Factors affecting the attitudes of students towards learning English as a foreign language

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Abstract: This study aimed at investigating on factors affecting the attitudes of grade 10 students towards learning EFL in Debremarkos Comprehensive Secondary School in Debre Markos town, Ethiopia. The researcher randomly selected 103 sample students (10%) out of the total population (1030) for the study. In order to gather data, a questionnaire was carefully and systematically adapted and designed. Nine sample students were also selected purposely for focus group discussion, and Grade 10 English teachers were selected for the interview. Then, the data were analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively. The findings of the study mainly showed that the attitudes of grade 10 students towards learning EFL is positive. There are social factors (e.g., English native speakers, peer groups and learners’ parents) affecting students’ attitudes positively. On the other hand, educational context factors like English language teachers, the English language learning situations (e.g., the classrooms, arrangements of seats and the physical learning environment) had negative impacts on students’ attitude. However, the findings showed that target language learners have positive attitudes towards the other educational context factor that is the English textbook of grade 10 which means English as a foreign language teaching materials in the study’s context affect students’ attitudes positively. By lowering the psychological variables (i.e. \( \text{\textit{about the author}} \))

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PUBLIC INTEREST STATEMENT

Language attitudes have something to do with students’ EFL learning. These attitudes may influence students to learn or not to learn English language in the required manner. There are some factors like educational factors, social factors, learner personality factors and other factors which in turn affect the attitudes of learners towards learning EFL. Therefore, it needs to conduct research to know the extent to which these factors affect learners’ attitudes towards learning EFL. This study was done on factors affecting the attitudes of grade 10 students towards learning EFL. To gather valid data, the researcher used questionnaire, interview and focus group discussion. He analyzed the gathered data quantitatively and qualitatively. The findings of the study show that social factors affected students’ attitudes positively, but educational context factors had negative impacts on students’ attitudes. However, learners have positive attitudes towards
affective filters) for the target language learners, it is possible to aid the language learning process. Thus, as the implication of this study considers, the physical learning environment should be improved, and to achieve this, the government should work in conjunction with the school principals, teachers and societies.

Subjects: Arts; Humanities; Language & Literature; Language Teaching & Learning

Keywords: Attitude and motivation; Learner personality context factors; Educational context factors; Social context factors; Other context factors (Age and sex); Instrumental motivation; Integrative motivation

1. Introduction

1.1. Background of the study

These days, English is taken as the common language in all parts of the world. It may be a foreign language, but international in its significance. English language is spoken, read and understood in most parts of the world. Because of this language, people of the world communicate and belong to the whole shares of the world. It is widely accepted that English has become the language of choice for many international scholarly journals. According to Crystal (1997), conversation without a common language between academicians from different nationalities, both in the virtual and real world would prove impossible. English language is now the most spread of the entire world’s language since it is spoken by both non-natives and natives. According to Graddol (1997), there are three types of speakers using English: those who speak it as a first language (around 375 million speakers), those who speak it as a second or additional language (again some 375 million speakers), and those who learn it as a foreign language (about 750 million learners). As to this language scholar, English language plays a very significant role in different areas worldwide. For instance, it serves as a working language of international organizations and conferences, scientific publications, international banking (economic affairs and trade), advertising for global brands, audio-visual cultural products such as films, TV, popular music, international tourism, tertiary (university) education, international safety (airline and maritime travels), international law, as a “relay language” in interpretation and translation, technology transfer, and international communication (Graddol, 1997).

In the Ethiopian context, English language uses for different purposes in some areas like Ethiopian Telecommunication Corporation, Ministry of Culture and Tourism, and Ethiopian Airlines although it is in side to side the Amharic language. English is more of a foreign language than a second language in Ethiopia. This is mainly because English is so infrequently used in daily life outside the classroom and students do not have the opportunity to learn the language informally. The designation of English, as a second official language, of the country is, thus, according to Stoddart (1986), misleading. The role of English in Ethiopia, at least outside the educational system, resembles more closely that of countries where English is considered a foreign language (like, Sweden) than that of countries where it is considered a second language used relatively widely as a lingua franca (for instance, in some urban settings in Nigeria). Thus, the main way students have been expected to learn English has been by using it as a medium of instruction. Some scholars have questioned the extent to which students can be successful in using English as a medium. As the English language serves as a medium of instruction from junior secondary to tertiary levels of educational sector of the country, it is somewhat not satisfactory for students to master it within the specified period of time in the classroom.

Based on his field surveys in the mid-1980s, Stoddart (1986) had the following to say about the English language ability of the vast majority of students in Ethiopia:
Students do not possess sufficient English even to understand what they hear from their teachers or read in their textbooks, let alone to participate actively the inability of students to function through English, the quality of teaching and learning in schools has been very adversely affected. At best, it means that mere rote learning students, and little enough of even simple comprehension by them of what they are being told. And at worst it means that some—possibly many—students whose English is not sufficient even for rote-learning spend most of their class hours copying down notes that the teacher has written on the blackboard, and transforming them in the process into complete nonsense. In such a situation it is no longer appropriate to call English as a medium of instruction; rather it has become a medium of obstruction. (pp. 6–7)

According to some researchers, the main reason for student failure in the secondary school is the inability to study through the medium of English and determining it as a foreign language which restricts students’ opportunities to practice outside the classroom that is informal way of learning (Dendir, 1981).

1.2. Statement of the problem
There are many research findings available in the developed world, so we need a link with them to widen the horizon of our generation. Specially, the young generation needs to acquaint the available knowledge through English (Mohamed, 2004). There are some research findings conducted locally regarding the attitude of students towards learning English as a foreign language. For instance, Medhanie (1986) and Mohamed (2004) conducted on this topic and both of them show that students have negative attitudes towards their English learning. The current researcher wants to investigate factors affecting the attitudes of students towards learning English as a foreign language. This differentiates the study from the previous researches because their focus was just to find out the attitudes of students towards learning English. Actually, there are some international research studies concerning factors affecting second/foreign language learning not students’ attitudes. Indeed, this confirms the researcher’s present work different from the other researchers.

Thus, the main focus of the present study is concerned with the investigation and establishment of the factors affecting students’ attitudes towards learning English as a foreign language among high school students. Because the researcher believes that studying the factors may lead our students to afford themselves with different situations while learning English language. This also in turn helps them reach higher levels in different fields of the study. However, to do this, students of English language should have a positive attitude towards their learning. It is widely accepted that an important predictor of success in a foreign language is students’ attitude towards it. In English as foreign language contexts, students who consider the learning of English as a positive and rewarding experience are less likely to suffer from foreign language anxiety. According to Gardner, Lambert and Burstal as cited in Stern (1987) suggest that there is a positive relation between learning outcomes and attitude towards learning a second or foreign language. Attitudes are derived from values we ascribe to objects or ideas. As Wright says “... values are the basis for our attitude” (Wright, 1987, p. 21). We have positive or negative attitudes based on our values. According to him, if a student believes in the importance of mastering second or foreign language and acts accordingly, then it shows that she/he values learning of the language and so has a positive attitude towards it.

On the other hand, if a student does not believe in the importance of mastering a second or foreign language and acts accordingly, then it shows that she/he does not value the learning of the language and so has a negative attitude towards it. This research aims at investigating the factors affecting the attitude of students towards learning English as a foreign language in Debre Markos government Comprehensive High school, found in East Gojjam Zone, Amhara Region, Ethiopia. The researcher intends to conduct his research on grade 10 students. He believes that students from this school seem to have an attitude problem and less achievement towards learning English as a foreign language. As the researcher had been a student in that school for 7 years (4–10 grades), the learners seem to demonstrate the problem by how haphazardly they perform in their continuous assessment tasks, and the excuses they make for not doing their homework. Furthermore, most students do not seem to value the opportunity they get in school to practice English. Instead,
they seem to prefer their own; first language (Amharic), even during English periods. Considering
the steady decline in results both nationally and provincially, at (the Grade-10-year ended results)
for recently, the learners’ attitude problem towards English language may probably account for the
situation.

In brief, the absence of willingness or what seemed to be attitude problem in the learning of
English amongst the learners in Debre Markos Comprehensive High School could be the result of
the lack of crucial English language proficiency and achievement. Thus, the researcher intends to
identify the factors affecting the attitudes of students towards learning English language. And
finally, he intends to look for possible solutions for such problems.

1.3. Research questions
The study was proposed to answer the following research questions:

1) Do grade 10 target learners have attitudinal problems towards learning English language?
2) What are the possible factors that positively and negatively affect grade 10 target language
   learners towards learning English language?
3) To what extent does each identified factor exert an influence on students’ attitude towards
   learning English?

2. Review of related literature

2.1. Attitude and motivation
Attitude has recently received considerable attention from both first and second language
researchers. Most of the researches on the issue have concluded that student’s attitude is an
integral part of learning and that it should, therefore, become an essential component of second or
foreign language learning pedagogy. There are several reasons why research on students’ atti-
tudes toward language learning is important. First, attitudes toward learning are believed to
influence behaviors, Kaballa, and Crowley (1985), as cited in Weinburgh (1998) such as selecting
and reading books, speaking in a foreign language. Second, a relationship between attitudes and
success or achievement has been shown to exist. Schibeci and Riley (1986) as cited in Weinburgh
(1998) report that there is support for the proposition that attitudes influence achievement, rather
than achievement influencing attitudes. The reason is that attitude influence one’s behaviors,
inner mood and therefore learning. So, it is clear that there is an interaction between language
learning and the environmental components in which the student grows up. Both negative and
positive attitudes have a strong impact on the success of language learning.

The attitude of an individual depends heavily upon different stimuli. Stern (1983) claims “The
affective component contributes at least as much and often more to language learning than the
cognitive skills”, and this is supported by recent research studies. All studies adduce that affective
variables have significant influences on language success (C. Gardner, 1985; Skehan, 1989; Spolsky,
1989; Eveyik, 1999). Discovering students’ attitude about language will help both teacher and
student in the teaching-learning process. Therefore, we have to consider the crucial role of
affective domain. The characteristics of affective domain are interest, values and tendency and
most of these shape our attitudes (Saracalaglu, 1992). Valuing, belief, interest and expectations
refer to affective characteristics. In the same work, she points out that these affective character-
istics have a great impact on learning as well. Alexander and Strain (1978) as cited in Saracalagu
(2000) show that expectations and behaviors influence both students self-image and academic
performance. With reference to the work of Saracalaglu (2000) the studies, related to students’
attitudes are generally restricted (Saracalaglu, 1992). But in fact, measuring attitude is achieved
more successfully than defining it as a term. Student attitude measured with high reliability shapes
the school curriculum, especially in ELT classes. In order to be able to evaluate the students’
attitudes, it is better to begin with some of the definition of the term, “attitude”. Among them,
Triandis (1971) accepts that it is a manner of consistency toward an object. To Brown (2001, p. 61), attitude is characterized by a large proportion of emotional involvement such as feelings, self, relationships in community. It emphasizes “the power of culture thereby shaping our life and feeling” and therefore our attitudes towards external world. Ajjan (1988, p. 4) considers attitudes as a disposition to respond favourably or unfavourably to an object, person, institution or an event. Baker (1992, p. 10) defines attitudes as a hypothetical construct used to explain the direction and persistence of human behaviour.

C. Gardner (1985, pp. 91–93) claims that attitude is an evaluative reaction to some referent or attitude object, inferred on the basis of the individual's beliefs or opinion about the referent. According to him, attitude is an inference which is made on the basis of a complex of beliefs about the attitude object. It is the sum of a man's instinct ions and feelings, prejudice or bias, perceived notions, fears, threats and convictions about any specified topic. Furthermore, he gives the concept of attitude as components of motivation in language learning. And motivation refers to the combination of effort plus desire to achieve the goal of learning the language plus favourable attitudes towards learning the language. However, Wenden (1991) proposed a broad definition of the concept of attitudes. He states that the term attitudes include three components, namely cognitive, affective and behavioural. A cognitive component is made up of the beliefs and ideas or opinions about the object of the attitude. The affective component refers to the feeling and emotions that one has towards an object, “likes” or “dislikes”, “with” or “against”. And the last component is the behavioural one which refers to one's consisting actions or behavioural intentions towards the object (Wenden, 1991). From a different angle, McGuire (1969, p. 157) as cited in Oscamp (1977, p. 10) suggests that it is possible that the three components are closely inter-related that theorists who insist on distinguishing them should bear the burden of providing that the distinction is worthwhile. This led Van Els et al. (1984, p. 116) to suggest that it does not have any problem whether all or only one of the three components are measured; the relationship between the components is so close that sufficient information on an attitude can be obtained by measuring one component, no matter which. Eveyik (1999, p. 21) in her work agrees with most scholars on the definition of “attitude” that it is the state of readiness to respond to a situation and an inclination to behave in a consistent manner toward an object.

