

ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES
FACULTY OF LANGUAGE STUDIES
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

A STUDY ON SELF-ACCESS CENTER (SAC) IN ENHANCING
AUTONOMOUS LANGUAGE LEARNING: ADDIS ABABA
AND HARRAR SELF-ACCESS CENTERS IN FOCUS

BY
KEMAL TUHA



JUNE, 2011
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A THESIS PRESENTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF
ENGLISH (GRADUATE PROGRAMME)
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR
THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS IN TEACHING
ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE (TEFL)

JUNE, 2011
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to my adviser Dr. Gessesse Tadesse for his constructive comments and unreserved guidance throughout the entire course of this study.

I am very grateful to all students, teachers, and coordinators of Addis Ababa and Harrar Peacekeeping English Centers and Peter Hare (the project coordinator from the British council in Ethiopia) who participated willingly and enthusiastically in this research.

I wish to extend my deepest gratitude to Andy (teacher trainer of the Peacekeeping English Project) for his great support in providing me valuable books and journals to undertake this study.

I would also like to express my gratitude to all my friends and relatives who contributed to the completion of this paper.

Finally, my thanks go to my family for their economical and moral support from the beginning to the end of the study.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS/ACRONYMS

SAC- Self-Access Center

ELT- English Language Teaching

SAL- Self-Access Learning

SALL- Self -Access Language Learning

EMOND- Ethiopian Ministry of National Defense

ABSTRACT

The main objective of this study is to explore to what extent Self-Access Center (SAC) use promotes autonomous language learning. To achieve this objective, Level-2 and Level-3 Peacekeeping English project students of Addis Ababa and Harrar Self- Access Centers were chosen as participants of the study. For the purpose of gathering sufficient and reliable data, three instruments were used. The questionnaire was used to assess students feeling about the SAC, the materials they used to improve their language skills, self-assessment, language learning strategies and how the SAC was helping them. The interviews were used to get a detail overview of the information gathered through the questionnaire. And the observation was also used as a supplementary tool for the data gathered through the questionnaire and interview. Then, the data were analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively. The findings show that students were good in making self-assessment, deciding their language learning process and independent use of material. However, students had problems on setting their language learning goals, discussing on their own language learning strategies and use of learners note book (SAC Log book). Students had also lack of information on the available resources in the SAC, this can be seen when most students focused on one skill. In addition, most students' autonomy was limited to listening skills. Finally recommendations are given in order to help teachers and administrative staffs to help their students to autonomous language learning.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Jones (1995) stated that the SAC is a place where both teachers and learners would have to change their attitude and approaches whereby learners could have a more active role in determining their learning objectives and processes. Sheerin (1997) also stated that Self-Access Center (SAC) is a means to cater for individual learners' needs which requires effort on teachers' part to provide learning materials. Dickinson (1987) on the other hand stated that SAC makes provision for learners who were either fully autonomous or semi-autonomous.

In setting up Self-Access facilities, it is conveniently assumed that learner autonomy, whether full or partial, is a desirable objective. The ideal good language learner after all, is said to be one who takes as much responsibility as possible for his or her own learning, and Self-Access is the most valid test of this responsibility (Jones, 1995). Sheerin also stated that:

Self -Access is by no means synonymous with learner autonomy or learner independence but there can be little doubt that the current wide spread interest in Self-Access has come about largely as a result of educational reform movements which are concerned with a learner-centered approach. The influences which have led to the development of Self-Access are then, to a large extent, also the influences which have popularized the concern with autonomous or independent learning, and so it is with the development of these ideals that a historical overview of Self-Access has to be begin (Sheerin, 1991:143).

Jones (2001) also stated that the chief reason for using Self-Access Center (SAC) tends to be regarded as promoting independent learning, and thus autonomy is a highly valued goal in this age of communicative approach.

Therefore, Self-Access can be seen as the logical development of and physical manifestation of individualization on one hand and as a means of promoting learner autonomy and self directed learning on the other hand (Sheerin, 1991).

Nowadays a Self-Access Center (SAC) is also seen as an essential complement in supporting classroom learning. Cotterall and Reinders (2001) stated that independent language learning is an essential complement to the classroom learning if learners are to acquire target competence in a realistic period of time. It follows that language teachers can help promote learning efficiency by making links between the teachers guided learning and learner initiated activities out of class learning. Many institutions in the last ten years have established Self-Access Centers.

Dickinson (1987) added that outside the normal classroom framework, Self-Access is in an excellent position to promote the learner-centered philosophy. The Self-Access Center, after all, is dedicated to recognizing the difference and fulfilling the needs of learners as individuals.

Because of this many ELT organizations have recently invested considerable sums of money in building and resourcing Self-Access Centers. Therefore, the main objective of this research will be to assess to what extent these students are autonomous as a result of using the Self-Access language learning programmes.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

According to Gremon and Riley (1995) as cited in Cotterall and Reinders (2001), Self-Access Center and hence Self-Access Learning have been in existence since the late 1960s. However, in the last few years, Self-Access Language Learning (SALL) has experienced an explosion of interest, as evidenced by growing a number of conference papers, Journal articles, and books which seek to enhance understanding of this approach to learning.

Nevertheless, as far as the researcher knows, he couldn't find any research work on Self-Access Language Learning which has been done in Ethiopian context. However, the research studies worked in other countries shows that Self-Access Center use promotes autonomous language learning but they vary on the extent that it promotes autonomous language learning. For instance, Cotterall and Reinders (2001) stated that the survey given to the students showed that 90% of the students found the Self-Access Center to be important to their learning experience. From a standpoint of autonomy, 88% of those that participated said that the Self-Access Center helped them to learn by themselves. Overall, 93% said that "learning to learn English by yourself" is an important objective. However, the survey done by Nunan (2000) indicates that the SAC is not being used to promote learner autonomy or to help engage students in autonomous learning to the extent it could be. In general, different research studies show different results. Nevertheless, the Peacekeeping English Project has not yet explored to what extent the SAC use makes the student autonomous Language Learner.

At the beginning of 2007 the Ethiopian Ministry of National Defense (EMOND) in collaboration with the British Council in Ethiopia established five Self-Access Centers across the country. And this year two additional Self-Access Centers are built. These SACs are designed as a resource for students to help them trained in how to learn according to their own learning styles, develop ability for self-directed learning and become independent learners based on their need, interest and potentiality; in other words, to develop learner autonomy (Peacekeeping English Project, 2009).

For the last three years, most of the students use the Self-Access Centers. However, no one has yet researched to what extent the students have become autonomous language learner as a result of using the Self-Access Center.

Therefore, the points the researcher has forwarded are inevitably based on the experience he has at Ethiopian Ministry of National Defense (EMOND). He has

also read some books and journals about this topic. From these sources he understood that the main objective of SAC is to make students autonomous learners.

However, as the program is new for the organization, no one has yet studied how really SAC use makes students autonomous language learner. Therefore, this study will explore to what extent the SAC use makes students autonomous language learners.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

1.3.1 General Objective

- The main objective of the study is to explore to what extent SAC use promotes autonomous language learning.

1.3.2 Specific Objectives

In order to achieve this general objective, the research focuses on the following specific objectives; these are to:

- 1 See to what extent the students are able to set language learning goals and work towards them using their own self-directed skills.
- 2 Assess what autonomous English learning activities are students currently undertaking on their own initiative in the SAC.
- 3 See if the students make study plans, reflect on their learning process, and self-supervise their work.

1.4 Research Questions

The study therefore addresses the following research questions in order to achieve the aforementioned objectives.

- 1 Do the students are able to set language learning goals and work towards them using their own self-directed skills?
- 2 What autonomous English learning activities are students currently undertaking on their own initiative in the SAC?
- 3 Do they make study plans, reflect on their learning process and self-supervise their work?

1.5 Significance of the Study

The researcher hopes that the findings of this study will provide information to think of learning out of classroom using Self-Access Language learning programmes. It is thus the researcher hope that the study will benefit the project, lecturers and students by identifying problem areas and offer possible solutions. Since there is also often a gap between what learners look to be capable of doing from autonomy theorists' stand point, and what learners truly execute, the study hopefully contribute to bridge the gap between learners autonomy theory and practice, for students who learn English in classroom educational setting.

Based on the findings of the study, it is possible to draw informed conclusions and make recommendations specific to the situation which will be important for the present and future learning and teaching endeavors regarding various aspects and principles of autonomous learning and Self-Access Center programme. As it is a new study, it will also be a base for future study.

1.6 The Scope of the Study

This study is carried out on Level-2 (Intermediate) and Level-3 (Advanced) students of Addis Ababa and Harrar Peacekeeping English Project. Thus, this study is mainly concerned with students. This study is also limited to the Self-

Access Center use. However, the classroom teaching learning process is not considered. The researcher believes that exploring to what extent the students are autonomous in their SAC use will help the organization to evaluate how much they achieved their objectives. The researcher also believes that if the students are autonomously using the SAC, they will also apply in the class room. This is the main reason why the study is limited only on the students work in the SAC.

1.7 Limitation of the Study

To carry out the study, the researcher faced the following limitations. Firstly, the researcher was forced to include only two Self-Access Centers. However, there might be more generalized result if the five centers have Level-2 and Level-3 programmes. Secondly, due to time constraint, it was impossible to see students SAC use for a longer period of time. It was also difficult to make a detailed discussion on the results he gets since the researcher has not got many research works regarding the topic. Especially, the researcher could not get any research works which is done in Ethiopian context.

CHAPTER-TWO

A REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

This chapter basically reviews literatures related to the study. The first part focuses on: A Brief history of Self-Access Language Learning, Self-Access Center and Self-Access Language Learning, Rationale for using Self-Access Center (SAC), Roles of Materials in the SAC, Good Self-Access Learning (SAL) Material, Roles of Self-Access Learner and Characteristics of Good Self-Access Center. The second part focuses on: A Brief history and Characteristics of Learner Autonomy, Promoting Learner Autonomy, and Factors that Affect Autonomous Language Learning.

2.2 Self-Access Center (SAC) and Self-Access Language Learning (SALL)

2.2.1 A Brief History of Self -Access

Sheerin (1991), in her article 'Self-Access' has clearly presented the historical root of Self-Access language learning. She stated that 'Self-Access' is by no means synonymous with learner autonomy or learner independence. But there can be little doubt that the current widespread interest in self-Access has come about largely as a result of educational reform movements which are concerned with a learner-centered approach. The influences which have led to the development of Self-Access are then, to a large extent, also the influences which have popularized the concern with autonomous or independent learning, and so it is with the development of these ideals that a historical overview of Self-Access has to begin. She also added that,

There are many political and social strands that can be traced in the new educational movement which grew up between 1950 and 1970. It has been said that the launching of the first Russian sputnik had a profoundly disquieting effect on the American psyche, causing the country to lose confidence in an education system which had failed to produce scientists of the caliber found in the USSR. Educational psychology and theory was in the grip of materials behaviorism and learning (including language learning) was seen to be a conditioned response to specified set of stimuli. Human beings were regarded as subjects whose behavior could be shaped in much the same way as that of rats or pigeons. The rediscovery of the rich and varied potential of the individual learner and their ability and needed to take an active part in own education was partly a reaction against the passive determinism of behaviorism of behaviorist psychology (Tuposky, 1982). In the forefront of this movement were the American educational philosopher Carl Rogers (1969), who stressed the importance of learning to learn and to adapt to a changing environment, and Ivan Illich (1970), who set out a rationale for 'deschooling society', criticizing formal education systems of the time because they were 'teaching the need to be taught' (143-144).

She further explained that in Britain in the 60's the movement towards mixed ability teaching and comprehension schooling led to a greater emphasis on individualization, particularly at school level, where active discovery techniques allowed children to develop concept and skills through experience and at their own pace. Developments in foreign language teaching reflected and in turn, lent impetus to the new attitude towards education.

At the end of 1960's, educational psychologists were highlighting the difference between individual learners in areas such as personality, cognitive style and learning style (Valette and Distick, 1972) as cited in Sheerin (1991). All of these developments meant that those concerned with language teaching focused their attention increasingly towards the learner as an individual and towards a consideration of how an individual difference could be taken in to account and individual needs satisfied.

The notion of individualization did not however, go far enough for many educational reformers who saw it as something, that teachers did for learners,

and who were concerned with a much more fundamental reappraisal of the relative role of teachers and learners. Their concern was that learners should become autonomous, assuming responsibility for and taking charge of their learning. And hence SAC has come in to application (sheerin, 1991).

Gardner and Miller (2008) also presented where the first Self-Access was implemented. They stated that the well known example of implementing Self-Access learning is started from the center d'Resarch et d'Applications pedagogiques en Langues (CRAPEL) at the university of Cambridge, UK; and from the Bell School in Saffron Weldon, UK. In addition to these, individual sites the British Council, through its Direct Teaching Operation, have established a number of showcase SACs throughout Europe (2008).

2.2.2 Self -Access Center (SAC) and Self-Access Language Learning

Sheerin (1991) defined Self-Access as a way of describing learning materials which were designed and organized in ways where learners could select, work independently, and later, obtain feedback on their performances. Gardner and Miller (2008) on the other hand, gave two definitions of Self-Access. They argued that it was 'an approach to learning language, not an approach to teaching language', and 'a system for organizing resources and an integration of a number of elements which combine to provide a learning environment'.

Jones (1995) also stated that Self-Access was dedicated to recognizing and fulfilling different individual learner's needs, which were expected to be actively responsible for their own language study. Though named differently, the definitions for Self-Access Learning (SAL) seemed similar to 'Self-Access'. SAL is also referred to the place where learners could use materials which facilitate learning in their self constructed way by Dickinson (1987) and Jones (1995). From the above definitions, it can be concluded that 'Self-Access' and 'Self-

Access learning' refer to a type of learning materials, an approach to language learning, a system allowing students to work at their own pace and time, a means to practice autonomy, and a way to recognize and fulfill learners' needs. In other words, SAL is a learning approach where students could learn under their own direction, choose and use suitable learning resources that facilitate their learning.

