Instruction**

It might be hard to differentiate learner-centered instruction from the traditional teacher-centered instruction because of lack of a single definition of each terms.

However, several educators mentioned different dimensions and indicators, some of them are similar except the style of expression, that distinguish learner-centered teaching from teacher-centered teaching.

1. Rogers (1969) and Farrant (1980) consider variety and activity as the most important features of learner-centered instruction.

Rogers (1969) argues that lecturing is almost the only mode of instruction in a teacher-centered teaching approach. Whereas the learner-centered teaching approach relies up on varied teaching methods and techniques, but with a less clear demarcation between them, all tending to be activity methods rather than rote methods.

Eventhough some wrongly conceive activity as those that require physical movement, it also involves all those which require mental activity such as reading, composing, active listening, etc (Farrant, 1980:133).

The theoretical basis for the emphasis on activity in a learner-centered teaching approach is that "efficient learning depends on well chosen and well managed activities" (Ibid). Furthermore, the importance of activity in learning can be best described by a common saying: " I hear and I forget, I see and I remember, I do and I understand" (Farrant, 1980: 134).

The inclusion of 'student activities' as one part of a lesson plan format, and teachers' making note of student activities in their lesson plan is a good indicator of recognition given to the importance of activity in the learning process.

2. Brandes and Ginnis (1986:74) characterize student-centered instruction as:

- learner, seating together instead of in rows,
- learner, speaking openly and honestly to each other;
- learner, freedom to participate or not; and
- participatory decision making where both students and the teacher together formulate learning objectives, select contents and methods and evaluate learning progress

3 Cuban in Anderson and Burns (1984:178) identified five dimension of instruction upon which he draws differences between learner-centered and instructor-centered instruction. These are: class arrangement, group instruction, classroom talk, class activities and student movement. Under each dimension of instruction, he, further, identified subcategories which are specific indicators of the

two models of instruction. The summary of his identification of dimensions and indicators in learner-centered instruction as well as teacher-centered instruction are illustrated by table 2.4.

**Table 2.4: Patterns, Dimensions and Indicators of Instruction**

Dimensions	Specific Indicators of	
	Student-centered Instruction	Teacher-centered Instruction
Class Arrangement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learners sit at movable chairs arranged in cluster.</li> <li>• No seats are arranged in rows.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teachers sit at movable chairs in rows facing the teacher and/or the blackboard.</li> </ul>
Group Instruction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Class divided into groups</li> <li>• Learners engaged in individuals and small group activities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Instruction directed to the whole class</li> <li>• Teacher works with individual student while the rest of class works at desks.</li> </ul>
Classroom Talk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student-led discussion or recitation.</li> <li>• Students talk in groups or with individuals</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No student in class talks; all listen teacher's talk silently</li> <li>• Teacher-led recitation or discussion</li> </ul>
Class Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Class divided into small groups</li> <li>• Students work individually or in small groups</li> <li>• Students lead discussion or recitation.</li> <li>• Students working on projects or centers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• students working at desks</li> <li>• Teacher talking (Lecturing, explaining, giving directions, reading to class,...)</li> <li>• Teacher checking students' classwork or homework.</li> <li>• Students taking test, watching film, listening to radio,..</li> <li>• Teacher-led recitation or discussion</li> </ul>

**Source:** Cuban in Anderson and Burns (1989:180).

4. Mckeachie (1963), on the other hand, identified several dimension of differences between the two major instructional methods as follows:

**Participation in Goal-Setting:** In a student-centered instructional 'method, the accent is on cooperative group work; and learning goal is set by the group, including both learners and the instructor. Whereas in a teacher-centered instructional methods, the teacher alone decides on the learning goal.

**Type of Goal Emphasized:** The teacher-centered model of teaching often emphasizes on the attainment of intellectual or cognitive goals of school subjects. In it, the emphasis is on academic excellence, on teaching students to think and create an attitude towards a subject matter irrespective of its relevance to the individual and society.

The student-centered method, on the other hand, focuses on both cognitive and affective learning domains.

**Learner Participation and Interaction:** The third dimension of difference between the two instructional methods is degree of student participation in the classroom teaching. In a student-centered instruction, the accent is on student creative expression; a higher degree of student verbal participation is encouraged, particularly an inter-student interaction rather than teacher-student one.

The assumption behind the principle of encouraging student classroom talk is that understanding the essence of a given lesson is assured when the learner is able to articulate it in his own words; and a student-centered teacher often feels that students who tend to talk to him are dependent and lack confidence, and this is in conflict with the principle of student-centered learning--student independence.

Contrary to the student-centered method, in a teacher-centered method of instruction, learning is passive, it is initiated by the teacher, it uses no learning centers, and spontaneous inter-student interaction is discouraged by the teacher. The teacher tends to make the class silent, providing a higher value to his verbalization. Teacher verbalism is, indeed, "a disease to which the children [learners] were often exposed to..." (Sampath et al. 1984:5).

**Acceptance of Student Views and Trials;** The degree of teachers acceptance of student talk (be it correct or incorrect) constitutes the fourth dimension of difference between the two teaching models. A student-centered instructor considers mistakes as signs of learning; he emphasizes the importance of accepting all contributions of learners without negative evaluation. Because he believes that it would help the learner to develop confidence, a feeling that she/he is important.

On the other hand, mistakes are seen as chronic weaknesses in a teacher-centered classrooms, "... mistrust, conflict, even fear are often accepted as part and parcel of the system" (Brandes and Ginnis, 1986:2)

**Learner Experience:** The amount of teaching time devoted to common experiences and problems of learners would constitute an other dimension upon which a learner-centered classroom teaching may differ from a teacher-centered one. While a learner-centered teacher, often, permit and encourages the discussion of personal problems of learners, a teacher-centered teacher often emphasizes more on inculcating his views and hard subject matter of liberal education.

Besides, the focus, in a teacher-centered method, is on what is taught (the content) rather than on the learners who are taught. That is the designed syllabus as well as the teacher rarely consider the needs, interests and abilities of learners; and education is seen as 'working through the syllabus' rather than assisting the learner to develop his potential (Farrant, 1980).

On contrary, the focus in a learner-centered method is on learners rather than on the subject matter to be taught. Learners are considered as a center of teaching and learning. Their needs, interests and capabilities are often considered by curriculum designers as well as the classroom teacher. The teacher understands that he is there to help them discover their potential (Farrant, 1980; and Brandes and Ginnis, 1986).

**Student Evaluation:** In a teacher-centered method of instruction, learner evaluation depends much on frequent exams made by the teacher (Brandes and Ginnis, 1986) which mainly emphasize up on testing memorized information rather than logical thinking and problem solving abilities (Sampath, et al, 1984).

In a learner-centered method, on the other hand, learners have a part in evaluating the teaching-learning process as well as their progress. The teacher encourages and frequently applies student self assessment and peer evaluation; she/he helps learners diagnose their progress. As opposed to instructor-centered teacher, a learner-centered teacher does not consider achievement tests as a criterion of her/his teaching (McKeachie, 1963).

**Role of the Teacher:** In a learner-centered method of instruction, the student is at the center of teaching and learning. It is the student who is the most important figure and plays active role in the teaching-learning process. The teacher has positive regard about students. They are no more considered as an empty vessel to be filled. Instead, they are trusted to be resource for learning; and the teacher is required to play a role of student motivator and learning facilitator rather than

distributor of knowledge. He is also required to help students acquire the skill of 'how to learn' rather than inculcating hard facts; provide learners with the opportunity of contact with materials they need for learning; and ensure that learners progress at their optimum speed (Farrat, 1980).

In addition, a learner-centered instructor works for any means of increasing autonomous student learning; and changing the teacher-student relationship from master-servant, and a relationship where one is giver and the other is passive receiver of information to cooperators who togetherly explore knowledge (Arbercrombi as quoted by Brandes and Ginnis, 1986).

To sum up, it is possible to list many other dimensions upon which instructor-centered and student-centered teaching methods may differ. However, as mentioned above, the degree of student participation in the setting of learning goals, the type of learning goal emphasized, the degree of student participation in the learning process, the focus of teaching on student experiences, the type of student evaluation emphasized, and the type of role played by the teacher in classroom teaching constitute the major dimensions of differences between the two methods of instruction.

### **Limitations of Learner-centered Instruction**

Many educators assert that learner-centered methods of instruction are the most effective methods. However, there are also some educators who criticize these methods. The criticisms made on learner-centered instruction are reviewed by Brandes and Ginnis (1986: 19-32), and include the following.

**Permissiveness:** In a learner-centered method of instruction, many believe, the teacher disappears from the scene of teaching-learning and abdicates responsibility. As a result anarchy and chaos prevails in the classroom, resulting in unfavorable teaching-learning environment.

**Loss of Status:** Critics fear that teachers' power, reputation and position will collapse if student-centered methods are completely employed in classroom teaching. This is because responsibility and power in teaching-learning appear to shift from the teacher to students.