Lambert (1967), as cited in Macnamara (1973, p. 37) mentions about two types of attitudes; “integrative” and “instrumental” attitude to language learning. An integrative attitude is a desire to know and become friendly with speakers of a language. An instrumental one is a desire to better oneself materially by means of the language. And he adds, “An integrative attitude is more likely to lead to success than an instrumental one”. Brown (1994, p. 168) gives an example of Canadian’s positive attitude toward French to understand them, and to empathize with them—will lead to high integrative motivation to learn French.

Brown (1994, p. 168) conveys the term attitudes, like all aspects of the development of cognition and affect in human beings, develop early in childhood and are the result of parents’ and peers’ attitudes, contact with people who are different in any number of ways, and interacting affective factors in the human experience. It seems clear that there are many stimulants lead to positive or negative attitude of an individual. Language learning is very much interplay of personalities—one shouldn’t tend to forget that pupils too are human, with likes/dislikes/moods. Language learning is closely related to the attitudes towards the language (Starks & Paltridge, 1996). Similarly, it is revealed that positive language attitudes let learners have a positive orientation towards learning English. As such attitudes may play a very crucial role in language learning as they would appear to influence students’ success or failure in their learning. Chamber (1999) asserts that learning occurs more easily, when the learner has a positive attitude towards the language and learning. C. R. Gardner and Lambert (1972) in their extensive studies give evidence that positive attitudes toward language enhance proficiency as well. Language attitude studies explore how people react to language interactions and how they evaluate others based on the language behavior they observe. Therefore, attitude may not come out during school life. But it is the duty of school to help
students develop positive attitude towards foreign language, attitude refers to our feelings and shapes our behaviors towards learning. C. Gardner (1985, p. 133) puts further emphasis on the importance of willingness and motivation when he cites:

... students learning a second language must be both able and willing to adopt various aspects of behaviour, including verbal behaviour which characterizes members of the other linguistic-cultural group. This obviously involves both cognitive and affective components and emphasize that cognitive factors such as attitudes and motivation are undoubtedly implicated in second language acquisition. (p. 133)

In language learning-teaching process, motivation is related to attitude in that attitude is a complex one which influences motivation and successful learning of the language in the school situation depending upon both motivation and on the range of opportunities for its use outside the classroom (C. Gardner, 1985). Spolsky (1989, p. 149) claims that for Gardner and Lambert, motivation comes from attitude. Wilkins (1978, p. 52) suggests that when learners have little intrinsic interest in language learning or they are not volunteers, the teacher must himself stimulate and sustain motivation. Another language scholar Lightbown and Spada (1993, p. 39) argues that if the speaker's only reason for learning a second language is external pressure, internal motivation may be minimal and general attitudes towards learning the language may be negative. He goes on to say that depending upon the learners' attitudes, learning a second language can be a source of enrichment or resentment.

According to Ellis (1994), the learners' attitudes towards the target language inform the determination with which the learner can tackle the challenges in the target language. Normally, the learners manifest different attitudes towards the target language, target language speakers, the target language cultures, special value of learning the second language, the particular use of the target language, and themselves as members of their own culture. These attitudes are likely to reflect the particular social settings in which learners find themselves. Learner attitudes have an impact on the level of language proficiency achieved by individual learners. Thus, learners with positive attitudes (motivated one) will experience success. Similarly, learners with negative attitudes (demotivated one) will not experience success rather failure (Ellis, 1994).

According to C. Gardner (1985), as cited in Lightbown and Spada (1993, p. 39), language research findings show that positive attitude and motivation are related to success in second language learning. Furthermore, Brown (1994, p. 127) elaborates the exact relation of attitudes and motivation in light with language learning and success or failure in the way that it seems intuitively clear ... that second language learners benefit from positive attitudes and that negative attitudes may lead to decrease motivation and in all likelihood because of the decreased input and interaction to the unsuccessful attainment of proficiency. According to C. Gardner (1985, p. 39–49), there are about five characteristics of attitude to be considered in learning second language:

(i) Attitudes are cognitive (i.e. are capable of being thought about) and affective (i.e. have feelings and emotions attached to them)
(ii) Attitudes are dimensional rather than bipolar—they vary in degree of favourability/unfavourability.
(iii) Attitudes predispose a person to act in a certain way, but the relationship between attitudes is not a strong one.
(iv) Attitudes are learned, not inherited or genetically endowed.
(v) Attitudes tend to persist but they can be modified by experience.

Concerning the learners' attitudes towards the target language, it was indicated by Gardner's results (C. Gardner, 1985) that second language learners with positive attitudes towards second language speakers and their culture were more successful than those who had negative attitudes. The relationship between attitudes and motivation is close so that it is impossible to see the two separately since motivation includes attitudes but it is influenced by attitudes. Thus, it is better to
see the students’ motivation for learning English as a foreign language and identify the relevant and basic types of motivation because it enables us to investigate and realize the effects that result in them, namely integrative and instrumental. Motivation has been identified as the learner’s orientation with regard to the goal of learning a second language (Crookes & Schmidt, 1991). It is thought that students who are most successful when learning a target language are those who like the people that speak the language, admire the culture and have a desire to become familiar with or even integrate into the society in which the language is used (Falk, 1978). This form of motivation is known as integrative motivation. When someone becomes a resident in a new community that uses the target language in its social interactions, integrative motivation is a key component in assisting the learner to develop some level of proficiency in the language. It becomes a necessity, in order to operate socially in the community and become one of its members. It is also stated that integrative motivation typically underlies successful acquisition of a wide range of registers and a native-like pronunciation (Finegan, 1999, p. 568).

In an EFL setting such as Ethiopia, it is important to consider the actual meaning of the term “integrative.” As Benson (1991) suggests, a more appropriate approach to the concept of integrative motivation in the EFL context would be the idea that it represents the desire of the individual to become bilingual, while at the same time becoming bicultural. This occurs through the addition of another language and culture to the learner’s own cultural identity. The opportunities to use the target (L2) language in daily verbal exchanges are relatively restricted. There is also a limited potential for integrating into the target language community. In contrast to integrative motivation in the form of motivation referred to as instrumental motivation. This is generally characterized by the desire to obtain something practical or concrete from the study of a second language (Hudson, 2000). With instrumental motivation, the purpose of language acquisition is more utilitarian, such as meeting the requirements for school or university graduation, applying for a job, requesting higher pay based on language ability, reading technical material, translation work or achieving higher social status. Instrumental motivation is often characteristic of second language acquisition, where little or no social integration of the learner into a community using the target language takes place, or in some instances is even desired.

While both integrative and instrumental motivations are essential elements of success, it is integrative motivation which has been found to sustain long-term success when learning a second language (Crookes & Schmidt, 1991; Ellis, 1997). In some of the early research conducted by Gardner and Lambert, integrative motivation was viewed as being of more importance in a formal learning environment than instrumental motivation (Ellis, 1997). In later studies, integrative motivation has continued to be emphasized, although now the importance of instrumental motivation is also stressed. However, it is important to note that instrumental motivation has only been acknowledged as a significant factor in some research, whereas integrative motivation is continually linked to successful second language acquisition. It has been found that generally, students select instrumental reasons more frequently than integrative reasons for the study of language. Those who do support an integrative approach to language study are usually more highly motivated and overall more successful in language learning.

One area where instrumental motivation can prove to be successful is in the situation where the learner is provided with no opportunity to use the target language and therefore, no chance to interact with members of the target group. Lukmani (1972) found that an instrumental orientation was more important than an integrative orientation in non-westernized female learners of L2 English in Bombay. The social situation helps to determine both what kind of orientation learners have and is most important for language learning. Braj (1977), as cited in Brown (2000) also points out that in India, where English has become an international language, it is not uncommon for second language learners to be successful with instrumental purposes being the underlying reason for study. Brown (2000) makes the point that both integrative and instrumental motivations are not necessarily mutually exclusive. Learners rarely select one form of motivation when learning a second language, but rather a combination of both orientations. He cites the example of
international students residing in the United States, learning English for academic purposes while at the same time wishing to become integrated with the people and culture of the country. Motivation is an important factor in L2 achievement. For this reason, it is important to identify both the type and combination of motivation that assists in the successful acquisition of a second language. At the same time, it is necessary to view motivation as one of a number of variables in an intricate model of interrelated individual and situational factors which are unique to each language learner.

2.2. Factors affecting attitudes towards learning English as a foreign language

Various researchers have developed taxonomies of factors influencing second/foreign language learners’ attitude which in turn affects their language proficiency, including personality factors, educational factors, social factors, and others like age and sex (Ehrman, 1996, p. 192; McDonough & Shaw, 1993, pp. 7–8; Spolsky, 1989, pp. 25–29; Van Ells et al., 1984, pp. 115–124). Besides, Conteh (2002, pp. 192–193) supports the belief of some applied linguists that factors such as social context, learner personality (self-confidence, risk taking and anxiety), learning conditions, learning process and learning outcomes influence the attitude of students and the way language is learned.

2.2.1. Learner personality context

Probably the most prominent variable in the instructional situation is the learner. Through the years, researchers and teachers alike have been interested in the role of affective factors in second and foreign language learning. The characteristics of learners “cover a whole range of personal and attitudinal aspects” (Conteh, 2002, p. 193). Attitudinal factors relating to language acquisition among those that contribute to a low affective filter, since classroom atmosphere created and sustained by the teacher not by the learners’ attitudes is equally important in lowering the affective filter (Richards & Rodgers, 1986, p. 133; Krashen, 1987, pp. 30–31).

A good language learner is described as a learner who acquires adequate intake in the second or foreign language, and has a low affective filter to allow input to language acquisition (Krashen, 1988, pp. 37–39). However, the bad language learner has “neither acquisition nor learning going to him” and this might be the result of attitudinal factors (lacking interest in the target language and its speakers, lacking self-confidence, a high anxiety level as well as low aptitude or interest in grammar) (Krashen, 1988). Brown (1994, p. 22) describes affective principles as the “foundation stones … on which techniques and learning material can be based”. Besides, the learner’s attitude and motivation, aspects such as personality (especially relevant are self-confidence, risk-taking and anxiety) are of significance in the language learning process. People vary widely in their personality, and personal factors are interrelated with attitudinal and motivational factors. Keuning (1998, p. 366–367) defines personality as the “combination of psychological characteristics to classify individuals”.

2.2.1.1. Self-confidence. Self-confidence, also defined by Brown (1994, p. 23) as the “I can do it” principle is about the learner’s belief in his or her ability to accomplish the task. Krashen (1998, p. 23) indicates that self-confidence encourages the learner’s intake, and will also result in having a low filter. The use of simpler techniques at the start of classroom activities will boost learners’ self-confidence, since a sense of accomplishment assists learners in the next, more difficult activity (Brown, 1994, p. 23). Self-efficacy, self-esteem, risk taking and lack of anxiety are traits of self-confidence that also related to second or foreign language learning. Ehrman (1996, p. 137) mentions self-efficacy as an element in learning because it reflects the degree to which the learner thinks s/he can cope and succeed in the learning situation. Conversely, enhanced self-efficacy that is the learner expects good results, tends to increase motivation, positive attitude, and also increases willingness to take learning risks (Skehan, 1989, p. 106).

Language learning difficulties may particularly influence self-esteem negatively which in turn affects students’ attitudes and their language success too (Ehrman, 1996, p. 146). Learners may
believe that the target language is difficult to learn, or even that there is a right way to learn the target language. Thus, such beliefs, negative assumptions as well as the expectation of himself/herself, affects the learner’s sense and attitude of him/her ability to learn the language (Ehrman, 1996, p. 145).

2.2.1.2. Risk-taking. A number of researchers (Dulay, 1982; Brown, 1994; Larsen & Long, 1991; Skehan, 1989) acknowledge the tendency to take risks and its connection with achieving greater success in language learning. According to these researchers, if learners have a positive belief and attitude towards a certain language task, they may be willing to become gamblers in the game of language, to attempt to produce and interpret the language. In their discussion of risk taking, Larsen and Long (1991, p. 188) indicate that the direct opposite of risk-taking behaviour is manifested in sensitivity to rejection. Learners who are sensitive to rejection may avoid participation in the classroom, because they fear disapproval from classmates or teacher. These all can lead to students to have negative attitudes towards English language because they are less confident and fear rejection (Dulay, 1982, p. 75).

Learners aged from 16 to 22 with the average age reflect an age category associated with adolescence. In these respect, researchers like (Ehrman, 1996, p. 150; Lightbown and Spada, 1993; Richards & Rodgers, 1986, p. 133) suggest that fear, embarrassment, inhibition about performing in front of others, and judgment by others, all increase in the early adolescence, and probably discourage risk-taking. Consequently, these traits may result in a high affective filter, for instance, negative attitudes which also hamper progress in language learning and achievement. Thus, high school language learners have different views about accomplishing a certain language activity in front of others since they may be afraid of being evaluated by their teachers and classmates. This also in turn creates a negative attitude towards the target language and can affect their English language achievement.

