



Assessing the Learners' Autonomy in Vocabulary Learning in EFL Class

Usman Ibrahim
Haramaya University, Ethiopia

Received: June 15, 2015

Accepted: October 10, 2015

Online Published: November 30, 2015

Abstract

This study aims to assess the Learners' Autonomy in Vocabulary Learning in EFL Class. The data were collected through questionnaires, classroom observations as well as interviews and were analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively. The findings revealed that the majority of students were aware of their responsibility but they do not know how they use vocabulary learning strategies and they had little awareness of their teachers' role in teaching vocabulary. Furthermore, they are not encouraged to learn and develop their vocabulary materials autonomously. The study also revealed some challenges that hold back students' efforts to learn English vocabulary: lack of Basic English skills, their exam based technique of study, lack of knowing strategies of vocabulary and lack of confidence in using English. In line with the findings, the study forwards appropriate recommendations. The implication of the study lies in the fact that teachers should accelerate their roles in helping learners learn different vocabulary learning strategies and encourage them to have a greater degree of autonomy by integrating language content and learning process and incorporating reflective lessons into their teaching vocabulary. The students should also exert individual efforts to learn vocabulary on their own.

Keyword: Autonomy, Vocabulary

1. Introduction

The fact that language plays a key role in any aspect of life is unquestionable. Without it, the world, perhaps, would not have been what it is now. In short, it is through language that the world's communication and development is established. Learning a language, however, is not as simple as it is assumed. This is due to the fact that learning a language involves not only knowing the language system (knowledge of grammar, vocabulary etc) but also the use of the language system or the skills.

Teachers are also expected to play their roles in order to satisfy the needs and objectives of students. They need to create positive learning environments and they have responsibilities more than imparting knowledge. All students must feel that they are positively and equally valued and accepted, and that their efforts to learn are recognized and they possess the right level of motivation in learning and be able to reflect on and confidentially assess their learning (Clark, 1995).

“Without grammar very little can be conveyed; without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed” (Wilkins, 1972, :111). The previous statement can be as an indicator on the importance of vocabulary in conveying meanings and expressing ideas. The knowledge of

vocabulary is essential part when using foreign language due to the fact that one is unable to communicate with others without a sufficient amount of words. A number of leading scholars in the field of vocabulary believe that the amount of words known is one of the crucial factors in foreign language learning where learners possibly have only a small amount of vocabulary (Laufer, 1989; Nation, 1990).

Over the past few decades, a number of researchers have shifted their concentration within the field of vocabulary learning and teaching with a greater emphasis on learning and learners rather than on teaching and teachers. (Sadighi and Zarafshan, 2006). It seems a sensible goal for language teachers to help students to reach a level of autonomy and make them less dependent on teachers (O'Malley and Chamot, 1990). Learners' autonomy can be enhanced by introducing the learner to different vocabulary learning strategies which can be used in developing the learning process. Vocabulary learning strategies also help students to be more active and take more responsibility on their own learning (Martinen, 2008).

Learner autonomy in vocabulary learning is becoming a necessity for English language learners in high schools that adopt either traditional or open education nowadays. It plays a prominent role in developing the learners' language acquisition and achievement. The new trends in education that emphasize the learner's needs and motivations deserve more attention from teachers of English language because they constitute the foundations of the learner's language learning acquisition. Some educators as Holec (1981), Dickinson (1997), Little (1991), Dam (1995) and Benson (2003) attached great importance to the necessity of autonomy in education. They stated that students who think and work strategically are more motivated to learn and have a higher sense of self-efficacy or confidence in their own learning ability. Then students who depend on themselves in learning vocabulary are more able to succeed academically and more autonomous than those who do not have effective strategies in learning by themselves. Therefore, learning how to learn vocabulary autonomously by the learner is a very crucial component that English language teachers have to take into account when teaching English language.

According to Garrdner & Milner,1999,When a syllabus is designed to promote learner autonomy, the focus of the syllabus is clearly on a student-centered approach, the teacher is still very much involved in assisting learners with their learning; the development of learner autonomy can have strong collaborative elements (Little, 1995); learners can choose to be more or less independent at different points in their learning process (Dickinson, 1987); and learners can be encouraged to reflect on their learning and ways to improve it (Little, 1997).

English language plays an important role as a foreign language in our country. It is taught as a subject from grade one and is a medium of instruction from grade nine through colleges and universities. The educational policy of Ethiopia in 2002, is advocating student centered approach and autonomous learning and encouraged in the objective of the policy. As autonomy is highly encouraged in the policy, the adoption of student centered approach and communicative language teaching, there seems to be an emphasis on the subject of the student freedom to participate actively and to use ample of words in the language learning. As a result of this, it is generally believed that English language teachers in high school are aware of how to motivate and encourage their students to become independent learners in vocabulary. It is also believed that the students are persistently involved in taking charge of their own English vocabulary learning.

In Ethiopian context, there are considerable problems which have not still been solved because of different reasons to implementing learners' autonomy in English vocabulary learning. So, due to the above mentioned problems has been serious, the researcher is interested to assess the learners autonomy in English vocabulary learning at grade 12 at Chanco Preparatory Secondary School.

1.1. Statement of the Problem

Learner autonomy is now gradually recognized as a legitimate need and goal in education. As McDevitt (1997) states: “ The end product of language learning is an independent learner in every aspect of the language”. Cultivating a learner’s independence or autonomy should be regarded as the end goal that teachers and educators pursue.

In our country, 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 apart from classroom instruction because the classroom instruction may not be sufficient to make them effective in their learning. The learners’ proficiency on vocabulary also remains poor and the effectiveness of English language vocabulary teaching remains always questionable, despite the efforts being undertaken by the Ethiopian government and concerned institutions.

There are very few studies on learners’ autonomy in our country. A number of research works on students’ learning autonomy and independent learning in English have been conducted locally, such as: Nuru-razik (2006), Atakilt (1998) etc. Nuru-razik (2006) also conducted a study on whether 3rd year Bahir Dar University English major students made endeavor towards autonomous learning. His study shows that students’ use of strategy vary from one strategy to another and students are aware of metacognitive strategies. Atakilt (1998) also conducted a study that dealt with autonomous learning in AAU freshman classes. The aim of his study was to explore whether or not English language instructors of freshman program in AAU employ learner-training components in their lesson. His finding indicates that instructors did not adequately incorporate learner training in their lessons.

This study is different from the above studies in the following ways: It is focused on grade 12 students and it is also different in setting and educational level. Besides, the two previous researchers focused on general learner autonomy. But the current study specifically focuses on learners’ autonomy in English vocabulary learning. Therefore, this study tries to assess the teachers’ role on learners’ autonomy in vocabulary learning and how learners develop their English vocabulary autonomously.

As it can be seen clearly in the present situation that the students’ autonomous learning in English vocabulary is not encouragable. Students enter high school with different experiential backgrounds and learning achievements, but unfortunately they have few autonomous dispositions which higher education requires in learning. They lack the knowledge of how to achieve by themselves, which requires some guidance and assistance from their teachers and tutors. So enhancing learner autonomy in vocabulary learning is a must for the great impact that it has on learning process. This negatively affects students of Chancho preparatory school on their autonomy in vocabulary learning and their confidence. So, the current study mainly focused on the learners’ low performance and scores on vocabulary when compared to the other languages skills. They are often dependent on some active students, teachers and course materials.

Therefore, it is believed that there is a problem on practice of students’ independent learning of vocabulary in English class in Chancho preparatory school. Hence, the researcher decided to assess learners’ autonomy in vocabulary learning in EFL class in grade 12 of Chancho preparatory school.

1.2. Objective of the Study

1. Assessing efforts of the learners to develop their English vocabulary autonomously.
2. Assessing the vocabulary learning strategies used by learners in vocabulary learning.

3. Identifying the extent to which teachers encouraged learners to use English vocabulary autonomously.
4. Exploring challenges faced by learners while practicing autonomous learning in vocabulary.

1.3. Research Questions

1. What are the efforts of the learners to develop their English vocabulary autonomously?
2. What are the vocabulary learning strategies used by the learners in vocabulary learning?
3. To what extent teachers encourage learners to use English vocabulary autonomously?
4. What are the challenges faced by learners while practicing autonomous learning in vocabulary?

1.4. Significance of the Study

The findings of this study are expected to have the following significance: To raise awareness among the learners as to the efforts they need to develop their English language skills autonomously. Furthermore, it may give pedagogical insights for the teachers to help learners learn how to teach 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 promotion of learner autonomy in learning English. Moreover, other researchers who like to conduct research in the area of fostering autonomous learning will be benefited since they can use it as reference.

1.5. Limitation of the study

The current study has some limitations. To begin with, it is difficult to measure learners' autonomy in vocabulary learning under most favorable circumstances because of untruthful or careless responses subjects may provide; Some subjects may be unable to report their own state accurately. The other limitations relate to the drawbacks with respect to the availability of resources, effect and interventions of personal and organizational behaviors and lack of relevant research works in Ethiopian context. Identifying the research gap in the local context has been problematic for researcher and the task of finding related studies throughout the country was not possible due to the budget deficit.

2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1. Definition of Learners' Autonomy

Learner autonomy has been described and defined in a number of ways in connection with language learning and there are different terms in literature. Dickinson (1987) and Pemberton (Pemberton et al. 1996.) identify various different terms in the literature on autonomy, some of which are used synonymously, and some of which have been ascribed a number of separate meanings. According to Benson (2001, p.48), there are a number of terms related to autonomy, which can be distinguished from it in various ways. Most people now agree that autonomy and autonomous learning are not synonyms of, 'self-instruction', 'self-access', 'self-study', 'self-education', 'out-of-class learning' or 'distance learning'. These terms basically describe various ways and degrees of learning by yourself, whereas autonomy refers to abilities and attitudes (or whatever we think the capacity to control your own learning

consists of). The point is, then, that learning by your self is not the same thing as having the capacity to learn by yourself. Also, autonomous learners may well be better than others at learning by themselves (hence the connection), but they do not necessarily have to learn by themselves. Over the last few years, for example, more and more research is coming out on autonomy in the classroom and 'teacher autonomy'. The terms 'independent learning' and 'self-directed learning' also refer to ways of learning by yourself . But these terms are very often used as synonyms for autonomy.

When it comes to its definitions, perhaps, the most often quoted definition is that of Holec, who defines autonomy as 'the ability to take charge of one's own learning'. To take charge of one's own learning is to have, and to hold, the responsibility for all the decisions concerning all aspects of this learning: determining the objectives; defining the contents and progressions; selecting methods and techniques to be used; monitoring the procedures of acquisition ...; evaluating what has been acquired (Holec, 1981). An overview of its definitions is discussed in Finch's (2000) dissertation. Recently, Little (2002) stated that learner autonomy is a problematic term because it is widely confused with self-instruction. It is also a slippery concept because it is notoriously difficult to define precisely.