**Fallibility:** In a learner-centered teaching method, it is normal if the teacher replies an "I don't know answer" to questions of learners for he is assumed no more the fountain of knowledge. But, because of the influence of the old assumption that a teacher is all knowing, the teacher will feel no comfort (a fear that learners will not respect him) if he relies on encouraging learners to answer their questions by themselves, or if he replies an "I don't know answer."<sup>3</sup>

**Suspicion and Cynicism:** Critics strongly believe that learner-centered teaching methods create suspicion and cynicism among teaching staff. This problem according to them, is a serious one. It is serious because, most teachers "care very deeply about what their colleagues think of them. Often their career advancement depends upon the high esteem of the rest of the staff" (p.20)

In addition to these, another author, Walklin (1990) posits difficulty of designing learning activities as a major short-coming of learner-centered methods of instruction. He said, designing student-centered learning activities is a difficult task. The difficulty, however, does not end here; facilitating the activities during classroom teaching is even much more demanding. The teacher is required to play several difficult roles like expert advisor, supporter, helper and assessor of student learning.

## **2.4 Learner-Centered Instruction as an Innovation**

### **2.4.1 Facilitating Educational Change**

Implementing educational change is a difficult process. It can't be attained at once. There is a need to follow scientific steps for the successful implementation of it.

Brandes and Ginnis (1986) have underscored seven interrelated procedures in which people and educational organizations can achieve various changes in education, of which learner-centered instruction is no different. These are, motivation, establishing trust, assessment, accepting resistance, awareness, problem solving, and contracts.

**Motivation:** To introduce and implement change in the teaching-learning process, both learners and teachers should have some motivation. Learners' complain about routine or ordinary ways of approaching or treating things in the classroom or in the institution is a good indicator of motivation for change. Teachers' motivation for change could be their dissatisfaction with the existing teaching-learning

conditions (emotional reason); an insight acquired as a result of informal staff conversation, participation in professional courses/in-service education panel/workshop and/or reading a current professional article (intellectual reason); educational policy changes at institutional or national level (ideological and professional reasons), and every body's need to develop--his awareness that learning is the basic means to develop (natural reason).

**Establishing Trust:** what is required in a student-centered learning is open communication, students uninhibited expression of their ideas, and students confidence to take risks. To achieve this, trust upon one another should develop. To develop trust between the teacher and the learning group the teacher should be polite, sit with learners and talk to them, not lie, and his criticism upon student response should be indirect.

Trust among a group in a classroom includes confidentiality, reliability, lack of manipulation, keeping agreements, unconditional positive regard, warmth and love, and direct communication, instead of sarcasm (p. 77).

**Assessment:** Assessment is of paramount importance to get feedback about the implementation of a change, which would contribute to the improvement of the new teaching-learning process. The most common ways of assessing teaching-learning suggested by different educators include the following.

- asking a colleague to observe one's classroom teaching and to comment;

- using an audio or video equipment to record one's teaching so as to identify weaknesses to be improved;
- teacher devising a questionnaire and requesting learners to assess him; and
- brain storming negative and positive aspects of learning environment with students.

**Accepting Resistance:** Both students and teachers might resist the change of teaching-learning from a teacher-centered to a student-centered one. One or more of the following views aired by teachers or students might reflect this.

**a) Teachers' Views:** learner-centered instruction might cause lose of control of students; it leads to anarchy and chaos; I won't do my job properly; 'students won't respect me any more'; 'students won't get their work done, or pass their exams'. I am the only person responsible for students achievement. So I must control them,' etc.

**b) Learners' Views :** "we need you [the teacher] to tell us what to do," "you are paid to tell us the right answers," "under this approach, we won't finish the syllabus or pass our exams," "we don't know how to do it," etc.

In most cases teachers will not fully apply the learner-centered instruction. This is because of the fact that resistance to new ways of doing things is a natural tendency of human being.

Related to this Brands and Ginnis (1986: 85) have noted: "resistance, the major obstacle, is an expected and healthy part of the process..., it is not [should not be] regarded as deterrent".

It is natural that the resistance will deteriorate, gradually, as the resisting persons understand that the new methods work, some times betterly.

Many change agents wrongly try to avoid resistance forcefully. If we fight people's resistance to change like that of battle, it tends to harden rather than dissipating. Teachers' and students' resistance to change, thus, should be met with acceptance for it will dissipate slowly, through time.

**Awareness:** The very act of students planning and negotiating the teaching-learning process with the teacher evokes, in the students, an awareness that they are the owner of their learning.

Previous students' view that "we cannot do with out the close guidance and control of the teacher" will be changed and substituted by a new habit - we can do it by ourselves" (p.86)

**Problem Solving:** one of the requirements in a student-centered instruction is making students responsible for their learning. To make students responsible for their learning, the teacher should share all learning tasks to students and encourage them to actively participate in the generation of solutions.

**Contracts:** This refers to "... behaving in a trustworthy manner, so as to build trust in the group" (p. 86); and it is the most important step for the successful application of learner-centered instruction.

In general, this seven step model of practicing learner-centered instruction is the most dependable one. Because it is tried and proved by long experience of implementing change.

#### **2.4.2 Factors Affecting the practice of Learner-centered Instruction**

Implementing educational reform is a difficult and complex process. Pratt (1980) attractively expressed this difficulty as follow:

the voyage from first identification of student need to eventual learner achievement is often stormy, but more good curricula sink without trace on the shoals of implementation than at any other point (p.425).

This is because effective implementation of an aspect of curriculum such as learner-centered instruction requires the careful consideration of several factors. A review of only the major factors is made hereunder.

**The Nature of Innovation:** An innovation, to be successful, must fulfill the following conditions (Farrant, 1980:97).

- a) It must be home-grown and adaptable to a particular situation. Because an innovation which is incompatible with particular situation is more likely to fail.

- b) It must have clear objectives. Because, implementation will be seriously hampered unless the intents of a given curriculum are clearly stated.
- c) It must be relevant in terms of addressing real needs.
- d) There must be adequate resource for the implementation of it. We should remember that attempts at change sometimes fail because of lack of preparatory works such as the procurement of essential resources.

**Participation of All Concerned:** Even though student-centered teaching-learning is not a new concept in the history of Ethiopian education system, it is currently emphasized much more than ever before. The new Education and Training Policy document (1994) reflects this emphasis.

Concerning policy formulation, many scholars argue that the source of initiative and decision making should not always be individuals and Government bodies at the top level. There is a need to involve users (such as teachers, students, head teachers and parents) at grassroot levels, both at planning, implementation and evaluation stages of educational innovation. Because this helps to reduce suspicion and/or indifference about the innovation, on the part of users or implementers (Fullan and Steigelbauer, 1991).

In other words, if change is imposed from above, it is more likely that resistance will prevail (Brandes and Ginnis, 1986). In addition, people at the top may commit mistake while formulating change, for they are often not well informed about the conditions at the grassroot level.

However, the participation and involvement of influential people at the top in the initiation, implementation and evaluation of innovation is equally important. Because, unless they participate, "there is always the danger of big hammer of power crashing down from above; stopping the action and leaving people defeated, crushed and powerless" (Brandes and Ginnis, 1986:92).

What Brandes and Ginnis (1986), thus, argue is for the application of combined model; that is, the participation of people both at bottom and top levels. This is because of the fact that cooperative effort is better than an isolated one (Farrant, 1980).

A better way to mobilize a well coordinated and cooperative effort is the opening of as many communication channels as possible to facilitate frequent discussion among teachers, learners and other education personnel. This could be done by arranging workshops, seminars, panels and meetings.

**Training of Teachers:** The training of teachers is a crucial factor among the multitude of factors that affect implementation of new teaching methods. Because the teacher is the final decision maker as regard to actual learning opportunities provided to students. The best designed curriculum as well as the poorest owes its ultimate success or failure to the quality of the teacher's planning and implementation. If teachers lack knowledge of the new teaching method which require new roles and commitment, implementation will be hampered seriously (Farrat, 1980).

Hence, provision of in-service teachers' training is essential to acquaint teacher trainers with new teaching-learning methodologies which are oriented more towards learner-centered instruction. Indeed, the adoption of innovation such as new teaching methods and provision of in-service teacher training are opposite sides of the same coin; it is impossible to have the former without the latter (Farrant, 1989).

In the new Ethiopian Education and Training Policy, it is indicated that the primary education of the first cycle "must provide learners with firm basic education directed to practical experiences which prepare them for some form of problem-solving" (Azeb, 1998:209).

The implication of this is that the teacher trainees who are going to create the kind of students having the profiles mentioned above must get adequate training that enables to achieve these intentions; in fact without forgetting the need for in-depth training of the teacher trainers. That is, the teachers of would be teachers must know how to teach trainees for the educational level they are required for.

The advantages of providing in-service education to teachers are well revealed by researchers. A study comparing the instructional effectiveness of teachers who participated in in-service education on one hand, and who do not participate, on the other hand, indicated that majority of teachers who received training for the work they are required for performed well. Whereas majority of the teachers who do not get in-service training performed in a way other than they are required to do (Nitsaisook and Anderson in Anderson, 1991). In addition, Caillods and

Pastelethwait (1989), in a study of teaching-learning, indicated that students learn more under teacher who have received in-service training courses that focus on practical activities than under teachers who have been to in-service courses of a theoretical nature.

What can be inferred from all these is that in-service training and refresher courses would help even the most qualified teachers such as those teaching in TTIs to become learner-centered instructors. It also provides opportunities to share experiences among teachers and to develop positive attitude towards new teaching methods and techniques.