2.2.1.3. Anxiety. There appears to be a consistent relationship among personality, anxiety, the learning situation and language proficiency. Ehrman (1996, p. 137–8) indicates that a variety of feelings accompany learning, and range from positive to less pleasant feelings or attitudes. Negative feelings or attitudes include frustration, anger, anxiety, lack of self-confidence, and these affective factors may influence the learning event as well as how much language a learner can learn and achieve in a given time.

According to Spolsky (1989, p. 114), anxiety in foreign language classes is often related to listening and speaking, with difficulty in speaking in class. At this time English language teachers are challenged to create a favourable condition in the classroom by employing techniques to reduce anxiety, negative feelings and stress about the language and their achievement too. Furthermore, a language teacher should also consider the use of appropriate learning material in the learning situation (Wedeman, 2002, p. 97). To become a professional, the language teacher should eventually be able to design appropriate teaching and learning materials to provide less threatening and positive attitudes or feelings, and more supportive environment for learners (Wedeman, 2002).

2.2.2. Educational context
Apart from informal situations where the learner may have the opportunity to learn and speak the target language in the community, school offers formal learning of the target language to the learner. Conteh (2002, p. 193) indicates that the factors influencing learners’ attitudes and the learning situation are “general atmosphere of the learning, the classroom dynamics, opportunities for student-student and student-teacher interaction, and students’ perception of the teacher’s commitment to their learning”. Educational contexts include the learning situation that is how language is learned, the English language teacher who considers how variables like physical, social and cultural differences that influence the learning-teaching process in to an account, and the teaching-learning materials.
2.2.2.1. Learning situation. Researchers suggest that the learning situation has an effect on the attitudes of the learners and their success. According to Ehrman (1996, p. 142), anxiety and anger may influence students’ attitudes and motivations, especially, in the situation where the English language subject is compulsory. Another person, Littlewood (2001, p. 21) indicates that in a country where English language is a compulsory subject, there is a link between attitudes of the learners and teachers’ authority, and learners’ ability to participate in the classroom. In such conditions, it is the teacher who controls the class and students are not free from such domination which results demotivation and unwillingness among the learners, and the failure comes then. Furthermore, there is another important feature that needs to be given emphasis in the teaching-learning situation that is time. The number of hours available for learning and teaching the language will obviously influence the level of attainment.

Another person pairs the motivation factor with opportunity and points out that successful learning of the language in the school situation depends upon both motivation and attitudes with the range of opportunities for its use outside the classroom, and that there are vast discrepancies in the range in this range in different rural and urban areas. For instance, Krogh (1990, p. 102) reveals that the need to communicate comes from inside a child, while the norms of the society give shape to the communication. She goes on to say that language learning is easy when it is whole, real and relevant; when it makes sense and is functional; when it is encouraged in the context of its use; when the learner chooses to use it. In other words, other, more rigid systems make learning difficult. In this regard, Pride (1979, p. 19) also puts forward this idea in that good learning depends on at least three variables, namely aptitude, motivation and opportunities to include all those activities both within and outside the classroom which expose the learner to the language and which afford him an opportunity to practice what he has learned. He further argues that if we want to enable the student of English, then we must put him in situations which demand the use of English.

2.2.2.2. The foreign language teacher. Favorable feelings and experiences with the teacher, classmates and materials can forge positive attitudes towards learning a second language (Day & Ford, 1998, p. 25). A learner who has better interaction with his teacher may develop a positive attitude towards the target language than those who have less interaction. “Without communication between teachers and learners, there will be little chance of effective education” (Spolsky, 1972, p. 3).

One of the most important variables that influence the learners’ attitudes towards learning a language is the teacher. It is the fact that the influence can be either positive or negative depending upon the teacher’s knowledge of the subject matter, his attitude towards the students and the subject. Factors like teacher’s personality, professional knowledge, enthusiasm, commitment and professional classroom management skills all have direct and multiple influences on the learners’ learning motivation. As Dornyei (2001) indicates, students adopted similar beliefs, attitudes, expectation and associated behaviours through the channels of teacher’s communication of beliefs, expectation and attitudes. If the teacher fulfills all the aforementioned qualities and he invites his learners systematically, learners will have better opportunities to develop a positive attitude towards learning the language. According to Spolsky (1969, p. 273), in a typical language learning situation, there are a lot of people whose attitudes to each other can be significant to the learners, teachers, parents and speakers of the target language. A number of recent studies, although all not done in languages, have pointed out that the importance of attitude of the teacher to the student is related to the learners’ success. In the same manner, Gaither elaborates the role of teachers’ attitudinal influence on the attitudes of the learners towards learning a language as follows:

all the teachers- not only language teachers but also those of literature, civilization, science, government, etc. should alert to the far reaching benefits of foreign language study for a student regardless of what his future education plans may be if the teacher is well-informed and quick to perceive the long range values of foreign language study as they been bearing upon the cultural, social, political aspects of modern civilization where else is the student to find out (Gaither, 1955, p. 425), as cited in (Mohamed, 2004, p. 18).
It is obvious that the knowledge of English as a foreign or second language is very important to all Ethiopian administrative staff, parents, society. Thus, government should encourage students to learn and develop their skill of the target language. Only then, our students can reach also the expected level within the given time, and it also needs the effort of policy makers and effective participation of all intellectuals. Besides, providing students with new resources for expanding and deepening their knowledge of a foreign country, the study of a foreign language helps them in further study and appreciation of their own culture which provides a solid gain to the students (ibid).

Larsen and Long (1991, p. 179) state that teachers’ attitudes towards the learners are important variables that can affect the attitudes of learners as well as the quality and quantity of the learning which takes place and the linguistic outcomes for the learner. The other important thing that goes on with teachers in the learning-teaching situation is the attitudes of learners’ towards the classroom situation because learners who feel at ease in the classroom, and who like the teacher, may accept the teacher as a “source of intake”. Furthermore, positive attitudes towards the classroom situation and the teacher may result in self-confidence and integrative motivation, thereby enhancing language acquisition (Krashen, 1988, p. 23). Conteh (2002, p. 193) says that the learning conditions also have an impact on the learning experience. According to him, these conditions could range from the physical conditions of the classroom like big or small, hot or cold adequate and functioning equipment, bright or dark class, air or steady … to what an individual teacher does to enhance learning clear teaching objectives, well-designed materials clear and concise transmission of new information, or the point of entry into new material. The physical arrangement of the class and the number of learners may have influenced the attitudes of student and the learning situation. In this regard, Wilkins (1974, p. 45) argues that the issue with large class is whether “desirable methods and objectives can be maintained in the face of classes of more than forty pupils”.

2.2.2.3. *English as a foreign language teaching materials.* The last educational factor of the attitudes of the learners and the learning and teaching English as a foreign language is to be considered here is the stock of resources which the teacher is able to exploit. According to Wilkins (1974, p. 47), resources are not an adjunct, but an integral part of the learning situation and therefore limited resources impede the language achievement. The presence or absence of resources like textbooks, workbooks, writing paper, pens/pencils, chalk, blackboard, wall-pictures, tapes, tape recorder, television, radio, reading material and a library, all influence the attitudes of learners and the learning situation (Wilkins, 1974).

Tomlinson (1998, p. 18) states that materials should take learners’ different affective attitudes into an account, and suggests that positive feelings towards the target language, teachers, and the learning materials would enhance the learning situation. Alongside this recognition of the importance of affective factors and the use of authentic texts in learning, Guariento and Morley (2001, p. 347) argue that there has been a growing awareness that simplicity of tasks to maintain or increase learners’ motivation does not sacrifice authenticity. Similarly, the affective strategy that needs to be taken into an account is the use of materials that tap into or stimulate learners’ interest, in order to increase motivation and positive attitude in the learning of English language. By embedding learners’ interest and willingness in materials, learners practice to activities that will naturally elicit their curiosity and desire for understanding (Wlodkowski, 1993, p. 158). Motivated learners are more cooperative and psychologically open to learning which may enhance information processing. According to Wilkins (1974, p. 84), developing materials in a second or foreign language with learners’ needs may trigger learners’ intrinsic interest in the communicative ability so that in their desire for successful achievement.

2.2.3. *Social context*

Spolsky (1989, p. 131) views that languages are primarily social mechanisms since languages are learned in social contexts. He further indicates that while the language learning is individual, it takes place in society, and though social factors may not have direct influences, they have strong and traceable effects on the attitudes and motivation of the learners. Similarly, Van Lier (1996, pp.
35–36) argues that language use and language learning are the parts of the world in which learners live, therefore, any activity undertaken in the classroom must be understood in context, and has its own effect on the learners’ beliefs, attitudes as well as their shaped behaviour. The social context comprises the family or home, the learners’ peer groups, the community or target language speakers and their cultures (Spolsky, 1989, pp. 25–26).

2.2.3.1. The learners’ parents. One of the social contexts to be taken into consideration is the various parent factors such as their education, religion, culture, socioeconomic status, place of birth, and knowledge of the target language (Spolsky, 1989, p. 26). These factors determine the parents’ rationales, goals and priorities. Larsen and Long (1991, p. 178) state that in several studies investigating the parental role and the development of attitudes towards the speakers of the target language, it was found out that the learners’ attitudes reflected their parents’ attitudes towards the target language. According to them, it becomes evident that learners adopt their parents’ attitude towards the target language and this in turn affects the learners’ achievements in learning the language.

Learners learn some behaviors by observing and imitating influential role models Bandura (1986) as cited in Ettiger et al. (1994, p. 672). Attitudes can be learned in similar processes. Parents have an especial and strong influence on their children’s attitudes. C. R. Gardner and Lambert (1972) discuss this role of parents as follows:

I think it is meaningful to distinguish the main roles which are relevant to their success in a second language program. For better labels, I am going to refer to them as the active and passive roles even though these labels are not completely descriptive. By the active role I mean that role whereby the parent actively and consciously encourages the students to learn the language. In the active role the parent monitors the child’s language learning performance and to the extent that he plays this role and attempts to promote success. That is the parent watches over the child and makes sure that he or she does his or her homework, encourages him to do well, and in general reinforces his or her success. I believe it is safe to assume that differences in the extent to which parents vary in this encouragement function would have some influence on the child’s performance in any learning situation. (p. 141)

Likewise, Wilkins emphasizes that the power of parental influences on the learners’ second or foreign language learning when he points out that it is particularly interesting that the attitudes of children are almost similar to the attitudes of their parents so that it would be said that the parents do much to determine the lack of success of their children second or foreign languages because children are always want act, do, say, and make what their parent perform in their actual life so do their children (Wilkins, 1978). Attitudes, like all aspects of the development of cognition and affect in human beings, develop in the early childhood and are the result of parents’ attitudes (Brown, 1994, p. 168). Besides, Carrol (1967) found in his study that the more the parents use the foreign language at home, the higher the students’ mean score will be. Thus, one reason the students reach in the higher levels of attainment in a foreign language is that they have home environments that are favourable to this, either because the students are better motivated to learn or because they have better opportunities to learn Carrol (1967, p. 138), as cited in Spolsky (1969, p. 273).

When it comes to students’ attitudes for a high school subject, it has been noted that parents’ attitudes to the subject and to the students’ achievements in the foreign language is very important (Anderson, 1967, p. 12). Concerning the learning of the foreign language, it is not only the learners’ internal motivation that matters, but the attitudes of his or her parents’ towards the foreign languages as well. The attitudes of the learner towards learning a foreign language will be formed at home. Therefore, one who wants to investigate the attitudes of the learners towards the foreign language should ask the following questions: do students’ parents consider learning the language important or irrelevant? Since his or her parent’s attitude can affect his or her attitude towards the learning of the language, if the answers to the above question are positive, then the
attitude of the child is more likely to be positive. Of course, in the information of the attitudes parents act as models though other sources like many peers, teachers and media, particularly characters portrayed on television exert an influence too (Roger & Houghton, 1995, p. 58).

2.2.3.2. Learners’ peer groups. Learner peer group has a remarkable influence on his or her attitude towards learning a foreign or second language. Concerning their role, Morgan (1966, p. 601) reports, “whatever the reason operating in any given case, the outcome is that an individual’s peer may shape views as well as behavior more than his/her parents do”. Furthermore, Brown (1994) says the following in pointing out the role of the learner’s peer group:

> Attitudes are like aspects of the development of cognition and affect in human Beings, develop early in the childhood and are the result of parents’ and Peers’ attitudes, contact with people who are different in any number of ways, and interacting affective factors in the human experience. These attitudes Form a part of one’s perception of self, of others, and of the culture in which one is living. (p. 168)

Onwards, their childhood most of high school students have developed intimacy with their parents and peer groups. Their previous cumulative experience helps them develop their attitude either positively or negatively towards their parents and peer groups. They may have a lot of experience in role taking and role playing with their peer groups, and they develop common interest. Therefore, they may have similar interest, feeling or attitude, in common with certain individual difference. Membership and acceptance in particular groups is often contingent upon the attitudes one expresses peer groups such as class, unions, sororities, fraternities, and churches differentially reinforce the expression of certain attitudes relevant to the group (Morgan, 1986, p. 390).