Dickinson (1987:11) defines autonomy (in learning) as: " ... the situation in which the learner is totally responsible for all the decisions concerned with his/her learning." He makes a distinction between "full autonomy" and "semi-autonomy". For Dickinson (1987), "semi-autonomy" is the stage at which learners are preparing for autonomy. To Sinclair B. (2008: 23) ,autonomy is an "approach" to learning. He writes: "The main characteristic of autonomy as an approach to learning is that students take some significant responsibility for their own learning over and above responding to instructions" (p.23).

Holec (1981: 41) also writes; "To me, autonomous learning within the context of a learning situation is a process in which the learner works on a learning task or activity and is largely independent of the teacher who acts as a manager of the learning programmer and as resource person."

Most of the writers regarding the notion of learner autonomy seem to have come out with some common characteristic features of this particular mode or attitude or approach to learning. For the purpose of this study, therefore, Boud's (1981) description of autonomy has been adopted. According to him, autonomy in learning involves "taking initiative" in one or all of the following: I. identifying learning needs, II. setting goals, III. planning learning activities, IV. finding resources needed for learning, V. working collaboratively with others, VI. selecting learning projects, VII. choosing where and when to learn, VIII. using teachers as guidance and counselors rather than instructors, IX. opting to undertake additional non-teacher-directed work, x. engaging in self-assessment, and XI. reflecting on their learning process (Boud, 1981b:23).

2.2. Learner autonomy and dominant philosophies of learning

In this section, three dominant approaches to knowledge and learning will be discussed with a view of examining how each of them connects up with learners' autonomy. positivism, which reigned supreme in the twentieth century, is premised up on the assumption of that knowledge reflects objective reality. Therefore , if a teacher can be said to hold this "objective reality", learning can only 'consist in the transition of knowledge from one individual from another.' (Benson and Voller,1997:20).Congruent to this view, of course, is the maintenance and enhancement of the "Traditional classroom ,"and learners are seen as containers to be filled with knowledge held by teachers' (ibid). On the other hand, positivism also lends support to the wide spread notion that knowledge is attained by dint of the

'hypothesis testing' model and that it is more effectively acquired when 'it is discovered rather than taught' (ibid).

Constructivism is an elusive concept and, within applied linguistics, is strongly associated with (Halliday, 1979 cited in Benson & Voller, 1997:21). In contrast to positivism, Constructivism posits the view that rather than discovering objective knowledge individuals reorganize and restructure their experience.

In Candy's term, (Candy, 1991:270) constructivism, 'leads directly to the proposition that knowledge cannot be taught but only learned because knowledge is something built up by the learner.' By the same token, language learning does not internalizing set of rules, structures and forms; each learner brings their own experience and world knowledge to bear in the target language. Apparently constructivism supports and extends to cover, psychological version of autonomy that appertain to learners' behavior, attitudes, motivation and self-concept (Benson and Voller, 1997 :22). As a result constructivist, constructivist approach encourage and promote self directed learning as a necessary condition for learner autonomy.

Finally, Critical theory, an approach with in the humanity and language studies, shares with constructivism the view that knowledge is constructed rather than discovered or learned. Moreover, it argues that knowledge does not reflect reality but rather comprises 'competing ideological version of that reality expressing the interests of different social groups (Benson and Voller, 1997 :23). within this approach learning concerns issues of power and ideology and is seen as process of interaction with social context, which can bring about social change. Certainly learner autonomy assumes a more social and political character with in critical theory.

2.3. Misconception of Learners' Autonomy

Discussing the meaning and implementation of learner autonomy in the language classroom (Esch, 1997) states that there are three common misconceptions to be avoided. The first common misconception is the reduction of autonomous learning to a set of skills, or to a series of techniques to train language learning skills. This reduction is the negation of the radical content of the concept, and this misconception seems to be increasingly popular at a moment when the range of technical possibilities for accessing information and manipulating data at distance is increasing. Second misconceptions related to definitions and implementation of learners autonomy is the avoidance of language learning specific issues. In order to understand and implement learner autonomy successfully, one should consider whether language has specific features which need to be taken in to account. Esch asks the question "Is language learning different from any other learning, say physics or Geography?" and he says the answer 'yes'. therefore, if one wants to encourage autonomous learning, she/he needs to take language learning specific issues understanding and implementing learner autonomy. Third common misconception stated by Esch related to learner autonomy is taking it as learning in isolation. The development of especially the last three decades (new technologies, self learning materials, etc.) brought a sense of freedom to language learning. However, this new found 'freedom' has led to confusion with individualization and isolation, but neither of these concepts is in fact relevant to autonomous learning.

Especially the misconception of learner autonomy as learning in isolation has brought the concept of 'interdependence' in to the discussion. According to Benson (2001), one of the most challenging developments in the theory of autonomy in the 1990's has been the idea that autonomy implies interdependence. Kohonen (1992) has supported this thoughts strongly by starting that "personal decisions are necessarily made with respect to social and moral norms, traditions and expectations. Autonomy thus includes the notion of interdependence

that is being responsible for one's own conduct in the social context: being able to cooperate with others and solve conflicts in constructive ways (p.14).”Then, we can safely argue that collaboration is essential to the development of autonomy as psychological capacity (Little,1991).

To capture all the above mentioned arguments, it is possible to summarize that learner autonomy as applied to language learning means students' talking more control over and having more responsibility for their own language learning process. It does not mean learning in isolation. Autonomous learners do not learn language without a teacher and peers. Instead they develop a sense of interdependence and they work together with teachers and other learners towards shared goals(Little,1991;Benson and Voller,1997;Littlewood,1999).

2.4. Basic Principles of Learner Autonomy in Language Education

Within formal education, an important distinction has been made between two modes of learning. These modes are known as school knowledge and action knowledge. Barnes (1976) comments: School knowledge is the knowledge which someone else presents to us. We partly grasp it, enough to answer the teacher's questions, to do exercises, or to answer examination questions, but it remains someone else's knowledge, not ours. If we never use this knowledge, we probably forget it. In so far as we use knowledge for our own purposes, however, we begin to incorporate it into our view of the world, and to use parts of it to cope with the exigencies of living. Once the knowledge becomes incorporated into that view of the world on which our actions are based I would say that it has become “action knowledge.” (p. 81). Barnes (1976) associates school knowledge with the knowledge of others (e.g., teachers, texts that learners read, books that learners study) and action knowledge with the constructivist capacity of the learner to reinterpret others' knowledge, reshape it to their own purposes, and make it part of their understanding of the world where “the pupil's ability to reinterpret knowledge for himself is crucial to learning” (p. 142). The concept of action knowledge leads into questions of how new understandings of the world are managed by learners.

Barnes (2008) explains: It is only the learner who can bring the new information, procedures or ways of understanding to bear upon existing ideas, expectations and ways of thinking and acting. That is, the learner actively constructs the new way of understanding. (p. 3) Given the emphasis on the active role of learners in shaping their knowledge of the world, it is not surprising that the school knowledge/action knowledge nexus has been taken up by different learner autonomy theorists and practitioners as a way of understanding the capacity of learners to be authors of their own learning.

David Little, in particular, has theorized from Barnes's work and put forward three general pedagogic principles for the development of language learner autonomy: learner involvement, learner reflection and appropriate target use (Little 2005, 2006, 2007, 2009). What Little (2007) means by learner involvement is that learners “are brought to engage with their learning and take responsibility for key decisions” (p. 7). This principle highlights the importance of learners determining for themselves their learning purposes and goals, as such self determination can directly influence their motivation and sense of control. From the principle of learner reflection follows the need for learners to be “taught to think critically about the process and content of their learning” (p. 7). Learners should therefore be guided to consider cognitive processes of learning and develop insights into their own ways of learning; they should also have freedom to choose (or at least the right to negotiate) the materials they use for their learning. The third principle, appropriate target language use, refers to learners “using the target language as the principal medium of language learning” (2006, p. 2). Learners should, in other words, use the target language not only for their own

communicative purposes, but also for the metacognitive functions of reflecting on and evaluating their performance and development in the target language. These principles are seen by Little as operating in dynamic relationship to one another: the development of autonomous learning may take place, he argues, only under conditions where all three principles are followed in practice.

2.5. Autonomy in Language Learning

The concepts behind learner autonomy have been promoted in the literature over the past 30 years and it is a concept which has attracted interest by language teachers as we have moved toward more communicative pedagogical approaches which encourage students to participate in their learning more fully (Miller, 2009). Learner autonomy has been defined as the ability to take control over one's learning (Holec, 1988) and is also described as a "capacity for detachment, critical reflection, decision-making, and independent action" (Little, 1991, p. 4). Learner autonomy, though, can mean different things to different people (Benson, 2001; Sinclair, 2006), and trying to identify what the ability or capacity of an autonomous learner is can cause confusion.

Learner autonomy is often mistakenly equated solely with independent out-of-class learning in which learners are in control of all aspects of their learning process. In this view, an autonomous learner is one who is intrinsically motivated and learns outside the classroom, alone, and with no need for support from the teacher. However, learner autonomy can also develop in the structured learning environment of the classroom and become part of the pedagogical objectives of a language course. According to Gardner & Miller, 1999, When a syllabus is designed to promote learner autonomy, the focus of the syllabus is clearly on a student-centered approach (Gardner & Miller, 1999); the teacher is still very much involved in assisting learners with their learning (Schwienhorst, 2003); the development of learner autonomy can have strong collaborative elements (Little, 1995); learners can choose to be more or less independent at different points in their learning process (Dickinson, 1987); and learners can be encouraged to reflect on their learning and ways to improve it (Little, 1997). The question then answers why we should use Learner Autonomy in the classroom as many of the studies discussed in this section of the paper have argued, the old teacher initiated way of learning is dated and does not suit our current way of life. Learner autonomy is in many ways very natural as it is one of the ways in which we learn and is not a constructed concept. In using a natural learner strategy it would be plausible that process should see a pupil better suited for lifelong learning than a pupil who is used to being led by the teacher. Also it has been decided that the teachers should try to individualize their teaching as much as possible and that pupils should take more responsibility over their own learning.

2.6. Autonomy in the Classroom

Given this wealth of sociological, pedagogical, psychological, and political justifications for the promotion of autonomous learning, and in view of Benson's definition of instruction as "a provisional state that has as its objective to make the learner or problem solver self-sufficient" (1966, p.53), it would appear that all learners need to learn to be independent of the teacher (Dickinson 1992, p.2), whose role it is to facilitate this.