Sheerin (1997) also further defined SAC is a means to cater for individual learners' needs which requires effort on teachers' part to provide learning materials. Jones (1995) on the other hand, stated SAC is where both teachers and learners would have to change their attitudes and approaches whereby learners could take a more active role in determining their own learning objectives and processes.

Cotterall and Reinders (2001) also propose the following definition, "A Self-Access Centre consists of a number of resources (in the form of materials, activities and support), usually located in one place, and is designed to accommodate learners of different levels, goals, styles and interests." Gardner & Miller (1999) highlight the fact that it is not simply the existence of Self-Access resources and services which go into making up the SAC, but also how these materials are presented to the students. They then set out a detailed explanation of what equipment and resources could be included and how it should all be organized. Furthermore, Benson (2001) stated that institutions often establish SACs "without any strong pedagogical rationale," which means that a SAC should be firmly grounded in strong pedagogical principles.

Concerning the purpose of SAC, Benson (2001) argued that the SAC should function as a quasi-independent unit with its own philosophy and routines for engaging learners in study outside the classroom. In other words, the SAC should have principles and purposes which could encourage learners to learn outside formal classes.

Jones (1995) on the other hand, stated that the creation of the SAC was to allow learners to take as much personal control of their learning as they wish, and to offer learners who have no aptitude or desire for independence as much guidance as necessary. Dickinson (1987) too, stated that the SAC makes provision for learners who were either fully autonomous, semi-autonomous, or even non-autonomous. In short, it can be argued that the SAC provides a conducive learning environment, offers learners opportunities to carry out learning activities either on their own or in groups, accommodates relevant, motivating and interesting learning materials. In addition, it encourages the use of various learning facilities and caters for the needs of individual learners so as to enable them to assume some responsibility for their learning.

2.2.3 Rationale for Using Self-Access Center (SAC)

The literature reveals many reasons why the SAC has been adopted for language learning. Dickinson (1987) stated that SAC allows learners to make their own learning decisions regarding what to learn, which materials to work on, and when to learn. These are the reasons why many institutions had accepted the SAC. Sheerin (1989) also stated the capability of the SAC in providing a practical solution to problems such as mixed ability language classes, learners' different psychological needs and personality, and others are also the reasons .

Furthermore, the approach was adopted because it enables individual learners with particular weaknesses to work either alone or with others with similar needs (Gardner & Miller, 2008). In their 1999 edition, they also added that Self-Access Language Learning has the potential to promote learner autonomy in a number of ways. Firstly, it provides facilities that can help learners to pursue their own goals and interests while accommodating individual differences in learning style, level and pace of learning; secondly, the resources have the potential to raise learners' awareness of the learning process by

highlighting aspects of the management of learning, such as goal setting and monitoring progress; thirdly, it can act as a bridge between the teacher-directed learning situation, where the target language is studied and practiced, and the “real world”, where the target language is used as a means of communication. Finally, SAC can promote the learning autonomy of learners who prefer or are obliged to learn without a teacher, by supporting their learning in the absence of an organized language course. In different contexts, Self-Access Language Learning offers varying degrees of guidance but encourages students to move towards autonomy (Gardner and Miller, 1999).

Sheerin (1997) also added that Self-Access benefits learners who are unable to attend formal classes and learners of all ages and cultures. It also enables learners to develop a sense of responsibility and different levels of independence towards their learning and later helps them to be self-directed and autonomous learners.

Nevertheless, Benson (2001) cautioned Language educators that the SAC does not necessarily imply learners possess or exercise the capacity to control their own learning. Self-Access learning educators have been known to adapt various strategies to instill different levels of independence or self-directedness among learners. Self-Access learners may benefit from either a full-autonomy or partial-autonomy learning mode. The gains for learners involved in such a learning mode are many. Self-Access learning motivates learners, leads them to employ higher order thinking skills, allows them to experiment with different learning styles, gives the opportunity for learners to use their own judgment about how best to learn, instills in them the ability to respond to change, and provides excitement and pleasure in learning.

2.2.4 Roles of Materials in the SAC

Sheerin (1997) argued that well-organized and suitable Self-Access materials could facilitate and encourage self-directed learning. Hence, she stressed that

the SAC should provide materials that could foster learner independence rather than teacher-directed materials or instructions by remote control. In addition, Waite (1994) who discussed 'Low-resourced Self-Access in the developing world', asserted that asking students to use learning materials which are inappropriate is like leading them 'to a watering hole' because they 'will have their worst doubts about their own language learning skill confirmed, and are not likely to return'. In other words, she stated that students who are forced to learn via inappropriately designed materials will feel that it is useless doing the activities and that it is better to be passive learners.

Learners select suitable materials based on personal needs (Gardner and Miller, 2008). This implies that Self-Access materials need to be varied in content and style so as to permit learners to follow their personal objectives, needs and interest. Lee and Morrison (1988) added that the intrinsic interest of materials is determinant factor for autonomous learners to continue their studies.

Due to this, Little (1991) stressed the importance of considering both the students' needs and teacher's special expertise when preparing the SAC materials. He stated that the preparation of the learning materials should take into consideration the teachers' suggestions and the learners' needs.

Gardner and Miller (2008) also point out various sources that serve to enhance Self-Access learning. These include: published language learning materials, authentic materials, specially produced materials, materials which are often enhanced by the inclusion of extracts from authentic sources (e.g. news papers, subject specialist text books).

2.2.4.1 Good Self-Access Learning (SAL) Materials

What constitute good SAC materials? Many researchers seemed to agree that the most important criteria of good SAC materials would be a clearly written statement of the aims and objectives (Sheerin, 1989) and (Dickinson, 1987). In

addition, Sheerin added that the presentation of the SAC materials is vital because well-presented SAC materials can increase the students' confidence in using them. She stated that as human beings, students often like professionally done materials. She listed several characteristics of well presented SAC materials, i.e. attractive, inviting, professionally written and finished with appropriate and suitable size, layout, artwork and typeface.

Dickinson (1987) also emphasized the need for materials to be worth learning, that is, they should consist of useful exercises, meaningful language input, flexible and appropriate learning instructions, and useful advice. In short, researchers agreed that SAC materials should have clear aims and objectives, worthwhile learning activities, useful feedback, appropriate assessment, flexible advice on record keeping, and accessible for students to work either individually or in collaboration with others without direct supervision from the teachers.

There were several suggestions given on how the SAC materials should be designed. Sheerin (1989) stated that the learning materials should be designed and organized in ways where learners could select and work on tasks independently, and later, obtain feedback on their performance through answer keys that are provided for the activities or tasks given. Similarly, Faizah *et.al* (1998) asserted that the learning materials should be more learner-friendly than the textbook and should guide students through the learning process with all possible queries addressed. In addition, Barnett & Jordan (199) highlighted the importance of linking the different learning materials to enable a more purposeful learning and to allow long-term planning, consolidation and reinforcement.

2.2.5 Roles of Self-Access Learners

Self-Access learners need to plan their own learning targets, choose their preferred learning style, plan and organize their work, decide when best to work alone, work collaboratively and when to seek advice. Self-Access learners will become better learners as they learn through their personal experience, identify and solve their own learning problems, employ creativity in their learning process, and assess their own progress with respect to their learning targets. If learners were made to select and outline their own learning objectives, they would be more directed and focused. This is because learners often do not know why they are participating in learning activities (Brophy, 1998). Learners will derive more satisfaction out of their participation in learning activities if they understand the reasons and the objectives of the activities.

One important responsibility of the Self-Access Learner, apart from identifying his learning needs and learning objectives and goals is to self-Access his learning activities. Self-assessment is a prerequisite for a self-directed learner (Todd, 2005). He further added the many benefits of self-assessment for a Self-Access learner as follows: it raises a learners' awareness of the language, makes him aware of his effective ways of learning and learning performance, increases learning motivation and goal orientation in learning, enhances and formulates his beliefs about aspects of learning.

To become effective Self-Access learners, Marshall and Rowland (1993) recommend that learners learn effective information retrieval methods such as the use of libraries, discover their own learning purposes and learning style, learn ways to bridge the gap from dependent learning which they are so used to while at school, to independent learning which they need to empower themselves with while at the university. They also stress the importance of learning how to ask complex questions and how to pursue their own questions in formal education, to be an independent learner.

2.2.6 Characteristics of Good Self-Access Center

Harmer (2007:404-406) has listed five major characteristics of good Self-Access Center these are:

Classification of items: nothing will de motivate a student more than trying to work on something that is too easy or way outside their reach. Yet, this is a distinct possibility unless there is a clear system of classifications which detail the type of materials and the level it is designed for. Thus, when students access the main screen of the SAC computer, they should find it easy to get to the listening menu (if listening is what they want to do). There should be a clear description of what listening material there is, and the levels should be clearly signposted. In general, the website should be easy to navigate about.

Pathways: once students have completed an exercise, they can be given suggestions about where to go next. The materials they have been using can list other items on the same topic; on the computer screen, students can return to the menu can offer a range of further possibilities. With paper worksheets, suggestions can be incorporated for related materials.

SAC assistants and teachers have a major role to play in helping students to use the Center successfully and follow appropriate pathways. Students can be shown where things are, can be helped with hardware and software problems and direct down new pathways. In order to help students in this way, assistants and teachers need to be aware of a center' contents and benefits, and trained through induction materials, especially designed SAC lessons, and staff seminars help students appropriately (O'Dell, 1992) in Harmer (2008).

Training students: most students left to their own devices in a SAC or on a computer website, will not know how to use the facility to its best advantage.

To prevent these situations; students need to be trained to use programs and centers appropriately. Even, when students have been trained to use the SAC, they will still benefit from the help that assistants and teachers can give them in the center itself.

Making Self-Access Center appropriate for students: one view of SAC has a group of individual students sitting apart from each other with silence (often at a computer screen), working profitably and autonomously. Yet, as Jones (1995) in Harmer (2007) points out 'To make autonomy an undiluted educational objective in a culture where it has no traditional place is to be guilty at least of culture insensitivity'. Harmer also pointed out that any one setting up a SAC or designing material and tasks for use should think carefully about who is like to use it and what patterns of use will be most culturally appropriate. One way of doing this is to set up a student advisory panel to take part in planning and evaluating the center. Apart from guaranteeing the involvement of those particular students, this has the potential for SAC design which really meets the need of its users.

Keeping interest going: SAC really come in to their own students take decisions to go and study there by themselves and continue to do so over a period of time. For this reason, administrators and teachers have to devise methods to keep users involved and interested. One way of doing this is to give students a feedback sheet to fill after every activity. Though these forms are apparently for the center's use, the process of reflecting on an activity helps to maintaining the user's engagement and prepares them for the next task. Another means of maintaining student involvement is through a SAC users committee which students can apply to become members of monthly meeting which bring about change and improvement, they have genuine part to play in directing the centre's present and future course.

2.3 Autonomous Language Learning and Autonomous Learner

2.3.1 A Brief History of Autonomous Language Learning

Benson (2006:1-2) presented the brief history of autonomous Language learning as follows:

The early history of autonomy in language education is well documented (Gremmo & Riley, 1995; Little, 1991, 2000a; Benson, 2001; Holec, 2007). In brief, it begins with the Council of Europe's Modern Languages Project, which led to the publication of Holec's (1981:3) seminar report, in which autonomy was defined as 'the ability to take charge of one's own learning'. Important work from this period can also be found in early issues of the journal M'elanges P'edagogiques and in papers presented at a 1976 seminar at the University of Cambridge (Harding-Esch,1977).Early pedagogical experiments related to autonomy were inspired by humanistic expectations aroused by the political turmoil and 'counter-cultures' of late-1960s Europe (Holec,1981; Gremmo & Riley,1995). Practical applications focused on self-directed learning and led to the development of Self-Access Centers and learner training as focal points for experimentation. Although Holec (1981) treated autonomy as an attribute of the learner, the term was also used to describe learning situations. In his book on self-instruction, Dickinson (1987: 11), for example, described autonomy as 'the situation in which the learner is totally responsible for all of the decisions concerned with his learning and the implementation of those decisions'

As Allwright (1988) put it, the idea of learner autonomy was for a long time associated with a radical restructuring of language pedagogy that involved the rejection of the traditional classroom and the introduction of wholly new ways of working. For Allwright autonomy needed to be re-conceptualized if it was to be applied to the classroom. Autonomy could, for example, be recognized in students' unpredictable contributions to classroom activities that could temporarily throw the teacher's plans of course. In his book on learner training, Dickinson (1992) also argued that learners often acted independently, both cognitively and behaviorally, in the classroom. However, Dam (1995) demonstrated how principles of autonomy could be integrated into secondary

school classrooms without Self-Access or formal learner training. This turn towards classroom applications led a second wave of interest in autonomy in the 1990s, with important theoretical implications.

Little's (1991) in his book on learner autonomy, for example, emphasized the psychological attributes of autonomous learners and prioritized 'interdependence' over 'independence' in learning. He also argued that learner autonomy did not imply any particular mode of practice, but was instead dependent upon the quality of the 'pedagogical dialogue' between teachers and learners. With the proliferation of Self-Access Centers in the 1990s and more recent developments related to computer-based modes of teaching and learning, however, Allwright's (1988) 'radical restructuring of language pedagogy' has become a reality that many language teachers must now come to terms with.

2.3.2 Learner Autonomy (Definitions and Characteristics)

The concept of 'autonomous learning' stemmed from debates about the development of life-long learning skills and the development of independent thinkers both of which originated in the 1960s (Gardner and Miller, 2008). Holec (1981) in Gardner and Miller (2008) defined autonomy as 'the ability to take charge of one's own learning'. He further defined autonomy as a conceptual tool in his 1985 edition. Nunan (2000) also states that autonomy implies a capacity to exercise control over one's own learning. He says that autonomous learners should be able to determine the general focus of their learning, take an active role in the management of the learning process, and have freedom of choice with regards to learning resources and activities. Benson and Voller (1997) make similar claims. They stated that autonomy means taking charge of one's own education and learning.