2.2.3.3. Community. According to Spolsky (1989, p. 26), the social context influences second language learning into two indirect but important ways. Firstly, it plays a vital role in the development of the learners’ attitudes towards the target language, its speakers, and the language learning situation which includes the learners’ expectations and perceptions of the learning and its probable outcomes. These expectations and perceptions lead to the development of the learner’s attitude and motivation. In this respect, Wilkins (1974) indicates that in communities where the target language is observed with “indifference or even hostility”, social and cultural attitudes have a considerable influence on individual learners’ attitudes and motivation. Secondly, the context establishes the social condition of the language learning situation (formal and informal) and the various opportunities for language learning. Formal situations are the provision of different educational institutions in society for language learning whereas informal situations reflect the potential opportunities in society for exposure to the target language (interaction with the speakers and writers of the target language). Studies suggest that there is a high correlation between the kind of exposure to the target language and the proficiency attained. In situations where learners have more opportunities to communicate with the target language speakers, the learning outcome is more favourable (Spolsky, 1989, p. 166). Thus, as different studies reveal, the community where the learners live with even from their own culture can influence the attitudes and motivation towards the language and an attainment too (Spolsky, 1989).

According to the results of Gardner’s (1985) work, it was found that learners who have positive attitudes towards the speakers of the target language, culture of the target language, and towards the target language were more successful than those who have negative attitudes. He argued that because language is an integral part of culture, the learning of the second or foreign language depends on the learners’ willingness to identify with the culture of the target language and to incorporate aspects of the target language culture including the linguistic repertoire, into his/her own behaviour. Moreover, Fasold (1984) stressed the role of learners’ attitudes in language growth or decay and he stated that the concept of language attitudes not only includes attitudes towards speakers of the target language but also includes all kinds of behaviors concerning language to be treated (attitude towards language maintenance and planning efforts).
Interestingly, success in learning second or foreign language depends upon the social relation among the first and second language communities. Wong (1991) suggests that success in learning second or foreign language is contingent on the existence of the following conditions: (a) motivated students who realize the need to learn the target language. (b) The target language speakers who support the second language learners and (c) frequent social contact between target language speakers and learners. Concerning the effect of learning a second or foreign language on one’s own culture, Kramsch (1995) writes about how language plays an important role not only in the construction of culture but also in the emergence of cultural changes. In this regard, it is stated that social change occurs slowly but inevitably at the edges of dominant culture. This is true of the change that we might bring about by teaching people how to use somebody else’s linguistic code in somebody else’s cultural contexts. Teaching members of one community how to talk and how to behave in the context of another discourse community potentially changes the social and cultural equation of both communities.

2.2.4. Other factors
According to C. Gardner (1985), in addition to the above-mentioned attitude variables that is learner (personality), social and educational factors affecting students’ attitudes and language learning attainment, he goes on to report that attitudes towards learning the second language also has been shown to relate to other factors like sex and age.

2.2.4.1. Learners’ sex and language learning. A number of studies suggest that females have more positive attitudes to learning a second or foreign language than males. Sex differences have been obtained on attitudes towards learning the language … Girls Tend to demonstrate significantly more positive attitudes than do boys learn. C. R. Gardner and Lambert (1972) reported that female learners of French as a second language in Canada were more motivated than male learners and also had more positive attitudes towards speakers of the target language. Spolsky (1989) also found that girls learning a second language that is Hebrew in Israel demonstrated more favourable attitudes to the language than the boys. Another person, Bacon (1992) found that men reported using translation strategies more than women, while the women reported monitoring their comprehension more cited in Ellis (1994, p. 203).

Almost women outstrip males in the standard of their speech and use of prestige forms and yet they also tend to be in the forefront of linguistic change. Actually, one obvious explanation for females’ greater success in second language learning in the classroom settings is that they generally have more positive attitudes. And it may reflect their employment expectations. Girls may perceive a foreign language as having significant vocational value for them but boys do not. These beliefs may derive from the students’ parents (Ellis, 1994, p. 2004).

2.2.4.2. Learners’ age and language learning. The learners’ age is one of the characteristics which determine the way in which an individual approaches second language learning. But the opportunities for learning (both inside and outside the classrooms) the motivation to learn, and an individual differences in aptitude for language learning are also important determining factors in both rate of learning and eventual success in learning the target language (Lightbown and Spada, 1993). Age has received considerable attention from sociolinguistics. According to Chambers and Trudgill (1980), as cited in Ellis (1994, p. 201), in England the younger generation (10–19 years) used nonstandard variants while middle-aged speakers (30–60 years) preferred the standard variants. But, older speakers (70+ years) demonstrated the use of non-standard variants, although not to the same extent as the younger generation. Chambers and Trudgill seek to explain this pattern by suggesting that younger speakers are subject to social pressures from their peer group. But the middle-aged speakers have less cohesive and social networks and are more influenced by social values. In retired old people, social pressure lessen and social network become narrow (Ellis, 1994).

The research that addressed on the effect of age on learners’ second language achievement is that adult learners have an initial advantage where the rate of learning is concerned particularly in
grammar. Child learners who receive enough exposure to the target language will eventually over take them. In relation with this, Ellis (1994, p. 484) states that there is a widely held lay belief that younger second language learners generally do better than older learners which is supported by the critical period hypothesis that (Spolsky, 1989, p. 90) claims. According to this theory, Ellis (1994) says that there is a fixed span of year during which language learning can take place naturally and effortlessly, and after which it is not possible to be completely successful. He goes on to say that the optimum period for language acquisition falls within the first 10 years of life, when the brain retains its plasticity. According to him, it is said that the age issue is controversial in that it remains an important one for theory building in language acquisition for educational policy-making and for language pedagogy.

3. Research design and methodology

3.1. Research design
In this chapter, the methodology adopted for the study is discussed. It is an explanatory method of the research that was adopted through which questionnaires, interviews and focus group discussions were used to answer the research questions of the study. As the main focus of the study is “Factors Affecting the Attitudes of Students towards Learning English as a Foreign Language” the research questions are answered through the aforementioned data-gathering tools and the causal relation is shown then. That is why the research is an explanatory one.

3.2. Population, sample and sampling technique

3.2.1. Population description
The population of this study comprises 1030 Debremarkos Comprehensive High School Grade 10 students in Debre Markos town, found in East Gojjam Zone, Amhara Region, Ethiopia. The main reason that the researcher selected that area is that he had the exposure so that he was familiar with the respondents and they were expected to give relevant data for the study. Furthermore, no one conducted research concerning the students’ English language problems in that area.

3.2.2. Sample description
The samples of the study are Debremarkos Comprehensive High School grade 10 students and English language teachers. Out of the target, population that is 1030 (consists of 522 female students and 508 male students); the researcher took 10% (103 students) for the subjects of the study. Actually, the researcher should have taken more than 10% for the convenience of obtaining data from a large number of subjects, but time constraints and financial problems restricted him not to do so. Besides, all the English language teachers were taken as the subjects of the study.

3.2.3. Sampling technique
The researcher used a simple random sampling technique to select sample students for the questionnaire in the study. There are 17 sections for Grade 10 students and he took six students from each 16 sections and seven students from one section. That is 96 students from 16 sections and seven students from one section which would be 103 students for the subjects of the study. He also used a purposive sampling technique to select respondents into different categories of above-average students, average students and below-average students for the focus group discussion. The researcher had cooperation from English language teachers to select students because they know which student is in which categories (above-average students, average students and below-average students) from their mark list sheet. David and Sutton (2009) acknowledge that in purposive sampling, the units are selected according to the researcher’s own knowledge and opinion about which ones they think will be appropriate to the topic area.

3.3. Data-gathering instruments
The researcher intended to use questionnaire as the main data-gathering instrument because it is believed that relevant data could be collected from a large number of respondents, i.e. students of
Grade 10 in this case. Besides, he intended that interview for English teachers and focus group discussion for students are supplementary data-gathering instruments.

3.3.1. Questionnaire for students
The researcher intends to use questionnaire for gathering data. The main reason that the researcher used this instrument is to gather relevant data from a large number of subjects. To identify factors affecting students' attitudes towards learning English as a foreign language and to collect valuable information for the study, opinions that reflect the attitudes of students were gathered by systematically and carefully adapted and prepared questionnaire. Basically, statements expressing a certain degree of positive or negative attitudes towards learning English as a foreign/second language have been used in similar studies despite of the fact that the present study focuses on factors affecting students' attitudes towards learning English as a foreign language. For instance, the researcher systematically adapted questions from studies like, Getahun (1997), Medhanie (1986), Mohamed (2004) and Tursi (1970).

To avoid difficulty, the questionnaire was written in Amharic language. To get reliable data, the researcher made efforts, just to make the questionnaire more comprehensive. Due to a shortage of time, convenience of analysis, and reduce confusion the researcher decided to use only close-ended questions in the questionnaire. The 5-point Likert-type scales were used in the questionnaire for both negative and positive statements and learners were allowed to put a tick in one of the scales based on their opinions. Concerning the distribution of the questionnaire, good cooperation was requested from the school administrator, English teachers and Grade 10 students. Thus, a letter was written for the school director by the researcher's Sponsoring Faculty Graduate Commission. Then, the researcher contacted and introduced himself to the above individuals in the school. The objectives of the research and research questionnaire were told to them (cooperators). Lastly, the questionnaires were distributed to the selected respondents and the researcher himself administered the questionnaires. Respondents were encouraged to feel free to ask any question in relation to the questionnaire. They spent about 45 min to finish filling the questionnaire and the researcher himself collected the entire questionnaire.

3.3.2. Interview for teachers
The second data-gathering tool is an interview. In this data-gathering tool, the researcher intended to use a semi-structured interview and only open-ended questions were incorporated. The subjects of the study in this tool were all grade 10 English language teachers.

3.3.3. Focus group discussion
The researcher selected students by making different categories such as above-average students, average students and below-average students purposely with the cooperation of English teachers as they know students for which categories they are in each section from the mark list sheet. The number of students is nine, and they were selected from nine sections (sections A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H and I) one student from each section. The underlying premise that the researcher selected one student from each section is to be fair and avoid bias. Lindlof and Taylor (2002) indicate that focus group discussion produces valuable data and insights with the interaction of a group setting—listening to others, verbalized experiences, stimulated memories, ideas, beliefs, opinion and attitudes regarding something. As they stated, whether the group is composed of homogenous or heterogeneous societies, each respondent has different perceptions, beliefs, and opinions concerning something that is subjective. The researcher raised different and basic questions relating to the attitudes of students and their English language learning. Then, opinions from the participants would be put in the form of notes. Actually, some students especially, females are shy and it was very difficult to record their voices so that the researcher would rather put their responses in notes.

3.4. Data analysis and interpretation techniques
The data gathered from students and English teachers were analyzed by using quantitative and qualitative methods. As the researcher incorporated only those close-ended questions, the data
gathered through questionnaire were organized, tabulated and analyzed quantitatively in the form of frequency and percentage. Whereas the data gathered through interviews and focus group discussions were analyzed qualitatively because most questions are open-ended; and mainly used to triangulate the results of the students’ responses to the questionnaires at different levels.

4. Data analysis, results, and discussion

The data presented and to be analyzed in this section of the study are factors that affect students’ attitudes towards learning English as a foreign language reported by Grade 10 students and English language teachers. The data gathered from respondents through the questionnaire, interview and focus group discussion were analyzed by using quantitative and qualitative methods. To identify factors affecting students’ attitudes towards learning English and the extent to which each identified factor exerts an influence on students’ attitudes were requested to put a tick under each statement; using a 5-point Likert Scale rating system as follows: Strongly Agree = 5, Agree = 4, No opinion = 3, Disagree = 2, Strongly Disagree = 1 and vice versa for negative statements. As the students who put a tick under the numbers 5 and 4 (Strongly Agree and Agree) confirmed students who have positive attitudes though the frequency differs, the total percentage of students who highly agreed.

On the other hand, the percentage of students who rated the alternatives “Strongly Disagree” and “Disagree” are summed up to show the students who have negative attitudes towards learning English as a foreign language as compared to the frequency of the two options. Finally, the percentage of those students who rated “No Opinion” are indicated separately, and used to demonstrate the above two extremes. In addition to this, the mean and cumulative mean was calculated to identify which factor exerts an influence on the students’ attitudes while learning English language.

4.1. The analysis of students’ responses for the questionnaire

4.1.1. Students’ attitudes towards the learning of English as a foreign language

As indicated in the above Table 1, for item 1, students were asked to show thought whether English is the most interesting subject that they have in school and about 25.2% of the respondents reported that they strongly agree, 55.3% agree, 7.8% have no opinion, 9.7% disagree and 1.9% strongly agree. The mean is 3.9. That means most students of about 80.5% have positive attitudes to English language. From this one can understand that students are aware of the importance and status of the English language and they are probably interested in that other subject given in the high school through the English language is favourable for them.

