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Investigating Some Major Challenges That Impede the Practice of School – Based English Mentoring

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ARTICLE INFORMATION	ABSTRACT

The main purpose of this study was to explore some major challenges that impede the practice of school-based English mentoring on four selected government secondary schools in the West Gojjam Zone. To put this in to effect, a descriptive survey design involving qualitative data was employed. To collect data 4 experienced EFL teachers who are assigned to lead the mentoring role and 4 less-experienced 'mentee' teachers were selected purposefully from the four educational settings. In addition, school principals, supervisors and English language department heads were also used as data sources. Convenience and purposive sampling strategies were used to select the sample schools and the teacher participants, respectively. In contrast, the comprehensive sampling strategy was used to select principals, supervisors and English department heads. After the data analysis, the results indicated that the formal practice of mentoring by EFL teachers was very low due to different factors – school-related, mentor related and mentee related. And finally, based on the findings of the study, some possible suggestions were recommended to responsible bodies.

1. Introduction
1.1. Background of the Study

As it is known, education plays a great role for the development of a nation. That means citizens should be educated so as to bring development to one's country. Due to this reason, most scholars agree upon the idea that education is a cornerstone for development. Accordingly, Tadesse (2012), as cited in a report on a future search conference, says, "There is no better ways of achieving development than educating our citizens." This is because the experience of most, if not all, developed nations testify that human resource is an indispensable and irreplaceable tool for development.

Therefore, there cannot be any higher agenda in our country than educating the citizens so as to mobilize them towards economic development. Cognizant of this fact, our country Ethiopia has undergone massive education sector developments in the last couple of decades, and, undoubtedly, remarkable achievements have been scored (Tadele, 2013). In line with this, everybody believes that this massive growth should be complemented by quality education. To this end, the government of Ethiopia is extensively working towards rendering quality education to its citizens. The strategies designed in this regard have started to show good progress. In order to bring quality education, involvement of a number of stakeholders is needed rather than leaving it to one party, namely the government, and that would be best achieved if it is done in collaboration.

When we talk about education in general and quality education in particular in Ethiopia, English's role cannot be oversimplified. Due to this reason, the Ethiopian Ministry of Education (1994) report discusses, "The English language has played a central role in the education system of the country since the introduction of modern education at the beginning of the 19th century." To back up this again, the New Education and Training Policy (MOE, 1994) of Ethiopia recognizes the English language to be offered as a subject starting from grade one and to be used as a language of instruction in secondary and tertiary levels of education. For the researcher, English is like a tire of a car as the other parts of the car are those different activities that people can do by using the language.

Globally, English language has also established itself as a lingua franca. It has become the language of worldwide communication in media, science and technology, business, academia, politics and so on (MOE, 2003). This calls for the need to produce citizens who can competitively and easily avail themselves to the world arena, which has already become a global village.

In order to meet these demands, it is worth giving due attention to enhancing the quality of English language teachers at all levels of the education ladder in Ethiopia in general and high school English teachers in particular. Nowadays, in the Ethiopian context, everyone has no courage to say that all high school English teachers have expected language proficiency and pedagogical knowledge, which helps them deliver their content knowledge in the classroom properly. Especially, the problem is seen serious with less-experienced English language teachers. To back up, the School-Based English Mentoring Hand Book, which was compiled by the MOE (2012: 2) assures this fact saying, "In Ethiopia, many teachers of English and their students need support in developing their own language proficiency and in improving their teaching methods." Furthermore, the impact study conducted by Lund University in 2005 and Haramaya University in 2007 on English Language Improvement (ELIP) as cited in the Ethiopian Ministry of Education (2012) indicates that teachers need intervention to improve their proficiency and pedagogical skills in English. For the investigator, the problem could emanate from gaps in English Mentoring practices by EFL teachers within the school context.

In order to minimize practitioners' lack of English language teaching skills and promote the use of English in Ethiopian schools, practical contributions have been prepared and done by the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia Ministry of Education and other co-workers like the British Council, which works on language and culture (MOE, 2007a; The First Ethiopian Mentor Trainer Team, 2012: 2).