Dickinson (1987) further defines it as a situation in which the learner is totally responsible for all the decisions concerned with his/her learning processes.

From these definitions we can clearly understand that autonomous learning is taking more responsibility to one's learning.

Dickinson (1993), Nunan (2000), Wenden (1991), and Gardner and Miller (2008) also discussed the characteristics of autonomous learner in the following way. Autonomous learners:

- Are able to identify what has been taught and what is going on in their class.
- Are able to formulate their learning objectives not necessarily in competition with the teacher rather than in collaboration with the teacher.
- Can select and implement appropriate learning strategies, often consciously and can monitor their own use of learning strategies.
- Are able to identify strategies that are not working for them that are not appropriate and use others. They have a relatively rich repertoire of strategies and have the confidence to ditch those that are not effective and try something else.
- They are consciously involved with self-assessment.

Dickinson (1993:330-336)

- Self-determine the overall direction of their learning,
- Become actively involved in the management of the learning process.
- Exercise freedom of choice in relation to learning resources and activities.

Nunan (2000:1)

- Are willing to take on the responsibility for their own learning and see themselves as having a critical role in their language learning.
- Are self-confident and believe in their ability to learn and to self-direct or manage their learning.

Wenden (1991:53)

Gardner and Miller (2008: 230) also added that to evaluate whether Self-Access Learning develops autonomy in learners, the following points should be considered:

- The level of individualization achieved
- The level in which learners take responsibility for their own learning
- The quantity and the quality of learners' reflection about their learning
- The outcomes of learner reflection and
- The degree of independence learners achieved over a period of Self-Access learning.

2.3.3 Promoting Autonomy

Teachers can promote autonomy without creating a teacher-dominated learning process. Sheerin cited in Benson & Voller (1997) points out that teachers have an important role in helping learners to become more autonomous. Thanasoulas (2002) also suggests that autonomous learning is achieved when both cognitive and metacognitive strategies become part of the learner's skills.

Cognitive strategies deal primarily with the manipulation of input such as repetition or note taking. Thanasoulas added that developing these skills will contribute to the overall development of autonomy in language learners. Wenden (1998) defines metacognition as the facts learners acquire about their own cognitive processes as they are applied and used to gain knowledge and acquire skills in varied situations. Metacognitive strategies are not learning strategies in the same way that cognitive strategies are. Metacognitive strategies deal with learning about how an individual learns. They involve techniques such as self-monitoring and self-evaluation. These are key aspects of Self-Access. If Self-Access truly involves self-monitoring and self-evaluation, then Self-Access Centers are essential in helping learners become more autonomous.

As cited in Harmer (2007), Cotterell suggests that language courses which aim to promote learner autonomy should have a number of characteristics. In the first place, the course should reflect the learner's goals in its language, tasks and strategies. This means raising the students' awareness of identifying goals, specifying objectives and identifying recourses which will help them to realize these goals. Next, the course task should be explicitly linked to a simplified model of the language learning process. In other words, Cotterell suggest, student are unlikely to be able to manage their own learning if they have no idea of how learning works; it is by developing an awareness of language learning theory that they are able to adopt learning strategies for themselves. Course tasks should replicate real-world communicative tasks and finally, the course should promote reflection on learning (Cotterell, 2000). Nunan (2000:11) also stated several stages to promote autonomy in terms of content and learning content domain:

In terms of content, the first step along the path towards autonomy is to make the learners aware of the goals and content of the curriculum, learning program or pedagogical materials. The second step is to involve learners in selecting goals and content from a range of alternatives on offer. Further, along the autonomy continuum, learners would be involved in modifying and adapting goals and content. The next step would see learners creating their own goals and content. The final level is one where learners are functioning as fully autonomous learners, transcending the classroom and linking content to the world beyond the classroom. A similar continuum can be proposed in the learning content domain. The first step is to encourage students to identify the strategies underlying classroom tasks and exercises, and to identify their own preferred learning styles and strategies. At the next level, learners would be involved in making choices among a range of options. Next, learners would be given opportunities to modify and adapt tasks. This could be a preliminary step towards teaching students to create their own tasks. At the final level, learners would become teachers.

2.3.3.1 Using Self-Access Centers to Promote Autonomy

In an effort to promote autonomy, many institutions have developed Self-Access Centers. These Centers have become increasingly more popular in the last few

decades. The first such Center was developed by CRAPEL (Centre de Recherches et d'Applications Pédagogiques en Langues) at the University of Nancy, France (Gremmo & Riley, 1995). Since then, centers have arisen in locations in the United States, throughout Europe, Asia, and elsewhere around the globe.

The idea behind these Self-Access Centers is to promote and facilitate autonomous learning. These centers may contain books, audiovisual equipment, and/or tutors. The purpose of these centers is to complement teacher instruction. Students can go to these places to participate in activities ranging from class homework to fully autonomous learning of language concepts (Gardner and Miller, 2008).

However, Gremmo and Riley (1995) added that for many institutions, autonomous learning is not defined as independent learning. In many situations, a center exists, but nothing is done to promote learner autonomy. The Center quickly becomes a computer lab or library, but maintains the name, claiming that it is a Self-Access Center. In short, there are many Self-Access Centers, but the information we have with regards to their efficacy and functionality is limited.

Recent studies on autonomy have dealt with Self-Access Centers. Researchers want to determine how and if these Centers are promoting autonomy. In other studies, researchers have tried to determine what makes a person a good language learner. They then try to find a way to transfer these techniques and integrate them into language programs (Gremmo & Riley, 1995). Gremmo and Riley also noticed that in Self-directed learning there is a link between language learning and learning-to-learn. They suggest that research should be done with regards to counseling and development of learning-to-learn programs. Metacognition seems to be a clear factor for producing learner autonomy.

However, in order to help students be autonomous learner using SAC, Cotterall and Reinders (2001) suggest four areas to be considered.

- Self-Access Center administrators should explore learners' beliefs.
- Students need an effective initial orientation to the Self-Access Center.
- Administrators should provide on-going support to students.
- There should be more links between the Self-Access Center and the classroom.

In other words, they suggest that, exploring learners' beliefs, orienting them to the available resources, providing on-going support to the students and strengthening the link between the classroom and these centers may help increase the use of the Center as a harbor for autonomous students as opposed to a computer lab. If Self-Access Centers are to succeed, studies should be done to verify the effectiveness of these suggestions.

2.3.4 Factors Influencing Students' Autonomous Language Learning Ability

As stated before, Holec (1981) defines Students' autonomy as students take charge of their own learning to have and to hold the responsibility for all the decisions concerning: determining objectives, defining contents and progressions, selecting methods and techniques to be used, monitoring procedure of acquisition and evaluating what has been acquired. The initial definition is taken as a starting point for much subsequent work in this area. Most scholars regard autonomy as a responsibility to control learning. A qualified autonomous language learner should be encouraged to choose his goals, his materials and his methods in organizing and carrying out his chosen task, and he is also required to choose the criteria for evaluation of his study. He added that in SAC environment, there are some factors influencing students' English autonomous learning Stability. These are:

A Motivation

Motivation is one of the key factors that influence success of foreign language learning. Motivation provides the main impetus to initiate language learning and driving force to sustain long and difficult learning (Dörnyei, Z. & L. Csizér, 1998). Students' motivation is the prerequisite of autonomous learning. That is to say, students want to learn without outer pressure. It is impossible for students to set the learning goal and start to learn without motivation.

Motivation is classified into instrumental motivation and integrative motivation. Instrumentally-motivated learners view foreign language as an instrument of finding a good job, passing an examination or furthering career. While, integrative-motivated learners are interested in the culture of target language, they learn the foreign language to participate in the life of the community in which the language is spoken. Many researchers believe that integrative motivation is more important than instrumental motivation in language learning because integrative motivation presupposes positive attitudes towards foreign language. Still there are a number of motivational beliefs that can be adaptive, but three that seem particularly important are self-efficiency, task value and goal orientation (Holic, 1981).

B Learning Strategies

In language learning, Wenden (1998:18) pointed out: "Learning strategies are mental steps or operations that use to learn a new language and to regulate their efforts to do so." The positive correlation between learners' use of language learning strategy and their self-perceived proficiency is confirmed. If students are empowered with abilities to use appropriate language learning strategies and monitor and evaluate their learning process, they can take a more active role in their learning and achieve more effective results. Generally, good learners have a better understanding and mastery of strategies in their

language learning. They prefer to use certain strategies appropriate to them and develop them into a stated model in their learning. In other words, the more frequently the strategies are used, the higher proficiency the learner can achieve. Good learning strategies can also enhance students' effort to reach learning goals because it encourages students to find their own pathways to success and thus promotes the students' autonomous learning capability.

C Goal setting and Plan-making

Goal setting and plan-making are essential for autonomous learning, and it is the first step to become aware of autonomous learning. Before setting up learning goals and making plans, students are supposed to make a detailed need analysis of their learning situations to figure out the weakness need to be improved as starting-point for goal setting. In autonomous learning, it is the learners who should determine what they want to learn because they are the active constructors of new knowledge and any external prescription imposed on them does not result in learning (Jonassen, 1999). Goal-setting and plan-making are skills critical for learner autonomy, especially in SAC environment.

D Self-assessment

Self-assessment is a process by which learners evaluate the process and result of their learning. It is a process by which students learn more about themselves: what they like, what they don't like, and how they tend to react to certain situations. Knowing these things can help students determine which occupations and work situations could be more suitable for them. Self-assessment is essential to learners as a way of evaluating the effectiveness of autonomous learning. It can provide learners with feedback on how they are doing and may lead them to re evaluate their approach. (Gardner and miller, 2008)

According to Gardner (2000) self-assessment is a familiar concept to human beings. All human beings are involved either consciously or subconsciously in ongoing progress of self-assessment. This being the fact, until recently this important notion was neglected in the teaching-learning process. With the coming of learner centeredness and learner autonomy, the concept of self-assessment becomes a particular interest in the language teaching learning process.

Autonomous learners take responsibility for their own learning. These include not only using a range of cognitive and metacognitive strategies but also monitoring their progress and reflecting back up on their learning. In other words, they need to know how they are doing in their learning. Therefore, training should be given to learners how to assess their progress in their language study. This is to mean that, part of the training needs to be geared towards training learners how to assess and monitor themselves (Dickinson, 1987).

Lai (1994) stressed that, the ability to evaluate the effectiveness of one's own performance in a foreign language is an eminent skill in learning and particularly when the learning becomes autonomous. By stating this idea, they show the link that exists between autonomy and self-assessment. They further argued that autonomy is enhanced when learners are encouraged to self monitor, and reflect critically on their learning. Tudor (1996) also added that training learners in self-assessment fosters their capability to take an active role and self-directive role in their learning both in the school life and in their formal course of study. Harris (1997) further affirms this point of view that, Self-assessment can help learners to find out their own strength and weakness and then get them to ponder about what they need to do as to be successful in their performance and to develop the ability to be self critical.

The importance of self-assessment is mentioned above. But how learners can assess themselves is the question to be posted here. For example, Hedge (2000)

suggests that learners will benefit a lot if they are trained to pose such questions while and after doing a task: 'Did I make myself clear?' 'Am I happy with my performance?' 'What do I need to improve in my language?' Nunan (1998) also suggests learners can be trained to keep a journal like this:

This week I studied:--- This week I learned:---, This week I used my English in these places:---I spoke English with this people---, I made these mistakes:---, My difficulties are:---, I would like to know ---, I would like to help with:---- My learning and practicing plans for next week are- (134).

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND PROCEDURES

This chapter presents the research methodology used for the study. It describes the research design, settings, participants of the study, the instruments used and the procedures followed in collecting the details.

3.1 The Study Design

The main research design used in this study is a descriptive study. The researcher has chosen this method mainly because he wanted to explore the extent that students think they have become autonomous language learner as a result of using the SAC. Thus, the researcher believed that descriptive study is appropriate. He used both qualitative and quantitative method to analyze the data. The data gathered through the questionnaire was analyzed quantitatively and the data gathered through interview and observations were analyzed qualitatively.

3.2 Research Settings and Participants

3.2.1 Research Settings

The Peacekeeping English Project is established to help those officers who are going to be deployed for a Peacekeeping mission as an observer. Before 2007, the Ethiopian Peacekeeping Observers were deployed with translators because they didn't have good language skills that let them communicate with the international community. This had also its own limitations since the translators were civilians. It was difficult to translate those military words and therefore affected the success of their mission in some way. As a result, Ethiopian Ministry of National Defense decided to have a good language school. To achieve

this, the organization communicated with the British government and decided to have modern language schools which include Self-Access Centers.

These schools are facilitated by the Peacekeeping English Project, settled at British council in Ethiopia. Thus, five Self-Access Centers are established across the country. Two of them have all the three levels (from Elementary to Advanced) and three of them have only level one and level two (Elementary and Intermediate) programmes. Each level takes ten weeks. But the SAC used in this research is confined to Addis Ababa and Harrar Self-Access Centers of the Project. The selection of these Self-Access Centers is purposive because it is only in these two centers that both level-2 and level 3 SAC programmes are given out of the five centers of the project. Each of the Centers can offer 14 computers to students of the project. Each computer is Equipped with more than fifty kinds of Language software programmes which include all language skills. They also include different kinds of books, soldier magazines, readers (with CD's), weekly news papers, especially the Guardian, Audio video CD' and films and satellite TV programmes and other resources.