Teachers' participation in the curriculum development process is also considered as part of in-service teacher education and is a potential factor for successful teaching performance of teachers. Gross and his associates (1971) asserted that participation of teachers in curriculum development activities will have great impact on the application of teaching methods sought. This is because of the fact that participation in curriculum works leads to higher morale, greater commitment (Langenbach, 1972), and greater clarity of information, where all of these are necessary to implement new teaching-learning methods.

Hence, though it would be practically impossible to expect that every teacher can be a member of curriculum developer teams, at least some teachers in each subjects at each institutions can be invited to have participation in curriculum development process. These teachers, in turn, can share the experiences they have acquired to their colleagues in their respective institutions.

**Attitude and Morale:** Teachers' morale and attitude towards certain innovation are also determinant factors that influence the implementation of innovation. Because teachers action are highly based on their attitude. Lack of teachers' enthusiasm can wipe out program effectiveness. There must be greater attitude and morale for successful implementation of change in education. To this effect, there must be higher teacher status, adequate promotion opportunities, adequate remuneration, and satisfactory living conditions. However, these all are rarely found in many countries (Farrant, 1980). Hence, it would be no suppr/ ssing if we deduce that teachers attitude or devotion to implement innovations which are demanding interms of both time and effort is low.

**Personal Support:** To be successful, the practice of larnner-centred instruction must have strong administrative and other personnel support. Although all agents of a government who are concerned with education have significant input to the implementation of innovation, like learner-centered instruction, education personnel at the local or lower level of the education system are crucially important for the effective im/ plementation of innovation (Cameron, 1970). Supervisors, education officers, principals head for pedagogical center, department heads and laboratory technicians are the supportive organs at the local level who are to facilitate and provide support for teachers to implement learner-centered methodologies effectively.

These personnel, according to Gross et al (1991:200-201), are responsible for the following duties, in one way or another.

- providing teachers with a clear picture of their new role requirements,
- restructuring the units to make them compatible with the innovation,
- arranging and providing in-service education for teachers to develop them professionally,
- making available the resources necessary to carry out student-centered learning,
- providing essential support and rewards that can help to maintain teachers willingness to make efforts of using student-centered instruction; and
- conducting followup and summative evaluation of the implementation of the innovation.

However, educators contend that those responsible personnel often do not carry out their duties properly. For example, Caillods and Postlethwaite (1989) blamed inspectors as one of the causes for ineffective implementation of innovation. They rarely visit schools or educational institutions. And, if they do at all, they often limit their activities to routine administrative matters rather than helping or encouraging teachers in their teaching duties.

**Social Environment:** Social environment of a given educational institution affects the effectiveness of instructional innovation. ". . . if the school [institution] is organized for the comfort and caring of each person in it, behavior problems tend to decrease" (Brades and Ginnis, 1986), Sadly, however, some teachers are cynical and trouble making; they tend to create discipline problems when they see

others doing their work creatively. Creative teachers, as a result, experience serious frustration, and become resentful to any kind of change (Farrant, 1980).

**Instructional Facilities:** The implementation of new curriculum is also determined by the presence and effective management of different instructional facilities like furniture, resource centers, laboratory and library service.

Learner's interaction and physical movement are the basic features of student-centered instruction. But, these are, to a large extent, determined by the seating arrangement of students in the classroom. If students' seats are movable for flexible arrangement rather than fixed rows, they are helpful to maximize learner interaction. That is, in such a situation, students can see each other, interact spontaneously, communicate and learn with ease. Learning becomes limited not only to cognitive aspect; but social and emotional learning will also be attained for learning, in a situation like this, is more of natural and entertaining.

Availability and effective utilization of resource centers is also essential factor for the success of instructional innovation. A TTI intending to carry out its teaching-learning program effectively should have instructional resource center. Because it is important in the following aspects.

- it offers borrowing services to trainees for books, and non-book materials such as pictures, charts, posters, films, etc, and
- it offers facilities to teachers and trainees by which they can acquire the knowledge and skills of designing, preparing, and using instructional materials (Farrant, 1980:50, and Sampath, et al, 1984:13).

However, it should be born in mind that availability of resource center alone is not sufficient. It should be managed by skilled personnel who can catalogue and keep carefully the available instructional resources.

The presence and functioning of pedagogical center also matters. Mastery of the teaching profession cannot be acquired at once. It, like any other profession, requires continuous learning and improvement at service in a particular school or institution. To such an end there must be a special unit which must provide these opportunities. Pedagogical centers or teachers' centers, in modern schools and educational institutions, are established in response to such needs. They are mainly established to serve as a unit that help to meet the particular needs of teachers in a specific locality. They serve as a place where teachers could get assistance with professional problems, training for new teacher roles, discuss with colleagues, and have recreation (Farrant, 1980).

In addition, effective teaching-learning process of a given TTI can't be achieved without the presence of well organized and managed library, which is stacked with latest, varied and sufficient reading room with appropriate seating facilities, and the presence of trained persons, in library science, are also paramount importance.

The presence of laboratories equipped with modern laboratory materials and managed by qualified technicians have also their share in making the new teaching-learning methods effective. They help to enhance the development of students' creative and problem-solving abilities, if the teacher has the skill of applying laboratory methods of teaching.

**Evaluation System:** Every innovation must be introduced with a system by which its effectiveness can be evaluated. Similarly, for learner-centered instruction to be successful, there must be an evaluation system by which its effects and the degree of achievement of learning objectives are to be assessed (Farrant, 1980). Evaluation should be carried out from the beginning up to the end of the instructional program. Evaluation conducted while implementation is under progress is known as formative evaluation. Whereas an evaluation conducted at the last phase of implementation of innovation is summative evaluation, by which the ultimate success of the innovation will be assessed (Ibid).

The implication is that TTIs should have an evaluation system either in the form of term of reference or any other form that suits the existing circumstances of a particular TTI, but it must be oriented more towards evaluating the "process" than the "product" of teaching-learning.

In general, the application of learner-centered teaching methods in classrooms of educational institutions is a complex process. Its success is influenced by many factors. The level of clarity of the curriculum plan, the training of teachers, the attitude and morale of teachers, the presence and functioning of instructional facilities, the presence of adequate personnel support, and the presence of effective evaluation system appear to be the fundamental ones.

## CHAPTER THREE

### 3. METHODS AND PROCEDURES OF THE STUDY

#### 3.1 Methods of the Study

The descriptive case study approach was employed in this study because of two major reasons. (a) the centers of the study were not scattered, and (b) case study provides data which is strong in reality as compared with other methods (Cohen and Manion, 1989).

As to research model, it was Cuban's (in Anderson and Burns, 1989:180) classroom research model, with little modification, that was used as conceptual framework to guide the study.

The model consists of three patterns of instruction--teacher centered, mixed and student-centered pattern--and five dimensions of instruction (namely, class arrangement, instructional format, classroom talk, class activities and student movement) (Ibid). "Student evaluation" was added to these five dimensions for it is one of the dimensions that could make an instruction either learner centered or teacher centered (Amare, 1989). Whereas 'student movement' is left out because of two main reasons: (a) to make the study manageable; and (b) the researcher's belief that it is a less crucial instructional variable in teaching learners at late adolescent period, such as in TTIs.

### **3.2 Sources of Data and Sampling Technique**

Data was collected based on the five dimensions of instruction, indicated in the research model above. The major sources of data for this study were the physical and social environment of English language classrooms of the two TTIs- Dessie and Debreberhan TTI.

In the two TTIs, there were a total of twenty six sections, 14 sections in Debreberhan and 12 sections in Dessie TTI. Out of these 7 sections from Debreberhan TTI and 6 sections from Dessie TTI were selected randomly. This makes a total of 13 sections (half of the total sections).

Other sources of data include English language teachers, language department heads, vice principals and principals in the two TTIs. The total number of these data sources were thirteen -- 7 English language teachers, 2 language department heads, 2 vice principals and 2 principals. All of them were taken as data source based upon the availability sampling technique for their number is very limited.

### **3.3 Instruments of Data Collection**

The principal way of collecting information for the study was observation. Because classroom observations unlike other instruments, are "data sources that can be used during the paramount events of instruction" (Cangelosi, 1991:47). Besides, classroom observation is the most basic and direct (not derived) method of securing behavioral data (Burroughs, 1971).

However, this does not mean a complete ignorance of other methods of data collection. Indeed, questionnaire and photograph camera were also used as data gathering instruments.

### **3.3.1 Observation**

To carry out classroom observation, the procedures below were followed.

1. A categorical system of observation was, first, developed based on the conceptual model of Cuban in Anderson and Burns (1989:180). This observation system was made to contain indicators of a learner-centered instruction and a teacher-centered instruction, with a belief that this would help in analyzing the collected data.
2. The observation checklist was given to eight colleagues from curriculum and instruction department for judgment, concerning its validity in measuring whether the teaching-learning in TTIs was learner-centered or not?
3. Three observers who had equal qualification with the researcher were trained for 2 hours in how to use the observation checklist, and how to tally the observed classroom event<sup>5</sup>. These observers were employed and trained for the purpose of testing an inter-observer agreement which helped to determine the reliability of the observational instrument.

To this effect, 3 sections of English classrooms in Debreberhan TTI were observed while teachers of each section were teaching the same lesson two times, in two different periods (sessions) The reliability of the instrument was, then, determined by computing correlation coefficient of scores recorded by the three trained observers and the researcher himself.

The computed correlation coefficient is summarized as follow (See Appendix - C for detail computation).