School-Based English Mentoring which can be abbreviated as SBEM is among the measures taken. Actually, different scholars have defined mentoring, and their thought is generally revolved around 'helping others', or the support given by those experienced individuals to the less-experienced or novice ones. In education, mentoring refers to the support experienced teachers give to the less-experienced teachers to enhance their professional development. Hence, Malderez (2009) identifies mentoring as "A process crucial to teacher development that focuses on the teachers' ability to succeed in a specific workplace context."

As Haney (1997) it is typically noted as "a way to develop teaching practices that involve a close relationship between a less experienced person and a more experienced person who provides guidance, advice, support, and feedback." Adapting slightly from Malderez and Wedell (2007) "Mentoring is the support given by one (usually more experienced) colleague for the growth and learning of another." Rhodes and Benecke; Clutter buck; as cited in Kennedy (2005) have discussed that mentoring often implies counselling and a supportive relationship where one partner is a novice and the other more experienced. And in the Ethiopian context, mentoring is practised in schools as it is an important contributing factor for teacher professional development (Daniel, Desalegn & Girma 2013: 91).

From these definitions, we can conclude that mentoring is to support and encourage less-experienced teachers to manage their own learning to maximize their potential, develop their skills, improve their performance, and become the person they want to be. School-Based English Mentoring (SBEM) is, therefore, a kind of help or support given by experienced English teachers – commonly known as 'mentors' to less-experienced English teachers – 'mentees' usually within the school context, especially in the school context to enhance the mentees' professional development.

Even though historically, mentoring is originated from Greek Mythology and its notion is rooted in the constructivist philosophy, which claims that humans generate knowledge and meaning from an interaction between their experiences and their ideas, nowadays the concept has been spreading in Ethiopia, largely with regard to school-based career training (The First Ethiopian Mentor Trainer Team Hand Book, 2012: 8). According to the Hand Book, School-Based English Mentoring is in-service mentoring which differs in some important ways because it supports in-service development. And it is one element of the English Language Improvement Program (ELIP), which is again an element of the Teacher Development Program (TDP) as the aim of TDP is to improve the performance of teachers in the classroom and to raise students' achievement and learning thereby improving quality of education (slightly adapted from Ethiopian MOE, 2009b).

1.2. Statement of the Problem

Mentoring is a form of personal and professional partnership which usually involves a more experienced practitioner supporting a less-experienced one who is new to the job, organization or profession (Butcher, 2002). And as can be seen in the above section, it is very important for the professional development of teachers, especially for less-experienced teachers. Indeed, different studies assure this fact as well. For example, in the mid-1990s, the American Association of Teacher Education analyzed data from a survey of teacher educators, school teachers, and university and school administrators and identified mentoring as the most crucial strategy for the professional development of teachers (Anderson, 1992). Besides, research into professional

development has pointed more strategies for up-skilling teachers for which mentoring has been very effective in accomplishing change in teaching and their work (Hargreaves &Fullan, 2000; Kochan & Pascarelli, 2003).

Moreover, local researchers like Daniel, Desalegn and Girma (2013: 86), who conducted a survey on 'School-Based Teacher Professional Development in Addis Ababa' and scholars like Richards & Farrell (2005: 4) all argue that mentoring is the core and number one strategy for professional development of teachers as the idea behind it is mutual sharing of knowledge and experience which is a valuable source of professional growth.

As a result of this, many scholars suggest that EFL teachers should practice mentoring within the school context for mentoring during practice teaching has received prominence in recent years due to the perceived need for change in the organization of the field experience and make suggestions as to how this might happen (Hennisen, et al.,2011). The first reason for change stemmed from the increasing need for and the recognition of the value of professional learning in a natural workplace environment (Bolhuis & Voeten, 2001); second, the questioning of the practical relevance and applications of theory-based courses that are often blamed for the disconnectedness between university education and field-based teacher training (Kumaravadirelu, 2012; Zeichner, 2010); third the reported professional value of mentoring practices in a school-based learning environment (Koc, 2012).