Teaching methodology must therefore be concerned with facilitating and promoting the process of informed learning rather than with the content of that learning. Cotterall, S. (1999a, p.35) suggests that the "seeds" of such a process already exist in the language classroom, and that teachers can therefore identify and encourage the autonomous classroom behavior of their students. He points to the fact that the individual learning agenda that all learners bring to the classroom is a form of individualization of the learning experience, and

that all learners' errors and questions can be seen as (autonomous) moves that have the potential of individualizing instruction (Allwright 1988b, p.37). Nunan also sees the language classroom as the best place for encouraging learners to move towards autonomy (Nunan 1997, p.201), and agrees with Dickinson (1987, p.2) that this is a slow process: I have found that it is usually well into a course before learners are in a position to make informed choices about what they want to learn and how they want to learn, and it is not uncommon that learners are in such a position only at the end of the course. (Nunan, 1996, p.15)

2.7. Language Learning Strategies

Many researchers have defined the term language learning strategy. Richards and Platt (1992:209) define it as "...intentional behavior and thoughts used by learners during learning so as to better help them understand, learn, or remember new information". Wenden (1991:18) further defines it as, "mental steps or operations that learners use to learn a new language and to regulate their efforts to do so." These definitions inform us that learning strategies are essential in learning a language. Therefore, learners have to be trained on how to use them to be autonomous.

Many scholars (Wenden and Rubin, 1987; O'Malley and Chamot, 1990; Oxford, 1990; Stern, 1992; Ellis, 1994, etc) have classified language-learning strategies. However, most of these attempts to classify language-learning strategies reflect more or less the same categorizations of learning strategies without any radical changes. Hedge (2000) puts forward four types of learning strategies used by good language learners. These are:

2.7.1. Cognitive Strategies

Hedge (2000:77) defines cognitive strategies as "thought processes used directly in learning which enable learners to deal with the information presented in tasks and materials by working on it in different ways". They operate directly on incoming information, manipulating it in ways that enhance learning (O'Malley and Chamot, 1990). Cognitive strategies include:

- a) repetition: repeating a chunk of language (a word or phrase) in the course of performing a language task.
- b) resourcing: Using available reference sources of information about the target language, including dictionaries, textbooks, and prior work.
- c) grouping: Ordering, classifying or labeling material used in a language task based on common attributes; recalling information based on grouping previously done.
- d) note taking: Writing down key words and concepts in abbreviated verbal, graphic, or numerical form to assist performance of a language task.
- e) Deduction/ Induction: consciously applying learned or self developed rules to produce or understand the target language.
- f) Substitution: selecting alternative approaches, revised plans, or different words or phrases to accomplish a language task.
- g) Elaboration: Relating new information to prior knowledge; relating different parts of new information to each other; making meaningful personal associations to information presented.
- h) Summarization: Making a mental or written summary of language and information presented in a task.
- i) Translation: rendering ideas from one language to another in a relatively verbatim manner.
- J) Transfer: using previously acquired linguistic knowledge to facilitate a language task.
- L) Inference: Using available information to guess the meanings or usage of unfamiliar language items associated with language tasks, to predict outcomes, or to fill in missing information. (Tudor, 1996:205-206).

2.7.2. Metacognitive Strategies

Meta cognitive strategies involve planning for learning, thinking about learning and how to make it effective, self monitoring during learning, and evaluation of how successful learning has been after working on language in some way (Hedge, 2000:78). In addition, Wenden (1991:34) states

“Meta cognitive knowledge includes all facts learners acquire about their own cognitive processes as they are applied and used to gain knowledge and acquire skills in varied situations”.

Therefore, when learners preview the next unit of their course book, read carefully through the teacher’s comments on their written work, or review the notes they have made during class, they are using metacognitive strategies. Generally, it is a skill used for planning, monitoring and evaluating the learning activity; some of these strategies are: a) Planning: previewing the organizing concept or principle of an anticipated learning task (advance organization); proposing strategies for handling an upcoming task; generating a plan for the parts, sequence, main ideas, or language functions to be used in handling a task (organizational planning). b) Directed attention: Deciding in advance to attend in general to a learning task and to ignore irrelevant distractors; maintaining attention during task execution. c) Selective attention: deciding in advance to attend to specific aspects of language input or situational details that assist in performance of a task; attending to specific aspects of language input during task execution. d) Self-management: understanding the conditions that help one successfully accomplish language tasks and arranging for the presence of those conditions controlling one’s language performance to maximize use of what is already known. e) Self-monitoring: checking, verifying, or correcting one’s comprehension or performance in the course of a language task. f) Problem identification: Explicitly identifying the central point needing resolution in a task or identifying an aspect of the task that hinders its successful completion. g) Self-evaluation: checking the outcomes of one’s own language performance against an internal measure of completeness and accuracy; checking one’s language repertoire, strategy use, or ability to perform the task. (Tudor, 1996:205).

2.7.3. Socio- Affective Strategies

According to Oxford (1990) cited in Williams and Burden (1997:152), “Affective strategies, are concerned with the learner’s emotional requirements such as confidence, while social strategies lead to increased interaction with the target language”. In other words, Hedge (2000) confirms that socio- affective strategies are those, which provide learners with opportunities for practice. For example, it include initiating conversations with native speakers, using other people as informants about the language, collaborating on tasks, listening to the radio or watching TV program in the language or spending extra time in the language laboratory (Ibid). They are related with social mediating activity and transacting with others. Some of the strategies are: Questioning for clarification: asking for explanations, verification, rephrasing, or examples about the material; asking for clarification or verification about the task; posing questions to the self. Cooperation: working together with peers to solve a problem, pool information, check a learning task, model a language activity, or get feedback on oral or written performance. Self-talk: Reducing anxiety by using mental techniques that make one feel competent to do the learning task. Self-reinforcement: providing personal motivation by arranging rewards for one self when a language activity has been successfully completed. (Tudor, 1996:206).

2.7.4. Communication Strategies

This category is sometimes including in the framework of learner strategies. When learners use gesture, mime, synonym, paraphrases, and cognate words from their first language to make themselves understood and to maintain a conversation, despite the gaps in their knowledge of the second language, they are using communication strategies (Hedge, 2000:78-79). The value of these is that they keep learners involved in conversations through which they practice the language (Ibid).

2.8. Autonomy and vocabulary learning

Based on utilization of contextualization, vocabulary learning techniques can be divided into four groups (Oxford and Crookall, 1990): Decontextualizing techniques: Techniques that remove the word as completely as possible from any communicative context: word list, flash cards, dictionary use. Semi contextualizing techniques: Techniques that allow some degree of context but fall short of full contextuality, new words may be linked with something that is meaningful to the learner, but they are not used as part of naturalistic communication: word grouping, word or concept association, visual imagery, aural imagery, keyword, physical response, physical sensation, semantic mapping. Fully contextualizing techniques: Techniques that embed the new words in a more or less normal communicative context: reading and listening practice, speaking and writing practice. Adaptable techniques: Techniques that can reinforce other techniques at any part of the contextuality continuum: structured reviewing.

2.9. How to be a good autonomous learner in vocabulary learning?

According to Boud (1995), an autonomous learner is the one who is prepared to take some significant responsibility for his own learning. And in order to be a good autonomous one, the learner should make decisions about his/her own learning, he/she should be able to set realistic goals, plan program of work, develop strategies for coping with new and unforeseen situations, evaluate and assess his/her own work and, generally, to learn how to learn from his/her own successes and failures in ways which will help him/her to be more efficient learners in the future. Autonomous learners willingly partner with faculty and peers in learning, and are reflective about their own learning. Omaggio (1978), thinks that there seem to be seven main attributes characterizing autonomous learners: they have insights into their learning styles and strategies; take an active approach to the learning task at hand; are willing to take risks, i.e., to communicate in the target language at all costs; are good guessers; attend to form as well as to content; develop the target language into a separate reference system and are willing to revise and reject hypotheses and rules that do not apply; and have a tolerant and outgoing approach to the target language. According to Omaggio's characteristics the autonomous learners can be considered as good language learners and I think that these characteristics can be applicable on the vocabulary autonomous learner.

2.10. Difficulties in promoting vocabulary in autonomous learning

In order to promote vocabulary learning, it is necessary to be aware of the difficulties involved: 1. Learning a word is much more than learning a definition. From knowing the word to using it correctly and effectively is a long path. 2. Oral and written language are different. Written language is normally de contextualized, it relies much on word choice for successful communication and therefore, it requires much richer vocabulary to understand. 3. Different types of words require different instructions. According to Stahl(1986), vocabulary instruction must: a) give both definitions and context, b) encourage deep processing and c) provide for multiple exposures to the instructed words. However, doing all those tasks is

quite time-consuming. It should be taken into consideration that which words are worth doing so and which ones can do with a brief explanation.⁴ Teachers may overestimate the helpfulness of context. Actually how far the context can help depends largely on learners' proficiency level (Nagy,2005).

2.11. The role of teachers and learners to foster autonomy in vocabulary learning

2.11.1. Teachers' Role

Learner responsibility can develop if teachers allow more room for learner involvement (Scharle and Szabô, 2000). In autonomous learning, the teacher is a facilitator of learning, an organizer of learning opportunities, a resource person providing learners with feedback and encouragement, and a creator of the learning atmosphere and learning space (Kohonen, et al, 2001). Furthermore, learner autonomy can be promoted by the ways in which the teacher makes the following decisions: Encouraging learners to take a more independent attitude to their vocabulary learning, thus legitimizing independence as a learning goal; Providing them with opportunities to exercise greater independence in their learning; Convincing them that they are capable of assuming independence, by providing them successful experiences of doing so; Helping learners to develop their learning strategies to be better equipped to exercise their independence; Helping them to understand language as a system and develop their learning skills on their own, using reference books; Helping learners to understand more about language learning so that they have a greater awareness of what is involved in the process and how they can tackle the obstacles. Dickinson (1992) Cited in Kohonen, et al, 2001).

Little (1995) notes that successful teachers have always been autonomous in the sense of having a strong sense of personal responsibility for their teaching, exercising by continuous reflection and analysis the highest possible degree of affective and cognitive control of the teaching process, and exploiting the freedom that this confers. In this regard, Little (1995) reasons that learner autonomy depends on teacher autonomy in two senses: begin it is unreasonable to expect teachers to foster the growth of autonomy in their learners if they themselves do not know what it is to be an autonomous learner; next, in determining the initiatives they take in their classrooms, teachers must be able to apply to their teaching the same reflective and self managing processes that they apply to their learning.

As Berfield, et al (2007) suggests the role of teachers to foster autonomy involves: Negotiation skills, institutional knowledge in order to start to address effectively constraints on teaching and learning; willing to confront institutional barriers in socially appropriate ways to turn constraints into opportunities for change; readiness to engage in lifelong learning to the best of an individual's capacity; reflection on the teaching process and environment; commitment to promoting learner autonomy. Generally, in order to foster learner autonomy, teachers clearly need to develop a sense of responsibility and encourage learners to take active part in making decisions about their learning (Scharle and Szabô 2000).