**Table 3.5. Correlation Coefficient of Inter-observer Agreement**

Observed Section	Observer-1	Observer-2	Observer-3	Observer-4	Average
1	0.95	0.94	0.91	0.93	0.93
2	0.92	0.96	0.95	0.96	0.95
3	0.91	0.95	0.92	0.95	0.93
Inter-observer average					0.94

As can be seen from the table the inter-observer agreement correlation coefficient is very high (0.94), and hence the instrument is reliable for collecting data of classroom instruction.

4. Necessary improvements of the observation checklist were made after taking the comments of judges and the reliability coefficient into consideration.
5. The researcher clarified to the observed teachers that the purpose of the observation was not evaluative, but limited to research undertaking. This was done with an intention of confirming the guarantee for the psychological and social risks that observed teachers might face.
6. Finally, the thirteen sample classrooms were observed for three periods, each observation having at least a one day interval. Thus, a total of 39 periods (13x3) were used to observe the sample sections, and care was taken not to repeat observation of a single lesson.

Besides, recognizing the effect of the presence of an observer in a classroom, the researcher made himself inconspicuous by such measures like clothing style - similar to learners - and avoiding formality of approaches with trainees and instructors.

### **3.3.2 Questionnaire**

A questionnaire focusing on collecting information on the area of problems that could hamper the effective application of learner-centered teaching learning strategies was prepared to respondents. The draft questionnaire was given to professionals (on the area) for judgment.

After the comments of judges, improvements of the questionnaire were made. Then, it was duplicated and pilot tested on few (7) respondents at Debreberhan TTI. The final draft of the questionnaire was, then, stenciled, duplicated and distributed to thirteen respondents - 2 directors, 2 vice directors, 2 language department heads, and 7 English language teachers.

Directors and department heads were included as respondents because of the belief that they would be better informed about the problems and strengths of teaching learning for they would frequently supervise and make contact with teachers teaching in classrooms. In addition, the assumptions, beliefs and the way they teach could also influence the practice of teachers who are under supervision of them.

### **3.3.3 Photograph Camera**

A photograph camera was also used as an additional instrument to collect information on the area of classroom lay-out and seating arrangement. A camera expert was employed, given orientation on what and when to make photograph; and photographing of learners seating arrangement was made.

## **3.4 Method of Data Analysis**

The basic questions of this study were tested based on the data procured through observation checklist, questionnaire and photograph camera. Scores of the collected data were determined by counting the tally marks. After summing up the tally marks, the data was summarized and presented using tables. Tables showing the frequency and percentage of major and sub-indicators of instructional dimensions were used.

Analysis of the data and conclusion of the study was made based on proportions (or percentages) of each instructional dimensions which are categorized into learner-centered and teacher-centered patterns of instruction, each with specific indicators.

Sorting, tallying and tabulating the collected data was accomplished by the researcher with the help of assistants. And, the computation of quantitative data was made using hand calculator.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

In this chapter, the data collected through classroom observation and questionnaire are presented using tables, and followed by analysis and interpretation to provide answers to the basic questions set in the study.

#### 4.1 Background Information of the Subjects

Background information of the subject of a given study is very important. It helps to reveal the past and present state of individuals or groups which directs a researcher to reach on the right findings. Hence, it seems reasonable to describe the characteristics of the subjects of this study.

The subjects of this study were English language classrooms, English language teachers, principals, vice principals and language department heads of the two TTIs -- Debre-berhan and Dessie TTI. While English language classrooms were subjects to observation, all others were respondents to questionnaire.

The average class size of observed classrooms was 47, with an average age of 22, each section involving more than 50 percent female teacher-trainees.

As to bio-data of questionnaire respondents, all of them were male, and majority of them (84.6 prcnt) were in their thirties (in age), an evidence revealing that most of the teachers were adult. With regard to qualification, a great majority (about 85 percent) of the subjects were B.A. degree holders while only two (15 percent of the subjects) were M.A degree holders.

percent) of the subjects were B.A. degree holders while only two (15 percent of the subjects) were M.A degree holders.

As to the experience of these subjects in the profession of teaching, the data indicated that a great proportion (77 percent) of them had an experience of nine up to 12 years. It is, therefore, more likely that these teachers might be acquainted more with traditional teaching methods like lecturing, how to phrase ideas, and question and answer methods than the new learner-centered teaching methods like involving learners, facilitating learning and serving as resource person.

On the other hand, the data showed a great variation concerning the training of the subject with professional courses. About 43 percent of the subjects reported that they had received training in general teaching method while an other 43 percent took subject area teaching method course, and only one (14 percent) teacher had training in both General Teaching Method and Subject Area Teaching Methods courses.

What can be implied from this data, then, is that majority of the subjects of this study had no adequate training in professional courses inclusive of General Methods of Teaching and Subject Area Methods of Teaching, though these courses are prerequisites for a person required to involve in teaching profession.

## **4.2 Analysis and Interpretation of Data**

In this part, data collected through classroom observation, and questionnaire are presented and analyzed. The categories included, here, are Class Arrangement

and Resources, Group Instruction, Learners Classroom Activities, Teacher Classroom Activities, Learner Evaluation, Classroom Talk, Teachers' Participation in In-Service Training Opportunities, the focus of the In-service training opportunities, the Extent of Application of Varied Teaching Methods, and Factors Affecting the Application of Learner-centered Instructional Methods.

**Table 4.6: Class Arrangement and Resources**

Instructional pattern	Indicators	Observation				Total	
		Debre-berhan		Dessie			
		*F	%	F	%	F	%
Learner-centered	1. Movable desks and chairs arranged in clusters or rounds	31	12.3	18	7.14	44	19.44
	2. Learners sit in clusters or rounds facing one another	31	12.3	18	7.14	49	19.44
	3. Instructional resources available	42	16.67	6	2.38	48	37.05
	Total	104	41.27	42	16.67	146	57.94
Teacher-centered	1. Movable desks and chairs arranged in rows	11	4.36	24	9.52	35	13.89
	2. Learners sit in rows facing the teacher and/or the blackboard	11	4.36	24	9.52	35	13.89
	3. Instructional resources not available	-	-	36	14.27	36	14.27
	Total	22	8.73	84	33.33	106	42.06

The data in table 4.6 shows a difference between the two TTIs (Debre-berhan and Dessie TTI) with respect to the category of "class arrangement and resources". About 41 percent and 9 percent of the observed indicators of instruction in Debre-berhan TTI were learner-centered and teacher-centered respectively while about

\* F= frequency of the observed indicator

17 percent and 33 percent of them, respectively, were indicators of learner-centered and teacher-centered instruction in Dessie TTI.

This is, thus, an evidence that revealed the category of "class arrangement and resources" associated more to learner-centered instruction in Debre-berhan and teacher-centered instruction in Dessie TTI. Observation revealed that chairs were easy, adapted to flexible movement, arranged in rounds, learners have been seating in rounds and some times in cluster (see figure 1, 2 and 3 at the back of this paper), and instructional materials were available in the classrooms of Debre-berhan TTI. All of these, however, were absent in Dessie TTI. Chairs and desks were not easily movable. As a result class arrangement was in rows (see fig.4 and fig.5, pp.111-112) most of the time; teachers make learners sit facing one another rarely. And this had greatly affected spontaneous interaction among learners.

However, class arrangement was more of learner-centered (58 percent) when the aggregate data is considered. The implication of this is that there was a move from teacher-centered to learner-centered instruction in the TTIs of Amhara Region in terms of "class arrangement and resource" instructional dimension.

**Table 4.7: Group Instruction**

Instructional Pattern	Indicators	Observation	
		F	%
Learner-centered	1. Teaching directed at class "divided into groups"	86	23.37
	2. Teacher helps learners rounding to the group	10	19.02
	Total	156	42.39
Teacher-centered	1. Teaching directed at whole class	123	33.42
	2. Teacher focuses on controlling discipline, being alien, when learners work in group	89	24.18
	Total	212	57.65
Grand Total		368	100

As can be seen in table 4.7, about 42 percent of "group instruction" indicators fall under learner-centered instruction while about 58 percent of them found falling under teacher-centered pattern of instruction.

Thus, it is possible to deduce that instruction was more of teacher-centered than learner-centered in the two TTIs as far as the dimension of "group instruction" is considered. In other words, teaching was directed more towards the "whole class" than to "class divided into groups." This is an indicator that the varied learning styles and preferences of individual learners have not been considered in English classrooms of the two TTIs -- Debre-berhan and Dessie TTI.

**Table 4.8: Learners Classroom Activities**

Instructional Pattern	Indicators	Observation	
		F	%
Learner-centered	Learners:		
	1. Doing classwork or assignment	23	3.38
	2. Micro-teaching	56	8.24
	3. Role playing	73	10.74
	4. Listening & speaking exercise in language laboratory	-	-
	5. Discussing in groups	87	12.79
	6. Peer teaching	48	7.06
	Total	287	42.21
Teacher-centered	1 Taking test	68	10
	2 Listening to teacher talk	126	18.53
	3 Listening to radio	-	-
	4 Watching film	-	-
	5 Attending demonstration	101	14.85
	6 copying teacher's note	98	14.41
		Total	393
	Grand Total	680	100

Table 4.8 depicts that about 42 percent of indicators of learners classroom activities fall under learner-centered instruction while majority (58 percent) of the total indicators were associated to teacher-centered instruction.