For item 2, students were asked whether they like to learn English for the essence of living abroad and 18.5% of the respondents replied that they strongly agree, 25.2% agree, 14.6% have no opinion, 24.3% disagree, and about 17.5% of them strongly disagree. The mean is 3.0. That means about 43.7% of the students are learning English for living abroad may be it is for different purposes and also for other businesses may be profession because there is only a slight difference (41.8%).

Thus, it sounds reasonable to say that students might want to learn English for the purpose of living abroad that is to have a social interchange with the target language culture, or to be bilingual. In much the same way, Brown (2000, p. 181) explains that students of the target language will have an integrative motivation that is held by them who want to join with “the culture of the target language group and become involved in social interchange in that group”.

Students were asked whether they are competent English language users (item 3) and for this 3.9% of the respondents replied that they strongly agree, 17.5% agree, 20.4% have no opinion, 43.7% disagree and 14.6% strongly disagree. The mean for this one is 2.5. Therefore, it is fair to say that most students (58.3%) are not competent English language users, and for this, there might be different reasons that they are reluctant to practice English language in a good manner. It is probably, because the target language is not their mother tongue or there might not be good English models in the school, or probably, they have low self-image about themselves concerning
| No | Statement                                                                 | Scales                  | Students’ response | Percentage (%) |
|----|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------|----------------|
|    |                                                                           | Frequency               |                    |                |
| 1.1| I think English is the most interesting subject that we have in school.     | Strongly agree          | 26                 | 25.2           |
|    |                                                                           | Agree                   | 57                 | 55.3           |
|    |                                                                           | No opinion              | 8                  | 7.8            |
|    |                                                                           | Disagree                | 10                 | 9.7            |
|    |                                                                           | Strongly disagree       | 2                  | 1.9            |
|    | Total                                                                     |                         | 103                |                |
|    | Mean                                                                      |                         | 3.9                |                |
| 1.2| I like to learn English because I want to live abroad.                    | Strongly agree          | 19                 | 18.5           |
|    |                                                                           | Agree                   | 26                 | 25.2           |
|    |                                                                           | No opinion              | 15                 | 14.6           |
|    |                                                                           | Disagree                | 25                 | 24.3           |
|    |                                                                           | Strongly disagree       | 18                 | 17.5           |
|    | Total                                                                     |                         | 103                |                |
|    | Mean                                                                      |                         | 3.0                |                |
| 1.3| I’m a competent English language user.                                    | Strongly agree          | 4                  | 3.9            |
|    |                                                                           | Agree                   | 18                 | 17.5           |
|    |                                                                           | No opinion              | 21                 | 20.4           |
|    |                                                                           | Disagree                | 45                 | 43.7           |
|    |                                                                           | Strongly disagree       | 15                 | 14.6           |
|    | Total                                                                     |                         | 103                |                |
|    | Mean                                                                      |                         | 2.5                |                |
| 1.4| I like to learn English because I want to have a good profession in it.   | Strongly agree          | 41                 | 39.8           |
|    |                                                                           | Agree                   | 46                 | 44.7           |
|    |                                                                           | No opinion              | 6                  | 5.8            |
|    |                                                                           | Disagree                | 8                  | 7.8            |
|    |                                                                           | Strongly disagree       | 2                  | 1.9            |
|    | Total                                                                     |                         | 103                |                |
|    | Mean                                                                      |                         | 4.1                |                |
| 1.5| I like to learn English because it is one way to get a good job.          | Strongly agree          | 28                 | 27.2           |
|    |                                                                           | Agree                   | 47                 | 45.6           |
|    |                                                                           | No opinion              | 7                  | 6.8            |
|    |                                                                           | Disagree                | 16                 | 15.5           |
|    |                                                                           | Strongly disagree       | 5                  | 4.9            |
|    | Total                                                                     |                         | 103                |                |
|    | Mean                                                                      |                         | 3.7                |                |
| 1.6| I like to learn English because I want to pass in the Ethiopian National Examination. | Strongly agree          | 42                 | 40.8           |
|    |                                                                           | Agree                   | 39                 | 37.9           |
|    |                                                                           | No opinion              | 15                 | 14.6           |
|    |                                                                           | Disagree                | 7                  | 6.8            |
|    |                                                                           | Strongly disagree       | 0                  | 0              |
|    | Total                                                                     |                         | 103                |                |
|    | Mean                                                                      |                         | 4.1                |                |

(Continued)
their ability to communicate through the target language (English). In this respect, Serrano-
Sanchez (1996) has noted that students may develop low self-image in learning a foreign lan-
guage; perhaps because they could not get appropriate exposure to practice the language; or
perhaps, because they may think that their language performance is lower as compared to others.

Item 1.4, students were asked whether they like to learn English because they want to have
a good profession in it and, as indicated in the above Table 1, 39.8% of the respondents strongly
agree to the statement, 44.7% agree to it, 5.8% have no opinion, 7.8% disagree and 1.9% of them
strongly agree. The mean is 4.1. Thus, from this, it can be deduced that most students about 84.5%
learn English for likely to have a good profession in it. For this, literature indicates that target
language learners might have an integrative motivation which indirectly conveys they learn
English for success that is to have abilities like the target language community have.

Table 1. (Continued)

| No  | Statement                                                                 | Scales                      | Students’ response | Percentage (%) |
|-----|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------|----------------|
| 1.7 | I believe that I can do the English examination very well.                | Strongly agree              | 12                 | 11.6           |
|     |                                                                           | Agree                       | 34                 | 33             |
|     |                                                                           | No opinion                  | 25                 | 24.3           |
|     |                                                                           | Disagree                    | 24                 | 23.3           |
|     |                                                                           | Strongly disagree           | 8                  | 7.8            |
|     | Total                                                                     |                              | 103                |                |
|     | Mean                                                                      |                              | 3.2                |                |
| 1.8 | I am free from any frustration whenever I speak English in the classroom. | Strongly agree              | 8                  | 7.8            |
|     |                                                                           | Agree                       | 27                 | 26.2           |
|     |                                                                           | No opinion                  | 19                 | 18.5           |
|     |                                                                           | Disagree                    | 32                 | 31.1           |
|     |                                                                           | Strongly disagree           | 17                 | 16.5           |
|     | Total                                                                     |                              | 103                |                |
|     | Mean                                                                      |                              | 2.8                |                |
| 1.9 | I do not like to learn English because it is not my favourite subject.    | Strongly disagree           | 33                 | 32             |
|     |                                                                           | Disagree                    | 33                 | 32             |
|     |                                                                           | No opinion                  | 24                 | 23.3           |
|     |                                                                           | Agree                       | 9                  | 8.7            |
|     |                                                                           | Strongly agree              | 4                  | 3.9            |
|     | Total                                                                     |                              | 103                |                |
|     | Mean                                                                      |                              | 3.9                |                |
| 1.10| I wish that no subjects in schools were taught in English.                | Strongly disagree           | 37                 | 35.9           |
|     |                                                                           | Disagree                    | 31                 | 30.1           |
|     |                                                                           | No opinion                  | 10                 | 9.7            |
|     |                                                                           | Agree                       | 10                 | 9.7            |
|     |                                                                           | Strongly agree              | 15                 | 14.6           |
|     | Total                                                                     |                              | 103                |                |
|     | Mean                                                                      |                              | 3.6                |                |

G.M. = 3.5

Where G = Grand and M = Mean.
For statement 1.5 students were asked to show whether they like to learn English because it is one way to get a good job, and about 27.2% of the respondents replied that they strongly agree, 45.6% of them agree, 6.8% have no opinion, 15.5% of them disagree and 4.9% strongly agree. The mean is 3.7. From this, it can be concluded that most students (72.8%) learn English language just likely to have got good job (instrumental motivation). This seems reasonable to say that learners of the English language are learning for the purpose of securing better jobs and they are learning it for short-term purposes. Regarding to this, C. R. Gardner and Lambert (1972) identify that students with instrumental motivation acquire the language for such reasons as to get a better job, to read technical material and to have rewards. From this, it can be concluded that most students (72.8%) learn English language just likely to have got good job (instrumental motivation).

Statement 1.6, learners were asked to indicate whether they like to learn English because they might want to pass the Ethiopian National Exam, and as indicated in above table obviously, 40.8% of the respondents reported that they strongly agree, 37.9% of them agree, 14.6% have no opinion, 6.8% disagree and none of them reported that they strongly disagree. The mean for this is 4.1. Hence, it is possible to say that students of large number (78.7%) learn English to pass exams which shows that they are instrumentally motivated as far as their responses are concerned. Concerning to this, it is reasonable to say that learners are likely to learn the target language for the purpose of targeting the Ethiopian National Examination which shows that they have short term success that is utilitarian such as meeting the requirements for the school. Actually, the literature part confirms this idea strongly.

For statement (item) 1.7, students were asked concerning their belief whether they could do the English examination very well, and 11.6% of the respondent responded that they strongly agree, about 33% of them reported that they agree, 24.3%of them have no opinion, 23.3% of them disagree and 7.8%of them strongly disagree. The mean is 3.2. Thus, it is possible to conclude that most students (44.6%) are confident enough in doing the English examination well. As far as literature is concerned in part two of this study, students’ attitudes tend to be positive if they have confidence in doing English examinations and activities and the tendency that their language performance would be continuously increased.

Statement 1.8, students were asked to show whether they were free from any frustration whenever they speak in English in the classroom, and 7.8% of the respondents reported that they strongly agree, 26.2% agree, 18.4% of them have no opinion, 31.1% of them disagree and 16.5% them strongly disagree. The mean is 2.8. Therefore, students of (47.6%) are not free from any frustration while speaking in the classroom which may be due to their shyness coming from parental problem. And for this, students might have different difficulties that make them not speak in front of the others; it is probably, because their backgrounds like cultures, or they might have natural language anxiety that derivate from their shyness, these might hinder them not to do their language activities in a good manner. In this respect, Hedge (2000, p. 285) explains that trying to speak inform of others often generates high level of anxiety, students may feel tense or worried for a number of reasons (a) they may feel that they are under the evaluation of others or (b) they may feel anxious because they may have “natural anxiety” resulting from fear of being incomprehensible in their speech or (c) they might have their own “cultural inhibitions” about seeing face or (d) they may develop “shy personality” to speak in front of others, perhaps because they fear making mistakes in class or fear of facing shortage of words or ideas as they become under undue anxiety.

For item1.9, that is students were asked to indicate whether they do not like to learn English because it might not be their favorite subject and it is contrary to statement (item), 1.2, and about 32% of the respondents reported that they strongly disagree, 32% of them disagree, 23.3% of them have no opinion, 8.7% of them replied that they agree to it, and 3.9% of the respondents responded that they strongly agree. The mean is 3.9. Therefore from this, it is fair to say that English is a favourite subject for students of about 64% so that they like to learn it. Besides, learners are interested in English as it is being the medium of instruction in the high school which
indirectly shows that they know the importance and the status of English language, and this confirms their responses given to item 1.2.

For statement 1.10 was regarding students’ wish that is no subjects in school were taught in English as indicated in table above, and 35.9% of them reported that they strongly disagree to it, 30.1% of the respondents disagree to it, 9.7% of them have no opinion to it, 9.7% of them agree to it and 14.6% of the respondents reported that they strongly agree to it. The mean is 3.6. Therefore, students of large number (66%) like the way those subjects taught in English language in the schools. Actually, this item or statement was raised in the above statements, and the difference is only being stated positively or negatively, and their responses are the same. As stated in the above clearly, from this one can understand that students are aware of the importance of the target language (English) and they know the status of English language.

Generally speaking, the cumulative mean for all the above is 3.5 and according to the responses given for the above statements concerning the attitude of students towards learning English, and learner personality factors (statement 1.3, 1.7 and 1.8), students of large number (72%) have positive attitudes towards learning English language, they are both integratively and instrumentally motivated. Actually, the learner personality factors and affective filters are related in concept that is why the researcher put them together in the above table. In the same manner, students are confident in doing English examination but are not free while speaking in English in the classrooms because they think themselves as incompetent users of the language.

4.1.2. Students’ attitudes towards the English language learning situation
The above table contains three statements concerning students’ attitudes towards the English language learning situation and for statement 2.1, 5.8% of the respondents reported that they strongly agree, 20.4% of them agree, 19.4% of them have no opinion, 32% of the respondents reported that they disagree, and about 22.3% of them strongly disagree. The mean is 2.6. Thus, it is possible to conclude that students of 54.3% have negative attitudes towards the English language learning situation. From this it sounds reasonable to say that students’ learning of the language might be determined by the target language learning situation like the method that their teacher uses to teach, the arrangements of seat, the learning environment, and also the sizes of the classroom and its cleanliness and dirt. It seems true to say that students’ attitudes tend to be negative if these things are not good despite of the fact that they like the target language that is English language.