3.2.2 Participants of the Study

The selected centers have three levels; these are Level-1 (elementary), Level-2 (intermediate) and Level-3 (advanced) students. In order to achieve the objective of the study, level-2 and level-3 Peacekeeping English Project students are chosen as target population. These participants are chosen for a number of reasons. Firstly, these two levels should spend a minimum of six hours in a week which is more than level one students. Secondly, these students have got more training on how to use the SAC. They have also better knowledge on utilizing the software programmes. Therefore, it is possible to get valid data from these samples.

According to the information gained from the Project coordinator, 48 students were attending the programme in two centers. These students were attending their classes in four sections.

All the student population was included in the study. Thus, the total numbers of students involved in the study were 26 level-2 and 22 level-3 students. 6 teachers were also selected for the interview from the total population of 12 teachers.

3.3 Instruments Used in the Study

To elicit the necessary information from the participants, questionnaire and interview are used as major instruments. These instruments are selected because they have been proven to measure autonomous language learning and SAC by scholars like Gardner and Miller (2008) and Wendon (1991). The researcher also believes that the questionnaire can help him to get the extent the students become autonomous and the interview is appropriate to make in depth analysis. The questionnaire has two major parts. The first part is used to assess students feeling about the SAC and to see how the SAC is helping them. The second part is used to see the materials they use to improve their language, self-assessment and language learning strategies. There are also two open ended questions that assess the students' general understanding of SAC. The interviews are used to get a detail overview of the information gathered through the questionnaire.

Observation is also use as a supplementary tool for the data gathered through the questionnaire and interview.

3.3.1 Questionnaire

One of the ways the researcher obtained answers to the research questions was by administering a questionnaire to all students of level-2 and level-3

3.3.1.1 Designing of the Questionnaire

The questionnaire is prepared in English. In designing the questionnaire every possible caution was taken to make the language easily understandable to informants. The questionnaire has two major parts. Both parts are close ended questions. There are also two open- ended questions at the end, that ask general understand and opinion about the SAC.

The close ended questions are aimed at collecting information from the participants about setting of language learning goals, what autonomous English learning activities are currently under taking by the students, self-assessment and the students' practice of making study plan and reflection of their learning process.

The first part of the questionnaire uses a Likert Scale to see the extent of agreements to a question. These variant greater responses were selected with the assumption that individuals show differences in agreement of the SAC use. Therefore, the likert rating scale comprises five-response ratings of strongly disagree (1), disagree(2), not sure(3), agree(4) and strongly agree(5). A theoretical mean value of 3.0* was determined as a criterion to judge the means of the items in these sections of the questionnaire. Therefore, an item with a mean equal or higher than 3.0 indicates the respondents have agreed, while items with a mean between 2.5 and 2.99 are neutral. However, any item with a mean less than 2.5 is regarded as disagreement. This classification is made based on Kelinger (1977), as cited in Moges Dagne (2009).

The scores of the items in each category were then summed up and expressed in percentage and examined how the respondent agreed on the items. Thus, higher percentages are meant to indicate greater practice of autonomous language learning.

Similarly, the second part is constructed to be measured using the likert frequency scales which comprise five response ratings. These are never (1), rarely (2), sometimes (3), often (4) and always (5). Some of the questions were adapted and slightly modified from O'malley and Chamot (1990), Gardner and Miller (2008), and Nunana (1988).

Similar with the first part, a theoretical mean value of 3.0 was determined as a criterion to judge the means of the items in this section of the questionnaire. Therefore, any item with a mean value equal to or higher than 3.0 indicates it was often used. While, an item with a mean between 2.5 and 2.99 indicates it was sometimes used. However, any item with a mean less than 2.5 was regarded as really used.

3.3.1.2 Administration of the Questionnaire

The questionnaire was first piloted using 15 randomly selected students. Based on the response of the students, both parts of the questionnaire were redesigned. That is, the numbers of the questions were reduced from 26 to 23 and two of the questions were changed so as to make the respondents reflect their own idea easily.

The researcher chose the six and the seventh weeks of the course to administer the questionnaire, since he expected that by then students would be able to give him informed answers about their Self-Access Langue learning. He used the eight week for the interview. He deliberately avoided the last two weeks of the course (the ninth and tenth week), since these tend to be a very stressful period of the students because the final proficiency exam.

The questionnaire was administered to the students of the four sections by the classroom teachers. These questionnaire, were administered in class for various reasons; firstly, so as to give room for students if there are unclear questions, secondly, to avoid duplication and lastly, to maximize return rate.

During the administration, respondents were told the purpose of the questionnaire and therefore, there were 100% return rate.

3.3.2 Interview

3.3.2.1 Designing of the Interview

Interview is a commonly used method of collecting detailed information. As Benson and Lor (1990:60) in Cotterall, and Reinders (2001) note 'questionnaire research in particular tends to give a snapshot. Therefore, in order to get in-depth information on students' Self-Access Language Learning, the researcher prepared 12 semi-structured interview questions, which were adapted and slightly modified from Nunan (1988), Wenden (1991), and Gardner and Miller (2008). Five of the questions were for the students and seven of them were for the teachers.

3.3.2.2 Administration of the Interviews

The semi-structured interviews were held after a week the questionnaire was administered. Eight students (four level-2 and four level-3) and six teachers were randomly selected for the interview.

The atmosphere during the interview was relaxed and it was conducted in the room next to the SAC with no other people present. Both the students and teachers were asked if they mind the interview being recorded. None of them declined, and then students' questions were first piloted to enable the researcher to change the wording of questions.

After the piloting had taken place, the interviews were recorded on digital recorder. However, there was considerable variety in length in both students' and teachers' interview.

3.3.3 Observation

This is a supplementary tool for the questionnaire and interview. Therefore, the researcher used it purposefully and systematically to observe student Self-Access Center use. He focused on students' goal setting and use of study plan, their learning process and what autonomous activities did the learners do. The researcher also observed the Self-Access Center facilities.

3.3.3.1 Administration of the Observation

The Researcher observed the students' SAC use for a month (from the fifth week to the eighth week of the SAC program of the project). He made observation three days a week for two hours, which is a total of 24 hours. The first two weeks were held in Addis Ababa and the other two weeks were in Harrar SAC. These observations were helpful in that they reinforced some impressions from the interviews and the questionnaire and suggested way of approaching the data.

Five observations were carried out together with 2 co-observers of each center. Two of them were the project coordinators and the other two were teachers, who took some training in China about SAC and autonomy. Their contribution was great. During the observation, the researcher and his assistants recorded events based on dichotomous type check list. The questions are adapted and slightly modified from Gardner and Miller (2008) and Wenden (1991) that asks for a yes/No response. The observations were made before and during other methods were administered.

3.4 Methods of Data Analysis

In order to explore to what extent the SAC use promotes autonomous language learning, the data gathered through the questionnaire, interview, and observation were analyzed in the following ways.

First the data gathered through the closed questions were tallied, tabulated and presented in frequency counts. Then, percentages were calculated and used to analyze the responses based on the frequency counts. The mean values were calculated for the questions which were prepared in likert scale format to identify how the SAC helps the students and to what extent they become autonomous as a result of using the SAC.

The data gathered through the interviews from both teachers and students were transcribed. Then, the transcribed data were organized according to the similarities of the data in order to make the analysis easier and analyzed qualitatively. After that, it was presented according to the information gathered through the questionnaire, since both of them were analyzed together. Finally, the data gathered through the observations were analyzed based on the observation checklist and organized together with the questionnaire and interview.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

As already pointed out in Chapter One (1.3), the main aim of this study is to explore to what extent the SAC use promotes autonomous language learning. Under this general objective, the researcher designed three research questions listed on chapter one (1.3).

To seek answers for these questions; the data was collected from the participants of the study using close-ended questionnaire, semi-structured interviews and observation. The results are presented, analyzed and discussed in this chapter.

4.1 Students Feeling about the SAC

Items 1, 2, and 3 are designed to investigate the respondents' feeling about the role of SAC in enhancing their language improvement. The results are summarized in table-1 below.

TABLE-1 Summary of Responses to Students' Feeling about the SAC

Items	Statements	T	Response										Mean
			SD		D		NS		A		SA		
			No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
1	Usefulness of SAC in language learning	48	-	-	-	-	-	-	32	66.7	16	33.3	4.3
2	Students' interest and motivation for SAC use	48	-	-	-	-	-	-	31	64.6	17	35.4	4.4
3	Students' general opinion and advice about SAC	48	-	-	-	-	-	-	21	43.8	27	56.2	4.56

KEY: SD= Strongly disagree, D= Disagree, NS= Not sure, A= Agree, SA= Strongly agree,
No. = Number of respondents, T= Total

Item-1 of the questionnaire is used to ask learners to rate the usefulness of using the SAC for learning English on a five point scale. As summarized in table-1, 33.3% of the respondents strongly agree and 66.7% of them agree on the usefulness of SAC. The mean frequency of the item is 4.3. This shows that almost all the students agree on the importance of SAC for their language learning and none of the respondents found it 'not useful'.

Item-2 of the questionnaire is concerned with the extent the SAC encourages students for their language learning. 35.4% of the respondents strongly agree and 64.6% of them agree that the Self-Access mode of learning helps them to be motivated on their language learning. Its mean frequency is also 4.4. This shows that the students have a higher agreement on the point.

The follow up interview with the students also confirmed this. They stated that the SAC helps them to be motivated and interested in their language learning. They also reported that the SAC helps them to spend their time when they are free.

Item-3 is also designed to investigate the students' general opinion and advice about the SAC. Almost all students do stressed that every students should make full use of resources of the SAC. Its mean frequency is 4.56, which really shows students' strong agreement on the full use of SAC resources.

However, the researcher's observation has some differences with the data collected using the above three items. When the students were ordered by the teachers, all the students attend the SAC programme but almost 40% of them do not use the SAC when there was no teacher, especially before and after class time. In the follow up interview, the researcher asked why this was happened. The students list three main reasons. The first is being the SAC is occupied by other students, though this may not be true. Because the researcher's observation doesn't confirm this, may be the computer software programs were occupied but still there were free places on the reading and news section. The

second is transportation problem. Two of the students reported that they leave the compound immediately they finished class because of transportation problem. The third reason is lack of time, since some students also cover their office work after class.

In conclusion, as the results from the above 3 items revealed, all the students agree that the Self-Access Center programme is beneficial and motivating in language learning. They believe that the programme helps them to develop their interest in learning English language. This could be seen when all students claimed that the programme encourage them to attend the SAC programme regularly. In addition, the students expressed that all students should make full use of the SAC. This shows that students realized how the SAC could help them to learn English language. This positive feeling can create a good opportunity to use the SAC to its full potential so as to be autonomous language learner. On the whole, they were very positive about the SAC as shown by the interviews and the questionnaire. This is approximately the same percentage as Gardner & Miller's (1997). They found that the SAC helps 84 % of the students to be motivated in their language learning.

4.2 How the SAC is helping Students.

TABLE-2 Summary of Students' Responses on the Help of SAC

Items	statements	T	Response										Mean
			SD		D		NS		A		SA		
			No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
4	Trying to develop good techniques on the four language skills.	48	-	-	6	12.5	14	29.2	18	37.5	10	20.8	3.66
5	Deciding what to do with materials	48	-	-	-	-	11	29.9	30	62.5	7	14.6	3.9
6	Identifying which material is useful	48	-	-	-	-	8	16.7	32	66.6	8	16.6	4
7	Having a great role in selecting materials	48	-	-	2	4.2	6	12.5	31	64.6	9	18.7	3.56
8	Doing more activities	48	-	-	-	-	12	25	22	45.8	14	29.2	4
9	Being responsible for their own learning	48	-	-	-	-	6	12.5	26	54.2	16	33.3	4.2
10	Ability to decide what they want to learn	48	-	-	-	-	17	35.4	21	43.8	10	20.8	3.85
11	The skill of learning how to learn	48	-	-	-	-	12	25	26	54.2	10	20.8	3.95

KEY: SD= Strongly disagree, D= Disagree, NS= Not Sure A= Agree, SA= Strongly agree, No. = Number of respondents, T= Total

4.2.1 Helping Students to Develop Good Language Learning Techniques.

Item-4 of the questionnaire was designed to find out whether the SAC helps students to develop good techniques to improve the four language skills. As the above table shows, the mean frequency of the item is 3.66. These tell us students agree on the role of SAC in helping them develop good techniques so

as to develop their language ability. However, the table also shows that not less than 40% of the students have a problem of practicing the above items.

Therefore, from the data gathered through the questionnaire, one can understand that almost 60% of the learners are aware of their own language learning techniques and use them frequently. Studies in this regard have shown that good language learning techniques can enhance students' effort to reach learning goals because it encourages students to find their own pathways to success and thus promotes the students autonomous learning capability (Wendon, 1998). Therefore, we can consider that these students have shown one characteristics of autonomous learner in their SAC use.

However, it would be hasty generalization to consider that students are autonomous, taking in to conceder students' trial to use good language learning techniques. These are one ingredient of autonomous language learning. Nevertheless, these techniques should be supported by goal setting and plan making, self-assessment, learner reflection and their independent use of different materials and activities, which will be analyzed in the subsequent sections, to make learners autonomous.

4.2.2 Helping Students for Autonomous Use of Activities

Items 5-8 of the questionnaire are used to assess how the SAC is helping the students for autonomous use of activities and materials.

Item-5 of the questionnaire is designed to see whether the SAC program helps them to decide what to do with materials. 14.6% of the students strongly agree and majority of them, 62.5% agree on the contribution of the SAC in helping them to decide what to do with the materials. Nevertheless, 22.9% of them are not sure whether the SAC helps them to decide on what to do with the materials.

The researcher's observation also confirmed this. All materials in the SAC have their own guidelines. For instance, the TV, Video, magazines, books and different language software programmes have their own guideline and tasks. Therefore, when students want to do any of these, they use the independence SAC activities. Therefore, whatever they wanted to do, they should use the independent tasks, that they would answer and put on their file. So it is possible to conclude that the activities can help students to decide what to do by themselves.

