

AN EXPLORATION OF THE PRACTICE OF LEARNER AUTONOMY IN  
LEARNING ENGLISH LANGUAGE AT GRADE 12: BAHIR DAR HIGHER  
EDUCATION PREPARATORY SECONDARY SCHOOL IN FOCUS

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This is to certify that the thesis prepared by Animut Tadele, entitled: An Exploration of the Practice of Learner Autonomy in Learning English at Grade 12: Bahir Dar Higher Education Preparatory Secondary School in Focus and submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of master of arts in Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) complies with the regulations of the university and meets the accepted standards with respect to originality and quality.

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## ***Abstract***

*In the field of language teaching and learning, the most successful learners are believed to be autonomous in a sense that they accept why, what and how they are learning because teachers cannot teach everything and help learners outside the formal setting of education and fulfill the needs of all the learners. Therefore, learners need to learn the language on their own. On the other hand, learners may not come to the classroom with natural gift of autonomous learning principles. Hence, teachers should train learners how to learn the language by themselves. Having considered these assumptions, this study was conducted to explore learner autonomy in learning English at grade 12: Bahir Dar Higher Preparatory Secondary School in focus. To achieve the objective, 131 grade 12 students were selected randomly, and all English teachers were selected. Data were gathered using questionnaire, interview, focus group discussion with the students and observation. The questionnaire was distributed to 131 students and six English teachers. The interview was conducted to six students and all the teachers. The focus group discussion was held with ten students. The observation was conducted to three sessions on voluntary basis. The questionnaire was used to find out the efforts of learners to develop their English language skills and the role of teachers in helping learners learn how to learn. To see the consistency of the results, interview was conducted. Focus group discussion with the students was conducted to cross-check the results found from the questionnaire and interview because the efforts of learners outside the classroom cannot be fully observed,. The observation was conducted to see the classroom practices as they occur. The results obtained through these tools reveal that most of the students did not exert individual efforts to develop their English language skills on their own. Although teachers tried to train learners how to comprehend only written texts and encourage learners to develop self-confidence to learn the language, they did not adequately train learners the cognitive and socio-affective strategies. In addition, most of the teachers did not adequately train learners the metacognitive strategies. Finally based on the findings, recommendations were forwarded. Accordingly, the teachers should carry out their roles in helping learners learn how to learn. The students should also exert individual efforts to learn the language on their own.*

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## Table of contents

	Page
List of Tables.....	VI
Chapter One: Introduction.....	1
1. 1. Background of the Study .....	1
1.2. Statement of the Problem.....	3
1. 3. Objectives of the Study.....	8
1.3.1. General Objective.....	8
1.3.2. Specific Objectives.....	8
1.4. Significance of the Study .....	8
1.5. Scope of the Study.....	8
1.6. Limitation of the Study.....	9
Chapter Two: Review of Related Literature .....	10
2.1 The Concept of Learner Autonomy .....	10
2.2. Reasons for Promoting Learner Autonomy.....	13
2.3. Characteristics of Autonomous Learners.....	16
2.4. The Role of Learners .....	18
2.5. The Roles of Teachers in Autonomous Language Classrooms.....	21
2.6. How is Autonomy Fostered?.....	23
2.6.1. Learning Strategies for Learner Autonomy .....	23
2.6.1.1. Types of Learning Strategies .....	24
2.6.1.1.1. Cognitive Strategies .....	25
2.6.1.1.2. Metacognitive Strategies .....	27
2.6.1.1.3. Socio-Affective Strategies.....	29
2.6.1.2. Strategies-Based Instruction.....	31
2.6.2. Self-Access Center.....	31
2.6.3. Classroom Tasks and Materials.....	32
Chapter Three: Methodology.....	34
3.1. Research Design.....	34
3.2. Subjects and Sampling Techniques of the Study.....	34
3.3. Data Gathering Tools.....	35
3.3.1. Questionnaire.....	35

3.3.2. Interview .....	37
3.3.3. Focus Group Discussion .....	37
3.3.4. Observation.....	38
3.4. Procedures for Data Collection.....	38
3.5. Method of Data Analysis .....	39
Chapter Four: Interpretation, Analysis and Presentation of Data .....	41
4.1. Interpretation, Analysis and Discussions of Students' Questionnaire	
Interview, Focus Group Discussion and Observation .....	41
4.1.1. The Use of Resources .....	41
4.1.2. The Practice of the Language.....	43
4.1.3. Self-Management Strategies .....	44
4.1.4. The Selection of Learning Inputs.....	46
4.1.5. The Production of Language Models and Tasks.....	47
4.1.6. Attempts to Understand Learning Sources .....	49
4.1.7. Discovering Learning procedures.....	50
4.1.8. Cognitive strategies.....	51
4.1.9. Metacognitive Strategies.....	53
4.1.10. Socio-Affective Strategies.....	55
4.2. Interpretation, Analysis and Discussion of Teachers' Questionnaire,	
Teachers' Interview and Observation .....	59
4.2.1. Cognitive Strategies .....	59
4.2.2. Metacognitive Strategies.....	61
4.2.3. Socio-affective Strategies .....	63
4.2.4. Learners' Effort .....	65
Chapter Five: Summary of the Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations.....	68
5.1. Summary of the Findings .....	68
5.2. Conclusions.....	70
5.3. Recommendations.....	71
References .....	72
Appendix A: Students' Questionnaire.....	77
Appendix B: Teachers' Questionnaire .....	81
Appendix C: Students' Interview.....	84
Appendix D: Teachers' Interview.....	85

Appendix E: Students' Focus Group Discussion.....	86
Appendix F: Results of the Students' Interview (summary) .....	87
Appendix G: Observation Checklist.....	89
Appendix H: Results of the Teachers' Interview (summary) .....	91
Appendix I: Results of the Focus Group Discussion (summary).....	94
Appendix J: Results of Observation.....	96
Appendix K: Students' Background Information.....	98
Appendix L: Teachers' Background Information.....	100

Appendix E: Students' Focus Group Discussion.....	86
Appendix F: Results of the Students' Interview (summary) .....	87
Appendix G: Observation Checklist.....	89
Appendix H: Results of the Teachers' Interview (summary) .....	91
Appendix I: Results of the Focus Group Discussion (summary).....	94
Appendix J: Results of Observation.....	96
Appendix K: Students' Background Information.....	98
Appendix L: Teachers' Background Information.....	100

## List of Tables

	Page
Table 1: Students' Response Related to the Use of Resources.....	42
Table 2: Students' Response Related to Practicing the Language.....	43
Table 3: Students' Response Related to Self-management Strategies.....	45
Table 4: Students' Response Related the Selection of Learning Inputs.....	46
Table 5: Students' Response to Regarding the Production of Language Patterns and Tasks.....	48
Table 6: Students' Response Concerning Attempts to Understand Learning Sources.....	49
Table 7: Students' Response Concerning to Discovering Learning Procedures.....	50
Table 8: Students' Response Regarding to Cognitive Strategies.....	52
Table 9: Students' Response Concerning on Metacognitive Strategies.....	54
Table 10: Students' Response Related to Socio-affective Strategies.....	56
Table 11: teachers' Response Concerning Cognitive Strategies.....	59
Table 12: Teachers' Response Concerning Metacognitive Strategies.....	61
Table 13: Teachers' Response Related to Socio-affective Strategie.....	63
Table 14: Teachers' Response Concerning Students' Effort.....	65

# Chapter One: Introduction

## 1. 1. Background of the Study

The English language plays significant roles in different countries of the world. It serves as the language of education, religion, commerce, meeting, etc. It is also used as an official language for some countries.

Similarly, the language plays significant roles as a foreign language in Ethiopia. It plays pivotal roles especially in the educational sector. It is given as a subject beginning from grade one, and serves as a medium of instruction for many subjects from grade seven in primary level. Starting from grade nine, it serves as a medium of instruction except local languages given as a subject like Amharic, Oromifaa, Tigrigna, etc.

In addition, as Teshome (1995:1) points out, "...Its service as the official language of international organizations and some national organizations involved in international contacts and/or transactions illustrate the importance, the English language has gained in this country."

As far as the importance of learning the English language is concerned, searching for appropriate methods of teaching and learning is significant. Hence, different approaches and methods have been used in different times with different roles of learners and teachers. In the traditional approaches of teaching and learning, learners had been dominated by teachers, and the participation of learners was limited to the range of teachers' ways of teaching. However, in recent, communicative approaches of language teaching, the roles of learners are given due emphasis and the role of teachers is considered as facilitating the students' learning. In this regard, Quinn (1984) as cited in Nunan (1988) asserts that the communicative approaches can be distinguished from traditional approaches to language teaching in different perspectives. One of the basic differences is the role of the teachers and learners. In the traditional approaches, the role of teachers was dominant and teacher-centered methods were emphasized. On the other hand, in the communicative approach, the

role of learners tends to be emphasized, and became learner-centered methods of teaching and learning.

According to Brindely (1984:15) as cited in Nunan (1988: 23):

... one of the fundamental principles underlying the notion of permanent education is that education should develop in individuals the capacity to control their own destiny and that therefore, the learner should be seen as being at the center of the educational process. For the teaching institution and the teacher, this means that instructional programs should be centered around learners' need and that learners themselves should exercise their own responsibility in the choice of learning objectives, content and methods as well as in determining the means to assess their performance.

This shows that for life-long learning, learners need to be active participants and decisive in the different activities of learning. Teaching should be centered on the basis of learners' needs. In addition, learners can learn the language more effectively when they make decisions on the different activities of learning.

According to Crabbe (1999) in recent times the role of learners and teachers has become the concern of language scholars. Their focus is in changing the traditional role of teachers and learners. This change is at this time referred to as something which can be described as a 'movement'- an effort by international scholars to discuss the relative roles of teachers and learners. The question of learner and teacher roles has now almost become a key focus, in some places of educational discussion and practice. The 'movement' is generally termed as learner autonomy even though there are many options.

As Crabbe (1999) states, learner autonomy was originated in Holec's *Autonomy and Foreign language Learning* (first published in 1979). According to Boud (1988) as cited in Cotterall (1995), the major feature of autonomy as an approach to learning is that learners take some vital responsibility for their own learning in addition to teaching institution. As Cotterall (1995) states, autonomous learners can take responsibility through 'setting' their own objectives, planning practice opportunities, or evaluating their progress.

The concept of the learner autonomy movement is on the ability to take charge of one's own learning (Holec, 1979; Dickinson, 1987 & Little, 1991 as cited in Crabbe, 1999). The key concept of it focuses on making decision in learning process. In conducting their core responsibilities, teachers have traditionally made the decisions about objectives and ways to achieve those objectives. The challenge for the learner autonomy movement is to take greater account of learners' capacity to set learning objectives and to organize their own learning activity. This does not mean to say that learners automatically know how to learn. If they already have the capacity, then they need the opportunity to practice and develop it; if they do not, they need to be guided in developing it. In either case, one is searching for greater flexibility in classroom practice and the ability of learners to benefit from that flexibility (Crabbe, 1999).

In Ethiopia, there is no English language speaking community. Therefore, it seems reasonable that schools need to teach learners because the environment provides few opportunities to actually use it in their day to day lives. However, learners need to learn and practice the language on their own besides the classroom instruction because the classroom instruction may not be sufficient to make them effective in their learning.

In line with this idea, Bahir Dar Higher Education Preparatory Secondary School as one of the institutions which teach English as a Foreign Language in our country, is supposed to empower its students. Learners, therefore, should exert their individual effort to learn the language on their own effectively. On the other hand, teachers are also supposed to help learners in learning the language on their own.

This study, therefore, is aimed at exploring the efforts of learners to learn the language by themselves and the roles of teachers in helping learners learn how to learn on their own at grade 12 at the above mentioned school.

## **1.2. Statement of the Problem**

Learning is seen as something learners do, rather than as something other people do to them. In this regard, Scharle and Szabo (2000) describe that in language teaching teachers may give learners the

necessary inputs. However, learning can only happen when learners accept their responsibility and contribute their own part. To participate actively in the learning process, learners first need to believe in that success in learning depends on learners having a responsible attitude.

Teachers may not fulfill all the necessary needs and keep the pace of all learners. Because, Dickinson (1987) asserts that learners might have varied needs that they need to improve individually on their own speed according to their learning styles and strategies, and their capacity to learn rapidly.

As Legutke and Thomas (1991: 270) also claim:

No school or University can provide its students with all the knowledge and skills needed to deal with the requirements and challenges of their adult lives. For this reason it is imperative that when leaving their formal educational experience, students are equipped to continue learning beyond school without the help of teachers and a specifically structured learning environment. In view of the complexity and rapidity of change worldwide, the issue of life-long learning has moved from a side show to center stage of the educational debate since the 1970.

This explains that formal settings of education may not be sufficient to make learners proficient. Therefore, learners need to practice learning the language on their own both in the course of education and outside the formal setting of education.

Even though Little (1999) suggests that the most effective learners are autonomous in formal educational contexts in a sense that they accept responsibility for their learning: they regularly reflect on what, why, how they are learning and with what extent of success, and their learning is completely integrated with the rest of what they are, the practice of it appears to be not practiced well.

In this regard, Cotterall (1995:220) claims that:

Many programs and most ESL teachers, claim to believe in autonomy, yet many of the same teachers regularly subvert that goal by excluding learners from decisions about planning, pacing, and evaluating classroom tasks. Consequently, learners do not always perceive the link between classroom tasks and the language skills they wish to develop.

According to Cotterall (1995), although many language programs insist on learner-centered and support learner initiative, more classroom practices seem to object this aim. A great deal of learning is going on without learners fully understand the objective of learning.

Even though it is believed that the active participation of learners is significant for effective learning, the practical realization seems problematic. Most of the time, teachers tend to take responsibilities in decision making about goals, methodologies, materials, activities and evaluation of learning. Furthermore, teachers tend to fail to train learners about the language, language learning strategies and the efforts that learners need to exert. Learners also seem not be able to practice the language both in and outside the classroom on their own. In addition, most learners appear to learn the language without understanding the aims of learning.

The researcher, as a learner and teacher, has also experienced that teachers cannot teach everything and help learners outside the formal setting of education. This might indicate that learners need to exert their individual efforts to learn the language successfully. However, it seems teacher-centered method of teaching that the researcher has experienced practically. This initiated the researcher to conduct the study on learner autonomy.

Regarding learner autonomy, a few researches have been conducted both outside and inside the country. Outside the country, Dam and Gabrielsen (1988) as cited in Nunan, Lai and Keobke (1999) and Dam and Legenhausen (1999) have conducted studies.

The first study was conducted by Dam and Gabrielsen (1988) as cited in Nunan, Lai and Keobke (1999) to find out the extent to which young learners were capable of making decisions about the content and process of their own learning. They investigated whether eleven year-old learners of English as a Foreign Language in Denmark were capable of being involved in planning, organizing, managing and evaluating their own learning. They found that, learners, regardless of their aptitude and ability, were capable of positive and productive involvement in selecting their own content and learning procedures. Furthermore, learners were also positive in accepting responsibility for their own learning.

The second study was conducted by Dam and Legenhausen (1999) on language acquisition in an autonomous learning environment: a comparative study on learners' self-evaluations and external assessment at Danish comprehensive school. The finding shows that the teachers' evaluation is no more valid than self-evaluations of autonomous learners.

Inside the country, Mesfin (2008) and Abdurahaman (2011) conducted studies. Mesfin (2008) conducted the study at Mekelle Atse Yohannes Preparatory School. The objective of the study was to assess the practice of learner autonomy in language learning. The finding shows that students know their own roles and strategies use in learning the language. In addition, it indicates that students did not practice autonomous learning for lack of confidence, shortage of library sources, exam-centered study method and lack of basic skills in English.

Abdurahman (2011) also conducted a study on the practice of learner autonomy in learning EFL at grade 11 Abadir Secondary School. It was conducted in a private school which may have different learning experience. The finding indicates that most students did not adequately practice learner autonomy because they were taught in teacher-centered ways. Most students did not adequately practice cognitive strategies in learning the various skills of the language. This is to mean that they did not practice learning reading, vocabulary, grammar, speaking, listening and writing skills on their own ways both inside and outside the classroom.