For statement 2.2, as shown in Table 2, 11.7% of the respondents reported that they strongly agree, 20.4% agree, 12.6% have no opinion, 39.8% of the respondents reported that they disagree, and 15.5% of them strongly disagree. The mean is 2.7. From this, it is possible to conclude that students about 55.3% are not interested in the way that English language is given to them. And it is reasonable to deduce that if the way that the target language delivered for students is not attractive and interesting, they tend to be reluctant to like the subject and learn it, and even learners might not have positive attitudes towards the target language (English).

For statement 2.3, 32% of them strongly disagree, 33% of them disagree to it, 14.6% have no opinion, 12.6% of them agree to it and 7.8% of the respondent indicated that they strongly agree. The mean is 3.7. Thus, from this, it is fair to say that students (65%) do not have difficulties in the light, hotness or the coldness of the air while learning English. It is also possible to deduce that whether the air is hot or cold learners do not consider it as it could affect their learning, it might be because the air is conducive for them despite of the fact that the classroom sizes are not suitable to be flexible as they are not the clean, and sufficient for them.

The cumulative mean is 3. From this, one can make clear that if students need to learn the target language in a good manner, it is advisable to consider the learning situation into an account, otherwise, and it is difficult to make good attitudes among the high school learners.
towards learning the English language. In this respect, it is important to pay attention to seating arrangements, for instance, encouraging and facilitating cooperation among students and carefully arranging desks together (Levin & Nolan, 1996, p. 126). According to them, it is essential to overlook an attractive and motivating physical learning environment in which the learning-teaching process takes place. However, from all the statements above (Table 2) students of 62% are not interested in the English language learning situation because according to statement 2.1 and 2.2 their responses indicate that they have negative attitudes towards the learning situation with the exception of air that is conducive for them.

4.1.3. The attitudes of students towards their English as a foreign language teacher

The above table contains five statements regarding to the attitudes of students towards their English as a foreign language teachers as shown clearly. Statement 3.1 explains whether students were interested in their English teacher's method of teaching and 16.5% of the respondents indicated that they strongly agree, 34% agree, 12.6% have no opinion, 14.6% of them disagree and 22.3% of the respondents strongly disagree. The mean is 3.1. From this, it can be concluded that most students (50.5%) are interested in their teacher's teaching the subject. Whether it is directly or indirectly one can understand that students are interested in their teachers' conduct or probably the teacher may be flexible, and s/he may be freer while the teaching-learning process is taken place.

| No | Statement                                                                 | Scales                | Students’ response | Percentage (%) |
|----|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|----------------|
| 2.1| I like to learn English because the arrangements of seats, learning environment and the classroom dynamics are interesting to me. | Strongly agree: 6, Agree: 21, No opinion: 20, Disagree: 33, Strongly disagree: 23 | Frequency       | 103            |
|    |                                                                           |                       |                    |                |
|    |                                                                           | Strongly agree        | 6                  | 5.8            |
|    |                                                                           | Agree                 | 21                 | 20.4           |
|    |                                                                           | No opinion            | 20                 | 19.4           |
|    |                                                                           | Disagree              | 33                 | 32             |
|    |                                                                           | Strongly disagree     | 23                 | 22.3           |
|    |                                                                           | Total                 | 103                |                |
|    |                                                                           | Mean                  | 2.6                |                |
| 2.2| I prefer to attend English classes because the way it is given is very interesting. | Strongly agree: 12, Agree: 21, No opinion: 13, Disagree: 41, Strongly disagree: 16 | Frequency       | 103            |
|    |                                                                           |                       |                    |                |
|    |                                                                           | Strongly agree        | 12                 | 11.7           |
|    |                                                                           | Agree                 | 21                 | 20.4           |
|    |                                                                           | No opinion            | 13                 | 12.6           |
|    |                                                                           | Disagree              | 41                 | 39.8           |
|    |                                                                           | Strongly disagree     | 16                 | 15.5           |
|    |                                                                           | Total                 | 103                |                |
|    |                                                                           | Mean                  | 2.7                |                |
| 2.3| I dislike learning English because the size of Classrooms, the light, and the hotness or coldness of the air is not conducive. | Strongly disagree: 33, disagree: 34, No opinion: 15, Agree: 13, Strongly agree: 8 | Frequency       | 103            |
|    |                                                                           |                       |                    |                |
|    |                                                                           | Strongly disagree     | 33                 | 32             |
|    |                                                                           | disagree              | 34                 | 33             |
|    |                                                                           | No opinion            | 15                 | 14.6           |
|    |                                                                           | Agree                 | 13                 | 12.6           |
|    |                                                                           | Strongly agree        | 8                  | 7.8            |
|    |                                                                           | Total                 | 103                |                |
|    |                                                                           | Mean                  | 3.7                |                |

G.M = 3
For statement 3.2 they were asked whether their English teacher uses good examples and illustrations while s/he teaches and for this about 7.8% of the respondents responded that they strongly agree, 19.4% of them agree, 8.7% have no opinion, 41.7% of them replied that they disagree and 22.3% of them witnessed that they strongly disagree. The mean is 2.5. Therefore, it is possible to say that students of a large number (64%) witnessed that they dislike their teacher’s giving examples and illustrations which shows that they have negative attitudes towards him/her.

| No | Statement                                                                 | Scales                          | Students’ response | Percentage (%) |
|----|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------|----------------|
| 3.1| I am interested in our English teacher’s method of teaching.              | Strongly agree                  | 17                 | 16.5           |
|    |                                                                           | Agree                           | 35                 | 34             |
|    |                                                                           | No opinion                      | 13                 | 12.6           |
|    |                                                                           | Disagree                        | 15                 | 14.6           |
|    |                                                                           | Strongly disagree               | 23                 | 22.3           |
|    |                                                                           | **Total**                       | 103                |                |
|    |                                                                           | **Mean**                        | 3.1                |                |
| 3.2| Our English teacher uses good examples and illustrations while s/he teaches. | Strongly agree                  | 8                  | 7.8            |
|    |                                                                           | Agree                           | 20                 | 19.4           |
|    |                                                                           | No opinion                      | 9                  | 8.7            |
|    |                                                                           | Disagree                        | 43                 | 41.7           |
|    |                                                                           | Strongly disagree               | 23                 | 22.3           |
|    |                                                                           | **Total**                       | 103                |                |
|    |                                                                           | **Mean**                        | 2.5                |                |
| 3.3| Our English teacher encourages us to speak in English both inside and outside the classroom. | Strongly agree                  | 9                  | 8.7            |
|    |                                                                           | Agree                           | 18                 | 17.5           |
|    |                                                                           | No opinion                      | 10                 | 9.7            |
|    |                                                                           | Disagree                        | 36                 | 35             |
|    |                                                                           | Strongly disagree               | 30                 | 29.1           |
|    |                                                                           | **Total**                       | 103                |                |
|    |                                                                           | **Mean**                        | 2.4                |                |
| 3.4| Our English teacher uses clear and concise instruction during any English activity and examination. | Strongly agree                  | 5                  | 4.9            |
|    |                                                                           | Agree                           | 26                 | 25.2           |
|    |                                                                           | No opinion                      | 17                 | 16.5           |
|    |                                                                           | Disagree                        | 37                 | 35.9           |
|    |                                                                           | Strongly disagree               | 18                 | 17.5           |
|    |                                                                           | **Total**                       | 103                |                |
|    |                                                                           | **Mean**                        | 2.6                |                |
| 3.5| The way our English teacher teaches is monotonous.                       | Strongly disagree               | 20                 | 19.3           |
|    |                                                                           | Disagree                        | 38                 | 36.9           |
|    |                                                                           | No opinion                      | 12                 | 11.7           |
|    |                                                                           | Agree                           | 21                 | 20.4           |
|    |                                                                           | Strongly agree                  | 12                 | 11.7           |
|    |                                                                           | **Total**                       | 103                |                |
|    |                                                                           | **Mean**                        | 3.3                |                |

G.M = 2.8
As far as literature is concerned, unless teachers use clear and concise examples during the teaching-learning process, the class will be very boring and nothing is grasped by learners.

Likewise, for statement 3.3, students were asked whether their English teacher encourages them to speak in English both inside and outside the classroom, and about 8.7% of the respondents indicated that they strongly agree, 17.5% agree, 9.7% have no opinion, 35% of them disagree and 29.1% of them strongly disagree. The mean is 2.4.

Therefore, English teachers do not give emphasis in encouraging their students to speak in English and students (64.1%) have negative attitudes towards their teachers. It supports the above statement (3.2). Actually, it may be due to the lack of good English model and encouragement in high school that students lack English proficiency.

The next statement (3.4) learners were asked whether their English teacher uses clear and concise instruction during any English activity and examination and according to the respondents' responses, 4.9% of them witnessed that they strongly agree, 25.2% agree, 16.5% have no opinion, 35.9% disagree and 17.5% of them strongly disagree. The mean for this is 2.6. Therefore, it is true to say that English language teachers do not use clear and concise instructions during any English activity and examination and shows that students of 53.4% do not have good attitudes to their teachers.

On contrary to statement 3.1, learners were asked to show whether the way their English teacher teaches is monotonous is statement 3.5 and respondents of about 19.3% of the respondents reported that they strongly disagree to it, 36.9% of them disagree to it, 11.7% have no opinion, 20.4% agree, and 11.7% reported that they strongly agree. The mean is 3.3. Thus, it is possible to say that students (56.2%) are interested in their teachers teaching method which is similar to statement 3.1.

Generally, the cumulative mean is 2.8. Thus, statement 3.2, 3.3 and 3.4, indicate that students have negative attitudes towards their English teacher and from the cumulative mean that is 2.8 which shows that 58% of the students have negative attitudes towards their teachers. As the main target of the researcher is to investigate the “factors affecting students' attitudes towards learning English as a foreign language”, the researcher realized that English as a foreign language teachers affect students' attitudes negatively in learning English since as respondents' responses indicate teachers do not use clear examples, they do not encourage their students properly. That is why learners lack good English proficiency as required. In this respect, C. R. Gardner and Lambert (1972) indicate those teachers' behaviours, teachers' personalities, teachers' way of teaching the course, and teachers' way of considering students' interests could change the attitudes of students towards learning the target language into negative or positive ones.

4.1.4. Students' attitudes towards grade 10 English teaching materials
Table 4 contains four statements concerning the attitudes of students towards the Grade 10 English teaching materials. For statement 4.1, respondents of 18.4% reported that they strongly agree, 51.5% agree, 5.8% have no opinion, 12.6% disagree and 11.7% of them strongly disagree. The mean is 3.5. Thus, students (69.9%) are interested in the English teaching materials. From this, it is possible to understand that if the teaching materials like English textbooks are attractive and supported with different pictures, learners are able to understand each and every activity properly.

In this regard, some language scholars like Tomlinson (1998, p. 18) indicates that the use of authentic materials make target language learners very conscious and their potential to learn the language tends to be increased continuously.

For statement 4.2, about 3.9% of the respondents replied that they strongly agree, 38.8% agree, 13.6% have no opinion, 35% disagree and 8.7% strongly disagree. The mean is 2.9. Thus, as indicated in the table above students of 43.7% have negative attitudes towards the words in the reading passages of English textbooks. As indicated in the literature part, if the lexical items used
in the teaching materials are above the level of learners it would be difficult to understand during the teaching-learning process. 

For statement 4.3, as obviously put in the table about 4.9% of the respondents reported that they strongly agree, 41.7% agree, 16.5% of them have no opinion, 25.2% disagree and 11.7% of the respondent responded that they strongly disagree. The mean is 3.0; from this, it can be deduced that students' English textbooks have different pictures so that students (46.6%) like which indirectly shows that they have positive attitudes towards it.
For the last statement (4.4) as shown, in the above table about 14.6% of them strongly disagree, 40.8% disagree, 18.5% have no opinion, 19.4% agree and 6.8% of the respondents replied that they strongly agree. The mean here is 3.4. Thus, most students (55.4%) witnessed that the passages in the English textbooks are clear for them. It sounds reasonable to say that those textbooks tend to attract the attitudes of students if they are being supported by different pictures because either it is vertical or horizontally students understand in a simple way.

Totally, the cumulative mean is 3.2 that are 66% of the students have positive attitudes towards their English teaching materials except statement 4.2 which indirectly shows these English teaching materials affect students' attitudes positively.

4.1.5. Parents’ attitudes towards the learning of English as a foreign language by their children

Table 5 contains five statements concerning the attitudes of parents towards the learning of English as a foreign language by their children. Statement 5.1 learners were asked to indicate whether their parents feel that learning English is important, and respondents of about 48.5% witnessed that they strongly agree, 33% of them agree, 3.9% have no opinion, 6.8% disagree and 7.8% of them strongly disagree. The mean is 4.1. Hence, most students’ parents (81.5%) have positive attitudes towards learning English by their children’s and know the importance of English language.