2.11.2. Learners' Role

One of the most important outcomes of the movement towards more communicatively oriented language learning and teaching has been the enhancement of the role of the learner in the language learning process (Wenden, 1991: xi). Cotterall and Crabbe (1999) believe that in formal educational contexts the most successful learners are autonomous in the sense elaborated in the definition. That is, they accept responsibility for their learning; they constantly reflect on what they are learning, why they are learning, and with what degree of

success and their learning is fully integrated with the rest of what they are (Ibid). Kohonen, et al (2001:36-37) insists that learners need to develop the following kinds of capacities to be autonomous: Confidence: sense of control and mastery of one's body, behavior and the world. Curiosity: desire to find out about things, Intentionality: capacity to work with persistence and develop a sense of competence. Self-control: ability to modulate and control one's action appropriately, developing a sense of inner control. Relatedness: ability to engage with others, developing a sense of empathy. Communication: ability to exchange ideas, feelings and experiences with others, developing trust in others. Cooperation: balancing one's needs with those of others in group situations.

Dam (1995) emphasizes that learners take their first step towards autonomy when they accept responsibility for their own learning. This involves an attitude that generates learning behaviors shaped and guided by reflection, and to this extent learner autonomy depends on a capacity for detachment, critical reflection, decision-making, and independent action. The development of learner autonomy also has a social interactive dimension, as successful classroom experiments make clear (Ibid).

However good a teacher may be, students will never learn a language unless they aim to learn outside as well as during class time. This is because language learning is too complex to learn in a classroom (Harmer 2001). Besides, she claims that to compensate for the limits of classroom time and to counter the problem of learning language, students need to develop their own learning strategies, so that as far as possible they have to be autonomous learners. To develop learner autonomy, teachers need to facilitate learners to increase their self-understanding and awareness of themselves (Kohonen et al, 2001).

The following are areas of activity through which learner autonomy can proceed towards the critical engagement: Authentic interaction with the target language users; Collaborative group work; Open ended learning tasks ;Learning about the language. Benson (1997) cited in kohonen et al, (2001:48).

2.12. Classification of vocabulary learning strategies

According to Seal (1991), word knowledge is an important part of communicative competence and autonomous learning, and it is essential for both production and comprehension in a foreign language. Knowing a word involves knowing: a great deal about its general frequency of use, syntactic and situational limitations on its use; its underlying form and the forms that can be derived from it; the network of its semantic features and, ;the various meanings associated with the item.

Also Word knowledge is defined by Nation (1990) as the knowledge of its spelling, pronunciation, collocations, and appropriateness. Therefore, vocabulary competence is further than the ability to know the meanings of a number of words. Vocabulary competence covers a wide range of knowledge which, in turn, requires a variety of strategies to gain the knowledge. Language learners may use various strategies to acquire the target language word knowledge. Taking this into consideration, many language researchers make a great effort to classify vocabulary learning strategies which are adopted by language learners. Similar to language learning strategies, there are many classifications of vocabulary learning strategies. For instance: Nation's Taxonomy, and Schmitts taxonomy can mentioned below:

2.12.1. Schmitt's Taxonomy

Schmitt's taxonomy (1997) is a comprehensive inventory of vocabulary learning strategies. He divides the strategies into two groups: the ones to determine the meaning of new words when learners encounter them the first time, and the ones to consolidate meaning when learners encounter words again. The former group contains determination and social

strategies and the latter contains cognitive, metacognitive, memory and social strategies. Schmitt includes social strategies in both categories since they can be used for both purposes.

To Schmitt, determination strategies are used when “learners are faced with discovering a new word’s meaning without recourse to another person’s experience”. Accordingly, learners try to discover the meaning of a new word by guessing it with the help of context, structural knowledge of language, and reference materials.

For Schmitt, another way to discover a new meaning is through employing the social strategies of asking someone for help with the unknown words. By the initial discovery of a word, learners need to employ a variety of strategies to practice and retain vocabulary. Learners, thus, use a variety of social, memory, cognitive and metacognitive strategies to combine their vocabulary knowledge. Cooperative group learning through which learners study and practice the meaning of new words in a group is an instance of social strategies for consolidating a word. Memory strategies, traditionally known as Mnemonics, involve relating the word with some previously learned knowledge by using some form of imagery or grouping. Cognitive strategies in this taxonomy are similar to memory strategies but are not focused on manipulative mental processing. They include repetition and using mechanical means such as word lists, flash cards, and vocabulary notebooks to study words.

Finally, metacognitive strategies in Schmitt’s taxonomy are defined as strategies used by learners to control and evaluate their own learning, by having an overview of the learning process in general. Testing oneself is an instance of metacognitive strategies which provides “input to the effectiveness of one’s choice of learning strategies, providing positive reinforcement if progress is being made or a signal to switch strategies if it is not”. To be more precise, Schmitt’s taxonomy classifies vocabulary learning strategies as in the table below:

Strategy Group

Strategies for the discovery of a new word’s meaning

DET	Analyze part of speech
DET	Analyze affixes and roots
DET	Check for L1 cognate
DET	Analyze any available pictures or gestures
DET	Guess from textual context
DET	Bilingual dictionary (e.g. English-Thai dictionary)
DET	Monolingual dictionary (e.g. English-English dictionary)
DET	Word lists
DET	Flash cards
SOC	(Discovery) Ask teacher for an L1 translation
SOC	(Discovery) Ask teacher for paraphrase or synonym of new word
SOC	(Discovery) Ask teacher for a sentence including the new word
SOC	(Discovery) Ask teacher for meaning
SOC	(Discovery) Discover new meaning through group work activity
SOC	(Consolidation) Study and practice meaning in a group
SOC	(Consolidation) Teacher checks students’ word lists for accuracy
SOC	(Consolidation) Interact with native speakers
MEM	Study word with a pictorial representation of its meaning
MEM	Imagine word’s meaning
MEM	Connect word to a personal experience
MEM	Associate the word with its coordinates
MEM	Connect the word to its synonyms and antonyms
MEM	Use semantic maps

MEM	Peg Method
MEM	Group words together to study them
MEM	Use new word in sentence
MEM	Group words together of a word
MEM	Study the spelling of a word
MEM	Study the sound of a word
MEM	Say new word aloud when studying
MEM	Imagine word form
MEM	Underline initial letter of the word
MEM	Configuration
MEM	Use keyword Method
MEM	Affixes and roots (remembering)
MEM	Part of speech (remembering)
MEM	Paraphrase the word's meaning
MEM	Use cognates in study
MEM	Learn the words of an idiom together
MEM	Use physical action when learning a word
MEM	Use semantic feature grids
COG	Verbal repetition
COG	Written repetition
COG	Word lists
COG	Take notes in class
COG	Use the vocabulary section in your textbook
COG	Listen to tape of word lists
COG	Put English labels on physical objects
COG	Keep a vocabulary notebook
MET	Use English-language media (songs, movies, newspaper, etc)
MET	Testing oneself with word tests
MET	Use spaced word practice
MET	Skip or pass new word
MET	Continue to study word over time

Key. MET; Metacognitive strategy, COG; Cognitive strategy, MEM; Memory strategy, SOC; Social strategy, DET; Determination strategy.

2.12.2. Nation's Taxonomy

Nation (2001) suggests a taxonomy of various vocabulary learning strategies. The strategies in the taxonomy are divided into three general classes of 'planning', 'source' and 'processes', each of which is divided into a subset of key strategies. The taxonomy separates different aspects of vocabulary knowledge (i.e., what is involved in knowing a word).

The first category (i.e., planning) involves deciding on where, how and how often to focus attention on the vocabulary item. The strategies in this category are choosing words, choosing aspects of word knowledge and choosing strategies as well as planning repetition.

The second category in Nation's taxonomy involves getting information about the word. This information may include all the aspects involved in knowing a word. It can come from the word form itself, from the context, from a reference source like dictionaries or glossaries and from analogies and connections with other languages. In Nation's taxonomy (2001), process is the last category of vocabulary learning strategies. It includes establishing word knowledge through noticing, retrieving and generating strategies. To Nation, noticing involves seeing the word item to be learned. Strategies at this level include putting the word

in a vocabulary notebook or list; putting the word onto a word card and orally and visually repeating the word. He argues that although these strategies are all of recording type, they are useful steps resulting in deeper processing of words. Retrieval involves recalling the items met before. It contains recalling knowledge in the same way it was originally stored. Nation (2001) also finds that generating strategies include “attaching new aspects of knowledge to what is known through instantiation (i.e., visualizing examples of words), word analysis, semantic mapping and using scales and grids. Generating strategies include rule-driven generation as well, such as creating context, collocations, and sentences containing the new word. Besides, the mnemonic strategies and using the word in different context through four skills are also defined as generating strategies.

Generally, even though the taxonomies cited above may slightly differ in terms of strategies they categorize, they all provide a list of widely applicable vocabulary learning strategies. There are many words on which teachers may not be able to spend time within the class time limits. Thus, if students are equipped with a number of the strategies mentioned in the taxonomies, they can deal with these words on their own and as a result have access to a large number of target language words.

To sum up, it has been discussed autonomy and autonomous learners in vocabulary learning and some factors that enhance the learners’ autonomy to take charge of own learning and confidence. Therefore there should be considered possible ways of fostering learners’ autonomy in vocabulary. Learners to be responsible for their learning, they need to develop the skill to use vocabulary learning strategies effectively and efficiently; they need to have positive attitude towards autonomous learning, and, finally, they need to use every opportunity to learn the language. Finally, theoretical basis related to learner autonomy, vocabulary, vocabulary learning and learner autonomy in vocabulary learning has been reviewed. These theories will serve as the foundation for the researcher to form and carry out the study according to specific methodology that will be elaborated in the next chapter.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study was designed to assess the learners’ autonomy in vocabulary learning. Hence, mixed method approach was used in which the researcher applied both qualitative and quantitative research techniques so as to increase the quality of final result of the research; and to clarify and illustrate the obtained findings from one method with the use of other. This approach helped to address objectives of the study; and helps strengthen the assessment of the issues by supplementing one approach with other (Best & Khan 1999).

3.1. The subjects of the study

The source of data considered in this study were students and English language teachers of Chanco Preparatory School in the first semester of 2013/14 academic year. The student participants consisted of grade twelve students because students at this level are assumed to have better awareness about language learning and the school has been selected because of easy access to the researcher.

The necessity of considering English language teachers as a source of data for this study is due to their long time teaching experience of English language teaching activities and their concern, expectation and understanding of students’ level of independent and autonomous learning.

3.2. Population and Sampling procedure

The target population of the study were grade twelve students in Oromia region, Arsi Zone Chanco Preparatory School. They were selected through random sampling techniques as it gives equal opportunity for the selection of the participants. The sample size of the student participants were 104 (50%) from the total population of 208 for questionnaires and six students were involved in the interview.

Due to their small number, all three English language teachers of grade twelve were also selected for the interview. Therefore, interview was conducted with three teachers who are currently teaching English for grade twelve in the school.