This study is different from the above studies in the following ways. Firstly, it focuses on grade 12 level. It is also different in setting. Besides, all of the above mentioned studies did not focus on the role of teachers in helping learners learn how to learn. Therefore, this study tries to explore the role of teachers in helping learners learn how to learn as a key tool to foster learner autonomy.

It seems insufficient to say learners that 'now you are autonomous; learn on your own'. Instead, it should be borne in mind that learners may not be experts who know how to learn the language effectively on their own. Therefore, they need to be trained how to learn the language on their own successfully. This study, therefore, is aimed at contributing some knowledge in this perspective.

In this regard, Nunan, Lai and Keokbe (1999) state that learners may not come to the classroom with a natural gift of practicing the principles of learner autonomy. Evidence suggests that many learners are not so naturally endowed. Learners need to be systematically educated in the skills and knowledge they will need in order to learn. Rather than assuming that the learner comes to the learning environment rich in critical learning skills, the 'sensitive' teacher accepts that many learners will only begin to develop such skills in the course of instruction.

Therefore, the purpose of this study is to explore learners' effort to learn the language on their own and teachers' role in helping learners learn how to learn the language autonomously at grade 12 at Bahir Dar Higher Education Preparatory Secondary School.

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

#### **1.3.1. General Objective**

The general objective of the study is to explore the practice of learner autonomy in learning English language at grade 12: Bahir Dar Higher Education Preparatory Secondary School in focus.

#### **1.3.2. Specific Objectives**

In line with the general objective, the study has also specific objectives. These are:

- To find out the efforts of learners to develop their English language skills autonomously.
- To investigate the role of teachers in helping learners learn how to learn.

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

This study may have the following significances. It is supposed to raise awareness for the learners the efforts they need to exert to develop their English language skills autonomously. Furthermore, it may give pedagogical insights for the teachers to help learners learn how to learn the language autonomously. It can also be used as an initial idea for further researchers who want to conduct studies in this area. This study, as already mentioned, is aimed at exploring the practice of learner autonomy in learning English. This may contribute some knowledge in this area for further researchers.

### **1.5. Scope of the Study**

This study is delimited to explore the practice of learner autonomy in learning English language at Bahir Dar Higher Education Preparatory Secondary School. Its conceptual scope is delimited to address only the practice of autonomous learning. It seems important to note that all aspects of autonomous learning cannot be conducted within a short period of time. For example, this study did not include the perceptions of learners and teachers towards autonomy, the role of materials and tasks, self-access centers, etc.

## **1.6. Limitation of the Study**

As already mentioned, this study focuses on Bahir Dar Higher Education Preparatory Secondary school. There are 872 students and six English teachers in the school. With this number of the students and teachers, the findings of the study may not be generaliazable.

## **Chapter Two: Review of Related Literature**

### **2.1 The Concept of Learner Autonomy**

Learning is perceived as an ‘active’, ‘creative’ and ‘socially interactive’ process. Knowledge is viewed as an ‘entity’ to be ‘constructed’ and not simply ‘transmitted’ or ‘transferred’. This necessarily implies approaching learning practices from a perspective in which learners’ abilities and their awareness of learning process are central components. This leads to the concept of the practice of autonomous learning. It emphasizes the significance of learners’ role and considers learners as the active subjects rather than the passive recipients of others’ decisions or expertise (Ruiz-Madrid & Sanz-Gil, 2007).

Learner autonomy is defined as, “An ability to take charge of one’s own learning” (Holec, 1979:3 as cited in Jones, 1998:379). Autonomous learners are able to identify their own learning goals, take the initiative in using the necessary resources to achieve these goals, and evaluate their progress towards their goals (Hoffmann, 1999). As Scharle and Szabo (2000) state, theoretically autonomy is defined as the ‘freedom’ and ‘ability’ to monitor one’s own issues which includes the right to make decisions as well.

Little (1999:11) also defines learner autonomy as:

In formal educational contexts, the basis of learner autonomy is acceptance of responsibility for one’s own learning: the development of learner autonomy depends on the exercise of that responsibility in a never ending effort to understand what one is learning, why one is learning, how one is learning, and with what degree of success; and the effect of learner autonomy is, to remove the barriers that so easily erect themselves between formal learning and the wider environment in which the learner lives.

As Little (1999) explains the concept, in this definition autonomy is an ability to a certain interval of highly overt that is conscious behavior which constitutes to both the process and the content of learning. Basically, the definition focuses on three arguments (i) learners cannot assist but do their own learning (ii) this being the case, learning will be more effective when learners are critically

aware of aims and methods, and (iii) it is through the development of such critical awareness that learners are empowered to surpass the restrictions of their learning environment.

As Martinez (2008) points out, learner autonomy is a construct of ability that is applied with willingness. This ability includes the development and conscious awareness of a body of particular knowledge towards:

- One's self as a learner;
- One's learning situation ;
- The subject matter to be learnt;
- The procedures of learning.

Autonomy entails an ability and willingness to act independently and in collaboration with others as a socially responsible person. The willingness to be autonomous results from intrinsic motivation (some inner derive for learning) and varies from time to time and task to task. Intervention is generally desirable to develop such ability in learners (Dam, 1995 as cited in Martinez, 2008).

Autonomy is understood as a learning process on the basis of learners who not only acquire linguistic competence but also learn 'how to learn'. In other words, the idea of autonomy in the language learning field is concerned with the development of learning awareness and the acquisition of an autonomizing competence that allows learners to gradually control their own learning process. This involves taking into account learners in all their dimensions, which involves a specific learner's role, and a specific teacher's role, the aim of which is to train learners to become independent (Ruiz-Madrid & Sanz-Gil, 2007).

As Dickinson (1987) describes, learning how to learn is a sense of developing knowledge about learning procedures and as a learner about one self, plan to learn, explore, and use appropriate and selected strategies to attain the aims specified in the plans. Learning to learn a language means developing an active process of internalizing the linguistic experience as well as acquiring instrumental procedures for learning (i.e. learning strategies) (Oxford, 1990; Wenden; 19991 & Dickinson, 1987 as cited in Ruiz-Madrid & Sanz-Gil, 2007).

Their acquisition allows learners to understand, retain, transfer and generalize information, which not only enables them to answer evaluation questions, but also allows them to use this information effectively in future situations. The skills that constitute learner autonomy are those implicitly involved in the capacity to learn, which proves to be inseparable from learning to learn or being aware of the procedures to transform new knowledge into meaningful knowledge (Ruiz-Madrid & Sanz-Gil, 2007). This process involves acquiring methodological and metalinguistic competence as well as the development of cognitive and metacognitive skills (Ruiz-Madrid & Sanz-Gil, 2007). Methodological skills refer to learners' capacity to set goals for language acquisition, to elaborate a learning plan and to be able to manage it (i.e. evaluating the acquired knowledge and being able to reorient the learning plan according to the results) (Ruiz-Madrid & Sanz-Gil, 2007). Cognitive skills are also important for the development of a language learning process based upon autonomous premises. Regarding cognitive strategies, it is important to mention that we consider psycholinguistic knowledge as being integrated within cognitive skills, since both are closely related. Cognitive skills believed to be based upon: the mobilization of learners' beliefs or attitudes about linguistic acquisition; the mobilization of learners' attitudes towards different strategies and learning styles; the development of cognitive strategies (i.e., inferring, deducing, generalizing, making analogies, among others) applied to language learning (Dicknison, 1987; Oxford, 1990 & Wenden, 1991 as cited in Ruiz-Madrid & Sanz-Gil, 2007). Metacognitive skills should help learners to develop learners' critical thinking, organizational skills, and to take responsibility for their learning skills that are necessary for most of the different aspects of life (Ruiz-Madrid & Sanz-Gil, 2007).

Therefore, learner autonomy does not mean that teachers do not have any role. Rather, more significantly, they are supposed to help learners learn how to learn. They are expected to train learners the necessary language learning strategies. As already mentioned in chapter one, it looks not sufficient to say learners that 'you are autonomous, learn on your own'. Because learners may not be naturally gifted with the principles of autonomous learning or learning to learn on their own, they need the help of their teachers in developing it.

As Waeytens, Willy and Roland (2007) cited in Manchon (2007) states, learning to learn can have a 'supportive', 'remedial', and/or 'developmental' function. Learning to learn has a supportive

function when its immediate objective is to assist students improve their results on exams and tests. In its application to language teaching, second language teachers may, for instance, decide to train their students in a certain reading strategies in an attempt to assist them with the foreign language. The remedial function of learning to learn, as its name suggests, aims at assisting students remedy their learning problems. For instance, students may be trained in the use of certain communication strategies to overcome lexical problems in face to face communication. Finally, the developmental function is more encompassing in nature. In this case teachers try to make their students familiar with information processing or problem-solving strategies so that they can solve new problems or process new information. This developmental function is usually made synonymous with learning to learn in the second language field.

As Nunan (1997) cited in Abdurahman (2011) asserts, learners are best encouraged to be autonomous in the classroom. Therefore, this is mainly done by the classroom teacher because he or she plays the roles of a 'facilitator', 'manager', 'counselor', 'helper' or 'resource' in the classroom rather than being 'redundant' or 'idle'.

## **2.2. Reasons for Promoting Learner Autonomy**

Language learners can be effective and successful in their learning when they take responsibility and participate actively for their own learning. Regard this, Scharle and Szabo (2000:4) assert that:

The saying goes: you can bring the horse to water, but you cannot make him drink. In language teaching, teachers can provide all the necessary circumstances and input, but learning can only happen if learners are willing to contribute. Their passive presence will not suffice, just as the horse remains thirsty if he stood still by the river waiting patiently for his thirst to go away. And, in order for learners to be actively involved in the learning process, they first need to realize and accept that success in learning depends on as much on the student as on the teacher. That is, they share responsibility for the outcome. In other words, success in learning very much depends on learners having a responsible attitude.

This indicates that even though teachers teach learners the necessary language inputs, learners cannot be effective in their learning unless they have positive and responsible attitude towards learning the target language on their own and contribute their own part.

As Cotterall (1995) claims, autonomous learning is desirable aim for philosophical, pedagogical and practical reasons. The philosophical reason about autonomy is the assumption that learners have the right to choose concerning their learning. As Knowles (1975) cited in Cotterall (1995) points out, making learners independent for learning shall be important for their social functioning. Assisting learners to become more independent in their learning is a way of increasing their life options. As Littlejohn (1985) cited in Cotterall (1995) states, a result of making learners autonomous might be an increment in 'enthusiasm' for learning. The pedagogical reasons can also be justified as adults clearly learn more, and more successfully when they are advised the perspectives like: 'pace' 'sequence' and 'make of learning' and even the content of what they are studying (Candy, 1988 as cited in Cotterall, 1995). The practical justification for encouraging learners' autonomy is that a teacher cannot be always available to help them. Learners have to learn on their own for there is not always access to the type of amount of the individual education needed by them to be proficient in the language. Learners become more effective in their language learning when they do not need to spend time waiting for the teacher to give them with resources or solve their problems (Cotterall, 1995).

In addition, according to Dickinson (1987), the learners' language learning needs might not match with the existing courses in several ways; the learner can demand a specific competence in a relatively short time, so requiring an intensive course, however the only existing course, or may be the only one the learner can afford; takes two years at two hours in a week. The learner can want to learn some parts of the language that are under emphasized, or not addressed, in many courses. In addition, learners might have varied needs that need to improve individually on their own speed according to their learning styles and strategies, and their capacity to learn rapidly. Therefore, learners need to learn how to learn.

Furthermore, Wenden (1991) describes the reason for promoting learner autonomy as, 'successful' or 'intelligent' learners learn how to learn. They acquired learning strategies, knowledge towards learning, and attitudes which help them to utilize these skills and knowledge confidently, flexibly, appropriately and independently of a teacher.

The arguments for autonomous learning are further claimed as:

- Autonomy can well strengthen intrinsic motivation (some inner drive for learning) and assist learners to consider learning as their own responsibility. Both factors seem linked to success (Dickinson, 1995 as cited in Jones, 1998).
- Absence of teacher control may help personalization of texts and tasks i.e. basing them on the learners own interests and experience (Campbell & Kryszewska, 1992 as cited in Jones 1998). This can also maximize intrinsic motivation, and there is evidence that personalized practice activities maximize retention of input (Slimani, 1989 as cited in Jones, 1998).
- Autonomous interpersonal communication tasks are likely required for learners to develop a full range of communicative skills (Broady & Kenning, 1966a cited in Jones, 1998).
- Teacher-directed may be considered as imposing inflexible external objectives and structure on the learner; taking charge of one's own learning, thus, means self-empowerment (Holec, 1979; Kenny, 1993; Little, 1990; Benson & Voller, 1997b, etc as cited in Jones, 1998).

The researcher believes that making learners autonomous helps them to be reflective, efficient and effective. It also helps learners to be more pro-active and motivated to their learning. Their learning can be meaningful to their life because autonomous learners can easily use their knowledge and skills outside the classroom or any situation for learning. Hence, learners need to be motivated and trained how to learn the language on their own. On the other hand, learners themselves should take responsibilities in planning their learning objectives, monitoring and evaluating their learning outcomes. They need to make decisions in selecting methodology, learning materials and organizing their learning activities. It seems reasonable for learners to exert their individual effort to develop their English language skills autonomously.

### 2.3. Characteristics of Autonomous Learners

According to Nunan (1991), more of the research on learning strategy has been concerned with identifying learning strategy with a view to differentiating the characteristics of good language learners. According to Omaggio (1978) cited in Wenden (1991) autonomous language learners:

- Have insight into their own language learning styles and preferences as well as the nature of the task itself: they adopt a personal style or positive learning strategy which fulfills their needs and preferences. They can adopt to different methodologies and materials and aware how to search, sort, analyze, synthesize, classify and retrieve relevant linguistic data.
- Take an active approach to the learning task: they choose learning goals for themselves and intentionally involve themselves in the target language. They search opportunities to communicate in the target language with native speakers whenever possible, and to know acts of communication; in a complete sense they are sensitive to connotative and socio-cultural meaning.
- Willing to take risks: they accept their status as 'linguistic toddlers'. They are willing to be foolish sometimes to communicate by using any mechanism at their disposal to transfer message. This usually includes using circumlocution, paraphrase, cognates or gestures and can sometimes use the creation of new words by comparison with familiar patterns (like nominalizing a verb).
- Good guessers: they use clues effectively and make legitimate inferences. For instance, effective reading comprehension strategies which involve guessing encompass using syntactic and contextual clues to decide meaning and reading around unknown words. They regularly find clues to meaning from context, explanation, trial and error or translation.
- They are prepared to attend to form as well as to content: they continuously search for forms, categorizing schema, rule governed relationships to regulate their own speech and others, and seek correction from informants.
- They actively attempt to develop the target language into a separate reference system and try to think in the target language as soon as possible: they purposefully revise their progress through testing hypothesis, learning from errors and rearranging the system when preliminary rules do not appear to apply.

- They generally have a tolerant and outgoing approach to the target language. They are capable to put themselves in another person's place; identifying to some degree with native speaker.

According to Deci and Ryan (1985, 1993) as cited in Martinez (2008), autonomy and communication e.g. interaction belong together. The autonomous learner has authentic approach to language which is considered to be a means of communication. As Little (1997b) cited in Martinez (2008) believes, we should assume learner autonomy both in terms of learning and implementing the target language. In practice, learner training has mostly, emphasized on the teaching of strategies. In employing this instructional approach, anybody runs the risk of forgetting the underlying objective of all learning contexts: communicative proficiency. Language is at once both the medium and the content of language learning and learner autonomization.

As Little (1997a:99) cited in Martinez (2008:117) claims with regard to the truly autonomous learner:

'Each occasion of language use an occasion of language learning, vice versa. Proficiency use of the spoken requires the gradual development of language awareness in the sense that knowledge about the target language provides the indispensable basis for critical analysis.'