Thus, it is possible to deduce that instruction was more of teacher-centered than learner-centered in the two TTIs as far as the dimension of "group instruction" is considered. In other words, teaching was directed more towards the "whole class" than to "class divided into groups." This is an indicator that the varied learning styles and preferences of individual learners have not been considered in English classrooms of the two TTIs -- Debre-berhan and Dessie TTI.

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	6 copying teacher's note	98	14.41
		Total	393
	Grand Total	680	100

Table 4.8 depicts that about 42 percent of indicators of learners classroom activities fall under learner-centered instruction while majority (58 percent) of the total indicators were associated to teacher-centered instruction.

This data, hence, is an evidence which shows that teacher trainees learning were oriented more towards passive reception of content than active learning, or more meaningful language learning which includes speaking, writing, listening and reading.

**Table 4.9: Teacher Classroom Activities**

Instructional Pattern	Indicators	Observation	
		F	%
Learner-centered	The Teacher:		
	1. Clarifies the learning objective	98	8.12
	2. Encourages learners to participate, but doesn't force	81	6.71
	3. Addresses learners by their names	73	6.05
	4. Points out learner mistake indirectly or diplomatically	71	5.88
	5. Uses the lesson plan flexibly	62	5.14
	6. Uses varied (more than two) instructional materials	56	4.64
	7. Uses the blackboard for spontaneous use of key words, writing outline of a lesson, showing doubts, showing relationships, and/or illustrating points with graphs, tables diagrams	78	6.46
	total	519	43
Teacher-centered	8. Directly starts the topic, without clarifying the objective	116	9.61
	9. Asks incidental questions that frustrate learners, or discourage learners spontaneous interaction	95	7.87
	10. Addresses learners by their physical features, or location	122	10.11
	11. Points out learner mistake directly	121	10.02
	12. Uses the lesson plan slavishly	58	4.81
	13. Uses only textbook and/or blackboard	113	9.36
	14. Uses the blackboard for detail notes where the major activity of learners is copying notes	63	5.23
		Total	688
	Grand Total	1207	100

Table 4.9 shows that about 57 percent of the total indicators of teacher activities were associated to teacher-centered classroom activities of a teacher which

includes activities listed from number one up to seven. Whereas about 38 percent of the indicators fall under learner-centered activities of a teacher that includes lists from eight up to fourteen in the table above.

What can be inferred from this data is that the classroom activities of observed teachers were more of instructor-centered than learner-centered.

**Table 4.10: Learner Evaluation**

Instructional Pattern	Indicators	Observation	
		F	%
Learner-centered	The Teacher: 1. Tells learners to exchange their assignment papers and correct one another's work	57	11.26
	2. Tells learners to form groups and discuss exercises given	72	14.23
	3. Elicits correct responses from learners instead of he himself supplying answers	82	16.21
	Total	211	41.7
Teacher-centered	1. collects assignment papers, and puts right and wrong marks only	79	15.61
	2. Writes correct answers to each questions on the blackboard	98	19.37
	3. Tells learners correct answers to each questions, instead of probing or eliciting from learners	118	23.32
	Total	295	58.3
Grand Total		506	100

The data in table 4.10 shows that 58 percent of indicators of evaluation of learners were associated to teacher-centered instruction as opposed to about 42 percent of student evaluation indicators, which are associated to teacher-centered instruction.

In light of the data, we can generalize that evaluation of learners' progress in English language classrooms of the two TTIs were done predominantly by teachers than the learners themselves, and/or by learners and the teacher jointly.

**Table 4.11: Classroom Talk**

Instructional Pattern	Indicators	Observation	
		F	%
Learner-centered	1. Learner led recitation or discussion	61	17.33
	2. Learners talk in groups or in pair	84	23.87
	Total	145	41.19
Teacher-centered	1. Teacher led recitation or discussion	119	33.81
	2. No learner in class talks	88	25
	Total	207	58.81
	Grand Total	357	100

As can be seen in table 4.11, 41 percent of classroom talk was found falling under learner-centered instruction. Whereas majority (about 59 percent) of indicators of classroom talk were associated to teacher-centered instruction.

The implication of this is that instruction in the observed classrooms was characterized by less learner interaction and more teachers' verbalization. That is, instruction had been dominated by more teacher talk than learner talk.

### **Data Gathered Through Questionnaire**

In addition to direct classroom observation, questionnaire was used to collect data particularly related to factors affecting learner-centered instruction and biodata of the subjects of this study. Respondents to the questionnaire were the seven English language teachers, two principals, two vice principals, and two language

department heads. This forms a total of thirteen respondents. (see section 4.1 for the detailed bio-data description of these subjects).

**Table 4.12: Frequency of Teachers' Participation in In-service Training Opportunities**

Item	In - Campus Discussion		Workshop		Seminar		Panel	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Zero Times	-	-	-	-	4	30.77	12	42.31
1-3	2	15.38	4	30.77	6	46.15	1	7.69
4-6	3	23.08	6	46.15	1	3.69	2	13.39
7-10	3	23.08	2	15.39	2	13.39	-	-
More than 10 times	5	38.46	1	7.69	-	-	-	-
Total	13	100	13	100	13	100	13	100

To item one of table 4.12, most of the respondents (about 38 percent) reported that they had participated on in-campus discussion about professional matters more than ten times since the inception of the New Education and Training Policy.

The implication is that there was an appreciable effort of organizing institution-based inservice teacher education though the exact extent and area of concentration were not known.

With regard to the extent of TTI instructors participation in workshop organized by organizations other than the TTI level, majority of the subjects (46 percent) replied that they had participated roughly seven up to ten times only throughout the nine years period. It was only one respondent (about 8 percent) who reported that he had received workshop opportunity more than ten times.

As to their participation in seminar, a great majority of respondents (46 percent) reported that they had got the opportunities of participating only one up to three times while a few proportion of respondents (15 percent) replied that they had participated seven up to ten times.

Concerning the participation in panel, most of the respondents (92 percent) reported that they had got no opportunity. It is only one respondent (about eight percent) who reported that he had participated one up to three times only.

In general different modes of inservice education opportunities that English language teachers of the two TTIs had got since the introduction of the New Education and Training Policy were by far inadequate to cope up with the changing role of teachers, particularly teachers of would be teachers in Teacher Training Institutes.

**Table 4.13: The Focus of the In-service Training Opportunities**

Item	Degree of Emphasize								Total	
	High		Medium		Low		No Opinion			
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1. Learner-centered teaching methods	1	7.69	4	30.77	5	38.46	3	23.8	13	100
2. Educational research	1	7.69	3	23.08	7	53.85	2	15.38	13	100
3. Educational organization & management	1	7.69	1	7.69	6	46.16	5	58.46	13	100
4. Curriculum development & evaluation	4	30.77	6	46.15	3	23.08			13	100
5. Student evaluation	1	1.68	7	53.84	4	30.77	1	7.69	13	100

As can be seen in table 4.13, a great majority of respondents (about 38 percent) replied that the emphasis of the inservice education, they had ever got on learner-centered teaching methods was "low" as opposed to only one respondent (about 8

percent) who claimed the focus of the in-service education he received on the same matter was "high".

One can also observe that the focus of the training opportunities on the area of educational research and educational management was low for it was rated "low" by majority of respondents, about 54 percent and 46 percent respectively.

On the other hand the emphasis of the in-service education that teachers received on curriculum development and learner evaluation were rated "medium" by most of the respondents, 46 percent and about 54 percent respectively.

Based on the above data, it is possible to generalize that in-service education opportunities provided to English language teachers of the two TTIs were inadequate, and even those provided by comparison, emphasize less on teaching methods and techniques. So, the basic question is how could it be possible to achieve better application of learner-centered teaching-learning process without equipping implementors (teachers) with the necessary skills.

**Table 4.14: The Extent of Application of Varied Teaching Methods**

Item	The Extent of Application								total	
	Always		Sometimes		Rarely		Not at all			
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1. Discussion	9	64.23	4	30.77	-	-	-	-	13	100
2. Peer teaching	1	7.69	9	69.23	3	23.08	-	-	13	100
3. Micro-teaching			7	53.85	5	38.46	1	7.69	13	100
4. Role Playing	2	15.39	6	46.15	5	38.46	-	-	13	100
5. Class work or assignment	7	53.85	6	46.15	-	-	-	-	13	100
6. Group work	7	53.85	6	46.15	-	-	-	-	13	100
7. Film show	-	-	-	-	3	23.08	10	76.92	13	100
8. Lecturing	7	53.85	6	46.15	-	-	-	-	13	100

Table 4.14 depicts the extent of the application of different teaching methods as reported by respondents. The teaching-learning methods which were reported as

had been employed "always" were discussion (69 percent), home work (54 percent), and lecturing (54 percent). Peer teaching, micro teaching, role playing, and classwork, on the other hand, were labelled "sometimes" by most of the respondents (69 percent, 54 percent, 46 percent and 62 percent respectively). The exception was film show which was reported by a great majority of respondents (77 percent) as had not been employed at all.

This data almost accords with the evidence gathered through repeated classroom observations, with the exception of the use of conducting teaching-learning process by means of providing class work or assignment. It was observed that learners have been doing homework or assignment less frequently (only 3.38 percent of the total learners' classroom activities)

The disparity, however, may be because of learners' working their class work or assignment after class at dormitory or library during their spare time. So, teachers' response to the question (item 5) may hold more accuracy than the researchers' observation.