Hence, taking into account the values of English mentoring within the school context, the GEQIP plan of the Ethiopian MOE (2008) sub-component entitled *'In-Service Teacher Education Quality Improvement Program'* which targets, among others, providing English language training for teachers of English and developing a cadre of school-based English mentors who will support teachers came in to being and has been given attention by the concerned bodies of the education sector since the last few years.

In Amhara Regional State, although the informal way of mutual support among EFL teachers had a long history, the formal school-based English mentoring program was started after three years of the introduction of the program by the Ethiopian Ministry of Education, that is, in 2012 (The First Ethiopian Mentor Trainer Team, 2012). Since then, the Amhara Regional State Education Office in collaboration with other co-workers like the British Council, has been encouraging the English mentoring program by providing appropriate materials such as SBEM manuals and through giving training to school-based English mentors. And the researcher was among those who took the first mentoring training of secondary school teachers of English. As said above, this approach is more appropriate as it develops the skills relevant to teachers' area of teaching by increasing job success, self-confidence and self-esteem and reducing trial and error learning (The Alberta Teachers' Association Handbook, 1998). However, though an effort was made to introduce English mentoring to secondary schools of Amhara Region and encouragement was made to practitioners to employ it in their schools, to the extent that the researcher's knowledge is concerned, there was no empirical research that indicated the practical challenges that EFL teachers have faced in the mentoring program in secondary schools locally.

But as the researcher reflects on his observation [as he was a teacher in different secondary schools of Amhara Region, Ethiopia], he strongly felt that lack of due attention to SBEM is prevalent in the teaching and learning practices as the presence of factors like most language teachers perceive that teaching is a scheduled activity conducted in private over which they hold away (Brookfield, 1995). It is undeniable that such a problem hampers EFL teachers' professional growth and thereby students' success in achieving the intended language proficiency and putting the quality of EFL education in question. So, the inspiration for this study partly comes from the recognition of this problem.

Regarding empirical research, an attempt was made to explore the school-based mentoring practices and challenges that affect its implementation by two local researchers, although their focus and context are different from the present study. For example, Solomon (2001) conducted a survey entitled *'Some Insights into the Mentoring Role of High School Teachers at Addis Ababa'* and identifies that the cooperating teachers (mentors) do not seem to be successfully discharging their mentoring duties. For the study, shortage of time, lack of enthusiasm and lack of mentoring skills on the part of mentors are some of the factors noted.

Another researcher Hailu (2006) made a survey on *'Factors Affecting the Implementation of School-Based Mentoring at Kotebe College of Teacher Education and St. Mary's University Colleges' Practicum'*. By using questionnaire and interview as primary data collection instruments, the study revealed that lack of assistance from school administrators, considering mentoring as an extra responsibility on the part of school-based mentors and mentors' inability to get training on mentoring skills as some of the factors that hinder the SBM.

Therefore, the above arguments on the relevance of mentoring in enhancing English language instruction and the researchers' personal experience about the mentoring program inspired him to develop an interest in investigating the practical challenges of EFL teachers' mentoring in some selected government secondary schools of West gojjam Zone in Amhara Regional State. This

is because a study to look into challenges will have practical implications to examine gaps and identify areas of intervention that eventually lead to promote EFL teachers' SBEM practices.

Therefore, the study's general objective was to investigate some major challenges that affect EFL teachers' School-Based English mentoring practice on some selected government secondary schools in West gojjam Zone. To put the above general objective into effect, the researcher specified the following specific objectives:

1. To examine some of the major barriers that affect English mentoring practices within the school context.
2. To recommend some possible solutions that could support the School-Based English mentoring program at the school level.

1.3. Significance of the Study
By revealing the gaps in the practices, it may give an insight for the program's main actors – EFL mentor and mentee teachers to improve the implementation of SBEM for their professional development. Finally, since the issue of this study touched only the smallest part of variables of English mentoring within the school context, the study can also be used as a springboard or an initial source for researchers who want to conduct further research upon this portion.

1.4. Delimitation of the Study
The study was limited to examining some major factors that impede school-based English Mentoring (SBEM) practice on four selected government comprehensive secondary schools of West Gojjam Zone in Amhara regional state for manageability and resources.