According to Marie (1994:431) as cited in Martinez (2002: 117), learner autonomy does not arise spontaneously from within the learner but develops out of the learners' dialogue with the world to which he or she belongs. As Martinez (2008:7) states, the need to communicate reminds us (Little's 1996) radical assertion, "Freedom to learn and [the] compulsion to interact". Therefore, autonomous learner interacts with the language speaker to communicate meaning.

As Martinez (2008) states, autonomy has an emotional as well as a cognitive dimension: the autonomous learner has an intrinsically motivated and a self-determined approach to language and language learning. Autonomy has to do with personal involvement and personal authenticity. Learner success leads to enhanced motivation and simultaneously increases the learners' acceptance of responsibility for his/her own learning experience.

As Martinez (2008) asserts, autonomy has to do with deep approaches to language learning: the autonomous learner has an expert approach to language learning on the basis of the previous knowledge acquired while learning other languages. The multilingual learner tends to be more effective learner in the sense that can use his/her multi language awareness and knowledge to new language learning contexts. These effects correlate with effects in multilingual acquisition research or cross-linguistic research which show that multilingual learning or inter-comprehensible language learning cause to more autonomy (MeiBner, 2004, 2005 as cited in Martinez, 2008).

## **2.4. The Roles of Teachers in Autonomous Language Classrooms**

According to Crabbe (1999), even though the right nature of roles differs from situation to situation and personalities taking part, it is possible to suggest some universal roles of teachers. As Tudor (1993) states, it is generally believed that a learner-centered approach to teaching a language changes the role played by learners. Recently, in learner-centered language teaching, apparent in notions like ‘learner autonomy’ and ‘syllabus negotiation’, emphasizes on learners can play roles in their language learning. In learner-centered approach, learners are assumed to play a more active and participatory roles than in the traditional approaches. However, learners’ role cannot be redefined without a parallel redefinition of teachers’ role. Therefore, there are main responsibilities which can be carried out by the teacher in learner-centered classroom as discussed below.

1.Preparing learners: if language teaching is to be going on the basis of learners’ intentions and resources, then both the teachers and the learners themselves need to understand what these intentions (what they need and would like to do) and resources (what they are able to do) are. From the learners’ perspective, this involves the development of awareness in at least the following points:

- Self-awareness as a language learner: this links to learners’ motivation to learn the language, the amount of effort they are willing to exert, and their attitudes both to the target language and to process of learning itself.
- Awareness of learning goals: learners need to develop an understanding of the reason they are learning the target language of their communicative aims and of their current capabilities in the language-together with the capacity to analyze and talk about their aims.

- awareness of learning options: this has to do with an understanding of what language learning incorporates, of the different learning strategies, study options, and resources they can utilize, and of how various tasks can increase learning in both in-class and self-study contexts.
- Language awareness: learners need to know at least a basic concept of how language is structured and used e.g. some grammatical or functional categories, the ability to recognize formulaic expressions and certain concepts of register and appropriacy.

Assisting learners develop awareness in these areas, a process, usually referred to as 'learner trainings' is crucial role of teachers. This can be done through giving suggestions and information on alternative learning strategies or study options. More significantly, the teachers need to assist learners to look at them and at language learning in an open and constructive manner. "This calls for skills which have little to do with language teaching in a narrow sense: the skills involved are essentially educational: skills designed to develop understanding of human potential" (Tudor 1993:25).

2. Analyzing learner needs: as Holec (1980:3) cited in Tudor (1993:25) suggests: "... It seems unlikely; to say the least, that needs analysis can be successfully carried out by anyone other than the learner himself." Since it is the learner who will be using the language who are learning, it does not appear to be unreasonable to assume that they may have something sensible to say about what they need to learn. Indeed, they may well have a deep insight into their communicative needs than the teacher select content on therefore an area where there would seem reasonable for listening carefully to what learners need to say.

3. Selecting methodology: every teaching situation involves the interaction between a given teaching methods, the learners and the wider socio-cultural context of learning. Teaching method needs thus to be selected not only based on what seems theoretically plausible, but also on the basis of experience, personality and expectations of the learners involved (Tudor, 1993).

4. Transferring responsibility: learner-centeredness represents partnership modes (Islet 1987 as cited in Tudor (1993:25) of language teaching, decisions regarding the content and form of teaching

being shaped between teachers and learners. Basically, the teacher needs to evaluate three main points: “What learners need to contribute?” “How this can make learning more successful?” “How learners are able of thinking a constructive and responsible role in shaping their learning program?”

According to Tudor (1993:25), language teaching is a complicated social and cultural activity. The teacher thus has to understand learners within their socio-cultural context quite apart from accepting them as psychologically complex individuals. Therefore, the teacher should think of the following questions which might affect learners: “How mature are my students?” Sharing knowledge and experiences, and negotiating study mode, need mutual respect between the teacher and learners, acceptance of other’s point of view, and a fair degree of give and take personal maturity which is not to mean age is crucial. “How motivated are my students?” Involvement in course development needs learners to exert thought and effort. “What are my learners’ cultural attitudes to language study and to the roles of teachers and learners?” No teaching method will work if it is not accepted by the teachers and learners. “Are there any external constraints that place limits on learner direction?” As Tudor (1993) asserts, permitting learners to develop their own ways in learning a language may have a number of real advantages. However, there are constraints, most obviously in the form of an external examination, which put limits on how far learners can deviate from a given way of study without facing difficulties. Such factors should not rule out learners’ direction, but they limit how far the teacher can responsibly permit learners to go.

5. Involving learners: learners need to involve in making decision on course structure (e.g. the ‘mix of in-class’, ‘self-access’ and ‘independent study components’), goal setting, choice of methodology, activity selection and organization, linguistic syllabus (e.g. will the teacher decide on the language points to be covered, or will these arise out of students observed performance in communicative tasks?) and choice of materials (e.g. students can provide materials directly relevant to their learning goals, select topics, evaluate and study independently) (Tudor, 1993).

Tudor (1993) also suggests three main sets of skills:

- Personal skill: evaluating learners’ potential and negotiating their involvement in a sensitive manner calls for a range of human interpersonal skills. Maturity and human intuition are key qualities.

- Educational skills: the teacher needs to develop learner's awareness and shape their ability to make the most of their knowledge and experience. Language teaching, therefore, becomes an educational endeavor far more than a matter of skills training.
- Course planning skills: being plain to learners' input and participation can make planning more difficult and needs the teacher to live with more uncertainty. In addition, coordinating goal-setting and choice of methodology assumes a solid familiarity with course plan and with the different methodological alternatives available.

According to Dam and Legenhausen (1999), learners need to be stimulated in an autonomous language classroom to evolve an awareness of the goals and processes of learning and to develop ability for critical reflection. As Dam and Legenhausen (1999) state, one of the first objectives of an autonomous language classroom is to increase awareness of students on the learning process itself that also implies having them reflect on their strengths or weakness and progress in various linguistic skills. As Thavenius (1999) states, although all learners may not arrive at the same level of awareness and responsibility, helping them to develop reflection on what they do not learn, and how they do it is important. The teacher is suggested to be willing to help learners take responsibility for their own learning. According to Thavenius (1999), teachers in an autonomous classroom is supposed to be willing to allow learners take responsibility, allow learners discover, without intervening with their procedures, alter the classroom situation in a way that gives learners more and active participation; assist every learner find his/her individual needs.

According to Thavenius (1999), a teacher needs not only know the learners' learning procedures, but also the importance of his/her own role. He/she needs to reflect on continuously on points like: promoting independence and responsibility, assisting learners aware their learning processing and strategies, reconsidering teacher roles, doing things for learners which they can and need to do themselves, and appearing to check the learners rather than interfering.

## **2.5. The Role of Learners**

As to teachers, learners have their own roles in autonomous language learning. Autonomous learners are required to set their own goals within the curricular guidelines to select relevant

materials and tasks, and to evaluate the result of learning (Dam & Legenhausen, 1999). Just as teachers are supposed to give up their role as the only producer of knowledge and relinquish some authority in the classroom, learners should also abandon their role as passive learners and assume responsibility for their own learning. The problem lies in learners' attitudes towards the learning process, since, as claimed by Tumposky (1982) as cited in Ruiz-Madrid and Sanz-Gil (2007), many students are not willing to assume the responsibility that was once given to the teacher. Undoubtedly, this new role for learners, as in the case of the teachers, is more complex and difficult to play, since it involves a learner who takes part in his or her learning process and makes decisions on all the aspects affecting it. In other words, he or she becomes an active learner who makes decisions, self-evaluates Tumposky (1982) as cited in Ruiz-Madrid and Sanz-Gil (2007), and plans his or her own results (Esch, 1997; Little, 1990 & Riley, 1997 as cited in Ruiz-Madrid & Sanz-Gil, 2007). It is because of this complexity that many learners are not ready or do not feel ready to assume so much responsibility and allow the teacher to take control of the whole process (Ruiz-Madrid & Sanz-Gil, 2007).

As Atkins, Hailom and Nuru (1995) claim, it is often argued that the qualities of a good student are the ability and willingness to take responsibility for his or her learning to initiate and take risks. It is believed that the good learner is a student who decides, at least partly, for himself or herself: the aspects of language to pay attention to, the activities which will help him or her learn best, and the strategies which will help him or her learn best. It is also believed that good learners seek opportunities for practicing outside class, information from a variety of sources, help from more proficient language users, help from dictionaries, grammar books, etc.

It would seem essential that learners need to accept responsibilities for their own learning, make decisions on all the aspects of language learning process, involve in goal setting, choose learning, select topics to be learned, study independently, select and organize activities, choose methodology, practice the language both in and outside the classroom, plan, monitor and evaluate their learning, solve learning problems by themselves, ask questions for clarification, find their own ways, use various resources, use library to develop the language skills, and search different opportunities to practice the language.

## **2.6. How is Autonomy Fostered?**

As Nunan, Lai and Keokbe (1999) state, learners may not come to the classroom with a natural gift of practicing the principles of learner autonomy. Evidence suggests that many learners are not so naturally endowed. Learners need to be systematically educated in the skills and knowledge they will need in order to learn. Rather than assuming that the learner comes to the learning environment rich in critical learning skills, the responsible teacher accepts that many learners will only begin to develop such skills in the course of instruction. As Nunan, Lai and Keokbe (1999) discuss, the degree to which it is feasible and crucial for learners to include autonomy will be on the basis of a range of influences from personality to the cultural situation where they find themselves. Nevertheless, irrespective of the context and the degree to which the learner are naturally 'predisposed' to the concept, some extent of autonomy can be fostered through systematic incorporation of strategy training into the learning process. The following conditions are supposed to contribute to the development of learner autonomy.

### **2.6.1. Language Learning Strategies for Learner Autonomy**

Learning strategies serve as instruments to improve one's language competence, and learners can really only be held responsible for their competence if they are aware of these instruments. Therefore, they need to be trained the varieties of strategies, assisted to find out what works for them, and helped to discover how and when to use these strategies (Scharle & Szabo, 2000). Learning strategies is one component of learner training to be incorporated in designs to assist learners become more autonomous. They are a type of learner training content that need to be embraced in plans to promote learner autonomy (Wenden, 1991). Wenden (1991:1) provides a saying to elicit the importance of learning strategies for learner autonomy as, "Give a man fish and he eats for a day, teach him how to fish and he eats for a life time."

Wenden (1991:18) asserts that, even though researchers in second language acquisition have not been able to come to an agreement concerning the concept of language learning strategies like strategies are 'techniques', 'tactics' 'potentially conscious plans', 'cognitive abilities', 'problem solving procedures' and 'language learning behaviors'. She defines them as "Learning strategies are

mental steps or operations that learners use to learn a new language and to regulate their efforts to do so.” As O’Malley and Chamot (1990:1) explain, learning strategies are, “The special thoughts or behaviors that individuals use to help them comprehend, learn, or retain new information.” According to Cohen (1999), second language strategies consist of both second language ‘learning’ and second language ‘use’ strategies. They include the steps or actions chosen by learners either to develop the learning of a second language, the use of it, or both.

Language use strategies incorporate retrieval strategies, rehearsal strategies, cover strategies, and communication strategies. Hence, the concept of language learning and language use strategies include those actions which are explicitly intended at language learning as well as those which might well lead to learning but that do not ‘ostensibly’ have learning as their primary goal. Language learning strategies have clear objectives of helping learners in developing their knowledge in a target language, whereas language use strategies concern on using the language which learners have in their present inter language (Cohen, 1999).

As Cohen (1999) explains, retrieval strategies are used to call up material which had been partly acquired or learned in some extent. Rehearsal strategies encompass strategies for rehearsing target language forms. An instance of rehearsal can be form focused practice like practicing the subjective forms for different verb conjugations: cover strategies are a unique type of ‘compensatory’ or ‘coping’ strategies that includes creating an ‘appearance of language’ capacity in order not to seem, ‘foolish’, ‘unprepared’, or ‘even stupid’.

According to Cohen (1999), communication strategies include a subset of language use strategies which focus on ‘approaches’ to convey meaningful information that is new to the recipient. Such strategies may or may not have any influence on learning. For example, learners use a vocabulary item encountered for the first time in a given session to communicate a message, without any intention of attempting to learn the word.

### **2.6.1.1. Types of Learning Strategies**

Language learning strategies can be distinguished as cognitive, metacognitive, affective, or social (Chamot, 1987 & Oxford, 1990 as cited in Cohen, 1999). The description of each is discussed below.

### **2.6.1.1.1. Cognitive Strategies**

As Cohen (1999) describes, cognitive strategies always include identifying, retaining, storing or retrieving words, phrases, and other aspects of the second language. As Wenden (1991) states, cognitive strategies are 'steps' or 'operations' in which learners use to process linguistic and sociolinguistic aspect. They fall into four stages or steps: selecting information from incoming data, comprehending and storing and retrieving it for use.

1. Selecting information from incoming data: as Wenden (1991) describes, according to information processing scientists, understanding and learning begins as input which 'impinges' up on our sensory organs. What we see, hear, touch, taste and smell is gone to the sensory buffers where it is either chosen for more processing or ignored. More information comes into the buffers than we may attend to and it stay there fore only a short period and it is necessary that learners need to be ready to select the information they want to process. Selective attending (deciding to pay attention to specific parts of the language input or the situation that will help learning) is a strategy which may help them to practice this. When learners employ this strategy, they determine early the aspect of input they all pay attention to.

2. Comprehending and storing the information: as Wenden (1991) states, at this stage the selected information is transferred to short-term memory in which it is transformed into a meaningful symbol like sound, a word or a syntactic structure and then into a more constant representation that is stored in a long-term memory. Elaboration, relating new information to other concepts in memory, is the main type of processing important for comprehending and storing information. Nevertheless, in order for elaboration to happen attempts should be done to keep the information in short-memory or it will disappear rapidly. Rehearsal strategies are used for this claim. As Chamot (1987) cited in Wenden (1991) defines, rehearsal strategies are imitating a language model, consisting explicit practice and silent rehearsal. Rehearsal strategies include no more than the actual repetition of the information and do not transform the material. On the contrary, elaboration transforms the material. During learners elaborate, they use strategies which recognize patterns in the data, make associations, and recognize detail meaning elicit knowledge from long-term memory and relate the knowledge to the meanings and categorize them. As Rubin (1989) cited in Wenden

(1991) describes, deductive reasoning (comparing native language with the target language) and inferencing (using available information to guess meanings of new items predict outcomes or fill in missing information) are two major kinds of cognitive strategies which help with elaboration. Chamot cited in Wenden (1991) suggests other instance of elaboration strategies like grouping (reordering or classifying and perhaps labeling the material to be learned based on common attributes), recombination (joining together things you already know to make new things) and contextualization (placing a word or phrase in a meaningful language sequence).