They were asked to show whether their parents are good speakers of English (item 5.2), and respondents of 4.9% strongly agree, 26.2% of them agree, 13.6% have no opinion, 32% of them disagree and 23.3% of them strongly disagree. The mean is 2.6. Therefore, from this, it can be referred that most students’ parents (55.3%) are not good speakers of English language. As it can be deduced from their responses that parents of the target language learners are clear about the status of English language although parents are not good speakers of the language.

Statement 5.3, they were requested to show whether their parents encourage them to study English very well, and respondents of 32% indicated that they strongly agree, 42.7% agree, 7.8% have no opinion, 8.7% of them disagree and again 8.7% of them showed that they strongly disagree to it. The mean is 3.8. Thus, most students’ parents (74.7%) encourage their children to study English. From this one can understand that parents of learners are able to help their children by helping materials that could improve their English proficiency which shows their great encouragement.

For the fourth statement (5.4) students were asked to indicate whether their parents buy English guides for them to study, and respondents of about 21.4% indicated that they strongly agree, 47.6% of them agree, 9.7% have no opinion, 8.7% of them disagree and 12.6% of them strongly disagree. The mean is 3.6. Thus, according to these responses indicated, most parents (69%) buy English Guides for their children. Indeed, this shows that parents have a good understanding about the importance of English and its status that is why they are eager to help their children by buying materials.

The last statement (5.5), they were asked to convey whether their parents feel that learning English is not important which is contrary to statement 5.1 and about 55.3% of them strongly disagree, 25.2% of them disagree, 11.7% have no opinion, 5.8% of them agree and 1.9% of the respondents strongly agree. Thus, it is the same as the first statement. The mean is 4.3. That is about 80.5% of the parents feel that learning English is important. The cumulative mean is 3.7 which mean that 76% of the students’ parents have positive attitudes towards the learning of English as a foreign language by their children. And on the other words, parents’ attitudes play very significant roles in developing positive attitudes towards learning English by their children. In much the same way, Young (1994) refers to some of the many ways in which parents exert an attitudinal influence, such as, through discussion, by encouraging participation in foreign language, by helping the child with homework, and by encouraging the child to buy and read material in the foreign language.
4.1.6. Peer groups' attitudes towards learning English as a foreign language

Table 6 contains four statements regarding the peer groups' attitudes towards the learning of English as a foreign language. Students were asked to show whether their friends use English in their communication so that it helps them improve their English proficiency (item 6.1), and 20.4% of the respondents reported that they strongly agree, 24.3% of them agree, 14.6% of them have no idea, 22.3% of the respondents indicated that they disagree, 18.4% of them strongly disagree.

### Table 6

| No  | Statement | Scales               | Students' response | Percentage (%) |
|-----|-----------|----------------------|--------------------|----------------|
|     |           | Frequency            |                    |                |
| 5.1 | My parents feel that learning English is important. | Strongly agree | 50 | 48.5 |
|     |           | Agree                | 34 | 33  |
|     |           | No opinion           | 4  | 4   |
|     |           | Disagree             | 7  | 6.8 |
|     |           | Strongly disagree    | 8  | 7.8 |
| Total |           |                      | 103 |      |
| Mean |           |                      | 4.1 |      |
| 5.2 | My parents are good speakers of English. | Strongly agree | 5  | 4.9 |
|     |           | Agree                | 27 | 26.2 |
|     |           | No opinion           | 14 | 13.6 |
|     |           | Disagree             | 33 | 32  |
|     |           | Strongly disagree    | 24 | 23.3 |
| Total |           |                      | 103 |      |
| Mean |           |                      | 2.6 |      |
| 5.3 | My parents encourage me to study English very well. | Strongly agree | 33 | 32  |
|     |           | Agree                | 44 | 42.7 |
|     |           | No opinion           | 8  | 7.8 |
|     |           | Disagree             | 9  | 8.7 |
|     |           | Strongly disagree    | 9  | 8.7 |
| Total |           |                      | 103 |      |
| Mean |           |                      | 3.8 |      |
| 5.4 | My parents buy English guides for me to study. | Strongly agree | 22 | 21.4 |
|     |           | Agree                | 49 | 47.6 |
|     |           | No opinion           | 10 | 9.7 |
|     |           | Disagree             | 9  | 8.7 |
|     |           | Strongly disagree    | 13 | 12.6 |
| Total |           |                      | 103 |      |
| Mean |           |                      | 3.6 |      |
| 5.5 | My parents feel that learning English is not important. | Strongly disagree | 57 | 55.3 |
|     |           | Disagree             | 26 | 25.2 |
|     |           | No opinion           | 12 | 11.7 |
|     |           | Agree                | 6  | 5.8 |
|     |           | Strongly agree       | 2  | 1.9 |
| Total |           |                      | 103 |      |
| Mean |           |                      | 4.3 |      |

G.M. = 3.7
The mean is 3.1. Thus, most students’ classmates (44.7%) are likely to speak in English language and it helps them to improve their speaking. From this, one can understand that classmates’ communication through English has a great value for the developments of students’ English proficiency which later determines their attitudes.

Statement 6.2, respondents were asked to indicate whether their classmates feel happy whenever they speak in English, and about 8.7% of the respondents witnessed that they strongly agree, 20.4% of them agree, 21.4% of them have no opinion, 29.1% of them disagree and 20.4% of them strongly disagree. And the mean here is 2.7. Thus, from this, it can be concluded that most students about 49.5% are not happy whenever their peer groups speak I English. For this, students

| No | Statement | Scales                  | Students’ response | Percentage (%) |
|----|-----------|-------------------------|--------------------|----------------|
| 6.1 | My friends use English in our communication so that it helps me improve my English proficiency. | Strongly agree      | 21                | 20.4           |
|     |           | Agree                   | 25                | 24.3           |
|     |           | No opinion              | 15                | 14.6           |
|     |           | Disagree                | 23                | 22.3           |
|     |           | Strongly disagree       | 19                | 18.5           |
| Total |           |                         | 103               |                |
| Mean |           |                         |                   | 3.1            |

| 6.2 | My classmates feel happy whenever I speak in English. | Strongly agree      | 9                 | 8.7            |
|     |                                                     | Agree               | 21                | 20.4           |
|     |                                                     | No opinion          | 22                | 21.4           |
|     |                                                     | Disagree            | 30                | 29.1           |
|     |                                                     | Strongly disagree   | 21                | 20.4           |
| Total |                                                   |                     | 103               |                |
| Mean |                                                   |                     |                   | 2.7            |

| 6.3 | Learning English with my friends is better than learning it by myself. | Strongly agree      | 30                | 29.1           |
|     |                                                                     | Agree               | 44                | 42.7           |
|     |                                                                     | No opinion          | 7                 | 6.8            |
|     |                                                                     | Disagree            | 12                | 11.7           |
|     |                                                                     | Strongly disagree   | 10                | 9.7            |
| Total |                                                                   |                     | 103               |                |
| Mean |                                                                   |                     |                   | 3.7            |

| 6.4 | My friends do not feel happy whenever I speak in English outside the classroom. | Strongly disagree   | 15                | 14.6           |
|     |                                                                 Disagree            | 24                | 23.3           |
|     |                                                                 No opinion          | 30                | 29.1           |
|     |                                                                 Agree               | 22                | 21.4           |
|     |                                                                 Strongly agree       | 12                | 11.7           |
| Total |                                                                   |                     | 103               |                |
| Mean |                                                                   |                     |                   | 3.1            |

The mean is 3.1. Thus, most students’ classmates (44.7%) are likely to speak in English language and it helps them to improve their speaking. From this, one can understand that classmates’ communication through English has a great value for the developments of students’ English proficiency which later determines their attitudes.

Statement 6.2, respondents were asked to indicate whether their classmates feel happy whenever they speak in English, and about 8.7% of the respondents witnessed that they strongly agree, 20.4% of them agree, 21.4% of them have no opinion, 29.1% of them disagree and 20.4% of them strongly disagree. And the mean here is 2.7. Thus, from this, it can be concluded that most students about 49.5% are not happy whenever their peer groups speak I English. For this, students
might be shy to use and exercise the language in front of others, and unless the setting is at school, they will be reluctant to speak in English because they might believe to be laughed at.

For statement 6.3 students were asked to show whether Learning English with their friends is better than learning it by themselves, and respondents of 29.1% of the respondents reported that they strongly agree, 42.7% of them replied that they agree to it, 6.8% have no opinion, 11.7% of them disagree and 9.7% of the respondents strongly disagree. The mean is 3.7. Thus, according to the responses given, students’ peer groups (71.8%) prefer to learn English with their classmates rather than learning it by alone.

The last statement (6.4) asked students whether their friends do not feel happy whenever they speak in English outside the classroom” is contrary to statement 6.2 and respondents of 14.6% of them strongly disagree to it, 23.3% of them disagree, 29.1% of them have no opinion, 21.4% of them agree to it and 11.7% replied that they strongly agree. The mean is 3.1. Thus, 37.9% of students feel happy whenever their peer groups speak in English which contradicts with statement 6.2.

To generalize all the above responses given, cumulative mean for the above statements is 3.2 which indicated that students of 66% have positive attitudes towards their classmates in learning English as a foreign language. On the other statement, the way students’ classmates act, the way they speak in English, the way they talk in the school as well as outside can determine peer groups’ attitudes in a good manner. Indeed, literature supports this idea.

4.1.7. Students’ attitudes towards English native speakers
Table 7 contains three statements concerning students’ attitude towards English native speakers. The first statement (7.1), students were asked to show whether they like the native speakers of English ... the Americans, British and Canadians, and the respondents about 22.3% of the respondents reported that they strongly agree, 25.2% of them agree, 22.3% of them have no opinion, 17.5% of them disagree and the rest that is 12.6% of them strongly disagree. The mean is 3.3. Thus, most students that are 47.5% like the English native speakers. From this, one can make clear those learners’ expectations and perceptions concerning English native speakers are good and this leads them to have positive attitudes towards the target language (English) which also probably leads them success.

Respondents were asked to indicate whether they wish they could speak like him/her when they hear someone (American, British and Canadian) who speaks English well, and about 47.5% of the respondents reported that they strongly agree, 37.9% of them agree, 5.8% have no opinion, 4.9% disagree and 3.9% of them strongly disagree. The mean is 4.2. Thus, 85.4% of the students wish to be like English native speakers. It sounds reasonable to say that if students get the exposure that those English native speakers do, they are eager to use the chance because it is one way that informal situation is created for learners to develop their English proficiency which in turn creates positive image for the target language as well as the speakers of the language.

The third statement (7.3), they were asked to indicate whether they do not like the culture of English native speakers, and about 33% of the respondents strongly disagree, 35.9% of them disagree, 13.6% of the respondents have no opinion, 13.6% of them agree and 3.9% of the respondents reported that they strongly agree. The mean is 3.8. Hence, 68.9% of the students like the culture of English native speakers. From the above interpretation, the cumulative mean is 3.8 and it is possible to conclude that students of 78% have positive attitudes towards those English native speakers. This confirms that target language (English) speakers community influence English learners’ attitudes positively.

As far as responses are concerned, cultures of the English native speakers play vital roles in determining or changing the images of the target language learners. The learners’ attitudes
towards the speakers of the target language (English) and the target language culture have been found consequential. According to C. R. Gardner and Lambert (1972), those concepts and attitudes which a student has concerning a language and also those strategies for learning which a learner developed may influence the process of learning foreign languages either positively or negatively.

4.1.8. Students’ attitudes towards their ages, sexes, and English as foreign language learning

Table 8 contains statements concerning students’ attitudes towards their ages and sexes and English as a foreign language learning. As indicated in the literature part of this study, learners’ ages and sexes are one of the contributors that change their attitudes to be positive or negative towards the learning of their target language (English). For statement 8.1 that is students were asked whether their ages contribute a lot to their English language learning and respondents of about 15.5% reported that they strongly agree, 38.8% of them reported that the agree, 15.5% of them have no opinion, 18.5% of them disagree and 11.7% of them strongly disagree. The mean here is 3.3. This means 54.3% of the students’ ages contribute lot for their English learning. As most of the high school learners younger, and are eager to know a new thing and their potential is important to their language learning, their ages are able to determine

| Statement                                                                 | Scales                | Students’ response | Percentage (%) |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|----------------|
| I like the nativespeakers of English ... the Americans, British, and Canadians. | Strongly agree        | 23                 | 22.3           |
| Agree                                                                     | 26                    | 25.2               |
| No opinion                                                                | 23                    | 22.3               |
| Disagree                                                                  | 18                    | 17.5               |
| Strongly disagree                                                         | 13                    | 12.6               |
| Total                                                                     | 103                   |                    |
| Mean                                                                      | 3.3                   |                    |
| When I hear someone (American, British, and Canadian) who speaks English well, I wish I could speak like him. | Strongly agree        | 49                 | 47.5           |
| Agree                                                                     | 39                    | 37.9               |
| No opinion                                                                | 6                     | 5.8                |
| Disagree                                                                  | 5                     | 4.9                |
| Strongly disagree                                                         | 4                     | 3.9                |
| Total                                                                     | 103                   |                    |
| Mean                                                                      | 4.2                   |                    |
| I do not like the culture of English native speakers.                     | Strongly disagree     | 34                 | 33             |
| Disagree                                                                  | 37                    | 35.9               |
| No opinion                                                                | 14                    | 13.6               |
| Agree                                                                     | 14                    | 13.6               |
| Strongly agree                                                           | 4                     | 3.9                |
| Total                                                                     | 103                   |                    |
| Mean                                                                      | 3.8                   |                    |

G.M = 3.2
their attitudes to be positive. This in turn shows that younger learners are good at their attitudes towards learning English as a foreign language that supports the literature in this study.