In item-6, respondents were asked if the SAC helps them identify which materials are useful for their level. 16.6% of the students strongly agree and 66.6% of them agree on identifying the right materials. But 16.7% of them are not sure about it. Its mean frequency is 4. This shows that most of the students agree on identifying the right materials of their level.

However, the teachers' interview shows that some of the students have problems of identifying materials which fit for their level. Teacher Four of the interview reported that even there are students who took materials which are only useful for teachers.

Teacher Two also added that some students always work on the same activities, especially on the language software listening programmes. According to him students did this because they don't have clear information about the different programmes. Researcher's observation also confirmed this in some way. Most of the resources are on display, so students can browse through different categories (writing, Listening, Reading etc.). Also, some materials are color coded to indicate level. The materials are also arranged in a menu-driven system where learners have to make a choice solely on the base of the description of the materials and their knowledge level. Though this happened, what surprised the researcher is that almost 30% students had not yet developed one of the most important skills in independent learning: the ability to find appropriate resources. This is really a serious problem. As Waito

(1994:241) asserted, asking students to use learning materials which are not on their level is like leading them 'to watering hole' because they 'will have their worst doubts about their own learning skill confirmed, and are not likely to return'.

Item-7 asked the respondents whether or not the SAC helps the students to have a great role in selecting activities. 18.5% of the students strongly agree and a significant number of students, 64.6% of them agree on having a great role in selecting activities. However, 12.5% of them are not sure and 4.2% of them disagree on their role of selecting activities. But this item has got the frequency mean value of 3.56, which shows that more than 80% of the respondents have a great role in selecting activities.

The follow up teachers' interview shows that students have freedom to the extent they can with the guidance of their teachers. Teacher One stated that:

It is up to the student preference. The teachers never push the students on which tasks to do except those students who they are counseling.

This teacher stated that students have freedom on their activity selection. They also have some guidance from their counselor or teacher. Teacher Two also stated that:

When the students come to the SAC, they know that they are free. They choose whatever materials they like to do but some of the students do not have the idea about which material to use and how do use them.

Teacher Four also stressed that students have freedom but this freedom has sometimes a problem.

One of the students interred to the SAC and he just gets out Harmmer's book (the practice of English language teaching) and tried to read it.

The above interview data shows that having a full freedom to choose activities does not guarantee autonomous use of the materials.

In item-8, the respondents were asked whether the SAC use helps them to do more activities than they are required. The summary in table 2 shows that 29.2% of students strongly agree and 45.8% of them agree on the role of SAC in helping them to do more activities. However, 25% of them are not sure about that. The mean frequency value of this item is 4 which shows students' agreement on the role of SAC in helping them to do more activities.

When the researcher also checked the borrowing list during his observation time, surprisingly there were students who read 20 up to 30 readers (short story books with CD) within 8 weeks though they are only three of the students.

To sum up, the data gathered through items 6-8 show that on average 79.6% of the students state that the SAC helps them to use activities and materials independently. Obviously, although students said that working in the SAC helps them to become more independent learners, this does not mean that they developed this skill. These findings seem to contradict with the researchers' observation and teachers' interview in some way. It could be that some students don't see being able to locate appropriate materials as a skill related to, or important for independent learning. The other reason might be some students don't always attend introduction session about how to use the SAC programme, as one of the teacher reported.

4.2.3 Helping Students to be Independent and Responsible

Item-9 was aimed at generating data if the SAC helps them to take responsibility for their own learning and see themselves having a critical role in their language learning. 33.3% of the students strongly agree and the majority of them, 54.2% agree on the helps of SAC to be responsible for their own language learning. However, only 12.5% of them are not sure about it and none

of them denied the SAC contribution. Similarly, the mean frequency of the likert scale is 4.2. This shows that the students agree on the SAC's contribution of making them responsible for their own language learning.

Item-10 of the questionnaire is meant to draw out information if the SAC programme enables them to decide what they want to learn. As summarized in table 9, 20.8% of the students strongly agree and 54.2% of them agree that the SAC helps them to decide what they want to learn. However, 35.4% of them are not sure on the SAC's contribution to help them decide what they want to learn. The mean frequency of the likert scale is 3.85 which means the students agree on deciding what they want to learn.

However, the follow up interview doesn't clearly show this because out of the eight interviewed students four of them need the strong support of their teachers.

Student Four stated that teachers should be in the SAC together with the students because there are students who can't access the programmes and manage their own learning.

Item-11 asked the respondents if the SAC helps them to learn how to learn by themselves. Here, 20.8% of the students reported that they strongly agree and 54.2% of them agree on the SAC's role in helping them to learn how to learn by themselves. However, 25% the students are not sure whether it helps them to learn how to learn by themselves. Nevertheless, it has got mean value of 3.95, which tells the average respondents agree on it.

The data gathered through the above three items show that most students found the development of their independent learning skill as an important goal of the programme. When they were asked about this point during the interview, most students concurred and gave several reasons for it. Student Six pointed out that.

... We are military officers and we don't know what will happen in the future and we might get used to learn while we are in the course and then forget that. However, practicing on the SAC has helped me to learn how to learn by myself in the future. It is a self-experience strategy in the future.

Some of the participants were also asked whether they thought the programme had actually helped them to become more independent learners. Most of them said it helps them. Student Three linked this to an improvement of his English.

Yes, before using the SAC, I didn't realize about that, so now I understand that independent learning is very important. And I concentrated on my independent learning, after realizing that my English improved more.

In general, when the researcher looks at the students' interviews he does get a clearer picture of how students perceive independent learning. The SAC programme helps most students to be more responsible for their learning and equip them with necessary skills to do so.

The teacher's interview also supported this. They reported that they encourage their students to take responsibility of their own learning during SAC use programme and counseling session. When the teachers were asked if the students can use the SAC autonomously, most of them reported that their students could do. Teacher Five reported that:

Of course the overall objective of the SAC is to help students to autonomous learners. And most of them can do but still some students need their teachers' assistance.

Teacher Three also added that:

Yes, of course! That is the aim of SAC. The aim is to help students to develop their own learning style, learning environment and taking responsibility for their own learning. Therefore, we teachers only help them to be independent through time

But two of the teachers warned that on the implementation of autonomous learning. Teacher Four warned that

Most of them can do it but teachers should consider that being autonomous learner doesn't mean that teachers leave everything for the students. Rather, they should guide their students when they need help. But there are teachers who use the SAC programme as a mask for letting themselves free.

To sum up, both the questionnaire and the interviews show that the SAC helps an average of 71.7% students to become responsible for their own learning and get practical help on how to learn by themselves. But still teachers have also an important role in helping their students to use the SAC programme in a better way. Here, it is better to discuss Teacher Five's practical experience he had with one of his students:

One of the level-2 student, who works in air force department as air traffic controller came to the SAC and told me his problem. He was very good at reading, speaking and writing but he had serious problem at listening skills, which is a mandatory skill for his job. Then me and other two teachers discussed and reached an agreement.

They told him to use graded readers (language graded short stories with CD's). First, they advised him to read the books and at the same time listen to the CD. Then, when he felt comfortable, they advised him to read the readers first and then listen to the CD to check how much he listened from what he had read. Then, they advised him to listen first and then read to check how much he comprehends from his listening. Based on their advice, he read many readers with the same procedure. As the teacher stated, after two months the student came with great happiness and thank teacher for helping him to solve his problems.

Therefore, it is possible to conclude that the SAC helps most students to be responsible for their own language learning and to learn how to learn by themselves. However, teachers still have also their own great role for the students' success.

4.3 Students' Self-Assessment

It is already mentioned in the review of related literature (2.2.4) that autonomous learners take responsibility for their learning and this includes taking responsibility for monitoring their own progress and reflects critically on their learning.

Items 12-14 of the questionnaire were set to examine whether or not participants use self-assessment strategies effectively. The responses of the self-assessment are put in table-3 below

TABLE-3 Summary of Responses to Self-Assessment

Items	Statements	T	Response										Mean
			Never		Rarely		Sometimes		Often		Always		
			No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
12	Evaluating weakness and strength	48	-	-	-	-	4	8.3	28	58.3	16	33.3	4.25
13	Working on weak points	48	-	-	-	-	7	14.6	27	56.2	14	29.2	4.14
14	Correcting one's mistake	48	-	-	-	-	5	10.4	35	73.9	8	16.6	4.1

Item-12 asked students if the students would try to evaluate their weakness and strength when they work on the self-Access Center. As can be seen from table 5, 33.3% of the students always evaluate their weakness and strength and 58.3% of them often do. It is only 8.3% of the respondents sometimes evaluate their weakness and strength for their language learning process. The mean frequency value is 4.25. This shows that the respondents often make self evaluation.

Item-13 asked students if they work on their weakness, once they assessed their weakness and strength. 29.2% of the students reported that they always work and 56.2% of them often work on their weakness. On the other hand,

14.6% of the respondents sometimes work on their weakness. The mean frequency is 4.14. This tells students often work on their weakness.

Item-14 is meant to investigate whether the students would try to check back and correct themselves when they made mistakes. As can be seen from table 3, 16.6% of the students always correct their own mistakes. And a significant number of the respondents, 73.9% often do. But only 10.4% of them sometimes correct their own mistakes.

In the follow up interview, both students and teachers were asked on who evaluate students learning progress. The data gathered from the interview with teachers revealed almost similar information with the students' questionnaire result.

Out of the six teachers, four of them totally agree that it is the students who have the highest role in assessing their own language learning progress. Teachers Three stated that

Primarily students evaluate their own work. The SAC Log helps them to evaluate their progress. Because there is section which they can write their comments and anything they find it difficult or easy about the tasks. Therefore, they can see whether they accomplished tasks or not. Then, the teachers see the records and finally give the feedback and sign on it.

Here, teachers also stressed that although students have the primary role in assessing their own language learning progress; teachers have also a secondary role. Teacher Four stated almost a similar idea with the first teachers.

... When students come to the SAC, they are given the study log by the instructor or SAC assistant and there is a contract in which they agreed on what they do. Then, whatever they do they record it and write what was good about their work and what were their difficulties. It is then the teacher sees what they have done.

However, two of the teachers were stressed on the primary role of the teacher in evaluating students' progress, Teacher One stated that

It is like doctor and patient. First, we diagnosis them for their problems like doctor diagnosis his patients sickness. Then, we prescribe something and we give them tasks to do so that the tasks they do meet their specific problems. After certain amount of time, they get back to their respective teacher and they will be asked different questions to evaluate the progress they made.

This teacher stressed that it is the teacher who should identify the students' problems first.

The students' interview also confirmed the data gathered through the questionnaire and teachers' interview. From eight interviewed students, five of them stated that they self-assess their own work and progress. The other three students showed that it is sometimes they assess their progress. Rather, they mostly waited their teachers' comment.

From the overall result obtained through the questionnaire, it seems that almost 89% of the students use self-assessment strategy. They also correct their own mistakes and work on their weakness. This implies that the participant have good awareness regarding self-assessment which plays a great role on their way to be autonomous learner.

However, what can also be inferred from both teachers and students' interview is that there is also 33.3% teacher dominance, which in turn hinders learners' involvement in the learning process. This could be due to their previous teaching experience. As stated above, from the six teachers, two of them stressed on the teachers' primary role in identifying students' problems and evaluating their work. Similarly, three of the students (37.5%) stated that they waited their teachers comment instead of self- assessing their own language learning progress.

The most probable explanations that these three students might be accounted for this negligible use of self-assessment could be the following. One of these may be student assessment, which stems not being trained about the notion.

For learners to employ these aspects of assessment, they have to have a better understanding of the nature of language learning (Wenden 1991). This is to mean that learners need to know that self-assessment is part and parcel of language learning process.

The second reason why these students reported they don't employ self-assessment may be due to lack of opportunity. The data gathered from the teachers show that two of the teachers do not seem to give chance to learners to assess their own language learning progress. Surprisingly, those two students who do not make regular self-assessment were from those teachers' class who stressed on the primary role of the teacher. This finding has some difference with Broady's (1996) findings which show that although students claim to accept responsibility for their learning, they do not feel confident in essential aspects of independent learning such as self-monitoring and self-assessment.

To sum up this part, Harris (1997) states self-assessment is rightly seen as one of the pillars of learner autonomy. Here, most of the participants qualify this. So it is possible to assume that these students show one good quality of being autonomous. However, there are still few students who cannot do this. Nevertheless, this doesn't necessarily mean that these students do not employ self-assessment all in all but to mean not fully engaged in it.

4.4 Students' Use of Language Learning Strategies

TABLE-4 Summary of Responses to Language Learning Strategies

Items	Statements	T	Response										Mean
			Never		Rarely		Sometimes		Often		Always		
			No	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
15	Setting goals and objectives	48	-	-	12	25	13	27	15	31.3	8	16.7	3.4
16	Write action (study) plan and working for its fruitfulness	48	4	8.3	8	16.7	15	31.3	13	27	8	16.7	3.27
17	Keeping language learning note book	48	4	8.3	6	12.5	11	22.9	13	27	14	29.2	3.56
18	Students discussion on their language learning process	48	-	-	8	16.7	10	20.8	12	25	18	37.5	3.6

The first two items are used to assess students' goal setting and planning. Item-15 of the questionnaire is designed to investigate whether the students set their goals for their language learning. As can be seen from table 4, only 16.7% of the respondents always set their objectives and 31.3% of them reported that they often do. However, 27% and 25% of the students stated that they sometimes and rarely set their objectives respectively. The mean value of the likert scale is 3.4 which shows on average students often set goals but still not less than half of them have a problem of setting objectives.

The follow up interview also confirmed this. Out of eight interviewed students, four of them reported that they set their objective before interred to the SAC and follow their objectives. However, the other four students reported that setting objectives is their serious problem. Student One stresses that

Setting objectives is my serious problem. When the teacher tells me what to do, I go to SAC and do what he told me. But when I go with my programme, which is after or before class time, I am not sure on what I want to do, so I need a great help on this.