According to Wenden (1991) elaboration strategies used to, at one and the same time, comprehend the incoming information, assist to categorize it in a way that can be integrated into an existing schema and stored in long-term memory. Mnemonic strategies are another kind of strategy which can be used in storing processed information. When learners use mnemonic strategies, they select verbal, spatial and visual hints to find out storage plan which will help future retrieval.

3. Retrieving the information: as Wenden (1991) describes, according to information processing scientists, retrieving the information is the fourth stage in learning. The attended, comprehended and stored information need to be easily retrieved when necessary. Effective communication needs that acquired knowledge about the language be brought to bear up on a communication activity. Automatic retrieval of data which is appropriate for a specific communication activity is an indicator of acquisition that the item has been completely acquired.

According to Wenden (1991), cognitive strategies which can promote the development of automatic and appropriate retrieval are practice strategies. Formal practice strategies are used for intentionally recalling a specific item strictly for concentrated practice. When learners employ functional practice strategies they put themselves in a context where they can employ the language to communicate, e.g. listening to the television, speaking to a foreign friend, reading to the paper, and in this way develop automaticity or facility in retrieval. All retrieval strategies will not be used to develop automaticity. Faerch and Kasper (1983) as cited in Wenden (1991) report six retrieval strategies that learners can use when they cannot recall something they have already learnt. These are: waiting for the term to appear, appealing to formal similarity, retrieval via semantic fields, searching via other languages, retrieving from learning situations, and sensory procedures. As Wenden states, retrieval

goes on together with the elaboration process, for elaboration takes in relating something new to something which is already known. Hence, to store new information, learners should retrieve information from long-term memory which is related to the new input.

#### **2.6.1.1.2. Metacognitive Strategies**

Metacognitive strategies are concerned with pre-assessment and pre-planning; on-line planning and evaluation and post-evaluation of language learning activities and language use incidents. These aspects of strategies permit learners to monitor their own cognition by integrating the planning, organizing, and evaluating of language learning practices (Wenden, 1991).

According to Wenden, self-management strategies are used by learners to oversee and manage their learning. In cognitive psychology, they are termed as metacognitive strategies or regulatory skills (Brown, Brasford, Ferrara & Compione 1983 as cited in Wenden, 1991) and in the methodological literature they are termed as self-directed learning skills (Holec, 1981 as cited in Wenden, 1991). As Wenden states, self-management strategies include planning, monitoring and evaluating.

1. Planning: as Wenden (1991) states, in the performance of learning activity, planning may precede the activity learners decide their objectives and determine the means to achieve them. This stage of planning is referred to as pre-planning. O'malley et .al. (1985) cited in Wenden (1991) suggest two types of decisions that learners made in preparing to do an academic language activity. They decide in advance (1) to attend to a learning activity and to avoid unnecessary distracters (directed attention) and (2) to attend to particular aspects of input (selective attending). They also recognize two strategies that learners implement as a type of advance preparation before actually deal with task. Learners will preview the main ideas and concepts of the material to be learned usually by skimming the text for the organizing principle /advance organizer. Then knowing the situations that assist one learn, they arranged for the presence of these situations (self-management). As Wenden (1991) describes, planning can also be done while the task is being performed. This is planning-in-action. On the basis of how well learners progress through the activity, i.e. how efficient their strategies are and how much they learn, aims may be altered as will be the way of achieving them. Planning-in-action will depend, in part on information given from the implementation of the two other self-management strategies monitoring and evaluation.

2. Monitoring: as Wenden (1991) explains, learners refer to the difficulties they experienced in the language and when they recognize that they cannot express their ideas or understand what others said: they had not acquired practical vocabulary, they may not express themselves appropriately (in the right way), when they could not understand especially television and strange idioms. When monitoring their efforts to learn, learners tune into or become aware of on line difficulties in processing. As Wenden (1991:27) asserts, functioning as participant observers or overseers of their language learning, they ask themselves “How am I doing?”, “Am I proceeding through this learning activity smoothly without obstacles?”, “What do they know and with what degree of certainty?”, “What can they do and with what degree of facility?” (They refer to their perceived level of proficiency to describe an obstacle to task accomplishment or effective strategy deployment or, sometimes, they may also refer to affective or cognitive factors.

As Wenden (1995) states, self-assessment is hold while the act of learning as a part of the monitoring strategy when learners monitor their learning. Self-assessment may also be done in the pre-planning step of learning when learners require setting their learning aims. At that time, they draw up on the knowledge attended through monitoring their knowledge and skills. In this condition, self-assessment is used as a planning strategy and is quite isolated from monitoring. The scope of the experience that learners monitor may differ from an effort to understand a vocabulary item in a reading text, to reading a whole text, to a whole semester’s course in writing or reading. Monitoring can involve a narrow focusing on in a single event, such as understanding a vocabulary item or reading a passage of text, or be a broad over view of a series of learning activities, such as a semester course in writing or reading.

3. Evaluating: in contrast to monitoring, that results in statements of self-assessment about a learner’s level of proficiency made in the course of learning or communicating, when learners evaluate, they consider the effect of a specific effort to learn or use strategy. The emphasis is on the effect and the means by which it is attained (Wenden, 1991).

Evaluating includes three mental steps (1) learners assess the outcome of one effort to learn (e.g. studying in the target language culture, reading a verb book, watching television); (2) they access

the parameter they will employ to evaluate it (e.g. opportunity for language use, opportunity for language learning) and (3) they implement it (Wenden, 1991).

As Scharle and Szabo (2000) explain, when learners are encouraged to focus on the process of their learning (rather than outcome), they are helped to consciously examine their own contribution to their learning such an awareness of the difference that their efforts can make is an essential first step to the development of a responsible attitude. Self-evaluation requires the learners to go even further, they have to step into the shoes of the teachers and judge their own work as objectively as they can. By doing so, they can formulate an idea of their level of proficiency, discover weak and strong points and plan the directions of progress; setting targets for themselves, they are more likely to consider these targets on their own and feel responsible for reaching them.

### **2.6.1.1.3. Socio-Affective Strategies**

As the name suggests, these strategies constitute dual concepts. These are social and affective strategies. According to Cohen (1999), social strategies constitute the activities in which learners select to interact with other learners and native speakers. For example, asking questions for clarification and interacting with others. Affective strategies are used to control attitudes, motivation and emotions. For instance, strategies to reduce anxiety and for self-encouragement can be affective strategy.

As Wenden (1991) discusses, in the literature on attitude change, attitudes have been defined as 'learned motivations', 'valued beliefs', 'evaluations of what one believes is' or 'responses oriented towards approaching or avoiding'. Implied in these various definitions, there are three characteristics of attitudes: attitudes always have an object, they are evaluative and they predispose to certain actions.

As Wenden points out, attitudes have cognitive component-beliefs and perceptions information about the object of the attitude. In language learning, this can be what learners believe about their role in the learning process or about their ability as language learners. Attitudes have an evaluative component-the attitude object may evoke like or dislike agreement or disagreement, approval or disapproval. Some language learners may agree with the concept that they must be more

responsible for their learning, while for others an independent role is something they may prefer to ignore. Finally, attitudes have a behavioral component-they predispose people to act in certain means. Learners whose evaluation toward autonomy is positive will try to become more responsible in their learning and those whose evaluation is negative will not.

As Wenden states, learner attitude towards autonomy is another type of learner training content to be encompassed in plans to promote autonomy. Learners need to probe beyond their definition of what it means to learn a language to decide whether they feel they should take on responsibility for their learning and are capable of doing so. Two attitudes that are crucial to learner autonomy are attitudes that learners hold about their role in the language learning process and their capability as learners:

- Willingness to take on responsibility: autonomous learners are willing to take charge of responsibility for their learning. They consider themselves as having a significant role in their language learning.
- Confidence in their ability as learners: autonomous learners are self-confident learners. They believe in their capability to learn and to self-direct or manage their learning.

Self-confidence helps for the development of responsibility in its own right. The learners should believe that they are capable of monitoring their own learning and they can rely on themselves, not only on the teacher.

According to Scharle and Szabo (2000), enhancing cooperation in the classroom affects learner attitudes in many ways. It encourages the learners to rely on each other (and consequently themselves as well) and not only on the teacher. Group work also creates opportunities for feedback from peers: learners will do things to please the group rather than to please the teacher. Finally pair and group work (as compared to whole class work) may assist teachers to get a higher proportion of students actively involved in completing a task.

More significantly, intrinsic motivation (the source of some inner drive) is encouraged to foster autonomy. Intrinsically motivated learners understand the objectives of learning and that makes them more willing to take responsibility for the outcome. Rewards and punishment (extrinsic

motivation) can also stimulate learning, but at the same time they increase the dependence of learners (Scharle & Szabo, 2000).

### **2.6.1.2. Strategies-Based Instruction**

According to Cohen (1999), strategies based instruction is a learner-centered approach to teaching that focuses on explicit and implicit inclusions of language learning and language use strategies in the second language classroom. As Cohen (1999) describes, the approach aims to help learners to become more effective in their efforts to learn and use the second language. The objectives of Strategies-based instruction entail:

- Strategies instruction: learners are explicitly taught how, when and why strategies can be used to promote language learning and use.
- Strategy integration: strategies are integrated and included into day to day classroom language practices to give for contextualized strategy practice and reinforcement.

According to Cohen (1999), perhaps the most effective way of getting the idea about strategies out to the language learners is considered as strategies-based instruction. The first assumption on strategy instruction movement rests on the belief that language teaching, as any other type of teaching, should include what we may call an ‘educational dimension’ by which it is implied that schools must empower people with tools and means to become independent and successful life-long learners (Bolhuis, 2000; Benson & Lor, 1999; Bolhui & Voeten, 2001; Dreyera & Nel, 2003; Kitajima, 1997 as cited in Manchon, 2007). This dimension of teaching is usually referred to as ‘learning to learn’, a construct that in its application to instructed language learning, learner would be equated with learning to become a successful language learner who can work independently of the teacher (Manchon, 2007).

### **2.6.2. Self-Access Center**

According to Cotterall (1995), self-access centers provide collection of self-study language practice materials. Learners need to be encouraged to discuss means of using the center with their class teacher and are directed to the documentation there for further information. The center gives for

learners who have identified needs which they want to address on their own time, at their own pace, in the way they feel most comfortable. According to Jones (1995), outside the classroom self-access is an excellent tool to promote the learner-centered philosophy. The self-access center is intended to recognize the differences and fulfill the needs of learners as individuals, for themselves and promotion from teachers, are supposed to accept responsibility for their own language study. According to Barnett and Jordan (1991), learners may have varied needs which may not be fulfilled by the class-based courses. Therefore, self-access facilities can cater for the individual and encourage learners to fulfill their own needs. The efficient, responsible self-access center user should be able to decide on what to do, find the relevant materials and set plans about the tasks in reasonable sequence and with ability for self-assessment without help from the teacher (Dickinson, 1987 as cited in Jones, 1995).

Besides, Cotterall (1995) concludes that autonomy in language learning is required, the relationship between the learner and the class teacher is crucial to foster autonomy, and autonomy has implications for the entire curriculum.

### **2.6.3. Classroom Tasks and Materials**

As Cotterall (1995) states, another component of strategy training involves the design of tasks. The tasks designed aim to replicate those which confront in real world situations and to include language support. Learners' difficulties need to be talked and a variety of follow-up classroom activities need to be provided. Materials developed are sought to encourage learners to take the initiative in their language learning. This can be done basically through making plain relationship between classroom language learning activities and learners' developing language competence. Learners need to discuss with the teacher to explore the objective and importance of tasks to their needs. According to Cotterall (1995), classroom tasks need to emphasize the significance of giving high quality feedback on performance to learners. To think greater control of learning, learners require means of assessing the quality of their language performance. On their performance, learners may think they have mastered something when they have not, may fossilize in errors, become demotivated, or disappointed the effort they have exerted. Sometimes feedback can be given in the task itself (Crabbe, 1991 as cited in Cotterall, 1995).

Generally, as Nunan, Lai and Keobke (1999) describe, autonomy is fostered when learners are encouraged to self-monitor and self-assess, encouraged to reflect critically on their learning process, given opportunities to select content and learning tasks and also when they are provided with opportunities to evaluate their own progress, encouraged to find their own language data and create their own learning tasks, and actively involved in productiveness of the target language rather than merely reproducing language models provided by the teacher or the text book.

In conclusion, learner autonomy is an ability to take charge of one's own learning. Thus, learners have to exert their individual efforts to learn the language autonomously. To achieve this ability, teachers also need to help learners learn how to learn.

## **Chapter Three: Methodology**

The main purpose of this study, as already mentioned, was to explore the practice of learner autonomy in learning English. This section discusses the research methods which were employed to achieve the objective of the study. Therefore, it describes the research design, subjects and sampling technique, and instruments of data collection, procedures of data collection and methods of data analysis.

### **3.1. Research Design**

The research design of the study was descriptive in order to describe the existing practice of learner autonomy in learning English at Bahir Dar Higher Education Preparatory Secondary School. According to Seliger and Shohamy (1989), descriptive research is used to describe the existing phenomenon explicitly. More specifically, survey method was used to gather data about a large number of people by collecting from a few of them. The study included both quantitative and qualitative aspects of research. The quantitative aspect was the interpretation of data which was collected through close-ended questionnaire items, where as the qualitative aspects of research was the analysis of data obtained through interview, focus group discussion and observation. Mixed approach was used because the study used both quantitative and qualitative tools, and it increases the comprehensiveness of overall findings through indicating how qualitative data give explanation for the quantitative data.

### **3.2. Subjects and Sampling Techniques of the Study**

The study focuses on only grade 12 students. This level is the highest level of secondary education. Students, therefore, are expected to be autonomous because this grade level prepares them to join university which requires more learner autonomy. In addition, students at this grade level are assumed to have better awareness about language learning. The school is selected because of its convenience to the researcher.

There are 872 (523 males and 349 females) grade 12 students at Bahir Dar Higher Education Preparatory Secondary School. There are 17 sections (five social sciences and 12 natural sciences) in the school. Because of inaccessibility, cost and time, from 872 students, only 15% (131) 88 males and 43 females were selected randomly to give equal chance for all the students to be included. More specifically, lottery method was used to select the respondents in the following ways. First the total list of the students was taken from the director's office. Then, numbers were assigned from one to 872. Next to that, pieces of papers (tickets) were prepared. Then, numbers were written on the tickets from one to 872. After that, the tickets were folded. Finally, 131 pieces (tickets) were drawn randomly. The members of the population who contain the numbers drawn were selected to be samples for the study.

In addition, there are six English teachers in the school. Since their number is limited, all of them were included through comprehensive sampling technique to gather relevant information or data for the study.

### **3.3. Data Gathering Tools**

To collect pertinent data for the study, questionnaire, interview, focus group discussion and observation were employed. The description of each is stated below.

#### **3.3.1. Questionnaire**

Questionnaire is a written set of questions which is intended to gather information from large number of respondents. It was used because of its easiness to administer. After important literatures had been reviewed, the questionnaire was designed. The questionnaire was prepared to be completed by both the students and teachers. The students' questionnaire was designed with 26 items. Among these, three items (1, 3 and 12) were adapted from Mesfin (2008), where as the remaining 23 items were prepared from the reviewed literature. All the teachers' questionnaire with 17 items was designed from the reviewed literature. The students' questionnaire has two main parts (see appendix A).The first part was aimed at gathering the respondents' personal or background information. The second part has two sections: A and B. Section 'A' was intended to explore the learners' individual effort to learn the language on their own, and section 'B' was aimed at

exploring the role of teachers in helping learners learn how to learn. Similarly, the teachers' questionnaire has two main parts (see appendix C). The first part was meant for gathering teachers' personal information. The second part has two main sections: A and B. Section 'A' was intended to know the role of teachers in helping learners learn how to learn, and section 'B' was aimed at exploring learners' efforts which can be known by the teachers. As already mentioned, the questionnaire was prepared for both the students and teachers. More specifically, close-ended questions were prepared for both the students and teachers through giving the possible range of answers to ease difficulties because such questions are easy to fill in and analyze.