3.3. Data collection Instrument

The data gathering tools employed in this study were questionnaires, classroom observations and semi-structured interview. Questionnaire was the main tool of data collection; while classroom observation and semi-structured interview were used as supporting instruments to obtain adequate and authentic information along with triangulation. These instruments were aimed at eliciting the required data or information for the sake of assessing learners' autonomy in vocabulary learning in EFL class.

3.3.1. Questionnaire

Questionnaire is widely used in educational research to obtain information about certain conditions of an individual or group, (Kaul, 1984). Therefore, to get an information about students' practice of autonomy in vocabulary learning and their learning strategy, the researcher used questionnaire with closed form questions to gather relevant data for the study. Hence, it was prepared for randomly selected students to gain ample information in quantified form on the topic. Likert scale was used to measure continuous variables. That is, the questionnaire consisted of statements whose responses ranged from strongly disagree to strongly agree to know varied perceptions of the students. The reason of using questionnaire is that it is easy to summarize the data collected from respondents and it was distributed for the students during the opposite shift of their class. The instrument concerned with elicited information about students' background information, problems in practicing the language both in and outside class room, planning of autonomous learning, self monitoring and self evaluation and evaluating peers on vocabulary learning.

For better understanding of the questionnaires, the participants were given a brief orientation and Afan Oromo translation for the items in the questionnaire.

3.3.2. Semi Structured Interview

The researcher designed semi structured interview for grade twelve English language teachers and students because semi structured interview is rigorous and flexible and it helps to elaborate data concerning respondents' opinions, experiences and feeling on the topic under the study. To gather relevant data in interview, one volunteer student from each five classes and adding one volunteer student totally six students were selected using simple random sampling technique to understand the vocabulary practice of all students. The researcher took notes of the responses given by the respondents. The purpose of interviewing teachers was to cross check and probe more information about the practice of learner autonomy in vocabulary learning in the school. Since the number of English teachers was limited, all of them were included in the interview to gather relevant information or data for the study.

3.3.3. Classroom Observation

In addition to questionnaire and interview, observation was used to collect in depth information about particular variables. As Seliger and Shohamy (1989) state, observation is mainly used to examine a phenomenon or behavior while it is going on.

To cross check the data obtained from the questionnaire and to see what teachers actually do during the class, two observations of each teacher were made. Classroom observation was employed to check the consistency of the data gathered through the questionnaire and semi-structured interview. Observation was used to capture practices as they occur in the classroom.

3.4. Data Collection procedures

Before collecting the data, the instrument of the data was prepared carefully and permission from school principal was taken. Similarly semi-structured interview questions were prepared. Furthermore, the checklist were also prepared for an observation. Thereafter, the objectives of the study was explained to all the subjects. Their willingness to participate in filling the questionnaire and answering the interview questions were also discussed. Finally the questionnaires were distributed. The students' questionnaire was filled in the class under the supervision of the researcher. Time for asking the semi structured interview was arranged with the teachers and was carried out accordingly and finally observation was held in classroom according to the programme.

3.5. Method of Data Analysis

After carefully gathering the appropriate data, using the instruments of data collection mentioned, the quantitative data was analyzed using different statistical tools, Such as frequency, percentile and a concurrent strategy (Cresswell, 2003.) was analyzed and used to interpret some qualitative data.

The data collected through questionnaires were analyzed quantitatively in the form of tabulations, frequency counts and percentage. It was analyzed in such a way that frequencies counted for each agreeing and disagreeing statements and ranging from always to never. Then, the extent of agreement, disagreement and neutral responses were assorted and set in tables based on sequence of the questions. The counted frequencies were then converted into percentage responses and set in tables for which more interpretations, descriptions, discussions and explanations were given to each of them. Data from all sources were presented and discussed jointly along certain successive thematic topic of the study. The descriptive statistics were also employed for proper analysis of quantitative data and the data collected through qualitative tools were analyzed descriptively and mixed with the quantitative data. Qualitative approach was used to analyze the data gathered through interview and observation. Both qualitative and quantitative data were presented in an integrated manner. All of the responses of the subjects were compared and contrasted to arrive at sound conclusion.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

As discussed in previous chapter, the data were collected through questionnaire, interview and classroom observation. These data gathering tools were employed to complement one another and to see the reliability of the responses. The analyses of the results which were collected through these tools had been presented point by point by triangulation. In order to analyze the assessment of learners' autonomy in vocabulary learning, the following data were summarized by merging the values: strongly agree and agree as agree (positive, favorable)

and strongly disagree and disagree as disagree (negative, unfavorable) views and undecided was retained as it is. The results were analyzed by using frequency and percentage.

4.1. Efforts of learners on vocabulary learning

4.1.1 Efforts of learners on Searching opportunity in vocabulary learning

Table 1: Learners' response on searching for opportunity in vocabulary learning

n o	Item	Responses													
		Agree						Undeci ded UD(3)	Disagree						
		SA(5)		A(4)		Total			DA(2)		SD(1)		Total		
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
1	I take part in classroom activities concerning vocabulary drills.	9	8.7	15	14.4	24	23	2	1.9	37	35.5	4	3.9	78	75
2	I practice English vocabulary both in and outside the classroom.	22	21.1	19	18.2	41	39.4	3	2.8	43	41.3	1	0.9	60	57.6
3	I search for opportunities to practice vocabulary.	21	20.1	20	19.2	41	39.4	-	-	46	44.23	1	0.9	63	60.5

Key. SA: Strongly Agree, A: Agree, UD: Undecided, D: Disagree, SD: Strongly Disagree.

As it can be seen from item 1, a considerable number of students 78 (75 %) did not take part in classroom activities in vocabulary learning. Besides, only 24 (23.1 %) took part in classroom activities in vocabulary learning, while only 2 (1.9 %) of the respondents were unable to respond whether they took part or not. By supporting the same idea, one of the students viewed that,

When we learn vocabulary in classroom, we are simply made to do only class work or homework on the given vocabulary exercise. We are not encouraged to take part in different activities on vocabulary drills; even we simply learn vocabulary from board or from written materials and we are only expected to answer the vocabulary questions in the classrooms.(S2)

From the above response one can guess that learners did not take part in classroom activities concerning vocabulary drills. As can be seen from the above table, item 2 , 60 (57.6 %) of the students did not practice vocabulary both in and outside the classroom. While, 41 (

39.4 %) of the respondents responded that they practice it both in and outside the classroom. Besides, 3 (2.8 %) of respondents were unable to respond.

Similarly, in the data obtained from interview with learners, they explained that they believed in practicing vocabulary both in and outside the classroom is important, but they do not practice it because they did not have language skills and self confidence to practice the vocabulary on their own. Besides, during observation most of the students did not practice it in vocabulary learning in classroom.

In item 3, the subjects were asked if they search for opportunities to practice vocabulary in classroom. Majority of the students 63 (60.5 %) did not search for opportunities. However, 41 (39.4 %) of the respondents agree that they search for opportunities to practice vocabulary in language. Regarding to the above analysis, one of the teachers responded during interview that:

They rarely search for opportunities to learn vocabulary by their own. When they were in classroom, they simply taking notes receiving lecture from me, I think this is because of they do not have any access and ability to practice outside the classroom that makes them depend them only on teachers.(T-2)

This probably shows that the students did not adequately search for opportunities to practice vocabulary and they did not practice vocabulary both in and outside the classroom. However, scholars like Atkins et.al (1995) describe that students are supposed to seek opportunities to practice vocabulary in language outside the classroom. As Wenden (1991) also states, autonomous learners search opportunities to communicate in target language with native speakers whenever possible and to know acts of communication.

4.1.2 Efforts of learners on self management

Table 2: Learners' response on their efforts on self management

n o	Item	Responses													
		Agree						Unde cided UD(3)	Disagree						
		SA(5)		A(4)		Total			DA(2)		SD(1)		Total		
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
1	I am confident of my knowledge of English vocabulary learning.	14	13.4	20	19.2	34	32.6	5	4.8	44	42.3	21	20.2	65	62.5
2	I correct myself when I notice that I have made a mistake in vocabulary.	19	18.2	22	21.1	41	39.4	6	5.7	34	32.6	24	23.1	58	55.7
3	I choose my own	1	18	2	2	47	45	2	1.	41	39	14	13	5	52.

	relevant materials to develop the vocabulary skills.	9	.2	8	6.9		.2		9		.4		.4	5	8
4	I plan my own vocabulary learning objectives by myself.	26	25	20	19.2	46	44.2	4	3.8	36	34.6	18	17.3	54	51.9
5	I monitor my own learning and evaluate my progress in learning vocabulary on my own.	19	18.3	25	24	44	42.3	4	3.8	43	41.3	13	12.5	56	53.9

Key. SA: Strongly Agree, A: Agree, UD: Undecided, D: Disagree, SD: Strongly Disagree.

Item 1 was designed to identify whether they are confident of their English vocabulary learning. When we compare the results, most of the students 65 (62.5 %) were not confident on the knowledge of vocabulary. Similarly, only 34 (32.6 %) of the respondents responded that they were confident, while 5 (4.8 %) were unable to respond.

Similarly Following up interview with students, most of them narrated as they were not confident at their knowledge of English vocabularies because they have not a base to use different vocabularies. Their lack of confidence on using vocabulary merge from their perception and lack of support. From this one can infer that the respondents were not confident at their knowledge of English vocabulary,

Item 2 was designed to find out whether they correct themselves when they notice that they have made a mistake. The table above shows the majority of the respondents 58 (55.7 %) did not correct themselves when they make mistake. while, only 41 (39.4 %) respondents corrected themselves when they made mistake. The other 6 (5.7 %) respondents did not respond whether they correct their mistake or not. So, from this, one can suppose the respondents did not correct themselves when they notice that they made mistakes. Many scholars like Macaro, (1997) have disclosed if learners are aware of their mistakes in language learning, they can be responsible for their own learning.

Item 3 shows, a significant number of students 55 (52.8 %) did not choose or find their own relevant materials to develop their vocabulary skills. In other way, when 47 (45.2 %) of the respondents choose their own relevant material, the other 2 (1.9 %) respondents did not respond on the item. Regarding this point, one of the learners stated:

We are not encouraged to produce our own materials; like, model exercises and the other. Instead, we use vocabulary of teachers and the textbook and we do not exert additional effort in classroom discussion. (S-5)

Similarly from teachers' interview, one teacher stated that:

I do not allow them to chose their own materials because of various reasons: we have only 40 minutes to teach the planned contents and though I tried to give this chance for them, they could not prepare their own materials, they do not like to do so, they habited to follow only teachers' lecture. (T-4)

Similarly, observation result show that most of the time, teachers simply lecture in the given time, they did not observe giving chance for students to draw their own model exercises.

It is possible to deduce, most of the students did not produce the target language model exercise rather than they use vocabularies of the teachers and the textbook. However, as Nunan, Lai & Kobke (1999) describes, autonomy is fostered when learners are involved to find their own language data and create their own tasks and actively involved in productiveness of language rather than merely producing language models provided by the teacher or the textbooks.