Statement 8.2 asked students whether their sexes hinder their English learning and respondents of 48.5% of them strongly disagree, 29.1% of the respondents disagree to it, 10.7% of them have no opinion, 7.8% of them agree and 3.9% strongly agree to it. The mean is 4.1. That is about 77.6% of the students’ sexes do not hinder to learn English. As far as literature is concerned, students’ sexes play significant roles to their attitudes to be positive or negative towards the language learning, but their responses show that being a female or male do not hinder or help their English learning. Students may not be aware of their sexes that whether it is influential to determine their way of perceiving the language.

For the last statement (8.3) they were asked to indicate whether their sexes helps them learn English in a good manner, and respondents of 11.7% strongly agree to it, 18.5% agree to it, 29.1% have no opinion, 20.4% of them disagree and again 20.4% of the respondents strongly disagree to it. The mean is 2.8. Thus, 40.8% of the students witnessed that their sexes do not help their learning of English.

Therefore, the cumulative mean is 3.4 which show that about 70% of those students’ ages contribute to their English learning which indirectly shows ages of students affect their attitudes
Most students in the high schools are believed to be younger ones and their ages are probably the one that contributes great roles for the target language learning and their attitudes towards the target language learning is positive; or probably they are assumed to be more active learners comparing to others. In this respect, Ellis (1994, p. 484) indicates that there is a widely held lay belief that younger second or foreign language learners are generally able to do better than older learners. Concerning the learners’ sexes, literature explains that the students’ sexes are one of the contributors that determine their attitudes towards learning the target language. For instance, females are almost expected to show good attitudes than do boys. Regarding to this, C. R. Gardner and Lambert (1972) reported that girls tend to demonstrate more positive attitudes than do boys. However, this does not fit to the literature, as far as respondents’ responses are concerned, being a female or male does not matter to their target language learning.

4.2. Teachers' responses for the interview

In this data-gathering tool, the researcher analyzed each response qualitatively since only open-ended questions were used in the structured interview. Despite of the fact that there is sameness in the type of questions in each data-gathering tool (questionnaire, interview and focus group discussion), there are some general questions that are incorporated concerning the attitudes of students towards learning English as a foreign language. Thus, the researcher analyzed each item separately. Students were requested to show whether they are interested in their English language teaching, and put reasons (item1). English teachers answered “yes” and there are reasons for this: (1) English is an international language and used as a medium of communication throughout the world (2) from the beginning they learned it to secure good jobs, but it came to an interesting subject after many years teaching experience (3) teaching by itself is learning indirectly (4) it is much proud of seeing our students reach higher level since they are our products.

Item 2, English teachers were asked to give answers whether their students are competent English users, and put the reasons. They answered “No” students are not competent in all skills (speaking, listening and writing). There are reasons for this: (1) fear of making mistakes (2) giving emphasis for some parts of the English language skills for their exam only (the Ethiopian National Examination), (3) lack of English language exposure, (4) lack of knowledge based on basic skills (those students who come from rural areas are shy so that they do not like to participate in speaking skills). Teachers were asked to show whether they come across situations in which their students are disinterested in their English classes, and if yes, they were requested to put reasons (item3). Their answer was “yes” and students are sometimes disinterested in teachers’ methods of teaching because (1) Students are not free when teachers are teaching speaking skills and they want to hear answers from themouth of the teacher (2) The learning environment is not conducive (dusty, classroom sizes are very crammed) for not only English but also other subject periods (3) Sometimes teachers’ teaching way may not be interesting for all students since it is difficult to meet the needs of clever students, medium students, and weak students once. (4) Sometimes learners themselves cause for their failure (as they are in the adolescence stages, they bring different decorated photos in the classroom and distract their peer groups’ attention).

Item 4, teachers were asked to show to what extent do students understand the grade 10 English textbooks during the teaching-learning process (like the difficulties of words in the passages and length of reading passages, and teachers answered that students are sometimes able to understand the English textbooks’ reading sections that are short but not the long and outdated ones.

Teachers were asked to indicate what their belief was about English native speakers like Americans, Canadians and British (item 5). According to English teachers, they have good beliefs or attitudes towards the English native speakers. However, regarding to English native speakers’ cultures, teachers have no good attitudes because as they said students are giving their attention to the English native speakers’ cultures (wearing styles, films) which causes to fail in their learning.
English. As teachers indicated, it is significant to interact with those English native speakers to have good language exposure not their cultures.

Item 6, teachers were asked to show whether they consider the interest of their students in using clear examples and illustrations during the learning-teaching process, and according to their responses, they sometimes consider students’ interest in using clear instructions and examples while teaching. However, these responses given by teachers do not confirm the responses given by students in the questionnaire and focus group discussion part.

Teachers were requested to mention any causes that make their students lack interest in their English language teaching, and if yes, what the causes were (item 7), and according to teachers’ responses, there are some causes for the students’ lack of interest but happening sometimes: (1) concerning with examinations only not learning English for general knowledge (2) poor background from primary schools and lack of opportunities to practice (3) lack of conducive learning environment (4) lack of encouragement from teachers (5) most teachers teaching other subjects mostly use Amharic language (lack of good English models) in schools (6) lack of confidence (7) seeing no need of using English as there is nowhere to apply the language and (8) lack of sufficient resources (English textbooks, guides).

The solution to measure the above causes (if any) that is (item 7), according to teachers’ responses, there are some possible solutions for the above causes. The Ethiopian English National Examination have a duty to include all skills (writing and listening skills) so that they will be given great emphasis for all skills by both teachers and students in the learning-teaching process. The other mechanism is that the learning environment should be improved. As the school served for about 70 years, the classes are very dusty, classroom sizes are not enough so it is difficult to manage a large number of students. Thus, the government and society must work together to establish enough and suitable learning environment not only for the English language but also for other subjects. Besides, English teachers should be ready for their teaching-learning process and identify the needs and interests of their students. Again, sufficient English textbooks, reference books need to be available in the library.

4.3. Students’ responses for the focus group discussion
In this section, the researcher analyzed the responses given by students qualitatively. Actually, the questions in this section are almost similar to the other sections to triangulate the responses. Item 1, students like learning English language because English enables them to communicate with people from different language groups. In addition, English is a medium of instruction and a key to communication. They were asked to indicate whether they are competent English language users (item 2), and students answered “No”; they are not competent English users because of the following reasons:

(1) It is not their mother tongue as far as Amharic language is their native language.
(2) English is not always practiced inside and outside the school (no English day in the school).
(3) Other subjects are taught in Amharic rather than in English although it is a medium of instruction. Thus, all these answers confirm the responses given in the questionnaire.

Students were asked concerning their English teachers’ teaching methods and put reasons (item 3). Students answered “it depends” it is different from teacher to teacher because some teachers are good at their teaching others not. According to their responses, some teachers are likely to be unwilling to their teaching, even they do not worry about their students’ moralities, and they sometimes waste their time without making students clear in their subject. Indeed, this idea is contrasting to the teachers’ responses. Item 4, students were asked to indicate whether their English teachers use clear examples and illustrations while they teach and put reasons. Students said “yes” but English teachers use examples and illustrations very rarely. They always do not consider students’ interests equally, including all groups of students. Of course, this idea supports students’ responses in the questionnaire but contradicts teachers’ responses for the interview.
Respondents were asked to show whether they like to be like native speakers (Americans, British and Canadians) when they hear their speaking (item 5), and they answered “yes” there are some reasons why students like to be English native speakers as they indicated:

(1) Those native speakers of English language are very fast in their speaking and students want to be like them.
(2) To communicate with them and create language interaction.
(3) To share ideas concerning cultures from English native speakers and build good relationships.

Students were asked to put causes that hinder them not to be interested in their English language learning if any (item 6), and they said “yes”, and for this, they gave some reasons like lack of background knowledge, lack of enough English textbooks for all students, lack of motivation from the teachers, and the difficulty in learning English (spelling, pronunciation and writing). As a matter of fact, these responses confirm the responses indicated by teachers. Of the last item No.7, students spoke out solutions to measure causes they mentioned above such as:

(1) They should be learned by clever teachers in lower classes.
(2) English teachers should teach in a good manner by getting ready.
(3) English textbooks should be available in large amount for each student.
(4) Students should attend classes attentively, read additional English books, and use their time wisely.

4.4. Conclusions
The results of the investigation led to the following conclusions: firstly, learners were both instrumentally and integratively motivated since most responses indicated that they wanted to learn English to secure good jobs, to pass the Ethiopian National Examinations (instrumental), to live abroad and to have a good profession in English (integrative). Secondly, students have positive attitudes towards learning English language; they know the status and importance of English, and they are interested in learning school subjects in English language. Thirdly, students have negative attitudes towards English as foreign language teachers. Besides, there are factors such as lack of conducive learning Environment, lack of encouragement from English teachers, fear of making mistakes and frustration (learners themselves), lack of opportunities to practice English, poor background and lack of resources which negatively affected students’ attitudes towards learning English as a foreign language in Debremarkos Comprehensive High School. Fourthly, while comparing to what extent the identified factors influence the attitudes of students towards learning English as a foreign language, educational factors were found to be negatively affecting factors. The rest are almost factors that affect students’ attitude positively. Fifthly, the social factors affect students’ attitudes positively. More specifically, they have positive attitudes towards English native speakers; their peer groups have positive attitudes towards learning English. Students’ parents have positive attitudes towards learning English as a foreign language by their children. On the other hand, students have negative attitudes towards educational factors or these factors affect students’ attitudes negatively. More specifically, they have negative attitudes towards their teachers; and they have negative attitudes towards the English learning situations like learning environment, the way English is taught, classroom sizes and arrangement of seats. However, students have positive attitudes towards grade 10 English textbooks. Sixthly, a large number of respondents for the questionnaire indicated that students are not competent English language users. For this, there are factors (causes) that accounted for as indicated by teachers and students for the supplementary tools. These are students’ less concern for all skills (exam-oriented studying), poor background from the lower schools, lack of good English models in the school, fear of making mistakes.
4.5. Recommendations

The following recommendations have been made based on the findings of the study:

(i) Grade 10 students have positive attitudes towards the learning of English as a foreign language; they know the status and importance of English. Therefore, English language should continue as a medium of instruction in the high school. As students do not have attitude problems, another study should be investigated concerning their English problems.

(ii) In response to questions on the students’ attitudes towards their English teachers, a significant number of the respondents reported that their English teachers do not make use of good examples and illustrations while they teach; they don’t use clear instructions during English examinations and activities; and they do not encourage students to use English inside and outside the classes as stated in statements 3.2, 3.3, and 3.4 (see the appendices). This is a clue that there is some kind of problem with the quality of teachers. This should be studied intensively. Besides, the Ministry of Education should devise means whereby English teachers could improve their qualifications, for instance, by organizing seminars and qualification improvement workshops.

(iii) As stated in statements 2.1 and 2.2 and focus group discussion and interview too, students’ attitude towards the learning situation is negative. For instance, classroom sizes, arrangement of seats, the way English language is given, and the learning environment. Also, English teachers responded that the learning environment is not conducive; the school has served for 70 years and the classrooms are too dusty whether they are cleaned or not and thus, it is becoming difficult not only English classes but also all subject classes. Therefore, the government in conjunction with the school principals, teachers and society, should work together to establish sufficient and conducive learning environment. This could be achieved by contributing intellectual and financial supports.

(iv) As statement 1.3, 3.3 and 6.2 show (see the appendices), students are not competent English users as there is no encouragement from their teachers and peer groups to use English in their everyday speaking (activities). It is recommended, therefore, the high school should devise means of initiating students to use and exercise the language. This could be done by organizing English clubs and English days since these ways could make good English models for students.

(v) As one of the causes (factors) that make students not competent English users are their poor background from primary schools and their less concern for all English skills. For instance, students are not good at writing skills, speaking skills and listening skills because they give emphasis for the sections that the examination is focused on as respondents indicated clearly. Therefore, it is recommended that the concerned body should appoint those clever English teachers that their profession is teaching in the lower schools. This could create a good background for students. Besides, the Ethiopian Secondary General Certificate Examination should involve all English skills so that significant emphasis would be given for all skills in particular and English language in general.

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