Prior to the distribution of the questionnaire to the respondents, piloting was done. Then, the first draft of the questionnaire was given to friends who are Master's student in TEFL at Addis Ababa University to evaluate the items in the questionnaire in terms of relevance and clarity. Some items which were similar in content were discarded and appropriate correction was made. Next to that, the students' questionnaire was translated into Amharic so that they can easily understand and respond to it. After revising the first draft of the questionnaire, the Amharic version of the questionnaire was piloted to the non-sample students, 15(11 males and 4 females) students (11.5% of the actual sample size) with the intention of checking the effectiveness of the questionnaire and making improvements. Similarly, pilot study on teachers' questionnaire was conducted with four (all males) (66.6% of the actual sample size) grade 12 English teachers at Tana Haique Secondary School. The pilot study on teachers' questionnaire was conducted in another school since all of the grade 12 teachers in the study area (Bahir Dar Higher Education Preparatory Secondary School) were to be involved in the actual study. The grade 12 students involved in the pilot study were selected randomly, where as the teachers were involved on voluntary basis.

Following the pilot study, improvements were made in both questionnaires. Unclear instructions, ambiguous items and similar items in content were revised. For example, instruction two of the second part and 9 and 11 items of the students' questionnaire which lacked clarity were revised. In addition, items 2, 3 and 5 which were similar in content with other items were revised. The participants involved in the pilot study were not included in the sample during the administration of the final form of the questionnaire.

### **3.3.2. Interview**

As Seliger and Shohamy (1989) state, the purpose of interview is to obtain data by actually talking to the respondents. To cross-check the data gathered through questionnaire, semi-structured interview was used to gather more detail, flexible and in-depth data about learning English autonomously. It was conducted with both the students and teachers.

To make the interview manageable, only six students (five males and one female) (5%) of the total sample size (131) were selected using simple random sampling technique. All of the participants selected were willing to participate in the interview after they were informed the objective of the study, how they were selected, and confidentiality was guaranteed. The interview with the teachers was held with all of them (six). The researcher took notes while the respondents were responding. It took around two hours and forty four minutes to conduct and complete both the students' and teachers' interview.

### **3.3.3. Focus Group Discussion**

Focus groups are a form of group interview, although not in the sense of backwards and forwards between the interviewer and group. Rather, it is on the basis of the interaction within the group who discuss a topic provided by the researcher (Morgan 1988 cited in Cohen, Manion & Morrison 2000).

As Cohen, et.al.(2000) assert, therefore, the participants interact with each other rather than with the interviewer, such that the views of the participants can emerge-the participants' rather than the researcher's agenda can predominate. It is from the 'interaction' of the group that the data emerge. Focus groups are contrived settings, bringing together a specifically selected part of the subjects to discuss a particular given theme or topic, where the interaction with the group leads to data and results.

Therefore, to cross-check the data obtained through the questionnaire and interview, focus group discussion with the students was used. It seemed important for this study especially to compare the data gathered through the above mentioned tools about learners' individual effort to learn the

language autonomously which is one of the objectives of the study since learners' individual effort to learn the language on their own may not be completely gathered through observation. Therefore, ten (seven males and three females) (7.63%) of the total sample size (131) students were selected randomly. Then, ten guide questions (see appendix G) were prepared for the discussion. The discussion was held in Amharic language so that learners can easily participate in the discussion in a separate room, and later the results were translated into English language. The students who involved in the interview did not participate in the focus group discussion. The discussion was jotted down.

### **3.3.4. Observation**

To see the consistency of the data gathered through the questionnaire, semi-structured interview and focused group discussion, observation was used to capture practices as they occur in the classroom. As Seliger and Shohamy (1989) state, observation is mainly used to examine a phenomenon or behavior while it is going on. More specifically, non-participant observation technique was used to identify and follow the behaviors as they occur in the classroom. Three teachers out of six have been observed on voluntary basis. Three periods have been observed. Each period is allotted 40 minutes. The observation was conducted for three periods all together; the three teachers were observed once each. Totally, the classes were observed for two hours. The classroom practices have been jotted down by preparing observation checklist and recorded by video recorder with the help of a co-observer. The checklist was designed by the researcher in order to specify practices used in the classroom to promote autonomy of learners. The checklist contained 16 points with two columns of 'Yes' and 'No' answers (see appendix I).

### **3.4. Procedures for Data Collection**

Before the administration of the data collection, the permission of the school principal was taken. Then, the selection of the representative samples were carried out using lists of the students collected from the principal. Following arrangements suggested by the principals and participants, the final draft of the questionnaire was administered to 131(88 males and 43 females) grade 12 students. After gathering the students in a separate room, the researcher distributed the questionnaire and read through the cover page of the questionnaire to the students and explained the

objective of the study before requesting them to answer the questions. The questionnaire was administered on-the-spot to avoid the possible duplication of responses and maximize return rate of questionnaire copies. Besides, confidentiality was guaranteed. The researcher told them to complete the questionnaire carefully and honestly. They were told that every student had to work on himself/herself without asking a friend. The students completed the questionnaire in approximately 20 minutes. On the same day, the teachers were given the questionnaire, and the questionnaire was collected on the following day. Following arrangements of place and time in accordance with the convenience of student respondents, the interview was conducted in a classroom. The interview with students, in Amharic, was conducted with each interviewee individually. The interview with the teachers was conducted in the English departments' office on the basis of their convenient time and place. After the questionnaire and interview were conducted, focus group discussion with the students was conducted in a separate room. Finally, classroom observation was conducted on the basis of arrangements of section and time in accordance with the convenience of the teachers.

### **3.5. Method of Data Analysis**

The data collected in quantitative tools were analyzed quantitatively through tabulations, frequency counts, percentage and mean. The data collected in qualitative tools were analyzed qualitatively in description in words and mixed with the quantitative data, a concurrent strategy (Cresswell, 2003 as cited in Mesfin 2008). Five-point Likert scales ranging from 5 indicating 'always', 4 indicating 'usually', 3 indicating 'sometimes', 2 indicating 'rarely' and 1 indicating 'never' were employed to analyze the data.

The items of the questionnaire were coded as: 'Always' (A) =5; 'Usually' (U) =4; 'Sometimes' (ST) =3; 'Rarely'(R) =2 and 'Never' (N) =1. The mean score of each item was computed in line with the coding numerals. The mean and the grand mean were used to measure the central tendency of responses. The grand mean was calculated by adding all the means of the items divided by the number of the items.

For example, if the frequency of 131 respondents for the item no. one was as:

Items: (A) (U) (ST) (R) (N) Mean

1. 20 25 16 34 36

The mean for this item was computed as:

$$M = (20 \times 5) + (25 \times 4) + (16 \times 3) + (34 \times 2) + (36 \times 1)$$

$$= 100 + 100 + 48 + 68 + 36$$

$$= 352$$

$$M = 2.68$$

When the grand mean values of the items were seen to be less than three, they were interpreted as the respondents' tendency to 'rarely' and 'never'. On the other hand, the mean and grand mean values of three and greater than three were interpreted as 'sometimes', 'usually' and 'always'.

Therefore, the analysis was done relating the computed percentage and mean values and results ranged between scores 5 to 1.

To make the discussion easier, section 'A' of the second part of the students' questionnaire was categorized into the following headings: the use of resources, practice of the language, selection of learning inputs, production of language models and tasks, attempts to understand learning sources, self-management strategies and discovering learning procedures. Section 'B' of the second part of the students' questionnaire was categorized into three headings: cognitive strategies, metacognitive strategies and socio-affective strategies. Similarly, section 'A' of the second part of the teachers' questionnaire was categorized into: cognitive, metacognitive and socio-affective strategies. Section 'B' of the teachers' questionnaire was categorized into one heading: learners' effort.

## **Chapter Four: Interpretation, Analysis and Presentation of Data**

As stated in the previous chapter, the data were collected through questionnaire, interview, focus group discussion and observation. These data gathering tools were employed to complement one to the other and to see the reliability of the responses. The analysis of the results which were collected through these tools had been presented point by point by triangulation below.

The data analysis was divided into two main sections. The first one is the analysis of the students' questionnaire, interview, the data obtained in the focus group discussion with the students and observation. The second part is the analysis of the teachers' questionnaire, interview and observation as presented in the following sections below.

### **4.1. Interpretation, Analysis and Discussion of the Students' Questionnaire, Interview, Focus Group Discussion and Observation**

As mentioned in the preceding chapter, to collect pertinent data for the study 26 close ended items were administered to 131 students (see appendix A). The analysis of each has been presented below.

#### **4.1.1. The Use of Resources**

Learners need to use different resources to develop their English language skills on their own. In contrast to this, results obtained from item 1 and 2 show that the students did not sufficiently use different resources.

Table 1: Students' response related to the use of resources

No.	Items	Always (5)		Usually (4)		Sometimes(3)		Rarely (2)		Never(1)		Mean
		Fre	%	Fre	%	Fre.	%	Fre	%	Fre	%	
1	I use library to develop the language skills.	20	15.26	25	19.08	16	12.21	34	25.95	36	27.48	2.68
2	I seek information from a variety of sources	13	9.92	24	18.32	14	10.68	41	31.29	39	29.77	2.47
Grand mean											2.57	

\*Fre. =frequency

As can be seen from the above table, a considerable number of the students 70(53.43%) did not adequately use library. In addition, a significant number of the students 80(61.06%) did not adequately seek information from a variety of sources.

The data obtained from the interview also show that most of the students did not exert additional efforts to the classroom's discussion to learn the language on their own. From this, it may not be difficult to understand that most of the students did not use library. Besides, most of the students did not seek information from a variety of sources

Similarly, the data obtained from the focus group discussion reveal that most of the students did not use library as they are expected. They reasoned out it as they wanted to use library to develop their language skills. However, as they said, the librarians did not always work in the library. As they explained it further, when the librarians even worked, they did not use library unless they were given assignments. They used only the text book and their teachers' explanation. They explained that they did not search information from different sources. They used only the text book and their teachers' explanation.

As can be seen from the table, the grand mean (2.65) is also less than the average mean (M=3). This possibly shows that most of the students did not adequately use learning resources.

This is inconsistent with what scholars suggest. For example, Atkins, Hailom and Nuru (1995) state that students are expected to seek information from a variety of sources like dictionaries, grammar books, etc. In addition, Wenden (1991) states that seeking information from a variety of sources is an important stage in cognitive strategies which helps learners to learn the language effectively. Moreover, Hoffmann (1999) claims that autonomous learners take the initiative in using the necessary resources to achieve their goals.

#### 4.1.2. The Practice of the Language

Searching for opportunities to practice the language in and outside the classroom plays significant roles to develop the students' English language skills. However, most of the students did not search opportunities to practice the language.

Table 2: Students' response related to practicing the language

No.	Items	Always (5)		Usually (4)		Sometimes(3)		Rarely( 2)		Never(1)		Mean
		Fre	%	Fre	%	Fre.	%	Fre.	%	Fre	%	
3	I practice the language both in and outside the classroom	13	9.92	19	14.5	30	22.9	41	31.29	28	21.37	2.72
4	I search for opportunities to practice the language	18	13.74	14	10.68	33	25.19	45	34.35	21	16.03	2.72
Grand mean											2.72	

\*Fre. =frequency

As can be possible to see from the table, a considerable number of the students 69(52.66%) did not practice the language both in and outside the classroom. Besides, nearly more than half of the students 66(50.38%) were not able to search for opportunities to practice the language.

Similarly, as the data obtained from the interview show, most of the students did not practice the language and search opportunities to practice it Furthermore, in the focus group discussion, most of the students said that they did not practice the language both inside and outside the classroom. They explained that they believed in practicing the language both in and outside the classroom is important, but they did not practice because of lack of the language skills and confidence. In addition, most of the students said that they did not search for opportunities to practice the language. They said that they did not have the necessary skills of the language and self-confidence to practice the language on their own.

As can be seen from the above table, the grand mean of the items (2.72) is less than the average mean (M=3). This possibly shows that the students did not adequately search for opportunities to practice the language and they did not practice the language both in and outside the classroom.

However, scholars like Atkins et al. (1995) describe that students are supposed to seek opportunities to practice the language outside the classroom. As Wenden (1991) also states, autonomous learners search opportunities to communicate in the target language with native speakers whenever possible, and to know acts of communication.

#### **4.1.3. Self-Management Strategies**

Most of the students' response concerning self-management strategies indicate that they were not able to plan, monitor and evaluate their learning on their own.

Table 3: Students' response related to self-management strategies

No.	Items	Always(5)		Usually(4)		Sometimes(3)		Rarely(2)		Never(1)		Mean
		Fre.	%	Fre.	%	Fre.	%	Fre.	%	Fre.	%	
5	I plan my own learning objectives by myself	16	12.21	15	11.45	24	18.32	41	31.29	35	26.72	2.51
6	I monitor my own learning on my own	13	9.92	19	14.5	25	19.08	38	29	36	27.48	2.5
7	I evaluate my own learning outcomes by myself	15	11.45	18	13.74	23	17.55	43	32.82	32	24.42	2.54
Grand mean											2.52	

\*Fre. =frequency

As can be possible to see from the table, most of the students 76(58.01%) were not able to plan their learning objectives on their own. In addition, a considerable number of the students 74(56.48%) did not monitor their learning by themselves. Besides, a significant number of the students 75(57.24%) inadequately evaluated their learning outcomes on their own.

The data obtained from the focus group discussion also support this situation. Most of the students explained that they did not plan their learning. They focused on only on what their teachers explained and directed to them. Moreover, most of them did not monitor their leaning on their own. They also explained that they did not evaluate their learning outcomes on their own.

As can be seen from the above table, the grand mean (2.52) is again less than the average mean (M=3). This may show that most of the students did not plan their learning objectives, monitor their own learning and evaluate their learning outcomes by themselves.

However, as Wenden (1991) explains that planning one's own learning is one of the self-management strategies that help learners to learn the language. As Wenden claims, learners refer to the difficulties they experienced in the language and when they recognize that they cannot express their ideas or the language and when they recognize that they cannot express their ideas or understand what others said: they had not acquired practical vocabulary, they may not express themselves appropriately (in the right way), when they could not understand especially television and strange idioms; when monitoring their efforts, learners tune into or become aware of on line difficulties in processing. Wenden also describes that when learners evaluate their learning, they consider the effect of a specific effort to learn or use. In addition, Cotterall (1995) states that autonomous learners can take responsibility through setting, their own objectives, and plan practice opportunities, or evaluate their progress.

#### 4.1.4. The Selection of Learning Inputs

The data obtained from the students show that most of them did not select materials and topics which are relevant to their learning by themselves.

Table 4: Students' response related to the selection of learning inputs.

No.	Items	Always (5)		Usually(4)		Sometimes(3)		Rarely(2)		Never (1)		Mean
		Fre.	%	Fre.	%	Fre.	%	Fre.	%	Fre.	%	
8	I select my own relevant materials to develop the language skills	14	10.68	11	8.39	23	17.55	45	34.35	38	29	2.37
9	I select topics to be learned by myself	21	16.03	25	19.08	12	9.16	34	25.95	39	29.77	2.65
Grand mean											2.51	

\*Fre. =frequency

As can be observed from the above table, most of the students 83(63.35%) did not select their own learning materials. Moreover, a considerable number of the students 73(55.72%) did not select their own topics by themselves to develop their language skills.

In supporting this, the data gathered in the focus group discussion indicate that most of the students did not select learning materials. They learn only from the materials provided by their teachers. They noted that they did not select topics to develop their own language skills. They learned only topics provided by the text book and their teachers. Similarly, in the observed classrooms, they were not seen in selecting and presenting their own materials which are relevant to their learning.

As can be seen from the above table, the grand mean (2.51) is also less than the average mean (M=3). This may indicate that learners did not select their own relevant materials and topics to develop their language skills.