1.5. Operational Definitions
Challenges – factors or problems that affect the practice of a program in a special occasion.

School-based English Mentoring is a kind of in-service mentoring that targets to support in–professional service development of English foreign language teachers (The First Ethiopian Mentor Trainer Team Handbook, 2012 p. 8).

Comprehensive Secondary Schools – schools which comprise 9th to 12th grade level students.

 (MOE, 1998).

Mentoring – all the things a mentor does to support their own and their colleagues' learning.

English School-Based Mentor – an experienced teacher who is an integral part of the teacher induction process through his or her work with less-experienced teachers (Collins & O' Brien, 2003: p. 218-219) and/or a colleague who is different from his/her peers only in that s/he has had special training on mentoring which has helped him/her understand how teachers learn and how to support that learning in schools.

Mentee – the teacher colleague who is learning the mentor aims to support and has less experience of teaching (Collins & O' Brien, 2003: p. 244). In this study, terms like novice teacher, mentee and the less-experienced teacher are used interchangeably. In addition, mentor and the experienced teacher are also used one in place of another.

2. Literature Review
2.1. Challenges Affecting the Practice of School-Based Mentoring
Wildman et al. (1989) reported that there is a lack of recognition of the 'learning to teach' role of teachers in practice. The authors identify two compulsory roles for teachers to accomplish when they enter the teaching profession. These roles are teaching students and learning to teach. Accomplishing both jobs effectively demands adequate time, endeavor and resources. The authors assert that only one of these jobs is often given official recognition. Schools expect teachers to do the teaching, but they forget teachers' other role, which is 'learning to teach'. This is indeed categorized under administrative factors that affect the practice of mentoring in general and English mentoring in particular in the school context. That is why Brookfield (1995) asserts the administrators' carelessness and underestimating the value of mentoring in improving one's profession and lack of encouragement as some of the challenges. Zimpher & Rieger (1988), on the other hand, reported that there is little interaction among colleagues due to extensive administrative and educational responsibilities.

Collegial interaction is also limited by the perception that teaching is an autonomous profession. In other words, in some educational institutions, there is a culture of individualism. Brookfield (1995) has stated the above fact saying, "In some educational settings, the academic excellence is measured in terms of individual effort and some people believe that collaboration is viewed as evidence of intellectual inferiority. In line with this, Kenea (2009) has also added that the isolated nature of teachers' work in the classroom discourages learning about teaching from others.

Another constraint comes from within the mentee teachers themselves. As Edwards (1998)"mentees sometimes promote attitudes and behavior that hinder their professional growth as teachers. These attitudes and behavior include disguising limitations or troubles that they encounter and pretending to be 'competent' than they are," which most often called the culture of secrecy – keeping one's practise for oneself. And when a culture of secrecy exists, sharing ideas with other colleagues is doomed. Feimen – Nemser et al. (1999) add that the prevailing custom of independence and feeling of equality of mentee teachers with their experienced colleagues make it difficult to ask for and get assistance. As far as (Brookfield, 1995; Kenea, 2009) are concerned, there is also a fear amongst teachers to publicize private errors or practices that could lead to negative consequences to their professional growth as this affects mutual support among them. Thus Brookfield (1995) has stated, "purposeful, deliberate and extended conversation about teaching is rare for many of us have a sense that teaching is a scheduled activity conducted in private over which we hold away."

However, opposing to the above views, as teachers, we have the greater responsibility in the notation of mutual support albeit the currents are very strong. Mentors, who are considered as the senior and respective teachers, should take the lead to minimize all the attendant risks to their professional standing.

One crucial issue regarding the role of mentors is whether they should be confined to assisting the mentees or extending their role to assessing them (European Commission, 2010). Mentees /less experienced/ teachers express difficulties in asking for support under judgmental conditions. When the situation appears judgmental, that is, the mentor is given the responsibility of evaluation, the mentees /less experienced/ teachers avoid openly addressing their problems in order not to be judged as incompetent. Consequently, they take the safe option by only requesting assistance on minor difficulties.