In item-16, the respondents were asked if they try to write an action plan (study plan) and try their best for its fruitfulness. As the result summarized in table 4 shows, 8.3% of the students never do and 16.7% of them reported that they rarely write an action plan. Large proportion of the students, 31.3% do this sometimes. It is only 27% and 8% of them often and always writes an action plan, which is below 50%.

The researcher's observation also confirmed this. Almost 30% of the students' use of action plan and study log was superficial in that they completed the documents only because they are required. The contents didn't really help them to set genuine learning objectives, as their plan and the materials they choose did not correspond. These students clearly do not understand the concept of study plan, or how it could help their study in the SAC.

This is to mean that more than half of the students hardly practice one of the pillars of Autonomous learning. As Gardner and Miller (2008) stated, goal-setting and plan making are skills critical for learner autonomy, especially on the SAC environment.

To sum up, the data gathered through the three instruments show that more than half of the students have problems related to goal setting and planning. The research revealed that some students wrote plans which did not correspond with their study record. For example, they set one goal, but the materials they choose to study didn't match that goal.

This in turn implies almost half of the students' might lack of awareness concerning one main characteristics of autonomous learner. In line with this, O'maley and Chamot (1990:90) state that "students without meta cognitive

approaches such as goal setting are essentially learners without direction and ability to review their progress, accomplishments, and future learning directions". This implies that almost half of the students lack the skills that guide them in to success in their autonomous language learning.

This apparent lack of goal setting and planning may have a tremendous impact on their independent learning. As mentioned in the review of related literature (2.24), for learners to be successful in their self-initiated learning, they need to be armed with this skill. In general, these two items try to answer question one of the research questions. Generally, these two items try to answers research question of number one.

Item-17 was intended to investigate to what extent they keep record on their language learning note book. As the result summarized in table 6, 29.2% of the students reported that they always keep language learning note book and 27% of them pointed out that they often use it and 22.9% of them reported that they sometimes keep language learning note book. On the other hand, 8.3% and 12.5% of the respondents stated that they rarely and never do. The mean frequency of this item is 3.56. This tells that on average the students often keep a record of their language learning note book. However, not less than 40% of the students do not keep a record of their language learning note book. Here, the main reason should be learners are not aware of the role of language learning note book (SAC log book). The researcher observed that when the students interred to the SAC, they are given this SAC Log book to reflect on their language process. However, some students are not aware of why they do so. This might limit them on reflecting their language learning process, which is one pillar of learner autonomy, as (Gardner and Miller, 2008) clearly presented. This may in turn hinder their autonomy.

Item-18 of the questionnaire is designed to investigate whether the students discuss their feelings about language learning process with their friends and teachers. As can be seen from the above table, 37.5% of them always discuss

and 25% of the students often do. However, 20.8% of them discuss sometimes and 16.7% of them rarely discuss on their language learning process. The average mean frequency of this item is 3.6. This tells us students often practice this point.

In the follow up interview, teachers were asked if they help students to develop good language learning strategies and let them discuss on their language learning process. All the teachers reported that they often discuss these points with the students, especially on the counseling session. Teacher One stressed that this is one of the teachers' responsibility so as to help their student to become autonomous.

Teachers that give classes are also capable of promoting and teaching students not just by specifying materials and setting objective for self-study, but with strategies which can help them to plan their own working programme. It is not just a question of saying here is the book, here are materials, but showing students how to set a time table, how long to study, what language learning techniques and process can they follow, and students start to believe in autonomy. Autonomous learning will be much more effective if we teach all these. The main problem is that we teachers know these from the trainings we took but some of the teachers are not committed to do that in practice.

The researcher's observation also confirmed this. Not less than 60% of the students decide on their learning process. However, the researcher hardly saw discussions among themselves. Thus, the above data reveals that learners tend to employ strategies to develop their language learning process. This indicates that learners have been trained well by their teachers to use the strategies or they have read the Self-Access guidelines and the computer software guidelines which focus on how students can develop their language skills using different techniques and strategies. In general, this section answers question number three of the research questions in some way

4.5 Students' Material use in Improving their Language Development

As mentioned in the literature review, one of the ways to determine the effectiveness of SAC is by measuring its contribution to language learning.

TABLE-5 Summary of Responses regarding SAC's contribution in Language development

Items	Statements	T	Response										Mean	
			SD		D		NS		A		SA			
			No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%		
19	Doing activities or language skills the teachers told to do	48	2	4.2	10	20.8	4	8.3	20	41.7	12	25	3.37	
20	Doing activities or language skills the students decided to do	48	2	4.2	4	8.3	11	22.9	17	35.4	14	29.2	3.77	
21	Working with materials	Listen to CD's	48	3	6	7	14.6	9	18.7	24	50	5	10.4	3.43
		Read general book	48	-	-	7	14.6	26	54.2	10	20.8	5	10.4	3.27
		Use language soft ware programs	48	-	-	3	6	22	45.8	18	37.5	5	10.4	3.52
		Use readers	48	-	-	16	33.3	18	37.5	11	22.9	3	6	3
		Read news papers and magazines	48	3	6	16	33.3	18	37.5	8	16.7	3	6	2.83
		Watch TV	48	-	-	7	14.6	20	41.7	7	14.6	14	29.2	3.58
		Watch movies	48	-	-	12	25	26	54.2	5	10.4	5	10.4	3.06
		Listen to music	48	12	25	20	41.7	16	33.3	-	-	-	-	2.08

KEY: SD= Strongly disagree, D= Disagree, NS= Not sure, A= Agree, SA= Strongly agree, No. = Number of respondents, T= Total

Item 19-20 are used to see what materials the students use to develop their language skills and who chooses the skills they want to focus.

To see to what extent their role is on selecting the skills they want to focus, student were asked on how often they do (practice) language skills they decided to do or their teachers told them to do (practice). As summarized on table 8, 66.9% of the respondents reported that they often focus on the skills their teachers told them to do (in item 19) and 64.6% of them reported they often focus on the skills they decide by themselves (in item 20).

From the above data, it is possible to conclude that students have a 50% role in selecting activities in order to improve their language skill. Almost equal number of students did activities there teachers told them to do and they decided to do.

Item-21 of the questionnaire was also administered to assess how often the students use different lists of SAC materials in enhancing their language development. As summarized in table-5, watching TV programmes, listening to CD'S and using computer language software programmes were the most frequently used materials (where their frequency mean is 3.58, 3.5 and 3.43 respectively). And listening to music, reading news papers and magazines and using readers were the list frequently used materials (where their frequency mean is 2.08, 2.83 and 3.0 respectively.)

The above data shows that students mostly focus on the listening activities. Similarly, on the follow up interview the students were asked on what independent activities they have done over the last week. From the eight interviewed students, six of them raised the listening activities; they did on the language soft ware programs and on the CD. This data shows that most students' independence seems limited to listening activities. This might be because of high face validity of the listening materials or students might not have clear information on the other skills.

However, when the researcher interviewed the teachers on informal discussion, they reported that the students thought their problem is on listening skill but it is writing and reading which their serious problems are.

To sum up, the data gathered through the above instruments show that students are not using the SAC program to the extent it can help them to develop their language skills. The main reason here is that students were mostly limited to activities that help them to develop their listening skills. However, the researcher's observation showed that the SAC is fully equipped with the four language skills. Here, it could be difficult to say that the students have used the SAC to its full potential in order to improve their autonomous use of activities and develop the four language skills. Therefore, the students' autonomous use of activities is mainly limited to listening skill.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCIUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusions

In this study an attempt was made to find out to what extent the students became autonomous language learner as a result of using the SAC. The study particularly aimed at assessing students goal setting skills using their own self directed skills and what autonomous English language activities they undertake on their own initiative. In addition, assessing if the students make study plans, reflect on their own learning process, and self supervise their work were the major points. To this effect, three techniques of data collection instruments were devised: 21 closed ended and 2 open ended questions were distributed to 48 students and the interviews were held with 8 students and 6 teachers.

The results of this study show that more than 50% of the students are trying to find ways to achieve autonomy as a result of using the SAC. Nevertheless, there are also evidences that there are still students who haven't yet developed this skill.

In general, it is possible to conclude that the SAC is helping them to be autonomous language learner. The main evidences for this conclusion are:

- Almost all students are highly motivated and interested in their language learning process.
- All students reported that the SAC has a great role for their language improvement. This is shown in their recommendation that every student should make full use of the SAC resources.
- 60% of the students try to use good language learning techniques so as to improve their Language skills.
- More than 80% of the students employ self-assessment.

- More than 70% of the students are responsible for their language learning process and have developed the skills of learning how to learn by themselves.

However, students have also problems in qualifying some characteristics of autonomous learner these are:

- Almost half of the students have problems related to goal setting and planning.
- Most students hardly discuss on their language learning process with their friends.
- Most of the students' SAC use was limited to listening skills though few students were practicing on the other skills such as reading.

In general, students are good in making self-assessment, deciding on their language learning process and independent use of material. However, students still have problems on setting their language learning goals, discussing on their own language learning strategies and use of learners note book (SAC Log book). Students have also lack of information of the available resources in the SAC, this can be seen when most students focus on one skill.

In conclusion, the SAC is helping students to be autonomous language learner. However, it is not being used to promote learner autonomy to the extent it could be.

5.2 Recommendations

The present study has highlighted a number of issues related to learner autonomy and the SAC. The study has provided opportunities for addressing these issues and the researcher offer the following recommendation as possible way forward to achieve better autonomy.

• Research

First of all the Peacekeeping English Project should provide a strong support for research on autonomy in language learning in each Center. This support should be given to particular research projects on autonomous language learning, since this is the first study of this kind.

• Training

Training for all member of the project could be provided in a continuous programme aimed at understanding learner autonomy and the skills needed to do it. Training at different skill levels and in different topics in the field of autonomy in language learning is highly recommended. This will help students, teachers, and administrators to have a better understanding of the actions expected from the project. Training should also be provided to students with in a menu of different options adjusted to their experiences in autonomy in language learning. Training learners to develop their autonomy by deciding what to learn and how to learn will be very important. That means, training learners by focusing on reflection, awareness, goal setting, and self-assessment of language learning in the SAC will play a great role to achieve better autonomy. Especially, the student highly need help on making reflection on their language learning process, goal setting and plan making.

• **The Project Support**

The project should revise the educational services that offer to reinforce and strengthen those that facilitate or promote autonomy in language learning. Especially, making some supervision on how teachers and students practice autonomy in the SAC will be very helpful.

• **Motivating Students to Reflect on their Learning Process.**

Reflection has a role in making learners to be aware of their own and other learners' strategies. Besides, it is a good opportunity to share their belief about language learning among themselves. These help them to be aware of their own learning process which in turn paves the way to approach language learning more efficiently and flexibly. Therefore, teachers are expected to motivate students to reflect on their language learning process among themselves. Masumote (1996) states that learners do not mostly reflect back up on their learning process on their free will. The results of this study also show that most of the students hardly discuss on their language learning process with their friends. Thus, teachers are expected to encourage learners to reflect up on their learning process through training.

• **Utilizing the SAC to its Full Potential**

As the research data revealed, most students SAC use is limited to listening skills. This means the students' autonomy is limited to listening tasks. Thus, both teachers and administration should work hard so as to help students utilize the SAC resources in its full potential by focusing on other language skills too. This can be done by letting them share experience with students who better utilize the resources, for example, with those three students who read 20-30 readers within eight weeks. Or teachers and administration can give them short training on what resources are available and how to use them.

- **Recommendations for Other Bodies**

The researcher also highly recommended other institutions to have SAC so as to help their students to help them to think of learning out of class room. The Researcher is also informed from the programme coordinator is that Mekelle University has already established the Center and Hawassa University is on the process. Thus, these two Universities will be benefited if they can make some experience sharing with the Project and see what strengths and weakness; the students have on the angle of autonomy. Therefore, they can apply it. This study will also be a stepping stone for researchers who want to work on autonomous language learning and SAC.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX-A

Students' questionnaire

**ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES**

Dear students,

The purpose of this questionnaire is to obtain **feedback from you about the SAC use**. Your honest comments will help us to improve this programme.

All information revealed will only be used for this research with the intention to help improve the Self-Access Center (SAC) and learning process, especially at this Project. To achieve this, please answer ALL questions. Your truthful and sincere answers would be much appreciated. All data given will be dealt with strict **CONFIDENTIALITY**.

Thank you for your cooperation!!!

PART ONE

Please state your opinion about the SAC by ticking (√) only ONE for each of the following statement. Use the response scale as follows:

1. Strongly Disagree
2. Disagree
3. Not Sure
4. Agree
5. Strongly Agree

NO	contents	1	2	3	4	5
1	The SAC programme is very useful for language learning.					
2	The Self-Access mode of learning is interesting and motivating.					
3	Every student should make full use of the SAC learning resources.					
4	The SAC helps me to develop good techniques to practice Listing, Speaking, Reading and Writing.					
5	The SAC programme helps me to decide what to do with the materials.					
6	The SAC programme helps me to identify which materials are useful for my level.					
7	The SAC programme helps me to have a great role in selecting activities.					
8	The SAC programme helps me to do more activities than I am required.					

9	The SAC helps me to take responsibility for my own learning and see myself as having a critical role in my language learning.					
10	The SAC programme enables me to decide what I want to learn.					
11	The SAC has helped me to learn how to learn English by myself, in the future.					

PART TWO

Please state your opinion about the SAC by ticking (√) only ONE for each of the following statement. Use the response scale as follows:

- 1. Never**
- 2. Rarely**
- 3. Sometimes**
- 4. Often**
- 5. Always**

No	Items	1	2	3	4	5
	How often do you---					
12	evaluate your own weakness and strength?					
13	work on your weak points of the English language?					
14	do you correct your own mistakes?					
15	set goals and objectives for your learning?					
16	write an action (study) plan and try your best for its fruitfulness?					
17	keep a language-learning notebook in which you reflect on your language learning process?					