This tends to oppose to what scholars point out. For example, Tudor (1993) asserts that students can provide materials directly relevant to their learning goals choose materials and select topics which are relevant to their learning. In addition, as Nunan, Lai and Keobke (1999) describe, autonomy is fostered when learners are given opportunities to select content and learning tasks. In addition, Tudor (1993) asserts that activity selection and organization, and choice of materials can be given to the students (students can provide materials directly relevant to their learning goals).

#### **4.1.5. The Production of Language Models and Tasks**

The results obtained from the students indicate that most of them do not produce the target language rather than merely reproducing the language of the teacher or the text book, and did not find their own language data and create their own learning tasks.

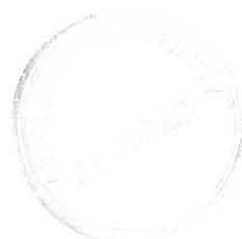


Table 5: Students' response regarding the production of language patterns and tasks

No.	Items	always (5)		Usually(4)		Sometimes(3)		Rarely(2)		Never (1)		Mean
		Fre.	%	Fre.	%	Fre.	%	Fre.	%	Fre	%	
10	I try to produce the target language rather than merely reproducing the language models provided by the teacher or the text book	11	8.39	17	12.97	30	22.9	43	32.82	30	22.9	2.51
11	I find my own language data and create my own learning tasks.	1	0.76	20	15.26	15	11.45	44	33.58	51	38.93	2.05
Grand mean											2.28	

\*Fre. =frequency

As can be vividly seen from the above table, a considerable number of the students 73(55.72%) did not produce the target language. Moreover, a significant number of the students 95(72.49%) did not find their own language data and create their own learning tasks.

In supporting this, most of the students' response in the focus group discussion indicates that they did not produce the target language model rather they use the language of the teachers and the text book. As long as most of the students in the interview said that they did not exert additional efforts to the classroom's discussion, it seems possible to understand that they did not find their own language data and create own tasks. In addition, in the focus group discussion, most of the students explained that unless their teachers gave them tasks, they did not find their own data and create their own tasks.

The grand mean (2.28) is less than the average mean (M=3). This possibly shows that most of the students did not produce the language; instead they merely reproduce the language of the teacher or the text book, and did not find their own language data and create their own learning tasks.

However, as Nunan, Lai and Keobke (1999) describe, autonomy is fostered when learners are involved to find their own language data and create their own learning tasks, and actively involved in productiveness of the target language rather than merely reproducing language models provided by the teacher or the text book.

#### 4.1.6. Attempts to Understand Learning Sources

Most of the students' response shows that they did not adequately try to understand learning sources, solve learning problems and ask questions for clarification.

Table 6: Students' response concerning attempts to understand learning sources

No.	Items	always (5)		Usually(4)		Sometimes(3)		Rarely(2)		Never (1)		Mean
		Fr	%	Fr	%	Fre.	%	Fre	%	Fre	%	
12	I try to understand different sources by	21	16.03	20	15.26	34	25.95	42	32.06	14	10.68	2.93
13	I solve learning problems by myself	21	16.03	25	19.08	12	9.16	34	25.95	39	29.77	2.65
14	I ask questions to different persons for clarification	18	13.74	16	12.21	28	21.37	45	34.35	24	18.32	2.68
Grand mean											2.75	

\*Fre. =frequency

As can be possible to see in the table, although 75(57.24%) of the students tried to understand different learning sources by themselves, a considerable number of the students 74(55.72%) and 67(52.67%) did not solve learning problems by themselves and ask questions for clarification respectively.

Even though most of them said that they tried to understand learning sources on their own, they need further explanation of their teachers as they explained it in the focus group discussion. They did not depend on their ability to understand learning sources on their own. Furthermore, they were not able to solve learning problems on their own. As long as most of the students in the interview also noted that they did not exert additional efforts to the classrooms' discussion, it may not be difficult to deduce that most of the students did not ask questions to different persons for clarification outside the classroom. Similarly, in the observed classes, most of the students were not sufficiently seen in asking questions to their teachers and friends.

As can be seen from the above table, the grand mean of the items (2.77) is also less than the average mean (M=3). This may possibly show that most of the students did not adequately attempt to understand different learning sources by themselves; they did not ask questions for clarification and solved learning problems on their own.

However, students are supposed to understand different sources by themselves. In this regard, Wenden (1991) suggest that understanding different sources on one's own is important in learning the English language. They are also supposed to solve learning problems by themselves since their teachers cannot be always available to help them. As Cohen (1999) describes, asking questions for clarification is one of the social strategies that helps learners to understand clearly.

#### 4.1.7. Discovering Learning procedures

Most of the students' response reveals that they tended not to discover learning procedures adequately on their own.

Table 7: Students' response concerning discovering learning procedures

No.	Item	Always (5)		Usually(4)		Sometimes(3)		Rarely(2)		Never(1)		Mean
		Fre	%	Fre.	%	Fre.	%	Fre.	%	Fre	%	
15	I discover learning procedures by myself	24	18.32	17	12.97	24	18.32	35	26.71	31	23.66	2.75

\*Fre. =frequency

Item 15 was asked to know if the students discover learning procedures by themselves. As can be seen from the above table, a little more than half of the students 66(50.37%) were not able to discover learning procedures by themselves.

As long as most of the students in the interview noted that they did not exert additional efforts to the classrooms' discussion, it may not be difficult to deduce that most of the students did not discover learning procedures on their own. In addition, in the observed classes, the students were not observed in selecting learning methods.

On the other hand, according to Tudor (1993), every teaching situation involves the interaction between a given teaching methods, the learners and the wider socio-cultural context of learning. Teaching method needs thus to be selected not only based on what seems theoretically plausible, but also on the basis of experience, personality and expectations of the learners involved.

#### **4.1.8. Cognitive strategies**

Most of the students' responses indicate that a considerable number of teachers did not adequately train learners the cognitive strategies.

Table 8: Students' response regarding cognitive strategies

No.	Items	Always (5)		Usually(4)		Sometimes (3)		Rarely(2)		Never(1)		Mean
		Fre.	%	Fre	%	Fre	%	Fre	%	Fre	%	
16	The teacher trains us how to select information from a variety of sources	11	8.39	27	20.61	20	15.26	35	26.71	38	29	2.52
17	The teacher trains us how to comprehend information	21	16.03	32	24.42	35	27.71	25	19.08	18	13.74	3.09
18	The teacher trains us how to store learned information	11	8.39	21	16.03	22	16.79	40	30.53	37	28.24	2.45
19	The teacher trains us how to retrieve learned information	12	9.16	21	16.03	27	20.61	39	29.77	32	24.42	2.55
Grand mean											2.65	

\*Fre. =frequency

As can be depicted from the above table, 73(55.71%) of the students responded that their teachers did not train them how to select information. In addition, 88(68.16%) of the students noted that their teachers trained them how to comprehend information. Besides, a significant number 77(58.77%) of the students noted that their teachers 'rarely' and 'never' trained them how to store information. Moreover, 71(54.19%) of the students noted that their teachers did not train them how to retrieve information.

In supporting this, the data obtained from the interview and focus group discussion reveals that the teachers did not train learners how to select information from a variety of sources. From the interview, they noted that their teachers trained them how to understand information. They said that their teachers taught them how to comprehend passages in the textbook, the meanings of unfamiliar

words, etc. Similarly, in the focus group discussion, most of the students said that teachers taught them how to understand information by giving comprehension questions and techniques of understanding vocabulary. However, the teachers did not train learners how to store and retrieve learned information.

In the observed classes, teachers were not seen while training their students how to select information from a variety of sources. They were not seen in training them how to comprehend information. This may reveal that, teachers trained learners how to understand only written texts. Teachers were not also observed in training the students how to select, store and learned information.

As can be seen from the above table, the grand mean (2.65) of the items is less than the average mean ( $M=3$ ). This possibly shows that most of the teachers did not adequately train learners the cognitive strategies.

This contradicts to what scholars suggest. For example, Wenden (1991) asserts that selecting information from a variety of sources is one element of learning strategies training to make learners autonomous. As Wenden also states, training learners how to comprehend information is one of the cognitive strategies which need to be included in plans to foster autonomy. Training learners how to store learned information is another element of the cognitive strategies which need to be included in plans to foster autonomy. Training learners how to retrieve learned information is also one of the cognitive strategies which need to be incorporated in plans to foster autonomy.

#### **4.1.9. Metacognitive strategies**

The students' response regarding metacognitive strategies reveals that most of the teachers did not adequately train learners how to plan, monitor and evaluate their learning on their own.

Table 9: Students' response concerning metacognitive strategies

No.	Items	Always (5)		Usually(4)		Sometimes(3)		Rarely(2)		Never(1)		Mean
		Fre.	Mean	Fre.	Mean	Fre.	Mean	Fre.	Mean	Fre.	Mean	
20	The teacher trains us how to plan learning objectives on our own	17	12.97	20	15.26	16	12.21	43	32.82	35	26.71	2.54
21	The teacher trains us how to monitor our efforts to learn on our own	15	11.45	26	19.84	20	15.26	36	27.48	34	25.95	2.63
22	The teacher trains us how to evaluate the aspect of a specific effort to learn on our own	16	12.21	33	25.19	14	10.68	28	21.37	40	30.53	2.67
Grand mean											2.67	

\*Fre. =frequency

As can be depicted from the above table, a considerable number of the students 78(59.53%) noted that their teachers 'rarely' and 'never' trained them how to plan their learning objectives on their own. In addition, most of the students 70(53.43%) responded that their teachers 'rarely' and 'never' trained them how to monitor their learning on their own. Furthermore, most of the students 68(51.9%) noted that their teachers did not train them how to evaluate their learning outcomes by themselves.

Similarly, the data collected from the interview and focus group discussion show the same situation. Besides, in the observed classes, teachers were not observed in training the learners how to plan, monitor and evaluate their learning.

As can be seen from the above table, the grand mean (2.67) is also less than the average mean. This possibly indicates that the teachers did not adequately train the learners the metacognitive strategies

Contrary to this, Wenden (1991) states that learners need to learn how to plan learning objectives, monitor and evaluate their learning on their own. In addition, Nunan, Lai and Keobke (1999) describe, learner autonomy is fostered, when learners are encouraged to evaluate their own progress. In this regard, as Scharle and Szabo (2000) explain, when learners are told to focus on the process of their learning (rather than outcome) they are helped to consciously examine their own contribution to their leaning such an awareness of the difference that their efforts can make is an essential first step to the development of a responsible attitude. Self-evaluation requires the learners to go even further, they have it step into the shoes of the teachers and judge their own work as objectively as they can. By doing so, they can formulate an idea of their level of proficiency, discover weak and strong points and plan the directions of progress; setting targets for themselves, they are more likely to consider these targets on their own and feel responsible for reaching them. Besides, as Nunan, Lai and Keobke (1999) describe, autonomy is fostered when learners are initiated to self-monitor and self-assess, to reflect critically on their learning process.

#### **4.1.10. Socio-Affective Strategies**

The students' response reveals that most of the teachers did not encourage and motivate learners to organize learning activities by themselves and to build positive attitude towards their responsibility. In addition, the students were not adequately encouraged to ask questions. However, most of the teachers encouraged the learners to build self-confidence.

Table 10: Students' response related to socio-affective strategies

No.	Items	Always(5)		Usually(4)		Sometimes(3)		Rarely(2)		Never(1)		Mean
		Fre.	%	Fre	%	Fre.	%	Fre.	%	Fre.	%	
23	The teacher encourages us to develop self-confidence on our ability to learn the language	25	19.08	35	26.71	30	22.9	31	23.66	10	7.63	3.25
24	The teacher encourages us to develop positive towards our responsibility to learn the language on our own	18	13.74	18	13.74	29	22.13	34	25.95	32	24.42	2.66
25	The teacher motivates us to organize learning activities on our own	17	12.97	17	12.97	17	12.97	34	25.95	46	35.11	2.42
26	The teacher encourages us to ask questions for clarification	18	13.74	22	16.79	19	14.5	38	29	34	25.95	2.63
Grand mean											2.74	

\*Fre. =frequency

As can be seen from the above table, 35(26.71%) of the students noted that their teachers usually encouraged them to develop self-confidence on their ability to learn the language. Moreover,

25(19.08%) and 30(22.9%) of the students said that their teachers 'always' and 'sometimes' encouraged them respectively. However, most of the students 66(50.37%) noted that their teachers 'rarely' and 'never' encouraged them to develop positive attitude towards their responsibility. Moreover, a considerable number of the students 70(61.06%) noted that their teachers 'never' and 'rarely' motivated them to organize learning activities on their own. Furthermore, most of the students 38(29%) and 34(25.95%) said that the teachers 'rarely' and 'never' initiated them to ask questions respectively.

Most of the students' response in the interview and focus group discussion reveal that their teachers encouraged them to develop self-confidence. In the focus group discussion, they said that their teachers tried to develop the students' self-confidence by giving advice and appreciating them when they answered questions. However, the teachers did not encourage the learners to develop positive attitude towards their responsibility to learn the language on their own. Similarly, as the data obtained from the focus group discussion show the teachers did not motivate learners to organize learning activities on their own, and to ask questions for clarification.

In the observed classes, the teachers were not seen in encouraging the students to develop positive attitude to learn the language on their own, and self-confidence on their ability to learn the language by themselves. In addition, they did not motivate learners to organize learning activities on their own, and to ask questions for clarification.

The grand mean (2.74) is also less than the average mean. This may indicate that most of the teachers did not encourage learners to develop or learn the socio-affective strategies.

This is inconsistent with the beliefs of scholars. For example, Wenden (1991) asserts that learner attitude towards autonomy is another type of learner training content to be encompassed in plans to promote autonomy. Learners who have positive attitude can learn successfully. Learners need to probe beyond their definition of what it means to learn a language to decide whether they feel they should take on responsibility for their learning and are capable of doing so. Two attitudes that are crucial to learner autonomy are attitudes that learners hold about their role in the language learning process and their capability as learners. As Wenden further claims, autonomous learners are self-

confident learners. They believe in their capability to learn and to self-direct or manage their learning. This is a type of learner training content that need to be embraced in plans to promote learner autonomy. As Crabbe (1999) also states, learners need to be motivated to organize learning activities by themselves.

Generally, learning strategies serve as instruments to improve one's own language competence, and learners can really only be held responsible for their competence if they are aware of these instruments. Therefore, they need to be trained the varieties of strategies, assisted to find out what works for them, and helped to discover how and when to use these strategies (Scharle and Szabo 2000). As Wenden (1991) describes, learning strategies are a type of learner training content that need to be embraced in plans to promote learner autonomy.

## 4.2. Interpretation, Analysis and Discussion of the Teachers' Questionnaire, Interview and Observation

As already mentioned in the previous chapter, to conduct the study, teachers' questionnaire, teachers' interview as well as observation were employed to see the reliability of the results obtained from students' questionnaire, interview and focus group discussion. The questionnaire was distributed to six teachers. Similarly, the interview was administered to these teachers. The analysis of the results obtained by the above mentioned tools has been presented below.

### 4.2.1. Cognitive strategies

The data obtained regarding cognitive strategies show that most of the teachers trained the learners how to comprehend information. However, they did not adequately train the learners how to select, store and retrieve information.

Table 11: Teachers' response concerning cognitive strategies

No.	Items	Always (5)	Usually (4)	Sometimes (3)	Rarely (2)	Never (1)	Mean
		Fre.	Fre.	Fre.	Fre.	Fre.	
1	I train learners how to select information from a variety of sources	1	1	-	2	2	2.5
2	I train learners how to comprehend information	3	2	1	-	-	4.33
3	I train learners	1	1	1	2	1	2.83

	how to store learned information						
4	I train learners how to retrieve learned information	-	1	1	2	2	2.16
Grand mean							2.95

\*Fre. =frequency

As can be possible to see from the above table, most of the teachers (four) 'rarely' and 'never' trained the learners respectively. Moreover, nearly all of the teachers 'always' and 'usually' trained the learners how to understand information. Furthermore, half of teachers 'never' and 'rarely' trained the learners how to store information. Besides, four of the teachers rarely trained the learners how to retrieve information.