Table 4.15: Factors Affecting the Application of Learner-centered Instructional Methods

Item	The Extent of Influence										Total	
	Null		Minimum		Medium		Highly		No Opinion			
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1. Lack or absence of suitable classroom furniture.	2	15.39	5	46.15	3	23.08	2	15.08			13	100
2. Poor institutional facilities such as library, pedagogical center, offices,			3	23.08	6	46.15	3	23.08	1	1.69	13	100
3. Teachers' lack of knowledge and skills	2	15.39	3	23.08	5	38.46	3	23.08			13	100
4. Cynicism and sabotage of some teachers	3	23.08	3	23.08	6	46.15			1	1.69	13	100
5. Lack of support & incentive from administrators	2	15.39	5	38.76	5	8.76	1	3.69			13	100
6. Inadequacy of time	2	15.39	2	15.38	5	38.46	4	30.47			13	100
7. Learners' lack of background and attitudinal acceptance					3	23.08	10	76.92			13	100
8. The curriculum being not learner-centered	1	1.69	7	53.85	4	30.77	1	3.69			13	100

According to the majority of respondents indicated in table 4.15, the degree of negative influence of most of the factors on the application of learner-centered teaching methods was rated "medium". These factors along with the percentage of respondents include: poor institutional facilities (46 percent), instructors lack of knowledge and skills (38.5 percent), cynicism and sabotage of some teachers (46 percent), and inadequacy of time (38.5 percent).

It is learners' lack of background and attitudinal acceptance to learner-centered methods that was reported by most respondents to have affected "highly". But, this may be because of people's tendency to pass on failures to some other body, or group; and this could have been minimized had instructors been equipped with skills of conducting learner-centered instruction, and knowledge of changing learners' attitude.

To item 5 (lack of support and incentive from administrators), respondents showed variation in their rating on the extent of its influence on the implementation of learner-centered instruction in the TTIs. While 38 percent of respondents rated it as "minimal", another 38 percent rated it "medium", and the third category of respondents (15 percent) rated it "null".

What can be inferred from the data is that learners' lack of background and attitudinal acceptance to learner-centered teaching-learning was the most serious perceived problem (by instructors) in applying learner-centered teaching methods. However, this seems teachers' shifting their accountability from their shoulder to learners. Indeed, lack of instructional facilities, teachers' lack of knowledge and skills, some teachers' cynicism and sabotage, and inadequacy of time had no less influence on the effective application of learner-centered teaching methods.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### 5. SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter deals with the summary and conclusions of the study. It also comprises the recommendations, forwarded by the researcher, which are hoped to redress the problems revealed in the study.

#### 5.1 Summary

##### Objective and Methodology

The fundamental purpose of this study was to find out whether the teaching-learning methods in TTIs of Amhara Region were oriented more towards learner-centeredness or teacher-centeredness. It was also directed to look into the major problems pertaining to the implementation of learner-centered instruction with an intention of forwarding possible solutions which would help to alleviate the problems.

To this effect, the study was made to focus on answering the following basic questions:

1. What do the classroom lay-out and seating arrangement look like?
2. What is the "format" of instruction?
3. Who is the dominant figure in classroom talk?
4. How is class activity?
5. How is learner evaluation conducted?
6. What problems do TTIs encounter in attempting to implement learner-centered instruction?

Relevant data for the study was gathered through observation checklist and questionnaire prepared for the purpose. Observational data was gathered from 13 randomly selected sections taught by seven teachers. Whereas data through questionnaire was secured from the seven English language teachers, two principals, two vice principals, and two language department heads (making a total of thirteen respondents). The selection of subjects of the study was based upon stratified sampling for the observation of classrooms, and availability sampling for the reply to the questionnaire.

### **Major Findings**

1. Most of the indicators of class arrangement and resources (about 41 percent) in Debreberhan TTI were associated to learner-centered instruction as opposed to most of these indicators (about 33 percent) in Dessi TTI which were associated to teacher-centered instruction.
2. While most of the indicators of group instruction (about 58 percent) were teacher-centered, a less proportion of it (about 42 percent) was associated to learner-centered instruction.
3. About 42 percent of the total indicators of learners activities observed in classrooms were recognized as learner-centered activities. Whereas 58 percent of them were identified as teacher-centered activities.
4. Most of teachers' activities (57 percent) were also oriented towards teacher-centeredness. It was about 43 percent of teachers' class activities that were identified as learner-centered behaviors.

5. While about 42 percent of indicators of evaluation of learner progress were identified as learner-centered instructional pattern, majority of indicators of the same instructional dimension (about 58 percent) were found to associate teacher-centered instruction.
6. Nearly a similar pattern to the above was found out concerning classroom talk. About 41 percent of classroom talk was covered by learners while 59 percent of it was identified as teacher - talk.
7. Concerning their participation in different in-service education opportunities since 1983 EC, majority of the respondents reported as follows:
  - a) About 38.5 percent of the respondents responded that they had participated in institution-based discussion more than 10 times.
  - b) About 46 percent as they had participated on workshop four up to six times.
  - c) About 46 percent as they had participated on seminar only one up to three times.
  - d) About 42 percent as they had participated in no panel discussion.
8. With regard to the extent of the application of different teaching methods, most of the respondents labeled them as follow:
  - a) Discussion, home work or assignment, and lecturing were labeled as had been employed "always" by 69 percent, 54 percent, and 54 percent of the respondents, respectively.

- b.) Peer teaching, micro teaching, role playing and class work were labeled "some times" by 69 percent, 54 percent, 46 percent and 62 percent of respondents respectively.
  - c.) Film show was reported as had not been employed as a teaching technique at all.
9. As to factors affecting the application of learner-centered teaching-learning methods, most of them were rated as they had exerted a "medium" influence. These include poor institutional facilities (by 46 percent of respondents), cynicism and sabotage of some teachers (46 percent), instructors lack of knowledge and skills (38.5 percent), and inadequacy of time (38.5 percent).
10. Learners' lack of background and attitudinal acceptance to learner-centered teaching methods was perceived as it had hampered "highly" the effective application of these methods by most of the respondents (77 percent).

## 5.2 Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions may be drawn.

1. A clear difference was observed between the two TTIs concerning class arrangement and resources. Class arrangement and resources tended to associate more to learner-centered pattern of instruction in Debreberhan TTI, and to teacher-centered pattern of instruction in Dessie TTI. However, the aggregate data revealed that instruction was more of learner-centered as far as this dimension of instruction is concerned.
2. The dimension of "group instruction" was more of teacher-centered than learner-centered pattern of instruction. Because most of the instructional time was observed being devoted to teaching the "whole class" rather than teaching "class divided into groups".
3. Learners' activities tended to associate more to passivity than activity and interaction. Because, most of the instruction observed depended on such methods like attending to teacher talk, attending to demonstration, and copying teacher's note which enhance the habit of passivity rather than activity. Even if there was discussion that was more of teacher-led rather than learner-led. As a result, it lacked no characteristics of learner-centeredness.
4. Classroom behaviors of teachers exhibited more features of teacher-centeredness.

5. Most of evaluation of learner progress as well as evaluation of the teaching-learning process were done by teachers. Peer evaluation and group evaluation (evaluation done by learners and the teacher jointly) were rare. Hence, student evaluation category was more of teacher-centered than learner-centered pattern of instruction.
6. Classroom talk tended to associate more to the features of teacher-centeredness than to the features of learner-centeredness. Because classroom verbal interaction was dominated by teacher talk rather than learner-talk.
7. Teachers' pre-service training in professional courses was insufficient for most of respondents received training only in one of the two desperately required courses (Subject Area Teaching Method and General Teaching Methods) for a person to join teaching profession.
8. Eventhough arrangement of formal and informal institution based in-service education to teachers was, comparatively, encouraging, arrangement and provision of in-service education opportunities like workshop, seminar and panel to trainers of would-be teachers focusing on new learner-centered teaching methods and techniques were inadequate.
9. Teachers' lack of necessary skills and knowledge, cynicism and sabotage of some staff members, and inadequacy of time were the perceived problems that hindered the full adoption and effective implementation of learner-centered instruction.

### 5.3 Recommendations

In light of the major findings and conclusions of the study, it seems reasonable to suggest the recommendations mentioned here under, with the hope that they could be helpful to improve the practice of learner-centered teaching-learning at TTI level, in particular, and any other education level, in general.

Formulating learner-centered education policy alone is not sufficient. There are many factors to be considered along with policy formulation.

1. One is conduciveness of classrooms and furniture. Chairs and desks must be easy and movable allowing flexible arrangement. Though this was not an observed problem in Debreberhan TTI, it was a serious one in Dessie TTI.

Hence, it is advisable if the two TTIs share experience in this and other aspects of conduciveness of facilities for the realization of learner-centered teaching-learning process.

2. The other is arrangement and provision of inservice education to teachers of would - be teachers. Because to implement reform in teaching-learning methods, the attitude of teachers who pass through and are familiar with teacher-centered instruction must be first changed by organizing and providing inservice education opportunities focusing on the new teaching-learning methods. However, this was by far inadequate for English language teachers in the two TTIs except the attempt at the institutional level.