2.1.1. Challenges More Specific to the Ethiopian Context

According to The First Ethiopian Mentor Trainer Team manual (2012 p. 23), challenges or constraints limit the school-based English mentoring practice specifically in the Ethiopian context. Therefore, the following are those hindrance factors. Different understandings of mentoring and what mentors do is the first challenge typical to the Ethiopian context. "The word 'mentoring' is not a 'new' term in Ethiopia, but the concept of mentoring as we use it does seem to be (The First Ethiopian Mentor Trainer Team Manual, 2012)." As to the manual, some see 'mentoring' as equivalent to induction. However, SBEM is for in-service ongoing teacher development, whereas induction mentors' one-to-one work requires them to assess.

Wong (2005) maintains that there has been confusion on the usage of the two terms, 'mentoring' and 'induction'. The two terms have often been used synonymously, even though they are not the same thing. According to Wong (2005), "Mentoring is most commonly used as a verb or adjective because it describes what mentors do. A mentor is a person whose basic function is to help a less-experienced teacher. Mentoring is not induction; it is the component of the induction process (p. 43)."

Besides, as there is not a thorough pre-match orientation about exactly how mentors and mentees will be working together and what they can achieve with their mentoring relationship under the umbrella of the SBEM program by the concerned bodies like school principals, they have the challenge to understand how the mentoring program can help them reach their goals, especially feel awkward or intimidated working with a slightly older partner, or feel that a referral to the program is a form of punishment(slightly adapted from The First Ethiopian Mentor Trainer Team Manual, 2012). To this end, for the mentoring program to be fruitful, there must be a continuous follow-up of both mentors and mentees via ongoing training and support from the beginning to the end.

Getting engagement is the second challenge to be seen here. Mentors found it a challenge to find colleagues willing to work with them (without, for example, per diems and so on). However, any teacher must be eager to engage in any activity that would support their professional development. But even with the status of SBEM established, and depending on their past experiences, some teachers are more or less reluctant mentees (The First Ethiopian Mentor Trainer Team Manual, 2012 p. 24).

Unable to get acceptance from colleagues during the in-service mentor role is the third challenge. Sometimes some mentees/less experienced/ teachers in Ethiopia may ask questions for mentor teachers like 'who are you after all?' or 'how can you be my mentor?' because of the presence of different factors, for example, age and experience of teaching and so on (The First Ethiopian Mentor Trainer Team Manual, 2012). Here, one can bear in mind that there should be some developmental hierarchy between the mentor and the mentee in terms of age and teaching experience in order to run mentoring smoothly. That is why analysis of research also indicates that the impacts, for both mentors and mentees, may be more pronounced if mentors are of high school age and if there is at least a two-year age difference between the mentor and the mentee.

The fourth challenge is that SBEM relationships lack consistency and quality. It can be a deeply distressing experience to mentees when mentors fail to show up for meetings or appear indifferent to them. Of course, mentors sometimes miss the regular meeting times intentionally or unintentionally. But this may make mentees feel rejected, and there is considerable potential for

them to internalize negative feelings about themselves or the program. But to protect this problem, concerned bodies of the program should know the mentees why their mentor can't be on time to assist them. Accordingly, Garringer & Patti MacRal (2008: 8) describe:

> When inconsistency and mentoring quality problems occur within schools, program staff must always explain to mentees why their mentor is unable to make a scheduled meeting, and if mentors need to drop out of the program for whatever reason, a termination activity can minimize any negative feelings and help for both mentor and mentee find closure about the relationships. At last, mentors who consistently miss meetings need reminders about the importance of consistent participation.

Furthermore, since school-based English mentoring matches are linked to a particular school, relationships are often terminated when practitioners transition from one school to another. And SBEM program in particular and SBM programs, in general, are linked to the academic year, or they are linked to the academic calendar. Therefore, during the summer, these programs are no longer continued. That is why Rhodes (2002 p. 2) argues, "The effects of school-based mentoring diminishes over the summer."