As long as the data gathered from the interview show that most of the teachers did not train the learners how to learn the language on their own due to shortage of time, it may not be difficult to infer that most of the teachers did not train the learners how to select information from a variety of sources. As the data obtained from the interview show they trained the learners how to understand unfamiliar words, the meaning of a passage, etc. However, they were not able to train learners how to store and retrieve information. They pointed out that it is not possible to include other points to the lesson out of the textbook. Most of the teachers explained that it is difficult even to cover the newly published textbook let alone teaching the students other than the textbook.

In the observed classes, the teachers were not observed in training learners how to select, understand, store and retrieve information. They were observed in teaching and explaining only the concept of the contents under discussion.

As can be possible from the above table, the grand mean of the items (2.95) is less than the average mean (M=3). This may suggest that teachers did not adequately train learners the cognitive strategies.

This is inconsistent with scholars' beliefs. For example, Wenden (1991) states that learners should be trained how to select, store and retrieve information. When learners learn such strategies, they can depend on themselves rather than on others. Therefore, Tudor (1993) states that, teachers are supposed to train learners such practices.

#### 4.2.2. Metacognitive strategies

Most of the teachers' response regarding metacognitive strategies indicates that they did not train the learners how to plan, monitor and evaluate their learning.

Table 12: Teachers' response concerning metacognitive strategies

No.	Items	Always (5)	Usually (4)	Sometimes(3)	Rarely(2)	Never	Mean
		Fre.	Fre.	Fre.	Fre.	Fre.	
5	I train learners how to plan learning objective on their own	-	1	-	2	3	1.83
6	I train learners to how monitor their learning on their own	-	2	-	3	1	2.5
7	I train learners how to evaluate their learning out comes on their own	1	-	1	2	2	2.33
Grand mean							2.22

\*Fre. =frequency

As can be depicted from the above table, nearly all of the teachers (five) 'never' and 'rarely' trained the learners how to plan their learning objectives. In addition, four of the teachers 'rarely' and 'never' trained the learners how to monitor their learning. Furthermore, four teachers did not train the learners how to evaluate their learning.

The data obtained from the interview also indicate that most of the teachers did not train the learners out of the text book; they teach on the basis of what has already been planned in the text book.

In supporting this, during observation, the teachers were not also seen in training the learners how to plan, monitor and evaluate their learning on their own. As can be possible to notice from the above table, the grand mean (2.22) is less than the average mean ( $M=3$ ). This possibly shows that most of the teachers did not adequately train the learners the metacognitive strategies. However, the literature reveals that learning will be meaningful and valid when learners learn how to plan, monitor and evaluate their learning outcomes on their own.

### 4.2.3. Socio-Affective strategies

Table 13: Teachers' response related to socio-affective strategies

No.	Items	Always(5)	Usually(4)	Sometimes(3)	Rarely(2)	Never(1)	Mean
8	I encourage learners to develop self-confidence on their ability to learn the language on their own	1	1	2	1	1	3
9	I encourage learners to develop positive towards their responsibility to learn the language on their own	-	1	3	2	-	2.83
10	I motivate learners to organize learning activities on their own	-	-	1	4	1	2
11	I initiate learners to ask questions for clarification	2	2	1	1	-	3.83
Grand mean							2.91

\*Fre. =frequency

As can be seen from the above table, four teachers encouraged the learners to build self-confidence on their ability to learn the language on their own. Furthermore, some of the teachers sometimes encouraged the learners to develop positive attitude towards their ability to learn the language on their own. In addition, most of the teachers (five) did not motivate the learners to organize learning activities on their own. However, most of the teachers (four) 'always' and 'usually' initiated the learners to ask questions for clarification.

The teachers' response from the interview shows that most of them encouraged the learners to develop self-confidence on their ability to learn the language on their own by involving them in presenting lessons, and giving advice and appreciation. Some of the teachers' response shows that they encouraged the learners to develop positive attitude towards their responsibility to learn the language on their own to some extent. They reasoned out that they did not have sufficient time to talk about attitude sufficiently.

However, in the observed classes, the teachers were not seen in encouraging the learners to develop self-confidence on their ability to learn the language on their own. Similarly, they were not observed in encouraging the learners to develop positive attitude towards their responsibility to learn the language on their own, they motivating the learners to organize learning activities on their own, and initiating learners to ask questions for clarification. Instead, they were observed in initiating the learners to answer questions raised by the teachers themselves.

The grand mean (2.91) of the items is less than the average mean ( $M=3$ ) which may show that most of the teachers did not adequately encourage the learners to develop the socio-affective strategies.

However, according to Wenden (1991), learners should be encouraged to develop self-confidence on their ability to learn the language on their own. As Wenden claims, those students who have positive attitude towards their responsibility to learn the language on their own and the target language will be more successful in their language learning. Therefore, teachers should contribute their part in encouraging learners to develop such responsibility. In addition, Crabbe (1999) asserts that learners need to be motivated to organize learning activities by themselves.

#### 4.2.4. Learners' Effort

Most of the teachers' response regarding learners' effort shows that the learners did not adequately participate actively in choice of materials, methodology and topics. In addition, learners did not adequately solve learning problems on their own, and ask question for clarification. Finally, they did not produce the target language rather than merely reproducing the language of the text book and the teachers.

Table 14: Teachers' response concerning students' effort

No.	Items	Always (5)	Usually (4)	Sometimes(3)	Rarely(2)	Never (1)	Mean
		Fre.	Fre.	Fre.	Fre.	Fre.	
12	Learners solve learning problems by themselves	-	1	2	1	2	2.33
13	Learners ask questions for clarification	1	-	2	3	-	2.83
14	Learners produce the target language rather than merely reproducing the language of the text book and the teacher	-	1	2	3	-	2.66
15	Learners involve in choosing method of learning	-	-	-	1	5	1.83



16	Learners involve in choosing learning materials	-	1	-	2	3	2.16
17	Learners involves in topic selection to be learned	-	-	-	1	5	1.16
Grand mean							2

\*Fre. =frequency

As can be seen from the above table, half of (three) the teachers said that the learners never solved learning problems by themselves. In addition, half of the teachers (three) noted that the students rarely asked questions for clarification. Besides, half of the teachers (three) responded that the students rarely produced the target language. All of the teachers responded that the learners 'rarely' and 'never' involved in selecting method of teaching. Five of the teachers responded that the learners 'never' and 'rarely' involved in material selection. In addition, five of the teachers noted that the learners 'rarely' and 'never' involved in material selection. Besides, all of the teachers noted that the students 'never' and 'rarely' involved in topic selection to be learned.

Likewise, most of the teachers' response in the interview shows that the students did not solve learning problems by themselves. They said that the students waited for only the teachers to do everything. The students did not also involve in choosing method of teaching. They said that they taught based on the text book and their own teaching experience. Besides, learners were not able to involve in topic and material selection.

In supporting this, in observed classes, only few students were seen in asking questions for clarification though it was not satisfactory. Learners were not also observed in selecting their own learning materials and presenting to the class. They were not seen in selecting method of learning. In addition, the learners were not seen in selecting topics to be learned.

As can be seen from the above table, the grand mean of the items (2) is less than the average mean (M=3). This possibly reveals that the learners' effort in learning the language is not satisfactory.

However, as Nunan, Lai and Keobke (1999) describe, autonomy is fostered when learners are encouraged to find their own language data and create their own learning tasks, and actively involved in productiveness of the target language rather than merely reproducing language models provided by the teacher or the text book.

## **Chapter Five: Summary of the Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations**

### **5.1. Summary of the Findings**

As already mentioned in the preceding chapters, the objectives of this study were to find out the efforts of learners to develop their English language skills and the role of teachers in helping learners how to learn. This section, therefore, summarizes the findings of these objectives.

Most of the students' response shows that they did not use library. Furthermore, it was found that they did not adequately search information from a variety of sources. In addition, they did not search for opportunities to practice the language. Besides, most of them did not adequately practice the language both in and outside the classroom.

As the data obtained from the students reveal, they did not adequately plan their learning objectives on their own. In addition, they did not monitor their learning by themselves. Furthermore, it was found that learners did not evaluate their own learning by themselves.

Most of the students' response reveals that they did not select materials which are relevant to their learning. Besides, they did not adequately select topics to be learned on their own.

As the data gathered from the students reveal, they did not adequately produce the target language model rather they reproduce the language of the teacher and the textbook. Furthermore, they did not find their own language data and create own tasks.

Most of the students' response indicates that they did not solve learning problems by themselves. In addition, they did not adequately ask questions to different persons for clarification. Besides, although the students tried to understand different sources on their own, they also need further explanation of the teachers.

As the data obtained from the students show, most of them did not discover learning procedures on their own. They depend only on the teachers' way of explanation.

As the data obtained from the students reveal, even though most of the teachers trained learners how to understand only written texts, they did not adequately train learners the cognitive strategies: how to select information from a variety of sources, store learned information and retrieve learned data.

As the data from students indicate, most of the teachers did not adequately train learners the metacognitive strategies. More specifically, the teachers did not train learners how to plan, monitor and evaluate their learning on their own.

As the data obtained from the students show, although most of the teachers encouraged the learners to develop self-confidence on their ability to learn the language, they did not adequately encourage learners to develop positive attitude towards their responsibility to learn the language on their own. In addition, teachers did not motivate learners to organize learning activities on their own, and initiate learners to ask questions to different persons for clarification.

As the data obtained from the teachers reveal, even though most of the teachers trained learners how to understand only written texts by themselves, they did not adequately train the learners the cognitive strategies. More specifically, the teachers did not train learners how to select, store and retrieve information.

Most of the teachers' response reveals that they did not adequately train the learners the metacognitive strategies. That is to mean that they were not able to adequately train learners to plan their leaning objectives, monitor their leaning and evaluate their leaning outcomes.

As the data obtained from the teachers show, they did not encourage the learners to develop positive attitude towards their responsibility to learn the language on their own. Furthermore, most of the teachers did not motivate the learners to organize learning activities on their own. Most of the teachers did not also encourage the learners to ask questions for clarification. On the other hand, most of the teachers encouraged the learners to develop self-confidence on their own ability.

As the data obtained from the teachers show, most of the students did not adequately solve learning problems by themselves, ask questions for clarification, select materials and topics, produce the

language and find their own language data and create own tasks, and they did not involve in selection of method of learning.

## **5.2. Conclusions**

On the basis of the above findings, the following conclusion remarks can be drawn. Generally, it would seem reasonable to conclude that the practice of learner autonomy in learning English is unsatisfactory.

More specifically, the learners did not adequately exert their individual efforts to develop their English language skills. This is to mean that, they did not sufficiently search opportunities to practice the language. In addition, it was found that they did not adequately practice the language both in and outside the classroom. Furthermore, they were not also able to use library. It was also found that they did not adequately select learning materials and topics on their own. Besides, they were not able to plan their learning objectives on their own. It was also found that they did not monitor their learning on their own. They were not also able to evaluate their learning outcomes by themselves. Moreover, they did not sufficiently produce the target language. Besides, they did not find their own language data and create their own tasks. They were not also able to discover learning procedures by themselves. In addition, they did not adequately solve learning problems by themselves. It was also found that they did not adequately try to understand learning sources on their own. Finally, they were not able to adequately ask questions to different persons for clarification.

Although most of the teachers trained learners how to understand only written texts, they did not adequately train the learners the how to select, store and retrieve information. In addition, the teachers did not train learners how to plan, monitor and evaluate their learning on their own. Finally, the teachers did not motivate learners to organize learning activities by themselves, initiate learners to ask questions to different persons for clarification and encourage learners to develop positive attitude towards their responsibility to learn the language on their own.

### 5.3. Recommendations

Based on the above findings, the following recommendations were made:

- Learners should practice the language both in and outside the classroom;
- Learners need to select learning inputs by themselves;
- Learners need to plan, monitor and evaluate their learning on their own;
- Learners need to discover their own learning procedures;
- Learners need to produce the target language pattern rather than merely reproducing the language of the teacher and the textbook;
- Learners need to find their own language data and create own tasks;
- Learners need to solve learning problems on their own;
- Learners should use library and other learning sources;
- Teachers need to train learners the cognitive strategies;
- Teachers should train learners the metacognitive strategies;
- Teachers should encourage learners to develop the socio-affective strategies;
- Teachers need to involve learners in selection of learning materials, topics and methodologies;
- Further researches seem need to be conducted to investigate the hindering factors of the practice of learner autonomy in learning the English language.

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International.

**Appendix A**  
**Students' Questionnaire**  
**Addis Ababa University**  
**College of Social Science**  
**Faculty of Language Studies**  
**Department of English**

**Questionnaire to be completed by students**

Dear students, I am studying the practice of learner autonomy in learning English language at your school. The title of the study is "An Exploration of the Practice of Learner Autonomy in Learning English language at Grade 12: Bahir Dar Higher Preparatory Secondary School in Focus". Therefore, I kindly request you to provide your honest response to this questionnaire. The questionnaire is designed to find out the efforts you do to learn the English language on your own and the role of teachers in helping you practice learning the language on your own. The information is only for the study and the result will be reported anonymously. Therefore, you are not supposed to write your names.

Your cooperation is highly appreciated.

Thank you in advance.

**Part I: Personal Information**

Instruction: please give information about yourself for each of the following items by writing on the blank spaces and putting a tick mark (✓) in the appropriate box where necessary.

1. Name of the school \_\_\_\_\_
2. Grade \_\_\_\_\_
3. Section \_\_\_\_\_
4. Age: A) Below 15  B) 15-20  C) Above 25
5. Sex: A) Male  B) Female
6. Field of study: A) Natural science  B) Social Science

## Part II: Section 'A': Learners' Efforts to Learn English Language on their Own

Instruction: by using the scales provided below, indicate what you do in learning English by your-self by putting a tick mark (√) on the space provided under the column of your choice.

No	Items	Always	Usually	Someti mes	Rarely	Never
1	I search for opportunities to practice the language					
2	I choose my own relevant materials to develop the language skills					
3	I use library to develop the language skills					
4	I practice the language both in and outside the classroom					
5	I seek information from a variety of sources					
6	I plan my own learning objectives by myself					
7	I monitor my own learning on my own					
8	I evaluate learning outcomes by myself					
9	I find my own language data and create my own learning tasks					
10	I try to produce the target language rather than merely reproducing the language models provided by the teacher or the textbook.					

11	I solve learning problems by myself					
12	I ask questions to different persons for clarification.					
13	I try to understand different sources by myself					
14	I select topics to be learned by myself					
15	I discover learning procedures by myself					

**Section ‘B’: the Role of Teachers in Helping Learners Learn how to Learn**

Instruction: by using the scales provided below, indicate the role of teachers in helping you learn English on your own by putting a tick mark (√) on the space provided under the column of your choice.

No	Item	Always	Usually	Sometime s	Rarely	Never
16	The teacher trains us how to select information from different sources.					
17	The teacher trains us how to comprehend information					
18	The teacher trains us how to store learned information					
19	The teacher trains us how to retrieve learned information					
20	The teacher trains us how to plan learning objectives					
21	The teacher trains us how to monitor our efforts to learn the					

	language on our own					
22	The teacher trains us how to evaluate on the effect of specific effort to learn the language on our own					
23	The teacher encourages us to develop self-confidence on our ability to learn the language on our own					
24	The teacher initiates us to ask questions for clarification					
25	The teacher motivates us to organize learning activities on our own					
26	The teacher encourages us to develop positive attitude towards our responsibility to learn the language					

## Appendix B

### Teachers' Questionnaire

Addis Ababa University

College of Social Science

Faculty of Language Studies

Department of English

#### Questionnaire to be Completed by the Teachers

Dear teachers, I am studying the practice of learner autonomy in learning English language at your school. The title of the study is "an exploration of the practice of learner autonomy in learning English language at grade 12: Bahir Dar Higher Preparatory Secondary school in focus." The questionnaire is designed to find out the efforts learners do to learn English on their own and your role in helping learners learn the language on their own.