Item 4 shows, a majority of students 54 (51.9 %) did not plan their own vocabulary learning objectives by themselves and only 46 (44.2 %) plan their own vocabulary learning objectives by themselves, while 4 (3.8 %) did not respond. What can be inferred from the result is, subjects were aware of anticipating learning task, that is, they understood the conditions that help them learn and would preview the main ideas to be learned. However, as Wenden (1991), explain that planning one’s own learning is one of the self management strategies that help learners to learn the languages. As Wenden claims learner refers to difficulty they experienced in the language and when they recognize that they cannot express their ideas or the language or understand what other said: they had not acquired practical vocabulary or they may not express themselves properly in the right way, when monitoring their efforts, become aware of difficulties in processing.

Similarly item 5 also shows that majority of students 56 (53.9 %) did not monitor their own learning and evaluate their progress in learning vocabulary on their own. Besides, 44 (42.4 %) of the respondents did monitor their own learning and evaluate their progress in learning vocabulary .while, 4 (3.8 %) of respondents were unable to respond to this item. Similarly, the data obtained from teachers’ interview also supports this situation:

Most of the students did not plan learning not only vocabulary but the other language skills. They focused only on what I explained and directed to them. Moreover, most of them did not monitor and evaluate on their own in vocabulary learning.(T-1)

From this, one can deduce that most of the students did not plan their objectives, monitor their own learning and evaluate their learning outcomes by themselves. On the other hand, according to Tudor (1993), every teaching situation involves the interaction between a given methods, learners and wider socio cultural context of learning. Teaching methods needs thus to be selected not only based on what seems theoretically plausible, but also on the basis of experience, personality and expectations of learners involved.

4.1.3 Attempts to understand learning resources in vocabulary learning

Table 3 Attempts to understand learning resources in vocabulary learning

no	Item	Responses													
		Agree						Undec ided UD(3)	Disagree						
		SA(5)		A(4)		Total			DA(2)		SD(1)		Total		
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
1	I solve learning problems by myself.	20	19.3	22	21.1	42	40.4	67	5.7	44	42.3	12	11.5	56	53.8

2	I ask teachers to explain if I could not understand the word in lesson.	7	6.7	19	18.3	26	25.6	5	4.8	62	59.6	11	10.6	73	70.2
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Key. SA: Strongly Agree, A: Agree, UD: Undecided, D: Disagree, SD: Strongly Disagree.

In the table 3 item 1, only 42 (40.4 %) of the respondents solve their learning problems by themselves. On the other hands, majority of the respondents 56 (53.8 %) did not solve their learning problems by themselves and item 2 was designed to know if the learners ask teacher to explain if they could not understand the word in lesson. The result shows that, 73 (70.2 %) of the respondents did not ask for teachers to explain if they could not understand the word in the lesson. In other words, only 26 (25 %) responded that they asked for teachers to explain and 5 (4.8 %) were unable to respond. Similarly from students' interview:

If simple problems encountered me, I tried to solve as much as possible and I tried to understand learning source on my own but I need for explanation of teacher and I am not confident on my ability to understand learning source myself. It is difficult for me especially in vocabulary area, the reason may be lack of prior knowledge on vocabulary.(S-6)

It may not be difficult to infer that most of the students possibly show that students are supposed to understand different learning sources by themselves in learning vocabulary and they did not solve learning problems by their own and they did not ask questions for clarification in the classroom. Similarly, in an observed class, most of the students were not sufficiently seen in asking questions to their teachers rather they were simply sat and listened to their teachers' explanation and they were writing the given vocabularies from the blackboard.

However, students are supposed to understand different sources by themselves, In this regard, Wenden (1991) suggested 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.

4.1.4 Responsibility taking of the learners in vocabulary learning

Table 4: Questionnaires related to responsibility in vocabulary learning

no	Item	Responses													
		Agree						Undecided		Disagree					
		SA(5)		A(4)		Total		UD(3)		DA(2)		SD(1)		Total	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
1	I am responsible for finding my own ways to practice	22	21.2	41	39.4	63	60.6	4	3.9	27	25.9	10	9.7	37	35.6

	vocabulary.														
2	I can identify my strength and weakness on vocabulary learning.	22	21.2	37	35.6	58	55.8	9	8.7	22	21.2	15	14.4	37	35.6

Key. SA: Strongly Agree, A: Agree, UD: Undecided, D: Disagree, SD: Strongly Disagree.

Item 1 in the above table was designed to investigate whether students were aware of their responsibility for finding ways of practicing vocabulary in English language. When we compare the results, the majority of the subjects 63 (60.6 %) agreed that they were aware of their responsibility to find ways of practicing. On the other hand, 37 (35.56 %) of the subjects responded that they were not aware of their responsibility to find ways of practicing vocabulary in English language. Whereas, 4 (3.9 %) of the respondents were unable to decide whether they are responsible or not. From this, it would be possible to say subjects were aware of their own roles and responsibilities and they are the owners of their own learning. This can lead learners to go beyond the classroom and make links between the contents of classroom learning and the world beyond classroom.

In item 2, the subjects were asked if they were aware of their efforts to identify their strength and weakness. As the table shows majority of the students 58 (55.8 %) agreed that they were aware of their role to identify their strength and weakness. However, 37 (35.6 %) were not aware of their strength and weakness and only 9 (8.7 %) of the subjects failed to decide.

In follow up interview, students were asked what should be their responsibilities to improve their own English vocabularies. Of six subjects who participated in interview five of the respondents were aware of their responsibilities in vocabulary learning. One student replied as follows:

We know as we have responsibility for finding our ways to practice vocabulary and identifying our efforts where we are and what is left to be as we are the owner of English vocabulary. But, it is difficult for us to use even in expressing ourselves.(S-3)

From this information, it may be noted that students were aware of responsibility to identify their responsibilities and strength and weakness in learning vocabulary. They are aware of problem identification strategy, which is one of the metacognitive strategy mentioned in the review of literature.

4.2 Types of vocabulary learning strategies used by learners

4.2.1 Learners Use of Determination Strategies

This section shows the determination strategies which were reported being employed by the students under the present research in order to learn vocabulary. Determination strategies included different individual vocabulary learning strategies. The following is the frequency of each strategy use under the determination category.

Table 5: Learners Use of Determination Strategies

No	Item	Responses	
		Some	

		Always (5)		Usually(4)		Total		times(3)		Rarely (2)		Never (1)		Total	
		f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
1	I learn vocabulary more from dictionary.	19	18.3	34	32.7	53	50.9	22	21.2	19	18.3	--	--	19	18.3
2	I use library resources to develop my English vocabulary.	8	7.7	19	18.3	27	25.9	32	30.8	42	40.4	3	2.9	45	43.3
3	I guess the meaning of the word from the context.	9	8.7	47	45.1	56	54.6	26	24.8	22	20.7	-	-	22	20.7

*Fre. =frequency

According to table 5, item 1, students were required to say whether they learn vocabulary more from dictionary. As the data shows, the majority of the respondents 53 (50.9 %) claimed that they were frequently doing it. Moreover, 22 (21.2 %) of the respondents were sometimes trying to learn vocabulary from dictionary. The rest 19 (18.3 %) of the subjects were rarely using dictionary for new words. This data almost accords with the information gathered from students' interview:

Most of the time I use dictionary to understand or define new words because it is accessible for me and when I get the meaning of the new words once, I do not forget it. (S- 3)

By supporting the same idea, student 6 viewed that,
I use dictionary to learn vocabulary more and I usually in favor of learning vocabulary through translation of meaning in dictionary. It is because of this strategy can help me to expand quality of my vocabulary and easy to memorize words using this way. (S-6)

From the above view of the respondents, one can infer that they learn more new words from dictionary. This is consistent with what scholars suggest. For example, Atkins and Nuru (1995) state that students are expected to seek information from a variety of sources like dictionaries, grammar books, etc.

Item 2 was designed to investigate if learners were using library with the intention of improving vocabulary learning. As the result indicates, the majority of the respondents 45 (43.3 %) reported that they rarely use library while 27 (25.9 %) of the subjects rated they frequently do this. While the other 32 (30.8 %) of the respondents use library sometimes. By supporting the same idea, teacher 5 viewed that,

Our students rarely use library because in our school there are few reference books and they are too oldies and the other reason is they have no interest to expend their time in library. (T-1)

From the above information, it may be possible to say that students were not using library properly to improve their vocabulary because of different reasons. The interview with learners also show that they did not use library for English vocabulary rather for other subjects. However, scholars like Hoffmann (1999) claims that autonomous learners take the initiative in using the necessary resources to achieve their goals.

Item 3, was designed to see whether students were guessing the meaning of the words from contexts. The majority of the respondents 56 (54.6%) were frequently guessing while 26 (24.6%) of the subjects apply this strategies sometimes. Unlike the above respondents 22 (20.7%) of the students were rarely guessing when they face difficult words while they read and listen. In interview part, the students were asked what techniques or learning strategies they were employing to learn vocabulary. Most of the students said they were guessing the meaning of new words, while the remaining subjects were using dictionary to find the meaning of words they cannot understand while they read or listen.

From the above response, one can deduce that most of the students tried to guess the meaning of new words from the context and they also use dictionary to understand the new words. So, it seem that students usually use determination strategy more. Similarly many Scholars like Wenden (1991) suggested that learners have to be good guessers to be autonomous learners. Nation (2001) also mentions in Learning Vocabulary in Another Language that learning from guessing word meanings from context is the most important strategy of all the sources of vocabulary learning. It can contribute to the learning process directly. Context can connect the word knowledge to the knowledge that learners already have.

4.2.2 Learners Use of Social Strategies

Table 6: learners Use of Social Strategies

n o	Item	Responses															
		Always (5)						Some times (3)				Rarely (2)				Never (1)	
		Usual ly(4)		Total		Total		Total		Total		Total		Total			
		F	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
1	I ask teachers to explain if I do not understand the word in lesson.	12	11.5	22	21.2	34	32.7	33	31.7	32	30.2	5	4.8	37	35.6		
2	I usually ask teachers for Afan Oromo/Amharic translation for new words.	23	22.1	42	40.4	65	62.5	31	29.8	8	7.7	-	-	8	7.7		
3	I ask teacher for or paraphrase	11	11	24	23	35	33	38	36	21	20	10	9	31	29		

synonym of new words	0.6	3	.7	6	.2	8	.8
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*Fre. =frequency

Item 1 was designed to find out the extent to which students ask teachers to clarify vocabulary words. According to the responses in the table 6 shows, the majority of the respondents 37 (35.9%) were poorly practicing it. Moreover, 34 (32.7%) subjects were asking sometimes and frequently for clarification. The result obtained from classroom observation shows that the majority of the students were not asking for clarification that they did not understand while learning: Instead, they observed that they simply attend the class by listening to their teacher presentation and they write the given vocabulary from board. From the above information, it can be concluded that learners were not trying to ask teachers for explanation and we can say that students were not practicing the questioning for clarification.

