

C-1
ACC 46938

Jimma University
College of Social Sciences and Humanities
Department of English Language and Literature
MA in Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL)

**English Language Teachers' Beliefs and Practices of
using Continuous Assessment: Preparatory Schools in
Ilu Abba Bora Zone in Focus**

By

Alemu Suppa



**A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for Master of Arts in TEFL**

August 2015

**English Language Teachers' Beliefs and Practices of
Using Continuous Assessment: Preparatory Schools in
Ilu Abba Bora Zone in Focus**

By

Alemu Suppa

**A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for Master of Arts in TEFL**

**Department of English Language and Literature
College of Social Sciences and Humanities
Jimma University**

August 2015

**Title: English Language Teachers' Beliefs and Practices of Using Continuous Assessment:
Preparatory Schools in Ilu Abba Bora Zone in Focus**

Declaration

I, undersigned, declare that this thesis is my original work, not presented for any degree in any universities, and that all the sources used for it are duly acknowledged.

Name Signature Date

Confirmation and Approval

This thesis has been submitted for examination with my approval as a thesis advisor.

Principal Advisor:

Name Signature Date

Co-advisor:

Name Signature Date

Thesis Evaluators:

Principal advisor Signature Date
Temesgen Mereba (PhD) [Signature] 08-09-2015

Co-advisor Signature Date

External Examiner Signature Date
Dereje Tadesse (PhD) [Signature] _____

Internal Examiner Signature Date
Rekle F. [Signature] 07/09/2015

Chairperson Signature Date
Dagne Timneh [Signature] 08/09/2015

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank first Dr. Temesgen Mereba for his valuable comments and suggestions he has provided since the beginning of this study. I am also grateful to Mr. Tekle Ferede, who has supported me by providing relevant reference materials and suggestions for improvement as well. I also appreciate my wife, Yodit Befikadu, and my children, Naol, Fraol, Robenuf and Kulani, who encouraged me morally for the success of this study. My gratitude also goes to Hussen Kemal, Geography teacher in Bedele Secondary School, and Alemayew Tadessie, mathematics teacher in the same school, and all participants of this study.



Abstract

The major purpose of this study was to investigate English language teachers' beliefs and the practice of using continuous assessment. Participants of the study were Grade 11 and 12 English language teachers and students of the same grade. Twenty-two teachers and 181 students took part in the study. Participants, teachers and students, were selected using census and random sampling techniques respectively. This descriptive survey study utilized quantitative and qualitative methods to collect and analyze the data. The study used instruments such as questionnaires, interviews, classroom lesson observation, daily lesson plan and assessment checklist. Findings indicated that the teachers had strong beliefs about continuous assessment, and the relationship between the teachers' beliefs and their actual continuous assessment practices was negative statistically. The data obtained through triangulation indicated that teachers did put their beliefs into practice. Therefore, it is recommended that to clear up with implementation barriers teacher support materials are crucial, and to broaden teachers' understanding training directed to continuous assessment is essential.

Table of Contents

Contents	Page
Acknowledgements	Iv
Abstract	V
1. Introduction	1
1.1. Background of the study	2
1.2. Statements of the study	3
1.3. Objects of the study	5
1.3.1. Main objective	5
1.3.2. Specific objectives	5
1.4. Research questions	6
1.5. Significance of the study	6
1.6. Limitation of the study	6
1.7. Delimitation of the study	7
1.8. Definition of key terms	7
2. Review of Related Literature	8
2.1. Belief	8
2.2. Continuous assessment	9
2.3. Classroom assessment tools	12
2.4. Students as promoters of continuous assessment	17
2.5. Feedback as core features of continuous assessment	18
2.6. Continuous assessment record keeping	19
2.7. Studies on teachers' beliefs and classroom assessment practices	21
3. Design and Methodology	23
3.1. Design	23
3.2. Study population and sampling	24
3.3. Instruments for data collection	25
3.3.1. Questionnaire	26
3.3.2. Interviews	27
3.3.3. Lesson observation	28
3.3.4. Document analysis	28

3.5. Data collection procedures	29
3.6. Data analysis procedures	29
3.7. Ethical Consideration	30
4. Findings and Discussions	31
4.1. Findings	31
4.1.1. Demographic characteristics of participants of the study	31
4.1.2. Teachers' beliefs	31
4.1.3. Teachers' continuous assessment practices	37
4.2. Discussions	53
5. Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations	60
5.1. Summary	60
5.2. Conclusions	65
5.3. Recommendations	66

References

Appendix A

Appendix B

Appendix C

Appendix D

List of tables

Contents	Pages
2.1. Sample Assessment Record Book	20
2.2. Sample Assessment Record Sheet	20
4.1. Teachers' Beliefs about Continuous Assessment	32
4.2. Teachers' Response to Continuous Assessment Practices	38
4.3. Students' Response to Continuous Assessment Practices	40
4.4. Students' Response to Teachers' Feedback Provision	44
4.5. Students' Response to Types of Feedback Teachers Used	45
4.6. Statistical Correlation between Teachers' Beliefs and Continuous Assessment Practices	48
4.7. Paired T-Test	49
4.8. How Frequently Teachers Used Assessment Tools	50

Acronyms

CA: Continuous Assessment

ICDR: Institute of Curriculum Design and Development of Research

FDRGE: Federal Democratic Republic of Government of Ethiopia

NIED: National Institute for Educational Development

Chapter One

Introduction

Multiples of problems have affected the relevance, quality, accessibility and equity of education in Ethiopia. The objectives of education do not really solve problems of the society and do not pave ways for the future growth of the society. The contents and mode of presentation do not take into account needs of students; do not broaden students' understanding, cognitive abilities, and do not bring behavioral change among students. To overcome the fore mentioned problems, the country has formulated policy that incororporates educational assessment, namely, continuous assessment (FDRGE, 1994).