Therefore, I kindly request you to provide your honest response to this questionnaire. The information is only for the study and the result will be reported anonymously. Therefore, you are not supposed to write your names.

Your cooperation is highly appreciated.

Thank you in advance.

#### Part I: Personal Information

Instruction: By using the categories provided below, indicate your choice about yourself by filling in the space provided and by putting a tick mark (√) in the box of your choice.

1. Name of the school-----
2. Age : A) Below 20  B) 20-30  C) 31-40  D) above 40
3. Sex: A) Male  Female
4. Teaching experience: A) below 5 years  B) 5-10   
C) 11-15  D) above 15
5. Qualification: A) Diploma  B) Degree  C) Master's Degree

**Part II: Section ‘A’: the Role of Teachers in Helping Learners Learn how to Learn.**

Instruction: By using the scales provided below indicate your roles in helping learners learn on their own by putting a tick mark (√) on the space provided under the column of your choice.

No	Items	Always	Usually	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
1	I encourage learners to develop self-confidence on their ability in learning English on their own					
2	I motivate learners to organize learning activities by themselves					
3	I initiate learners to develop positive attitude towards their responsibility to learn the target language on their own					
4	I encourage learners to ask questions different persons for clarification					
5	I train learners how to comprehend information					
6	I train learners how to store learned information					
7	I train learners how to retrieve learned information					
8	I train learners how to select information from a variety of sources					
9	I train learners how to plan learning objectives by themselves					

10	I train learners how to monitor their learning by themselves					
11	I train learners how to evaluate their learning outcomes by themselves					

**Section ‘B’: Learners’ Effort to Develop their English Language Skills by themselves**

Instruction: By using the scales provided below, indicate learners’ effort in learning English by themselves by putting a tick mark (√) on the space provided.

No.	Items	Always	Usually	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
12	Learners solve learning problems by themselves					
13	Learners ask questions for clarification					
14	Learners produce the target language rather than merely reproducing the language of teachers and the text book					
15	Learners involve in choosing method of learning					
16	Learners involve in choosing learning materials					
17	Learners involve in topic selection to be learned					

## **Appendix C**

### **Students' Interview**

1. Do you exert additional efforts to the classroom's discussion to learn the English language on your own? Why?
2. Does your teacher train you how do you learn the language on your own? Does he encourage you to develop self-confidence on your ability and positive attitude towards your responsibility to learn the language on your own? How?
3. Do you involve in deciding on the different activities of learning? Why?

## **Appendix D**

### **Teachers' Interview**

1. Do you train your students how do they learn the language on their own? Do you encourage learners to develop self-confidence on their ability and positive attitude towards their responsibility to learn the language on their own? Why? How?
2. Do you involve learners in deciding on the different activities of language learning? Why?
3. How do you comment your own roles in helping learners learn on their own and learners' individual effort to learn the language on their own?

## **Appendix E**

### **Students' Focus Group Discussion Guide Questions**

1. Do you search opportunities to practice the language both in and outside the classroom?
2. Do you try to learn the language by searching different learning sources and using library?
3. Do you plan, monitor and evaluate your learning on your own?
4. Do you try to understand different learning sources and solve learning problems on your own?
5. Do you choose your own topics and materials to be learned?
6. Do you produce the target language model and create your own tasks?
7. Does your teacher encourage you to develop self-confidence on your ability and positive attitude towards your responsibility to learn the language on your own? How?
8. Does your teacher train you how to learn the language on your own?
9. Does your teacher train you how to plan, monitor and evaluate your learning on your own?
10. Does your teacher motivate you to organize learning activities on your own and ask questions to different persons for clarification?

**Appendix F**  
**Observation Checklist**

No	Activities	Time					
		Ob.1		Ob.2		Ob.3	
		Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
1.	Teachers motivate learners to organize learning activities on their own						
2	Teachers initiate learners to develop self-confidence in learning English on their own						
3	Teachers initiate learners to develop positive attitude towards their ability to learn the target language						
4	Teachers train learners how to comprehend information						
5	Teachers train learners how to retrieve learned information						
6	Teachers train learners how to store learned information						
7	Teachers train learners how to select information from a variety of sources						
8	Teachers train learners how to plan their learning objectives						
9	Teachers train learners how to monitor their learning						
10	Teachers train learners how to evaluate their learning outcomes						
11	Teachers encourage learners to ask questions						
12	Learners ask questions to their friends and teachers for clarification						
13	Learners involve in choosing learning materials						

14	Learners involve in choosing method of teaching						
15	Learners involve in topic selection						
16	Learners actively participate in the learning and teaching process						

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If any other observed behaviors

## Appendix G

### Results of the Students' Interview (summary)

First of all, the students were greeted to have good rapport with them so that the interview could be successful. Then, they were informed why and how they were selected for the interview. After that, the following interview guide questions were raised.

1. Do you exert additional efforts to the classroom's discussion to learn English language on your own? Why?

Student A: No, I don't try to learn outside the classroom. I always learn only from the classroom teacher's explanation and the text book. But, I sometimes study grammar guide books to pass the exam. Other than that, I don't have experience in such learning.

Student B: No, I don't exert any effort to learn the language outside the classroom.

I depend on the classroom's discussion to pass the exam. So, I don't exert extra efforts to learn the language by my-self.

Students C: No, I don't exert any effort to learn the language outside the classroom. I attend only my teacher's explanation, and I read my textbook because I think that is sufficient to pass the exam.

Student D: No, I don't. I always learn and study based on the text book and my teacher's discussion.

Student E: No, I don't try to learn outside the classroom because I can't learn without my teacher.

Student F: No, I don't exert any effort. I learn only from my teacher. I can't to learn the language without my teacher.

2. Does your teacher train you how do you learn the language on your own? Does he encourage you to develop self-confidence on your ability and positive attitude towards your responsibility to learn the language on your own? How?

Student A: No, he doesn't. He only teaches us topics in the text book. Besides, in reading session, he sometimes teaches us how to understand unfamiliar words.

Student B: No, he doesn't teach us how we can learn the language on our

own. But, he sometimes initiates us to practice the language.

Students C: Yes, he encourages us to develop self-confidence to avoid shyness and to learn the language freely. But, he doesn't teach us how to learn the language on our own.

Students D: Yes, he sometimes initiates us to build self-confidence. Furthermore, he sometimes teaches us techniques of understanding vocabularies. Except these, he doesn't teach us how to learn the language on our own.

Students E: Yes, he sometimes initiates us to build self-confidence if we fear when he asks us to answer questions, but he doesn't teach us to learn on our own.

Students F: Yes, he sometimes tries to encourage us to avoid fright, and practice the language, but he doesn't do other than that.

3. Do you involve in deciding on the different activities of learning? Why?

Student A: No, I don't involve in the activities of learning because my teacher always orders me what to do.

Student B: No, I don't decide on activities of learning because my teacher always decides what to be learned and how to be learned.

Student C: No, I do not decide on the activities of learning because the activities are decided by the textbook and the teacher.

Student D: No, I don't decide. It is my teacher's job.

Student E: No, I don't decide because I learn only based on my teacher's decision and the activities of the text book.

Student F: No, every learning activity is decided by my teacher.

## **Appendix H**

### **Results of the Teachers' Interview (summary)**

As to the student interviewees, teachers were also greeted to create conducive atmosphere so that the interview could be effective. Then, the following interview guide questions were raised.

1. Do you teach your students how do they learn the language on their own? Do you encourage them to develop self-confidence on their ability and positive attitude towards their responsibility to learn the language on their own? Why? How?

Teacher A: No, I don't teach them to learn the language on their own. But, I teach them only the contents from the text book. From the textbook, I teach them how to understand a reading passage. I also try to encourage them to develop self-confidence by appreciating, and positive attitude towards their responsibility by informing them the significance of learning English. To teach out of that, it is difficult to even cover the newly published text book. So, it is impossible to teach learners other points outside the text book.

Teacher B: No, I don't teach them how they learn the language on their own because of shortage of time. I have to finish teaching the contents of the text book timely. But, I sometimes initiate them to develop self-confidence through giving them presentation activities. But, I sometimes talk about positive attitude even though there is no sufficient time.

Teacher C: yes, but I teach only how they understand different written texts, etc. I always teach contents in the text book. I also encourage them to develop self-confidence by giving advice. But, I don't raise the issue of positive attitude.

Teacher D: Yes, I sometimes initiate learners to practice the language without fear and through thorough reading. I also encourage learners to develop self-confidence by giving advice. But, I don't talk about positive attitude.

Teacher E: No, I don't. But, I teach them how they understand passages in the textbook and the meaning of unfamiliar words. Except these, I don't teach them to learn the language on their own because of shortage of time. On the other hand, they want to learn only on what they don't know. They don't need to learn other things. I sometimes

also encourage them to develop self-confidence through appreciating. Besides, I usually encourage them to develop positive attitude.

F: No, I don't teach them how they can learn the language on their own. But, I try to encourage learners to practice the language confidently by giving advice, involving them in presentation. But, I rarely talk about developing positive attitude although there I don't have ample time.

2. Do you involve learners in deciding on the different activities of language learning? Why? How?

Teacher A: No, I don't involve learners. If I involve learners, some sort of changes may occur. Changing anything from the text book is not possible. Since everything is decided by the government, it is impossible to change anything. I have to teach only the activities prescribed in the textbook.

Teacher B: No, I don't. If I involve learners, it takes time and the textbook will not be completely covered on the given time.

Teacher C: No, I don't. I only decide on the basis of the text book and my lesson plan.

Teacher D: No, I don't involve learners because if I involve learners, things may go to the wrong direction. For example, students may want to learn only one skill like grammar.

Teacher E: Yes, I sometimes involve learners. I involve learners to choose sub-topics from the topics given in the text book during revision.

Teacher F: No, I don't. I decide everything based on the text book and the lesson plan which I prepared in accordance with the textbook.

3. How do you comment your own roles in helping learners learn the language on their own and learners' individual effort to learn the language on their own?

Teacher A: I always teach only the textbook and the prepared lesson plan. In the lesson plan, I incorporate everything including the evaluation criteria like assignments, home works, class works, etc. Accordingly, I teach my students to make them able to pass the exam; learners don't want to work on their own; they wait for their teacher. Most of the time, we teach our students on our basis. Therefore, it is possible to say teacher-centered method of teaching is experienced in our school.

Teacher B: I don't teach my students other than the textbook. Because, the textbook takes time; the students also don't want to carry out their responsibilities. Unless I give them orders, they don't work on their own interest. Generally, students' participation is poor.

Teacher C: I always teach based on the textbook and my lesson plan. Because the lesson plan which I prepared to teach is based on the textbook; the plan constitutes every activities of learning like evaluation criteria, etc. If you change from the lesson plan, you may be even accused of shifting from the plan by the directors. So, I teach only the text book. The Students don't want to work hard on their own. They waited for their teachers to do every thing. They don't have experience in participating actively.

Teacher D: I teach only contents in the text book. The text book is too large; it is even difficult to cover within the allotted time. Therefore, I don't try to teach learners out of the textbook ; I have to cover all the contents in the textbook. On the other hand, students don't participate actively. They don't want to do learning activities on their own.

Teacher E: I sometimes encourage learners to practice the language outside the classroom and to speak the language confidently; but the students don't always practice. They want to learn only from my explanation, and pass the exam.

Teacher F: I always teach my students only the contents in the text book. I can say I don't teach them out of the text book. The students also don't want to learn on their own

## Appendix I

### Results of the Focus Group Discussion (summary)

- Most of the students noted that they did not search opportunities and practice the language both in and outside the classroom. They said that they believed in practicing the language both in and outside the classroom is important, but they did not do so practically because they fear and lack skills of the language and self-confidence. As they said, they fear the people around them in order not to be seen as boastful.
- Most of the students said that they did not try to learn the language by searching different learning sources. As they said, they did not use even library because the librarians did not always work. Even when the librarians worked, they did not use the library unless their teachers gave them assignments. They used only the text book and their teachers' explanation.
- Most of the students pointed out that they tried to understand different learning sources on themselves. However, they needed further explanation of their teachers. They did not depend on their ability to understand different learning sources. In addition, they did not try to solve learning problems on their own.
- Most of the students discussed that they did not manage their learning on their own that is they did not plan, monitor and evaluate their learning. They waited only for their teachers' directions.
- Most of the students noted that they did not choose learning topics and materials on their own. As they said, they were dependent on the text book and their teachers' selection.
- Most of the students said that they did not produce the target language pattern. As they said, most of the time they use the language of the text book and their teacher's. In addition, they

said that they did not find their own language data and create their own learning tasks unless their teachers gave them tasks.

- Most of the students discussed that their teachers tried to encourage them to develop self-confidence by giving advice and appreciation when they answered questions. However, they said that their teachers did not encourage them to develop positive attitude towards the target language and learn the language on their own.
- Most of the students said that their teachers motivated them to ask and answer questions. However as they said, their teachers did not motivate them to organize learning activities on their own.
- Most of the students noted that their teachers did not train them how to learn the language on their own. They discussed that their teachers tried to teach them how to understand a written text by giving e.g. comprehension questions and techniques of understanding vocabularies.
- Most of the students discussed that their teachers did not inform them how to plan, monitor and evaluate their learning on their own.

## Appendix J

### Results of Observation

The classroom practices of learner autonomy were recorded three times as follows.

No	Activities	Time					
		Ob.1		Ob.2		Ob.3	
		Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
1.	Teachers motivate learners to organize learning activities on their own		✓		✓		✓
2	Teachers initiate learners to develop self-confidence in learning English on their own		✓		✓		✓
3	Teachers initiate learners to develop positive attitude towards their ability to learn the target language		✓		✓		✓
4	Teachers train learners how to comprehend information		✓		✓		✓
5	Teachers train learners how to retrieve learned information		✓		✓		✓
6	Teachers train learners how to store learned information		✓		✓		✓
7	Teachers train learners how to select information from a variety of sources		✓		✓		✓
8	Teachers teach learners how to plan their learning objectives		✓		✓		✓
9	Teachers train learners how to monitor their learning		✓		✓		✓
10	Teachers train learners how to evaluate their learning outcomes		✓		✓		✓

11	Teachers encourage learners to ask questions		✓		✓		✓
12	Learners ask questions to their friends and teachers for clarification		✓		✓		✓
13	Learners involve in choosing learning materials		✓		✓		✓
14	Learners involve in choosing method of teaching		✓		✓		✓
15	Learners involve in topic selection		✓		✓		✓
16	Learners actively participate in the learning and teaching process		✓		✓		✓

NOTE: Teachers were seen in explaining only the concept of the contents. In addition, they were seen in initiating learners to answer questions raised by the teachers themselves.

## Appendix K

### Students' Background Information

No.		Characteristics	Reponses	
			Fre.	%
1	Age			
		Below 15	-	-
		15-20	125	95.41
		21-25	6	4.58
		Above	-	-
2	Sex			
		Male	88	67.17
		Female	43	32.82
3	Grade	12	131	100
4	Field of study			
		Social science	42	32.06
		Natural science	89	67.93
5	Section			
		A	9	6.87

	B	9	6.87
	C	7	5.34
	E	17	12.97
	G	27	20.61
	H	11	8.39
	J	10	7.63
	K	6	4.58
	L	4	3.05
	M	14	10.68
	N	6	4.58
	O	4	3.05
	P	2	1.52
	Q	5	3.81

\*Fre. =frequency

## Appendix L

### Teachers' Background Information

No.	Characteristics	Responses
		Fre.
1	Sex	
	Male	6
	Female	-
2	Age	
	20-30	-
	31-40	1
	Above 40	5
	Below 40	-
3	Teaching experience	
	Below 5 years	-
	5-10	-
	11-15	1
	Above 15	5
4	Qualification	
	Diploma	-
	Degree	5
	Master's Degree	1

\*Fre. =frequency

## DECLARATION

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

Name: Animut Tadele

Signature AT

Date 06/06/2012