3. Methodology
3.1. Research Design
As this study aimed to investigate EFL teachers' challenges on SBEM, a descriptive survey design involving qualitative data was employed.

3.2. Research Participants
EFL teachers of the four selected government secondary schools of West Gojjam zone by 2019/2020 were participants. In addition, school principals, supervisors and English language department heads were used as participants of this study. The researcher included the aforementioned participants as he believed that these participants help to get the relevant information that was needed for the study.

3.3. Sampling Techniques and Procedures
By using convenience sampling strategy, the researcher selected four government comprehensive secondary schools namely Dembecha comprehensive secondary school, Jiga comprehensive secondary school, Quarit comprehensive secondary school and Abay Minch comprehensive secondary school as it was very difficult to include all the nine comprehensive secondary schools of West Gojjam Zone within the study because of manageability and resources. The researcher's acquaintance with the areas and their relative accessibility were the two reasons for the selection of the pre-described schools.

With regard to participants of the study, four EFL mentor and four mentee teachers of the four schools were included purposefully. In fact, the researcher selected the participants with the help of academic vice directors and English language department heads of the aforementioned schools. In addition, by using comprehensive sampling strategy, school principals, English language department heads and supervisors of the pre-described schools were informants in order to get in-depth information about the issue.

3.4. Instruments of Data Collection
So as to collect the necessary data for this study, an in-depth interview was employed as the researcher believed in its effectiveness to collect the intended data about school-based English mentoring challenges within the school context. The instrument was developed and adapted in which the researcher designed some items and some others were modified from the Alberta Teachers' Association Handbook (1998), and the appropriateness of the instrument was checked by two instructors from the College of Education and Behavioral Science Staff at Debre Markos and Mekdela Amba Universities. Based on the feedback, some items were completely discarded and some others were modified.

3.5. Procedures of Data Collection
The data were collected at a convenient time for all teachers, school principals, English department heads and school supervisors as it might affect the accuracy of the data. Besides, the researcher gave a brief orientation for the participants of the study about the purpose of the research.

3.6. Methods of Data Analysis
The data collected from the in-depth interviews were analyzed thematically and transcribed qualitatively.

3.7. Ethical Issues
Ethical issues have become increasingly important in research involving human beings. For the current research, some crucial points were taken into account. First, the purpose of the study was explained to the participants and the researcher asked for their consent before conducting the in-depth interview. The researcher also informed his participants that the information they

provided would only be used for the purpose of the study. Accordingly, the researcher used the information he gained from his participants only for the study purpose. In addition, the researcher ensured confidentiality by making the participants anonymous.

4. Results and Discussion
4.1. Results
4.1.1. Analysis Results on Factors that Impede the Practice of School-Based English

Mentoring Program.
Both mentors and mentees and school officials, including English language department heads, school principals, and supervisors, were interviewed to mention practical challenges that hinder English mentoring programs within the school context. Specifically, they all were asked to list the barriers under: 'Problems related to mentors', (I) 'Problems related to mentees', (II) and 'Problems related to the school', (III).

4.1.1.1. Problems Related to EFL Mentor Teachers
Mentors were not empowered via consistent mentoring training as most of the mentor respondents reported that they needed training to be given to them on how they practically support their mentees. And, hence, the mentors are not committed enough to run the program well. Interviews with mentees and school officials revealed that some mentors are not eager to share their expertise with their mentees openly, thinking that teaching is an autonomous profession. As mentees, school supervisors, principals, and English language department heads reported on the interview items, some EFL mentor teachers' knowledge and skill of the four central levels were questioned. This is, perhaps, related to the lack of ongoing training for mentor teachers. Shortage of time was another limitation raised by the majority of mentor respondents, which hinders them from holding the mentoring program well as they have been busy with the different social factors outside their schools.