18	discus your feelings about language learning process with your friends and teachers so as to find out a better way of learning a language?					
19	do activities or languages kills your teacher told you to do?					
20	do activities or languages kills you decided to do?					
21	do the following to improve your English?					
	a) Listen to CD's					
	b) Read general books					
	c) Use computer language software programs					
	d) Use readers(graded fiction with CD)					
	e) Read newspapers and magazines					
	f) Watch TV programs					
	g). Watch movies					
	h). Listen to music					

22. How do you describe the SAC?

23. Any other comments / requests?

APPENDIX-B

Students' Interview Questions

**ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES**

1. How does the SAC program help you to learn by yourself?
2. Can you tell me what independent activities have you done over the last week?(such as speaking skills, writing skills---)
3. What do you think about there being someone in the SAC to help you?
4. Do you set your objectives before you use the SAC? If so, do you follow your objectives when you use the program?
5. Who assess whether you achieve your listed objectives or not? How?

APPENDIX-C

Teachers' Interview Questions

**ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES**

1. Can you tell me how do the students use the SAC?
2. Do you tell them what activity or skills should they focus on or they choose by themselves?
3. How do they evaluate their progress?
4. How do you help them to use the SAC independently?
5. Do you think the students can use the SAC program with out a teacher or SAC assistant?
6. Do you think the students can self-determine the overall direction of their own learning? How?
7. To what extent do you think the students exercise freedom of choice in relation to learning resources and activities?

APPENDIX-D

SAC Observation Checklist

ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES

For Level Two and Level Three

Date and Time _____

Observation Number _____

No	Items	Yes	No
PART ONE:STUDEN'S SAC USE			
1	Do they access the soft ware programmes by themselves?		
2	Do they use different resources of the SAC?		
3	Do they choose activities or materials related with the objectives they wrote on their study SAC Log?		
4	Do they use their language learning notebook while they are working in the SAC?		
5	Do they write what they do and achieved on that day?		
6	Do they assess their own progress with respect to their learning targets?		
7	Do they work on their weaknesses either alone or with others?		
8	Do they actively involve in managing their learning process?		
9	Do they decide on the procedures of their learning?		

10	Do they discuss on their language learning process		
PART TWO: OBSERVATION CHECKLIST ABOUT THE SAC			
11	Are necessary materials available in the self access Center? Such as,		
	• Audio CD's		
	• Different News channels		
	• Video section		
	• News papers and magazines		
	• Books		
	• Computer language soft wares		
	• Graded Readers with CD's		
	• Individual and group independent activities		
12	Does the SAC allow learners to pursue their own goals and interests?		
13	Is the SAC suitable for different level of students?		
14	Dose the SAC have clear guidelines on how to use it?		
15	Are the materials arranged based on the level of the students and specific skills?		
16	Can the arrangement of materials attract the users?		
17	Do the language software programs work properly?		
18	Can the students get help when they want?		
19	Is the SAC opened out side class time?		
20	Do the students use the SAC after class time?		

APPENDIX-E

Teachers' Interviews Responses

**ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES**

Teacher One

R: Can you tell me how do the students use the SAC?

T1: Well, in our SAC, the students use the Center for different purposes. There are audio visual materials, different type of materials including readers based on their level. And the most important thing in our SAC is also the computer software. Therefore, in our Center students use the SAC for different purposes. They can either watch news or movies and then they can improve their listening skills and they have also different tasks and activities in the computer software programmes and which really engages them in improving their language skills and the hard copy, the books are also leveled and therefore, the students can get their best matches because they know the levels. Here, students are attending the programme based on their level: Level-1, Level-2 and Level-3. The materials are also leveled accordingly. Hence, the SAC gives various purposes for the students.

R: When they come to SAC, do you tell them what activities or language skills should they focus or they choose by themselves?

T1: It depends. Regarding this question, you know there is one thing that makes the SAC use very different. Because here we have paper called SAC Log, which is a paper that we follow the progress of our students. All the teachers have students under them. For example, I have some six students that I care and follow their prepress and in the first place me and my six students sit together and talk what they need to work on. After that, I will give them tasks/ areas to do, so that they can solve those problems. And

the other time, students may have something special to do. They can either watch news or movies or re tell the stories they watched and the other side when they need to study grammar, they can go to the books and there is also softwares on the computer, which they can use it for their special need. Therefore, it is sometimes controlled and sometimes students have lots of chances or preferences.

R: Who evaluate their progress?

T₁: You know, on this question, as I told you earlier there is a SAC log like may be medical cases, like a doctor and a patient. First we diagnosis them for their problems like a doctor diagnosis his patients sickness and then we prescribe something and we give them tasks to do so that the tasks they do meet their specific language problems. Therefore, after a certain amount of time, the students get back to their respective teachers and they will be asked different questions. Therefore, the progress they make will be evaluated.

R: Therefore, to use the SAC effectively, do you help them to be independent user?

T₁: Yes! In fact, at the beginning, when they arrive here in our SAC, we give them orientations on how to use the SAC. But there are very few students who do not attend this. In fact the books are there which is clear for them. They can go and take any book, with regard to the software programmes on the computers, it is difficult for them. Some of them might not have computer knowledge. Therefore, you need to give them highlights on how to get each and every software and therefore, they can use it. And there are also students who have well knowledge on computer use. Therefore, the students are in this range. Some of them need intensive help while others are independent. But what we are working here is to make our students more independent worker. Therefore, Teachers that give classes are also capable of promoting and teaching students not just by specifying materials and setting objective for self-study, but with strategies which can help them to plan their own working programme. It is not just a question of saying here

is the book, here are materials, but showing students how to set a time table, how long to study, what language learning techniques and process can they follow, and students start to believe in autonomy. Autonomous learning will be much more effective if we teach all these. The main problem is that we teachers know these from the trainings we took but some of the teachers are not committed to do that in practice.

R: Ok, so when you see their general SAC use, do you think they can self-determine the overall direction o their own learning?

T₁: Yes! In fact, everything you can do in the SAC has purpose and you know what they determine to do sometimes may be they think as useless, but everything in the SAC has purpose. Even if they can stand and read the posters on the wall, they are doing something. Therefore, I can say they are not losing their time in the SAC because whatever they do, they are doing activities. If they watch movies they are helping their skills either their listening skills or when they tell stories they heard, then they can improve their speaking skills.

R: To what extent do you think the students have freedom of choice in relation to learning skills or tasks?

T₁: As I told you it is nearly 90%. It is up to the students' preference. Therefore, the teacher never push the students which tasks to do except those students who we are counseling. And the other time the tasks they do on the SAC as you can understand from the name SAC is where the students do the tasks by themselves. Therefore, more activities are freer therefore, students are beneficial here.

Teacher Two

R: Can you tell me how do the students use the SAC?

T₂: Actually students use the SAC together with their normal class or just for giving them some support.

R: Do you mean that they use only in the Class time?

T₂: Sometimes they can use it during class time, but in other cases they also use after class. There is time for SAC and it is a kind of integration with class and sometimes they can go to the SAC and use it alone.

R: Ok when the students come to the Self-Access Center, do you tell them what activities /skills should they focus or they choose by themselves?

T₂: I think this depends on the level of students. If our students are level-1, we need to tell them what to do in the SAC. But if the level of the student is going up, it means if they are Level-2 or Level-3 students; the only thing we can do is only just simply tell them what is available for them and it is up to the students to go and select the materials.

R: So, who do you think they evaluate their progress?

T₂: I think there are many ways of evaluating their progress. The first thing is they can just check what they do by themselves or they can also just work with their partners, especially if they can do the same thing and they will just get some kind of feedback to each other. When it is necessary, they may ask teachers just to see what they did is right or wrong. In general, the teachers' contribution is very low. They may not involve with giving direct feedback for the students.

R: So if the teachers' involvement is lower, can you help them to be independent learner. May be inside or outside classroom?

T₂: Of course, it is necessary. You know sometimes just to give them a kind of support but you do not need to go thoroughly. If you just tell them throughout the programme, we can't say that independent learning. You are giving the some kind of support.

R: So do you think if there is no teacher or SAC assistant, they can manage their own learning progress?

T₂: Ya, I think sometimes I can say this works for those students who are a higher level student but for the lower level, you need to give them strong support.

R: So when you see their general SAC use, to what extent you think the students can exercise freedom of choice in relation to the learning tasks or materials?

T2: I think they have freedom

R: May be to what extent do you expect that?

T2: I think when the students come to the SAC; they know that they are free. They choose whatever materials they like to do but you can also say some students do not have idea on the kind of thing in the Center. So when they come to the SAC, they become confused on what do. And some students are limited on the same activities. So, at time your contribution is very relevant. So you need to help them which material is important for them.

R: Do you think they can self- determine the overall progress of their own learning?

T2: I think that is one of the most important point. If we say that the students have to use the SAC, at the same time they have decided what to study. But in our case students do not have enough knowledge about how to use the SAC.

R: You mean in all levels?

T2: No some of them. Level-1 students for example, in the beginning, they do not know what to do in the SAC. So, you need to just give them some support. However, Level-3 students are able to utilize what is there on the SAC.

R: So, you mean the SAC help them to be autonomous?

T2: Ya! That is the most important thing the SAC helps the students to be autonomous especially, when the students level increase, it helps them a lot to be autonomous.

Teacher Three

R: Can you tell me how do the students use the SAC programme?

T3: Yes of course! Just at right the beginning of the course all students attend an inductive session, which aims to help students find out every resource

and materials in the SAC and how they can use them effectively. After the secession, students will use the SAC according to the time schedule. They have SAC hour, so before they start using the SAC students have also counseling secession with the teachers. It is aiming to help them use the SAC log. The SAC log is a study plan so students decide on the areas of language that they want to work with the teacher. So they can use materials that related to their objective with the teachers. Finally, they evaluate their progress.

R: So when they use the SAC, do you tell them what activity or skill they focus or they choose by themselves?

T3: We do not really tell them to use any material but we help them to choose; first of all which areas or skills they want to work on. After that, they decided on this one then they will agree with the teacher on what materials they should work on and the tasks, so it is not something that the teacher can tell them to do but they both agree on their choices.

R: So when they work on this programme, who evaluates their progress?

T3: Primarily students evaluate their own work and the SAC log will help them to evaluate their progress because there is a section which they can write their comments if there is anything that they find difficult or easy about the tasks. They might have finished on using SAC but they write their opinions. So, they can see how they can accomplish tasks or not and they can record that. And the teacher having seen the records, he finally gives feedback and sign on the plan.

R: Do you help them to use the SAC independently?

T3: Yes, of course! That is the aim of SAC. The aim is to help students to develop their own learning style, learning environment and taking responsibility for their own learning. Therefore, we teachers only help them to be independent through time. But some students may not be considered. They may not have the same level of language or back ground and so forth. So they need different assistance of teachers.

R: So do you think the students can use the SAC programme without a teacher or a SAC assistant?

T3: Ya! There could be a time. We minimize the time they can spend on the teacher, so they can work everything by themselves in the SAC. But I think it needs time for a student to be totally independent.

R: So, when you see the programme itself, do you think the students can determine the overall direction of their own learning?

T3: Students have a major role in deciding what to do and what materials to use. But teachers have a major role in helping them to choose the appropriate materials and tasks and appropriate time that they can accomplish task. Students have a major rule but it would be effective if they work on materials with the help of their teachers.

R: To what extent do you think the students can exercise freedom of choice in relation to the learning resources and activities?

T3: I think students have full freedom of choosing materials or language areas they want to work on. Once they have decided, it is their choice to work on appropriate materials. So, nobody can force them to change on or to do different tasks that they don't want to use or do. So, the students have the freedom to choose what to work and the types of tasks, but sometimes they need help. They may not know the location of each material and they may not know how the materials are fully exploited, the procedure, and the level of the language in each material so in this case they may need help.

Teacher Four

R: Can you tell me how do the students use the SAC?

T4: There are two ways in which students come to the SAC and work on. The first thing is we have a program for each level. We have Level-1, Level-2, and Level-3 and they have their own programme. The second is after class and before class. There are at least one hour in each case. These are the two ways in which students come and use the SAC.

R: So, when they use the SAC, do you tell them what activities or skills should they focus on or they do by themselves?

T4: Ya it depends, for example, in the regular programme sometimes I tell them because most of them do not know what we have in the software. So I tell them which is basically related with what I have done with the classroom. To consolidate that task, I tell them. May be this could be for the first 30 minutes. After that they will search on the software or books and they can choose by themselves and the other, which is before or after class time, it is based on their interest.

R: So, how do you think they can evaluate their progress?

T4: We have SAC log. When everybody come to the SAC, he/she will be given the SAC log (study log) by the instructor or the SAC assistant and there is a contract in which they agreed on what they do. Then what ever they do, they record it and finally they will submit to someone around there. So based on that we can see what then have done or what they tried to do.

R: So, if you say most of the time is taken by the students do help them or be independent user?

T4: Ya most of the time they are independent users but sometimes they need help. When I say independent learners, it doesn't mean that we leave everything for them. The teacher which is assigned on the level will be there and we will help them if they need and finally, we will check what they have done on the SAC log and we will ask them if there is something they do not understand, we well give them guidance or help.

R: So do you think the students can use the SAC if there is no teacher or SAC assistant?

T4: Yes, they can use because we have everything there. Our SAC is full. We have software programmes, books, different dictionaries, readers and magazines. So since our SAC is full, they can do it and we have study Log. Thus, they can show us and based on that we can give feedback. Generally, most of them can do it but teachers should consider that being autonomous learner doesn't mean that teachers

leave everything for the students. Rather they should guide their students when they need help. But there are teachers who use the SAC programme as a mask for letting themselves free.