So, organizations responsible for facilitating and implementing educational change should work hard in this aspect. Ministry of Education (MOE), Institute of Curriculum Development and Research (ICDR), Regional Education Bureau (REB), and/ or Teacher Training Institute (TTI) should arrange continuous short-term inservice education for teachers of would be teachers.

In fact, this would not be an easy task. It may require a lot of resources. But, financial and material resources for the purpose may be secured from donors by preparing and submitting convincing proposals.

In addition, TTIs can improve the methodological skills and competence of their staff by organizing a 'staff development' committee. The role of this committee would be (a) to coordinate duties pertaining to staff development activities, (b) to organize seminar and workshops, and (c) to procure reference materials and make available in the institution's library.

Changing the non-rewarding attitude learners and community have towards learner-centered instructors is also a necessary step. This can be realized by raising the awareness of community and students by providing education through "mini-media" at institution level, and through mass media such as radio, television and news paper at national level. This responsibility at national level may be taken up by Educational Mass Media Agency (EMMA).

3. Employing learner-centered teaching-learning methods, as opposed to traditional methods such as lecturing, requires a lot of commitment, patience and persistence on the part of both teachers, principals and learners. Above all principals and department heads should work hard towards creating awareness among teachers that self initiated professional development is crucially needed in educational institutions, and must be considered as a life long experience. They should also enable teachers to recognize the fact that teachers in the modern world are required to be adaptable to changes. This could be realized by arranging every opportunities that can help to familiarize them with educational views and technologies, changing every time. Example: making available professional articles, periodicals, materials written on current affairs, and educational video films in the respective TTIs.

Exposure of teachers to such inservice opportunities <sup>would</sup> provide them with not only skills and knowledge of applying learner-centered methods, but also insights that would be helpful to change the attitude learners have to new student-centered teaching-learning methods.

4. Trainees in TTIs often have varied academic and social background for they come from different zones of a region. It is, hence, advisable if teachers employ cooperative teaching-learning methods like group work, brainstorming, peer teaching, group project, and the like as frequently as possible since these methods are productive in heterogeneous classes. Of

course, this in turn, require teachers' fresh training in the area of communication and group work skills. Therefore, inservice teacher education arranged by different organizations, among other things, must focus on learner-centered teaching skills.

5. It was found out that poor institutional facilities, cynicism and sabotage of some teachers, inadequacy of time and absence of indicators of learner-centered instruction were the perceived problems that hampered the effective application of learner-centered instruction. Hence, it is advisable if principals give due attention in improving facilities like pedagogical center and language laboratory facilities.

They should also work on fostering a healthy teaching-learning environment. Because change initiation will create a great damage unless a healthy respect for and mastery of the change process is given a top priority (Fullan and Stiegelbauer, 1991).

In order to allow the participation of every learner, there is a need to increase the time of a given period, or reduce a class size of learners say from 50 to 30 or 40. Of course, such measure is expensive since it requires additional space and cost. However, a committed and diligent administrator of a TTI will tackle this problem through time by resorting to financial support from donors through a well prepared proposal.

Further, to redress the problem which result from absence of clear indicators of learner-centred instruction, ICDR and/or MOE, in conjunction with different educational institutions may formulate indicators of learner-centered instruction against which the practice can be evaluated continuously.

6. Lastly, the study was very limited for it involved investigation only in one subject. Hence, it seems reasonable to recommend the conduct of similar study on the same or other subjects so that the findings will be compared and verified.

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## Appendix - A

### CLASSROOM OBSERVATION CHECKLIST

Preliminary Information

Observer \_\_\_\_\_ Name of the TTI \_\_\_\_\_

Section \_\_\_\_\_ Subject \_\_\_\_\_ Topic - \_\_\_\_\_

Observation: Round \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Time begin \_\_\_\_\_

Time ended \_\_\_\_\_

#### DIRECTION:-

This observation checklist consists of five major instructional dimensions. Under each dimension, possible indicators of it are listed. Hence, put a mark (✓) in the boxes that corresponds to the indicator (or classroom event) you observed during the first, second, and third 15 minutes of a session. (Note that you should enter classroom with a copy of the instructor's lesson plan)..

#### 1. CLASSROOM ARRANGEMENT AND RESOURCES

Observations in the  
first 15' Second 15' third 15'

- |     |   |                          |
|-----|---|--------------------------|
| 1.1 | Movable desks and chairs arranged in clusters or rounds       | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 1.2 | movable desks and chairs arranged in rows                     | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 1.3 | Learners sit in clusters or rounds facing one another;        | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 1.4 | Learners sit in rows facing the teacher and/or the blackboard | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 1.5 | *Instructional resources available                            | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 1.6 | Instructional resources not available                         | <input type="checkbox"/> |

\* Instructional resources-means any instructional materials in the classroom other than blackboard and textbook.

## 2. GROUP INSTRUCTION

		Observations in the		
		first 15'	Second 15'	third 15'
2.1	teaching directed at class "divided into groups"	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.2	teaching directed at whole class	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.3	Teacher helps learners rounding to the group	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.4	Teacher focuses on controlling discipline, being alien, when learners work in group	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## 3. CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

### A) Learners:

3.1	doing classwork or assignment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.2	taking tests	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.3	microteaching	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.4	listening to teacher talk	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.5	role playing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.6	listening to radio	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.7	working in laboratories	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.8	watching film	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.9	discussing in groups	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.10	attending demonstration	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.11	peer teaching	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.12	copying teacher's note	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Others: _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**B) The Teacher**

- |      |  |                          |                          |                          |
|------|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 3.13 | Clarifies the learning objective   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3.14 | Directly starts the topic, without clarifying the objective  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3.15 | Encourages learners to participate, but does not force   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3.16 | Asks incidental questions that frustrate learners, or discourages learners spontaneous interaction   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3.17 | Addresses learners by their names  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3.18 | Addresses learners by their physical features, or location   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3.19 | Points out learner mistake indirectly or diplomatically  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3.20 | Points out learner mistake directly  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3.21 | Uses the lesson plan flexibly  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3.22 | Uses the lesson plan slavishly   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3.23 | Uses varied (more than two) instructional materials  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3.24 | Uses the blackboard for spontaneous use of key words, writing outline of a lesson, teaching student question, showing relationships, and/or illustrating points with graphs, tables, diagrams... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3.25 | Uses the blackboard for detail notes where the major activity of learners is copying notes   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

## 4. STUDENT EVALUATION

### The Teacher

- |     |   |                          |                          |                          |
|-----|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 4.1 | Tells learners to exchange their exercise books or assignment papers and correct one another's work | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4.2 | Collects papers and puts right and wrong marks only.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4.3 | Tells learners to form groups and discuss on exercises given  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4.4 | Writes correct answers to each questions on the blackboard  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4.5 | Elicits correct responses from learners instead of he himself or she herself supplying answers      | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4.6 | Tells learners correct answers to each questions, instead of probing or eliciting from learners     | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

## 5. CLASSROOM TALK

- |     |                                       |                          |                          |                          |
|-----|---------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 5.1 | *Learner led recitation or discussion | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5.2 | *Teacher led recitation or direction  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5.3 | Learners talk in groups or in pair    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5.4 | No learner in class talks             | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

### \* Learner - led recitation means:

- Learner expressing his own ideas or feelings;
- Learner asking question;
- Learner reciting his work, paragraphs, or composition; and
- Learner practicing pronunciation, language structure,...

### \* Teacher - led recitation means:

- teacher lectures (offers facts or opinions about content); gives explanation, expresses his own ideas;
- teacher asks, and learners reply;
- teacher gives direction or commands;
- teacher criticizes students.

ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY  
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES  
DEPARTMENT OF CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

Questionnaire to be Filled by Directors and Teachers of Teacher Training Institutes (TTIs)

The purpose of this questionnaire is to collect information about teaching learning situation of TTIs. The information secured through the questionnaire is going to be used only for research undertaking; your cooperation in giving genuine information is highly valuable to complete the study.

There is no need of writing your name on the questionnaire.

Thank you!

**PART I** Please mark with a tick (✓) your responses on the spaces provided except the questions which require written responses.

- 1.1 Name of \*TTI \_\_\_\_\_
- 1.2 Your age a) 18-25  B) 26-31  C) 32-37  D) 38-43  E) Above 43
- 1.3 Sex A) Male  B) Female
- 1.4 Qualification:- A) B.A/B.Sc  B) M.A/MSc  C) Ph.D  D) Diploma
- 1.5 Area of qualification \_\_\_\_\_
- 1.7 In which area of teaching methodology courses did you take training? A) General Teaching Methods   
B) Subject Area Teaching Methods  C) Both
- 1.8 Teaching experience in \*TTIs a) 0-3 years  B) 4-8 years  C) 9-12 years   
D) Above 12 years
- 1.9 work experience other than TTI A) 0-3 years  B) 4-8 years  C) 9-12 years   
D) Above 12 years

\* TTIs - Teacher Training Institutes

PART II Mark with a tick ( ✓ ) your response in the space that corresponds to the item.