4.1.1.2. Problems Related to Mentees
The study shows that many problems exist with less-experienced EFL teachers. However, the main problems repeatedly mentioned by many of the respondents were that mentees as per the data gained from the mentors and mentees' questionnaire, interview with English language department heads, school principals, supervisors, mentors and with mentees themselves are concerned, lack of openness in raising the different gaps they have for their mentors due to different factors, as most of them noted, like thinking as if they were equal in every aspect with the experienced EFL teachers, fearing of not to be blamed as incompetent and even some of the respondents reported as though some of the mentees lack motivation and interest to ask for support in order to enhance their teaching career as they do not feel comfortable to continue teaching in the long run. In relation to this, it may be important to quote what Edwards (1998) suggested "Mentees sometimes promote attitudes and behaviours that hinder their professional growth as teachers. These attitudes and behaviours include disguising limitations or troubles that they encounter and pretending to be 'competent' than they actually are."

These perceptions of mentees could be rooted as the concerned bodies, like the school administrators' limitation in giving continuous orientations about school-based English mentoring in particular and mentoring in general, which is one of the pillars of continuous professional development variables.

4.1.1.3. Problems Related to the School
With regard to the school-related challenges which hinder the English mentoring program, the pre-described samples, especially mentors and mentees replied as if concerned bodies in the school like principals, supervisors and even the Woreda Education Bureaus (WEBs) give low attention to the program like they hardly hold up the school-based English mentoring practices with full commitment as they only stick on teachers to do the teaching, just forgetting the other role of beginning teachers which is learning to teach. However, Wildman et al. (1989) have asserted that mentees /less-experienced teachers/ have to play two essential roles – 'teaching students' and 'learning to teach'.

Feiman – Nemser (2008) describes the use of ongoing training for mentors as "Mentors learning happens when they are provided with frequent chances to build their know-how and involve in actual problem-solving exercises." Missing to recognize this fact, sampled schools lack arranging on-going training for mentors as the data gained from the majority of respondents in the interviews with mentors, English language department heads, mentees, principals and supervisors are concerned. Lack of budget and appropriate facilities assigned for the program are the other school-related factors raised by the majority of respondents. As the data typically gained from mentors, mentees and English language department heads indicated, the school officials, after selecting mentees and appointing potential mentors for them at the start of the school year, left the program without a budget and even as to some of the respondents, the arrangement of appropriate facilities like the place, time and reference materials are left for mentors as though these were their responsibilities.

When interviewed, all four mentors confirmed that there is no formal appraisal of what they have done throughout the year. This shows that the school officials in the sampled schools are reluctant and have limitations in following up the English mentoring program via incentives and facilities. Because of this, there is no recognition or appreciation given for the two key players at the center of the mentoring process (the mentors and mentees) either in the form of item or money within the process and at the end of the mentoring program. Moreover, lack of communication among the different stakeholders from top to down as one of the major school related challenges noted at last by the majority of respondents. These gaps may affect the effective implementation of the school based English mentoring program, which is against the expectations mentioned in the national framework of the Ethiopian Ministry of Education (2009).

4.2. Discussion
There are many aspects that can be addressed and when it comes to the constraints which limit school-based English mentoring practice. Therefore, in this section, the researcher discussed the findings and results that were presented in the above portion in line with the pre-described research objectives. Hence, for ease of communication, he found it better to deal with the aforementioned critical points that he was curious about under the following theme: School-based English Mentoring challenges.

4.2.1. School - Based English Mentoring Challenges
The challenges observed in connection to the school-based English mentoring program practices have been presented in the results section above under three thematic areas: mentee, mentor, and school /administrative/ related problems. Thus, the results suggested that mentees have limitations of openness, motivation, and interest to ask their mentors about their different gaps. These limitations of less-experienced EFL teachers are in line with what Edwards (1998) has depicted, saying that "less-experienced teachers sometimes promote attitudes and behaviours that hinder their professional growth as teachers. These attitudes and behaviours include disguising limitations or troubles that they encounter and pretending to be 'competent' than they actually are." While EFL mentor teachers lack mentoring know-how and skills as they were not given on-going training opportunities, face shortage of time to practice the mentoring activities, and lack commitment in helping others due to their perception that teaching is individual were revealed as mentor related constraints that hindered the implementation of the SBEM program practices within the four selected schools. These hindrance factors are almost consistent with the findings which were identified by Solomon (2001).