Item 2 was designed to elicit if students were asking teachers for Afan Oromo/Amharic translation for new words. As the data in the table depicted, the majority of the subjects 65 (62.5%) responded, they were frequently asking for translation. However, only 8(7.7 %) of the students were not asking for translation of new words in their native language; While, 31 (29.8 %) of the respondents ask for the translation. During the classroom observation it assured that most of the students need to translate for new words and they are observed to ask for translation.

In item 3, the majority of the respondents 73 (71.3%) were frequently do and sometimes were asking for paraphrase or synonyms of new words. However, only 31(29.8%) responded that they were rarely asking their teachers to paraphrase for them. Regarding this one of the teacher responded that:

I usually do this, I encourage them to ask for clarification or ask for explanation if they do not understand the meaning. But, only few students ask me, the others do not ask because they are afraid and they do not have enough word to ask and they usually ask for L1 translation for new words and sometimes they ask me to tell them the new words in other way.(T-3)

Accordingly, the data depicted that the learners were asking their teachers for translating vocabularies to their native languages and they need to paraphrasing new words in the classroom. But, they did not ask the teacher for clarification in English language. However, Schimitt(1997) stated that the best way to discover the new word is through employing the social strategies of asking someone for help with the unknown words.

4.2.3 Learners Use of Memory Strategies

Table 7: learners Use of Memory Strategies

n o	Item	Responses						
					Some times(3)			
		Alw ays (5)	Usual ly(4)	Total		Rarely (2)	Never (1)	Total

		f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
1	I use new words in the sentences in order to remember them easily.	2	1.9	9	8.7	11	10.6	27	26	53	51	9	8.7	62	60
2	I connect the new words to its synonyms or antonyms.	15	14.1	16	15.1	31	29.9	24	23.1	43	41.3	6	5.8	49	47.1
3	I Group or divide words together to study their meanings.	13	12.5	21	20.2	33	31.7	26	25	36	34.6	8	7.7	45	43.3

*Fre. =frequency

This section shows the memory strategies which were reported being employed by the students under the present research in order to learn vocabulary. The following is the frequency of each strategy use under the memory category.

Item 1 was aimed at collecting data to know whether the students use new words in the sentences in order to remember them easily. As can be seen from the above table, most of the respondents 62 (60 %) use it rarely and 27 (26 %) of the students indicated that they do so sometimes, while only 11 (10.6 %) replied that they frequently activate new words not to forget it. From this response, one can deduce that learners did not use new words in the sentences in order to remember them easily. Such apparent lack of using certain strategies may have a tremendous impact on their independent learning. As mentioned in the review of related literature for learners to be successful in their learning vocabulary they need to use different strategies. However, the subjects were not successful in doing so.

Item 2 in table 7 was intended to find out if students connect the new words to its synonyms or antonyms. According to the data, the majority of the respondents 49 (47 %) respondents reported that they do so rarely while 24 (23.1 %) were connect it sometimes. The remaining 31 (29.9 %) of the subjects used it frequently.

For response to item 3 table 7, the majority of the respondents 45 (43.3 %) were rarely grouping or dividing words together, while 26 (25%) of the subjects apply this strategy sometimes. Unlike the above respondents 33 (31.7%) of the students frequently grouped or divided words together to learn vocabulary more. From the above response learners were not use new words in the sentences in order to remember them easily and they did not connect the new words to its synonyms or antonyms and they also were not Grouping or dividing words together to study their meaning. So, learners did not use the memory strategies to learn vocabulary. However, according to Scholars like Schemitts, (1997) memory strategies, traditionally known as Mnemonics, involve relating the word with some previously learned knowledge by using some form of imagery or grouping and it is in the simplest way of acquiring vocabulary.

4.2.4 Learners Use of Cognitive Strategies

Table 8: Learners Use of Cognitive Strategies

n o	Item	Responses													
								Some times(3)							
		Always (5)		Usually (4)		Total				Rarely(2)		Never (1)		Total	
		f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
1	I use text book glossary for understanding words.	3	2.9	33	31.7	3	34.6	51	49	1	15.4	1	9.6	17	16.3
2	I study the spelling of the words.	11	10.6	12	11.5	2	22.1	29	27.8	4	42.3	8	77	52	50

*Fre. =frequency

Item 1 was intended to investigate if learners use text book glossary for understanding new words. It shows, the majority of subjects 51 (49 %) sometimes used text book glossary for understanding new words. while, 36 (34.6 %) of the respondents use the glossary frequently. However, only 17 (16.3 %) rarely used text book glossary . In addition to this, the interview made with teachers revealed that, most of the students were able to use textbook glossary for understanding new words.

In item 2 of table 8, students were required to say whether they study the spelling of the words. As the data shows, the majority of the respondents 52 (50 %) claimed that they were rarely studying the spelling of words. Moreover, 29 (27.8 %) of the respondents replied, they were sometimes studying the spelling. The rest 23 (22.1 %) of the subjects were frequently studying the spelling of words. From the above view of the respondents, one can deduce that learners use text book glossary some times for understanding the new words. But, they did not study the spelling of the words to learn vocabulary. So, As we can see from the above table, most of the individual strategies under the cognitive category reported being employed by the students were at the medium frequency level. As Schemitts, (1997), Cognitive strategies in this taxonomy are similar to memory strategies but are not focused on manipulative mental processing. They include repetition and using mechanical means such as word lists, flash cards, and vocabulary notebooks to study words and as important strategies of learning vocabulary.

4.2.5 Learners' Use of Metacognitive Strategies

Table 9. Learners Use of Metacognitive Strategies

n o	Item	Responses			
				Some	

		Always (5)		Usualy(4)		Total		times (3)		Rarely (2)		Neve r(1)		Total	
		f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
1	I test myself with word test during studying.	8	7.7	23	22.1	31	30.7	32	31.1	34	32	7	6.2	41	39.4
2	I usually skip/pass the new words in the passage.	21	20.2	34	32.7	55	52.9	37	35.6	9	8.7	3	2.9	11	10.6

*Fre. =frequency

Item 1 was designed to elicit if students test themselves with word test during studying. In response to the item 1, the majority of the subjects 41(39.4 %) responded that they were rarely test themselves with word test during studying vocabulary. However, only 31 (30.7%) test themselves frequently; while 32 (30.7 %) of the respondents do it sometimes. From this one can deduce that learners did not test themselves with word test during studying vocabulary.

Item 2 was designed to know if students were usually skip/pass the new words in the passage. In response to the item 2, the majority of the subjects 55 (52.9 %) responded that they frequently skip or pass the new words in the passage. However, only 11 (10.6 %) of the students were rarely skip or pass the new words when reading or listening; While, 37(35.6 %) of the respondents do sometimes.

As revealed in the above table, all the strategies under meta cognitive category were reported to be employed by the students at the medium frequency level (continue to study word overtime, use spaced word practiced, skip or pass new word, use English language media, and testing oneself with word lists) respectively. As Schemitts, (1997), testing oneself is an instance of meta cognitive strategies which provides input to the effectiveness of one's choice of learning strategies, providing positive reinforcement if progress is being made.

Very few reported strategies that involved detailed elaboration of word meaning complex. These evidences suggested that the students typically did not use complex vocabulary strategies.

4.3 Learners' view on the extent that teachers encouraged them in learning vocabulary autonomously.

Table 10: learners' responses related to the extent encouraged by teacher

n	Item	Responses
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0		Agree						Undecided		Disagree					
		SA(5)		A(4)		Total		UD(3)		DA(2)		SD(1)		Total	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
1	The teacher create opportunities for us to practice vocabulary.	24	23.1	44	42.3	64	61.6	8	7.7	28	26.9	5	4.8	33	31.7
2	The teacher makes us to rely on his explanation in vocabulary learning.	29	27.9	44	42.3	73	70.2	5	4.8	18	17.3	8	7.7	26	25
3	I can learn English vocabulary successfully without the help of teacher.	9	8.7	26	25	35	33.7	7	6.7	46	44.2	1	16.3	63	60.6
4	The teacher trains us how to plan learning objectives and how to monitor our effort to learn vocabulary.	17	16.3	22	21.1	38	36.5	3	2.9	39	37.5	2	23.4	63	60.6
5	The teachers train us how to evaluate the effect of specific efforts to learn the language on our own.	18	17.3	25	24	43	41.3	4	3.8	38	36.5	1	17.3	56	53.9
6	The teacher initiates us to ask	14	13.1	48	46.2	62	59.6	7	6.7	24	23	1	10.6	35	33.6

questions for clarification.		5												
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Key. SA: Strongly Agree, A: Agree, UD: Undecided, D: Disagree, SD: Strongly Disagree.

Item 1, was designed to investigate whether their teachers are creating opportunities for the students to practice vocabulary or not. A significant number of students: 64 (61.6 %) indicated that their teachers create opportunities for students to practice; while 33 (31.7 %) of respondents disagree that their teachers create opportunity for them to practice. Of all the subjects, only 8 students (7.7 %) were unable to rate their views. Therefore, this shows that learners were aware of teacher’s role towards creating opportunities for learners to practice vocabulary. Regarding this, Scharle and SZabo (2000) suggested that learners’ responsibility could develop if learners allow more room for involvement.

Item 2, was aimed to investigate whether the teacher makes them rely on his explanation in vocabulary learning. The majority of the subjects, 73 (70.2 %) agreed that teacher made them rely on their explanation. Nevertheless, 26 (25 %) were not in the position to agree with the idea; while, 5(4.8 %)of respondents were unable to respond.

In follow up interview, students were asked what especially they like or dislike about teachers’ explanation. Five of the six students said, they like when the teachers explains everything. This issue was also observed in classroom during the researchers’ twice classroom observation in vocabulary session. Almost all the participants have a positive view about teachers’ explanation. Similarly from teachers’ interview all teachers supported that learners did not like to work themselves, instead they like spoon feeding. Many of the students agreed that it is the responsibility of the teacher to ensure learning vocabulary when teachers encourage students to work independently, they were considered as if they were tired or bored of teaching.

From this, it would be possible to say that students were not aware of independent learning. Scholars like Kohonen,et.al (2001) disclosed, teachers role is helping learners to develop their learning strategies to be better equipped to exercise their independence.

Item 3, was designed to investigate whether learners were aware that vocabulary learning could be done without teacher. As can be seen from the above table, the majority of the subjects 62 (60.6 %) were not aware that a lot of vocabulary learning could be done without teacher; whereas, 35 (33.7 %) of the respondents were aware that vocabulary learning can be done without teacher. Only insignificant number of students,i.e. 7 (6.7 %) were unable to decide. The data from the students’ interview shows that:

I do not think so. Because, starting from lower grade we relied on our teachers and we do not have ability of learning of learning without teachers. I think this need more reading and confidence, but we do not have this. Unlike the other subjects, I do not think English vocabulary is learnt without teacher. (S-4)

From this, one can conclude that, students cannot learn English vocabulary without the help of teacher. However, Scholars like Dam (1995) suggests, learners can take their first step towards autonomy when they accept responsibility for their own leaning. Learners’ autonomy depends on a capacity for detachment, critical reflection, decision making, and independent action (Huttunen, 1986). In this case, we can say that students were not aware of that they could learn English without teacher.