2.1 How many times have you participated in the following in service training opportunities since 1983 E.C.?

	Frequency				
	0	1-3	4-6	7-10	Mote than 10 times
2.1.1 In Campus discussion					
2.1.2 Workshop					
2.1.3 Seminar					
2.1.4 Panel					
Other:-					

2.2 To what extent was your participation in the in service training opportunities in focus of the following areas?

	High	Medium	Low	No Opinion
2.2.1 Teaching methods like problem solving, discovery discussion, drama and audiovisual methods.				
2.2.2 Educational research				
2.2.3 Educational organization and management				
2.2.4 Curriculum development and evaluation				
2.2.5 Student Evaluation				
Other:				

2.3 Have you participated in the design and development of curriculum of TTIs? A) Yes  B) NO

2.4 If your response to question no. 2.3 is "yes". in which phase of curriculum development have you participated?  
(more than one response is possible). A) syllabus development  B) textbook writing

c) syllabus evaluation  d) other: \_\_\_\_\_   
\_\_\_\_\_

2.5 How often do you employ the following teaching methodologies?

	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Not at all
1. Discussion				
2. Lecturing				
3. Demonstration				
4. Peer Teaching				
5. Micro-teaching				
6. Role Playing				
7. Classwork or assignment				
8. Group Work				
9. Film show				
Others:				

2.3 Have you participated in the design and development of curriculum of TTIs? A) Yes  B) NO

2.4 If your response to question no. 2.3 is "yes". in which phase of curriculum development have you participated?  
(more than one response is possible). A) syllabus development  B) textbook writing

c) syllabus evaluation  d) other: \_\_\_\_\_   
 \_\_\_\_\_

2.5 How often do you employ the following teaching methodologies?

	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Not at all
1. Discussion				
2. Lecturing				
3. Demonstration				
4. Peer Teaching				
5. Micro-teaching				
6. Role Playing				
7. Classwork or assignment				
8. Group Work				
9. Film show				
Others:				

2.6 To what extent would you claim that the following factors affect the application of \*learner-centered teaching-learning methods in your institution?

	Null	Minimally	Medimuly	Highly
1. Lack or abserece of suitable classrooms furniture				
2. Poor institutional facacilities such as library, pedagogical centers, offices, etc...				
3. Teachers' lack of knowledge and skill in learner-centered methods				
4. Cynicism and sabotage of some teachers				
5. lack of support and incentive from administrators				
6. Students' lack of background and attitudinal acceptance to learner-centered teaching				
7. Inadequacy of time				
8. The curriculum being not learner-centered				
9. Difficulty in evaluating learners				
Other:				

Note:

\* Learner-centered teaching-learning method \_ is any method where:

- a) the teaching-learning process is oriented towards learner activity rather than rote memorization;
- b) learners frequently interact among themselves and with the teacher;
- c) teaching is directed more towards class 'divided into groups";
- d) learners initiate their learning and are more responsible for their learning; and
- e) the role of the teacher is more of facilitation and resource person in the teaching-learning process. Example - discussion method, role playing, micro-teaching, peer teaching, projects and the like.

2.7 How often do you employ the following student evaluation methods in your classroom teaching?

	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Not at all
Student self evaluation				
peer evaluation				
teacher evaluation				
Group (both student and teacher) evaluation				
Other method:				

2.7 How often do you employ the following student evaluation methods in your classroom teaching?

	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Not at all
Student self evaluation				
peer evaluation				
teacher evaluation				
Group (both student and teacher) evaluation				
Other method:				

## Computation of Correlation Coefficient

Computation of Correlation Coefficient of Scores Recorded by Each Observer During the Tryout of the Observation Instrument to Determine its Reliability is illustrated below.

### Section 1

Instructional Dimension	Observer -1					Observer -2					Observer-3					Observer-4				
	S <sub>1</sub>	S <sub>2</sub>	S <sub>1</sub> <sup>2</sup>	S <sub>2</sub> <sup>2</sup>	S <sub>1</sub> S <sub>2</sub>	S <sub>1</sub>	S <sub>2</sub>	S <sub>1</sub> <sup>2</sup>	S <sub>2</sub> <sup>2</sup>	S <sub>1</sub> S <sub>2</sub>	S <sub>1</sub>	S <sub>2</sub>	S <sub>1</sub> <sup>2</sup>	S <sub>2</sub> <sup>2</sup>	S <sub>1</sub> S <sub>2</sub>	S <sub>1</sub>	S <sub>2</sub>	S <sub>1</sub> <sup>2</sup>	S <sub>2</sub> <sup>2</sup>	S <sub>1</sub> S <sub>2</sub>
1	3	2	9	4	6	3	3	9	9	9	3	2	9	4	6	2	3	4	9	6
2	6	4	36	16	24	5	4	25	16	20	5	4	25	16	20	3	5	9	25	15
3	16	13	256	169	208	14	16	196	256	224	13	17	16	289	221	18	15	324	225	270
4	16	17	256	289	272	17	14	289	146	238	19	15	361	225	285	16	20	256	400	320
5	7	8	49	64	56	7	5	49	25	35	6	8	36	64	48	5	7	25	49	35
6	5	3	25	9	15	3	5	9	25	15	4	4	16	16	16	4	5	16	25	20
<b>Sum</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>531</b>	<b>551</b>	<b>581</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>577</b>	<b>527</b>	<b>541</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>463</b>	<b>614</b>	<b>596</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>634</b>	<b>733</b>	<b>666</b>

$\sum S_1$	53	49	50	48
$\sum S_1^2$	631	577	463	634
$(\sum S_1)^2$	2809	2401	2500	2304
$\sum S_2$	49	47	52	55
$\sum S_2^2$	551	527	614	733
$(\sum S_2)^2$	2401	2209	2704	3025
$\sum S_1 S_2$	581	541	596	666

S<sub>1</sub> and S<sub>2</sub> represent Session<sub>1</sub> and Session<sub>2</sub> respectively

N, number of categories = 6

Then by substituting the above values in Pearson Product Moment Coefficient of

Correlation, i.e.  $r = \frac{N(\sum S_1 S_2) - (\sum S_1)(\sum S_2)}{\sqrt{[N \sum S_1^2 - (\sum S_1)^2][N \sum S_2^2 - (\sum S_2)^2]}}$  we can get the correlation coefficient value of each observer as follows.

$$r_1 = \frac{(6 \times 581) - (53 \times 49)}{\sqrt{[6 \times 631 - 2809][6 \times 551 - 2401]}}; \quad r_2 = \frac{6 \times 541 - (49 \times 47)}{\sqrt{[6 \times 577 - 2401][6 \times 527 - 2209]}}; \quad r_3 = \frac{6 \times 596 - (50 \times 52)}{\sqrt{[6 \times 463 - 2500][6 \times 614 - 2704]}}; \quad r_4 = \frac{6 \times 666 - (48 \times 55)}{\sqrt{[6 \times 634 - 2304][6 \times 733 - 3025]}}$$

$$r_1 = 0.95$$

$$r_2 = 0.94$$

$$r_3 = 0.91$$

$$r_4 = 0.93$$

## Section 2

Institutional Dimension	Observer -1					Observer -2					Observer-3					Observer-4				
	S <sub>1</sub>	S <sub>2</sub>	S <sub>1</sub> <sup>2</sup>	S <sub>2</sub> <sup>2</sup>	S <sub>1</sub> S <sub>2</sub>	S <sub>1</sub>	S <sub>2</sub>	S <sub>1</sub> <sup>2</sup>	S <sub>2</sub> <sup>2</sup>	S <sub>1</sub> S <sub>2</sub>	S <sub>1</sub>	S <sub>2</sub>	S <sub>1</sub> <sup>2</sup>	S <sub>2</sub> <sup>2</sup>	S <sub>1</sub> S <sub>2</sub>	S <sub>1</sub>	S <sub>2</sub>	S <sub>1</sub> <sup>2</sup>	S <sub>2</sub> <sup>2</sup>	S <sub>1</sub> S <sub>2</sub>
1	2	2	4	4	4	2	3	4	9	6	3	2	9	4	6	2	3	4	9	6
2	4	6	16	36	24	4	5	16	25	20	5	6	21	36	30	6	4	36	16	24
3	12	15	144	225	180	18	15	324	225	270	12	13	144	169	156	12	16	144	256	192
4	18	14	324	196	252	18	20	324	460	360	15	17	225	289	255	16	19	256	361	304
5	5	6	25	36	30	4	5	16	25	20	9	6	81	36	54	4	5	16	25	20
6	4	6	16	36	24	6	4	36	16	24	4	5	16	25	20	6	4	36	16	24
Sum	45	49	529	533	514	52	52	720	100	700	48	49	500	559	531	46	51	492	683	570

$$\sum S_1 = 45$$

$$\sum S_1^2 = 529$$

$$(\sum S_1)^2 = 2025$$

$$\sum S_2 = 49$$

$$\sum S_2^2 = 533$$

$$(\sum S_2)^2 = 2401$$

$$\sum S_1 S_2 = 514$$

$$r_1 = 0.92$$

$$52$$

$$720$$

$$2704$$

$$52$$

$$700$$

$$2704$$

$$700$$

$$r_2 = 0.96$$

$$48$$

$$500$$

$$2304$$

$$49$$

$$559$$

$$2401$$

$$521$$

$$r_3 = 0.95$$

$$46$$

$$492$$

$$2116$$

$$51$$

$$683$$

$$2401$$

$$570$$

$$r_4 = 0.96$$

## DECLARATION

The Thesis is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other University and that all sources of material used for the thesis have been duly acknowledged.

Name: Sirak Demelash

Signature: 

Date: 19/05/2000

This Thesis has been submitted for examination with my approval as university advisor.

Name: Amare Asegdom

Signature: 

Dat of Submission: 19/05/2000