At last, lack of on-going support to the practitioners of the program via training opportunities, especially for EFL mentors and provision of appropriate facilities as stakeholders like principals, supervisors and the Woreda Education Bureaus (WEBs) hardly give due attention to the program, lack of budget assigned for the SBEM program and lack of communication among the different stakeholders from top to down were some of the school-related challenges identified by many of the respondents. Accordingly, Brookfield (1995) confirmed that "administrative' carelessness and underestimating the value of mentoring in improving one's profession, and lack of encouragement given to the main actors of the program – mentors and mentees as some of the challenges which affect the practices of mentoring."

5. Conclsion and Recommendations
5.1. Conclusion
Based on the results, the following conclusions have been derived.

a. The results of the study revealed that there was a range of constraints that hinder the practice of English mentoring activities within the sample educational settings. The most common school /administrative/ related impediments documented by the majority of the respondents were a problem of assignment of basic facilities like a place reserved for mentoring, inaccessibility and in some cases a total absence of School-Based English Mentoring references /modules/, absence of appropriate budget assigned for the program, lack of coordination among concerned bodies and incapability to arrange on-going in-service English mentoring training opportunities for the main actors of the program.

b. The findings of the study further disclosed that there were also other problems with regard to EFL mentor and mentee teachers. These mentor related problems include lack of motivation, lack of commitment, shortage of the necessary mentoring skills and theoretical concepts and shortage of time due to their social causes. Similarly, the results have shown that mentees in the target schools have limitations in raising their gaps openly to their assigned assistants because of their inferiority complex, lack of motivation, and interest in asking for help.

c. In sum, the findings of the study have shown that the structured practice of school-based English mentoring by EFL mentor and mentee teachers is not satisfactory and in line with what the existing literature is concerned as the conditions necessary for high quality mentoring were affected by several constraints and did not always prevail in the schools.

5.2. Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations have been given:

a. The provision of appropriate ongoing training to key players is a pressing step to improve the frequency and quality of school-based English mentoring practices. The Ethiopian Ministry of Education, teacher training institutions (colleges and universities) and other concerned bodies should organize a successive workshop, seminar and offer continuous in-service training opportunities so that EFL mentor teachers can get the chance to share experiences on how they practically mentor the less-experienced teachers. In relation to this, it may be important to quote what Moir (2006 p. 178) suggests:

      i. Mentors are not born but made. Therefore, policymakers who advocate the proliferation of mentoring programs without adequate support and resources for on-going professional development of both mentors and mentees undermine their policy goals of improving the quality of new teachers' practice.

      b. Second, to effectively manage and support the School-Based English Mentoring practices, training should be organized for the school principals, supervisors and responsible Wereda Education Bureau implementers of the selected schools.

b. In order to have effective implementation of School-Based English Mentoring, it is important to consider the practical context in which it is operating. Hence, the school principals, supervisors, Wereda Education Bureaus, the Ethiopian Ministry of Education and other concerned bodies should exert every possible effort and take measures to minimize constraints that hinder the School-Based English Mentoring activities. For example, it might be worth if these stakeholders make a continuous follow-up, assign appropriate budget and make available the necessary facilities for the program.

c. From the results found and conclusions drawn, the researcher would like to recommend for both EFL mentor and mentee teachers to make themselves ready for a change of their learning to teach away from learning in isolation by trial and error methods and move towards working collaboratively with their colleagues as this, in turn, can help them to find remedies to the difficulties they encounter and enhance their self-confidence and self-esteem in the classroom.

d. Finally, the researcher would like to suggest that because this study was only limited to four government comprehensive high schools of West Gojjam Zone, further research need to be conducted based on a greater number by taking participants from different schools, by adding some other variables like EFL teachers' attitudes towards the program since they are the cornerstone of this and many other school-based initiatives, and their views regarding such initiatives are critical for success in a different research design so that a detailed and comprehensive type of generalization can be made in the area.

e. As one can understand from this study, most EFL teachers who are assigned to run the mentoring program did not receive special training in mentoring. How will the processes, practices and results of this program change when mentors are trained? This is another principal area for further research.

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