As it can be depicted from the above table item 5, significant number 63 (60.6 %) did not agree with the idea that their teacher train them how to plan and monitor their effort to learn vocabulary. In addition, only 38 (36.5 %) on respondents agree that their teacher train them how to plan and monitor their effort to learn vocabulary. While, 3(2.9 %)did not respond on this.

Similarly, on the next item 5, majority of the respondents 56 (53.9 %) did not support that their teachers train them how to evaluate the effect of specific efforts to learn vocabulary on their own. In contrast, only 43 (41.3 %) respondents agreed this idea, while 4 (3.8 %) of respondents did not respond. The data obtained from interview also indicate:

I did not train them out of the text book; I teach on the bases of what has already been planned in the text book. (T-2)

In supporting this, during class room observation, the teachers were not also seen in training the learners how to plan, monitor and evaluate their learning on their own. This possibly shows that most of teachers did not adequately train the learners the meta cognitive strategy. However, the literature reveals that learning will be meaningful and valid when learners learn how to plan, monitor and evaluate their learning vocabulary on their own.

Item 6 was designed to know whether the teacher initiates them to ask question or not, as the data shows, the majority of students 62 (59.6 %) agreed that their teachers initiate them to ask questions for clarification. However, 35 (33.6 %) of respondents expressed their disagreement on teachers initiation to ask questions while 7 (6.7) did not respond to this. Furthermore, they encourage learners to develop positive attitude towards their ability to learn vocabulary on their own. In contrary, all of the teachers did not motivate learners to organize vocabulary learning activities on their own. However, most of the teachers usually initiated the learners to ask questions for clarification. One of the teachers responded during interview as follows:

I encourage learners to develop self confidence on their ability to learn the vocabulary by making them to ask different questions. On other hand, I encourage them to develop positive attitude towards their responsibility to learn vocabulary on their own to some extent.(T-3)

However, in the observed class, the teachers were not seen in encouraging the learners to develop positive attitudes towards their responsibility to learn vocabulary on their own; they were not motivating learners to organize learning activities on their own and initiating them to ask questions for clarification. Instead, they were observed initiating learners to answer questions raised by teachers by themselves. From this, one can deduce that most of teachers did not adequately encourage 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, these students 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 responsibilities. In addition, Crabbe (1999) asserts that learners need to be motivated to organize learning activities by themselves.

4.4 Challenges of learning English vocabulary Autonomously

Table 11: Questionnaires that is related to challenges of learning vocabulary

no	Item	Responses													
		Agree						Undec ided UD(3)	Disagree						
		SA(5)		A(4)		Total			DA(2)		SD(1)		Total		
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%

1	My lack of knowledge on vocabulary affects me to learn English independently.	42	40 .4	19	18 .2	6 1	58 .7	7	6. 7	2 8	26. 9	8	7. 7	36	34 .6
2	The reason why I can be good or bad in vocabulary is because I have good or bad teacher.	45	43 .2	30	28 .8	7 5	72 .1	9	8. 7	1 3	12. 5	7	6. 7	20	19 .2
3	During studying, paying more attention to grammar and other skills rather than vocabulary challenges me in vocabulary learning.	42	40 .4	42	40 .4	8 4	80 .7	2	1. 9	1 3	12. 5	5	4. 4	18	17 .3

Key. SA: Strongly Agree, A: Agree, UD: Undecided, D: Disagree, SD: Strongly Disagree.

As can be observed in table 11, item 23 of the above table, 61 (58.7 %) of the students responded that their lack of knowledge on vocabulary affects them to learn English vocabulary autonomously. On the other hand, there were some respondents 36 (34.6%) who did not believe that their lack of knowledge on vocabulary affects them to learn English vocabulary autonomously. The rest 7 (6.7 %) of the subjects were unable to decide. During the interview with the students, the participant pointed out that to be independent learner of English, they have a problem of vocabulary that affects them. Regarding this, one of the teachers also responded that:

Learners have no any knowledge on vocabulary, even expressing the present situation. When they taught them, they did not actively use most of the strategies of vocabulary learning and they learn vocabulary to pass exam not for knowledge. (T-1)

As can be observed in item 2, of the above table, the majority of 75 (72.1%) of respondents believed that the reason that they can be good or not good in vocabulary relates having good or unprofessional English teacher, while 20 (19.2 %)of respondents did not believe on this. On the other hand,9 (8.8 %)of respondents were unable to decide.

The students' interview pointed out that students relied on teachers to be autonomous learner of vocabulary. They assumed teaching learning process is impossible without teacher and

they also viewed the reason for good or not good in vocabulary learning is because of having good or unprofessional English teacher.

Item 3 shows that, the majority of the students 84 (80.7 %) has a problem of paying attention to grammar and other skills rather than vocabulary. Nevertheless, 18 (17.7%) of the respondents were not in the position to agree with the stated view; while, 2 (1.9 %) of them were unable to respond.

In follow up interview, students were asked what are the challenges they faced in learning vocabulary autonomously. Of six subjects who participated in the interview, four of them stated problems like, not paying attention to vocabulary when studying, their poor background knowledge of vocabulary, and feeling shy while speaking in English. In addition one of the teachers responded that,

We have problems to do with input, in other words, the way in which vocabulary presents itself to us is challenges itself, for example through teacher presentation, reading words in texts, learning words during peer exchange, or through self-access work of some kind.(S-5)

Similarly, the data obtained from teachers' interview also supports this situation. All three teachers explained that the challenges of learners in learning vocabulary autonomously were due to lack of interest to learn vocabulary and they also stated their poor knowledge of English vocabulary and their intention to learn vocabulary is only exam based rather for knowledge, this made them not to learn vocabulary autonomously.

From this one can deduce that, the major challenges faced by the learners are paying little attention to vocabulary while studying, poor background knowledge of vocabularies and their interest intended to use vocabularies in speaking and writing are less.

5 Conclusion

The objective of this study was to assess the autonomous learning strategies used by the learners in vocabulary learning in English language Classroom at grade 12: Chanco Preparatory School in Arsi Zone of Oromia Region. Based on the analysis of the data, the following conclusions were drawn:

1. The study showed that the majority of the learners did not take part in vocabulary drills and did not practice vocabulary both in and outside classroom. They also did not adequately search for opportunities to practice vocabulary.
2. The study also showed that the majority of the learners study English vocabulary not to develop knowledge rather, they learn it more to pass an exam. They were not confident on their knowledge of vocabulary, they did not correct themselves when they notice that they made mistakes and they did not choose or find their own relevant materials to develop their vocabulary drills. Besides, they did not adequately plan their learning objectives on their own. In addition, they did not monitor their learning vocabulary by themselves. Furthermore, it was found that learners did not evaluate their own vocabulary by themselves. Most of the students' response reveals that they did not select materials which are relevant to their learning.
3. 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.
4. However, Students were aware of their own role, they are the owners of their own learning and they were also aware of their strength and weakness in learning vocabulary, Students were not effective in exerting individual effort and strategy use

- towards autonomous learning. They were not responsible for their own language learning. This shows that they did not make efforts to be successful language learners.
5. 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 vocabulary. Besides, most of them did not adequately practice the vocabulary both in and outside the classroom.
 6. However, the students had limited awareness of teachers' role, They believe the teacher as an authority who passes knowledge to them. This can make them not to realize that vocabulary learning is possible by individual effort, which is part and parcel of autonomy. They also pointed out their lack of knowledge on vocabulary which affects their learning English vocabulary autonomously. They assumed that teaching learning process is impossible without teacher. Besides, they believed that the reason of high or low proficiency in vocabulary is because of having skilled or not unskilled teachers even though they did not believe correcting all students' mistake is not the teachers' job.
 7. The vocabulary learning strategies most often used by the EFL learners in this study were determination (in terms of mental images), dictionary strategies and linguistic clues or guessing strategy. However, the least used strategy discovered is cognitive and meta cognitive strategy. The implications of these findings suggest that EFL learners would need to engage more strategies to enhance their learning and memory of the vocabulary. Although the subjects in this study were discovered to have knowledge of certain strategies, yet they failed to practice what they have learned. It is important to make students aware that learning does not only involve having knowledge of a particular strategy (competence), but rather it will become enhanced when we make use of that knowledge (performance).
 8. The data obtained from the teachers reveal that most of the teachers trained learners on how to understand vocabularies by themselves, but they did not adequately train the learners on other vocabulary learning strategies.
 9. As the data from students indicate, most of the teachers did not adequately train learners on meta cognitive strategies. More specifically, the teachers did not train learners how to plan, monitor and evaluate their learning on their own vocabulary learning. The data obtained from the students showed, that most of the teachers encouraged the learners to develop self-confidence on their ability to learn vocabulary; 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.

5.1. Recommendations

Based on the major findings of the study and the conclusions drawn, the researcher suggests the following recommendations, which might be helpful in promoting autonomous learning in vocabulary learning:

1. Since students' varied views are found for lack of awareness in teachers' role in vocabulary learning, teachers have need to share them knowledge with learners about their role so that learners can have a great awareness of what to expect from teachers. In addition, teachers should help learners to become more aware of vocabulary learning as a system so that they can understand many of the vocabulary learning strategies.

2. Teachers need to encourage learners to reflect on classroom learning by training students different strategies such as using diaries and evaluation sheet to plan, monitor and evaluate their vocabulary learning, identify problems and solve it by discussing with friends and teachers. In addition, teachers have to transfer their roles by involving students in various tasks that come up in any teaching-learning situation. For instance, allocating small tasks in the classroom, sharing ideas about learning outside the classroom, allowing learners to talk to the class and initiate using various vocabulary learning strategies.
3. The school should allocate some amount of money for equipping the library with reading materials that holds the need of the students concerning vocabularies. Teachers are also expected to recommend materials that are valuable for vocabulary learning.
4. Teachers have to cultivate students' interest on learning vocabulary from different materials by asking students to write or listen to English media and allow them to read it in class.
5. Autonomous learning has to be understood and accepted as a goal not only by students but also by teachers to ensure its meaningful recognition. It requires teachers' commitment, determination and outlook to shift their role from instructing and controlling over the learning process to train learners' skills and strategies as to how they can study vocabulary, practice and use sources etc. Autonomous learning also requires on the part of the learners personal responsibility for their own learning, to readily engage in and persist commitment at learning tasks and manage their own learning experiences in different ways.
6. Finally, the researcher recommends that it is advisable to conduct further study on this area thoroughly to obtain comprehensible findings.

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