R: So, generally when you see students SAC use do you think they can self- determine the overall direction of their learning process?

T4: Not 100% for example, in the study log there is a contract. They may choose five or six items to do, and based on that they can do but if they can't do that by themselves we negotiate what to do.

R. To what extent do you think the students can exercise freedom of choice in relation to learning resources or activities?

T4: Well they have freedom. They are free to choose because there is a teacher not to decide what to do and what they don't do. They can choose whatever they want. But sometimes there is a problem. For example, if I tell you from what I saw, one of the student entered in the SAC and he just get out a Grammar book (The practice of English language Teaching) who is a Level-1 students and he tried to read it. This shows to some extent it shows that they need some help and guidance because he selected the wrong book. So they are free but not 100% free. So teachers should help them in some way.

Teacher Five

R: Can you tell me how do the students use the SAC?

T5: We just help them to use the SAC in different ways and sometimes they can use as they can exploit by themselves but they need the help of the teachers. Particularly, at the very beginning they need some information and they need guidance after that they can manipulate by themselves.

R: So, when they come to the SAC, do they choose the activities or language skills by themselves or it is you who choose?

T5: They are free to choose but sometimes as a teacher I do have my own role. I might have my objectives but very often they choose their own and I am there as a facilitator and to give them some guidance and to control what they are doing but in most cases they are free to choose their own activities.

R: So, who do you think they can evaluate their progress?

T5: It is me actually! You know the feedbacks I can give them tell what level they are but in some cases they first evaluate themselves then the feedbacks from their teachers. This is the way they can do.

R: So, if the students assess their own progress in some way, do you help them to be independent user?

T5: Of course! That is the overall objective of SAC is to help them to be autonomous learners. That is the point. For example, in the SAC as you know there are lots of materials, the software and publications like magazines, books, readers etc. and they can help themselves but still they need their teachers' assistance. Here, it is better to tell you one of the good experiences we have. One of the level-2 student, who works in air force department as air traffic controller came to the SAC and told me his problem. He was very good at reading, speaking and writing but he had serious problem at listening skills, which is a mandatory skill for his job. Then me and other two teachers discussed and reached an agreement. We told him to use graded readers (language graded short stories with CD's). First we advised him to read the books and at the same time listen to the CD. Then, when he felt comfortable, we advised him to read the readers first and then listen to the CD to check how much he listened from what he had read. Then we advised him to listen first and then read to check how much he comprehends from his listening. Based on the advice, he reads many readers with the same procedure. As the teacher stated, after two months the student came with great happiness and thank us for helping him to solve his problems.

R: So, if they need some assistance, do you think they can use the SAC by themselves?

T5: Of course, they can. After three or four days assistance, they may not need your help but you are there to monitor what activity they do and to give them feed backs and then they can even recognize things and progress.

R: So, when you see their SAC use in general, do you think the students can self determine the overall direction of their own learning?

T5: Actually it will be hard to answer this question because teachers are there to help students. Students may not have such kind of habits to evaluate their progress in every direction. So they badly need the help of their teachers. So it will be hard.

R: To what extent do you think the students exercise freedom of choice in relation to the learning tasks or activities?

T5: 100% because SAC is the name implies the choices is up to them and teachers are there to monitor what activities they do but teachers should not guide students which activities should students do themselves and teachers can give assistance an how to perform that activity.

Teacher Six

R: How do the students use the SAC?

T6: Ok, it varies but with Level-3, the students have a regular programme for Self-Access Center use. So they will inter according to the course or the topic they have taught. They use the Self-Access Center, may be the books or software programmes form the computers.

R: You mean, they only use with the regular programme?

T6: Actually they have regular programme, but they also use out of the regular programme based on their interest, may be during break time, after lunch or after the regular class time.

R: If that is the case, do you tell them what activity or language skill should they focus or they choose by themselves?

T6: Actually most of the-time the thing what to do in the SAC, I choose for them but sometimes it varies according to their interest for example if they learn grammatical items, when they inter to the SAC, the use different software programmes or books that will have connection with the topic or the use grammatical books.

R: You mean the students are dependent on the teachers?

T6: No, basically the SAC mean, the students choose what they have to do but sometimes, we will tell them. What they have to do because some students may for do different things other than the thing they have to look at.

R: So, how do you help them to use the SAC independently?

T6: Actually we give them different advice on what they have to look at example, after they inter to the SAC in skills which they have to improve. We will talk to them and after that they we will advice them if they will look at different software programmes and book.

R: So who evaluates their progress?

T6: Actually, we teachers do most of the time. We are there while they are using the SAC. Then there is a checklist on what they do in the SAC so we will see what the record and do and what they gain then we will sign.

R: What about the students?

T6: They sometimes do

R: Do you think the students can use the SAC programme without a teacher or SAC assistance?

T6: I can say yes. Most of the students can do but some of them can't do that.

R: You mean most students can determine the overall goal of their learning?

T6: It depends on the Level. In Level-3, they can do because they know everything. They may not need teachers' assistance.

R: To what extent do you think the students exercise freedom of choice in relation to the learning resources or activities?

T6: As I have said previously, it may vary on the level but in Level-3, they have full freedom but there are circumstances on we will tell them what to do. Otherwise they have full freedom.

APPENDIX-F

Students' Interviews Responses

**ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES**

Student One

R: How does the SAC programme help you to learn by yourself?

S1: The SAC has helped me to solve my problems and to minimize my listening problems.

R: What about other skills?

S1: Many times I focus in the listening because I have listening problem and sometimes writing and reading.

R: So, if that is so can you tell me some independent activities you have done over the last week?

S1: Yes, last week I did some listening activities on the computers. I also did listening skill using films. The teacher showed us the film and we completed the questionnaires about the film.

R: So when you use the SAC what do you think about someone in the SAC to help you, may be a teacher or SAC assistance?

S1: Not always, but sometimes if I have any problem, I can tell the teacher. There is a programmed teacher and if we have a problem, he can help us. So it is important sometimes.

R: So when you use this programme, do you mostly set your objectives before you enter to the SAC?

S1: Setting objectives is my serious problem. When the teacher tells me what to do, I go to SAC and do what he told me. But when I go with my programme, which is after or before class time, I am not sure on what I want to do, so I need a great help on this.

R: When you go to the SAC there are many activities, so who evaluate your progress?

S1: Sometimes I assess myself using the tests given on the soft ware. Therefore, the computer can tell me may result and by this way I check myself.

Student Two

R: How does the SAC help you to learn by yourself?

S2: It helps me. I use one hour in the morning and one and half hour in the afternoon

R: How often do you use the SAC?

S2: I usually use it? I use four day a week.

R: can you tell me what independent activities you have done over the last week?

S2: I used the software listening programs of Level-3

R: what about books, magazines, Readers and TV programme?

S2; Yes I use the TV programme daily, especially this month I listened about North Africa and middle east crisis from BBC and Aljazira.

R: So when you use the SAC programme, what do you think about someone in the SAC to help you?

S2: The first time yes but now I adapted the programme so I can choose one programme and listened that. Mostly I listen different CD's

R: So, when you use the programmme, do you set your own objectives before you entered to the SAC?

S2: Not exactly. I want to break the problem of listening by any means. I use Level-3 listening but I don't fix what to do each day. I don't do based on objectives.

R: But do you decide which skill you focus?

S2: I have some problems of listening, so to solve this problem I try different mechanisms like, listening to BBC, Software programmes and CD's I use these every day.

R: who assess your progress?

S2: I think the main assessment is the class. If I tried to use in the SAC and can listen the classroom CD effectively, it means I improved it well.

R: What about by yourself?

S2: Yes, I check by myself. For example, I listened different levels from Level-1 up to Level-3 and then, I test myself on how much I listened them.

Students Three

R: How does the SAC programme help you to learn by yourself?

S3: The SAC programme helped me a lot because there are different books and I read them. I also use the software programs and I improve my skills. It really helped me.

R: So, can you tell me some of the independent activities you have done over the last week?

S3: Here, I want to say one point, before using the SAC, I didn't realize using the SAC independently, so now I understand that independent learning is very important. And I concentrated on my independent learning, after realizing that my English improved more. For example, I did some grammar activities and reading activities using readers.

R: What about other skills?

S3: I used the TV programme to improve my listening there are different kinds of accents of different people from different countries. So, I listen different listening and have understood different styles of English so I learned a lot from the TV.

R: What do you think about there being someone in the SAC to help you?

S3: The teachers help me in the SAC. When I read different books, they help me to select the best books and to improve myself. So, they help me every day.

R: Do you need them always?

S3: Sometimes I need their help but most of the time I do myself.

R: When you use the activities in the SAC, do you set your objectives before you enter to the SAC?

S3: Yes

R: So do you follow your objectives?

S3: Yes I follow my objectives because there are many books in the SAC. I use them to achieve my objectives.

R: If you set your objectives and follow them, who assess your progress whether you achieved these objectives or not?

S3: I read different books outside SAC. Before I use the SAC, I don't understand most of the ideas or words of those books, but after I started to use the SAC and with my teachers, I can understand most of them. I also communicate with people, so I achieved my objectives in some way.

Student Four

R: How does the SAC help you to learn by yourself?

S4: It is very important because there are a number of programmes such as, listening programmes and reading materials so that based on this I can prefer them. They are crucially important.

R: can you tell me some of the independent activities you have done over the last week?

S4: Ya. Example, I use the soft ware programmes and I did the listening questions then I confirmed with the answers given.

R: What do you think someone in the SAC when you work in the SAC?

S4: In my opinion teachers should be there. Because there may be someone who can't access the soft ware programmes. In addition to monitor physically it is very important to be there.

R: What if there is no someone may be the teachers or SAC assistant. Do you face any problem?

S4: Personally I don't have any problem because before I entered the SAC I set my objectives and I do what I have to do.

R: So you mean you set your objectives before you entered to the SAC?

S4: Yes.

R: So you mean you can manage your learning by yourself?

S4: Yes, I can

R: How can you assess whether you achieved these objectives or not?

S4: Most of the time I evaluate myself based on the scripts given on the software. For example, I do listening and reading comprehensions. So I answer the questions and I check my answers myself and evaluate how far I achieved my objectives.

R: What about other skills?

S4: In writing, there are many model writings there. For example, I read business and personal letters then based on that I try to do just exercise by myself and sometimes I show to my teachers.

Student Five

R: Can you tell me how does the SAC programme help you to learn by yourself?

S5: It is very important, especially for the listening purpose. My basic problem in this course is listening. To improve this, I used most of the time in different ways. All Levels are available in the SAC. I used them and I can do different questions.

R: What about other skills?

S5: About the reading, I don't use because my problem is listening so I use SAC for listening and grammar.

R: Can you tell me some practical works you have done over the last week?

S5: Yes! For example in the grammar part I worked on past participle and present perfect. From the listening I work on direction, that is, if someone asked me how I can tell directions. I also did different questions on different topics of listening.

R: When you use the SAC, what do you think about someone being in the SAC?

S5: This is not very important but sometimes it is important. For example, I don't know most important things in the SAC and our teachers guide those important sources. I also asked them where I get it.

R: But what if there is no one there? Can you use it by yourself?

S5: Yes, I can.

R: Before you enter to the SAC, do you set your objective?

S5: Yes before I entered and start to use the SAC I set my objectives on what I want to use it. So, most of the time I want the listening part and I decide on which specific part I focus and according to that I use the SAC.

R: Once you set your objective do you follow them?

S5: Yes, but sometimes I change after I start if I get new things or most appropriate, so randomly I continue on that new thing but most of the time I focus on my objectives.

R: How can you evaluate whether you achieve these objectives or not?

S5: Sometimes, there are questions in the software, so I try to answer those questions and I check with the given answers. Then if I get half and more than that I get happy.

Student Six

R: How does the SAC helped you to learn by yourself?

S6: It helps me in different ways. For example, I use different kinds of skills: listening, speaking and grammar activities. You know we are military officers and we don't know what will happen in the future and we might get used to learn while we are in the course and then forget that. However, practicing on the SAC has helped me to learn how to learn by myself in the future. It is a self-experience strategy in the future.

R: Can you do these activities by yourself or with the help of others?

S6: Both of them. For the first time, the teacher informed me how to access these programmes and then I can do myself?

R: Can you tell me some of the independent activities you have done over the last week?

S6: Most of the time I used listening parts and different kinds of accents and vocabulary.

S7: Yes of course, I set my objectives. Even when I joined this project, I decided to improve my language especially the listening skill I have a poor listening skill. Therefore, I always interred t the SAC to improve my listening.

R: Once you set your objectives, do you follow them?

S7: Of course, I try to follow them but sometimes if there are something interrupted me I may not do.

R: Once you have followed these objectives, who assess you whether you achieved them or not?

S7: Ya. I can see this thing in two ways. That is I can assess myself by comparing I had before and I have now. My teachers also assess me whether. I achieved my objectives or not by looking at the information I completed in the SAC Log.

Student Eight

R: How does the SAC programme help you to learn by yourself?

S8: It is very important. In this programme I learn by myself. If the programme is difficult, I will ask the teacher.

R: So do you think it helped you to learn by yourself?

S8: Yes!

R: Can you tell me any activity you have done over that last week?

S8: I have done speaking and grammar

R: When you use the SAC, what do you think about someone in the SAC to help you may be the teacher or the SAC assistance?

S8: I need teachers support. The teachers support me a lot.

R: Do you need their help of them always?

S8: No, sometimes. If I have problem, I ask the teachers.

R: when you go to the SAC, do you set your objectives before you inter?

S8: Not actually but sometimes I do.

R: Who assess whether you achieved these objectives or not?

S8: Sometimes me and sometimes the teachers.

Declaration

I, the undersigned, declare that this thesis is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any university, and that all resources used for the thesis have been acknowledged.

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