Any attempt to change assessment practices and to make those assessments more fundamentally a part of the teaching and learning process, classroom assessment reform must concede the power of long-lasting and hidden beliefs because teachers might resist the change. As to Shepard (1997, as cited in Sheprd, 2000), traditional tests, objective tests, have affected more than the form of subject matter knowledge. It also has a profound influence on teachers' beliefs about the form and use of assessment. For instance, when teachers need to employ alternatives to standardized tests, teachers were seen working from a set of measurement of beliefs consistent with traditional principles.

Teaching and learning involve regular follow up actions to make adjustments and intervention during the learning process. It requires continuous assessment to accomplish this. Continuous assessment is the viaduct between teaching and learning. As to Plessis et al. (2003), continuous assessment provides immediate information needed to adjust teaching and learning while they are happening. Therefore, this paper discusses preparatory schools teachers' beliefs and their actual use of continuous assessment.

1.1. Background of the study

To bring a significant change or improvement in education system, there is a widespread concern about teaching and learning. As to Wilson and Peterson (2006), education has always been filled with new ideas about teaching and learning. Wilson and Peterson add that teachers are usually called for suggestion and reforms. They are often asked to implement modified curricula, modified teaching methods and assessment techniques. They are encouraged to make students ready for standardized tests and assess students on a regular basis. Richardson and Placier (2001, as cited in Saad, 2013), however, note that teachers' beliefs are crucial in the implementation of new assessment reforms in schools.

Language teachers' beliefs play an important role in many aspects of teaching. According to Harste and Burke (1977, as cited in Kuzborska, 2011), teachers make decision about their classroom practices based on the beliefs they hold about teaching and learning. What teachers think, plan, decide, and implicit beliefs are interwoven facets that influence their classroom practices every day. The concept and the principles they need to follow and their beliefs about how learners are assessed inform their thinking and planning, and consequently, guide their classroom assessment (Bliem & Davinsory, 1997).

All teaching requires assessment. In the classroom setting, learners are expected to listen, take risks, set goals, etc. While students are doing these tasks, teachers observe and assess students' performance incidentally or intentionally. However, the question here is whether teachers assess students continuously (Brown, 2004).

Continuous assessment (CA) has paramount importance to students' learning. It is essential because it provides regular information about teaching, learning and the effectiveness of the learning objectives (National Institute for Educational Development, 1999). It is also helpful for both students and teachers. It helps learners see their own progress. Similarly, when a

teacher assesses students on a regular basis, he or she learns students who are progressing and those who have not mastered the skill and also identifies the topic that is difficult for learners (Plessis et al., 2003).

In Ethiopia, CA has been introduced at all levels of schools since 1994 (FDRGE, 1994). However, some studies show that the assessment practices have not been freed from traditional assessment practices yet. For instance, Aytaged (2010) conducted a comparative study on the practices of continuous assessment between Addis Ababa University and Unity University College and found that the institutions were still a hangover from traditional assessment practices. While discussing factors that affect assessment reforms, Bliem and Davinsory (1997) claim that the extent to which teachers implement new forms of assessment and whether the reforms succeed or fail depends on the teachers' beliefs and knowledge that they possess in terms of learning assessment and its relation to instruction. Thus, to improve education by altering assessment practice, we need to understand teachers' beliefs about how they assess learners' learning. The researcher, therefore, decided to investigate preparatory schools English language teachers' beliefs and their actual practice of using CA in their classrooms.

1.2. Statement of the problem

Teachers have their own beliefs about teaching and knowledge they have constructed throughout their life, both as students and teachers. They reflect these personal views in the teaching-learning process. This reflection might facilitate or hinder their efforts (Bliem & Davinsory, 1997). For many teachers, teaching is the reflection of early learning. "Teachers teach the way they were taught" (ICDR, 1999, p. 49). Teachers were once students. Many of them, thus, tend to use the method they were taught because they believe that it is essential for the success of learning. According to Westhood (2008), teachers often resist change because they feel comfortable with their present methods. They think that modified teaching methods may require more preparation and planning time, and high presentation skills. "Most teachers

seem to prefer to remain within their comfortable zone rather than accept the challenge” (p. 83). Tatto and Coupland (2003) point out that the main challenge of educational reform is transformation of views from traditional to reformed teaching.

Teachers often exert utmost effort to design some form of effective learning experience that they expect interesting and other aspects of teaching, but they usually neglect assessing learners’ learning (Wilson & Scalise, 2006). If assessment insights are to be used to move learning along instead of keeping scores on how much learning has taken place, assessment should occur continuously (Shepard, 2000). However, many teachers have misconception about the importance of CA and how to implement it in their classroom. As a result, they usually overuse tests; give credit to student’s disposition and behaviors (e.g. attendance, effort, attitude, etc) in the form of grades; take CA as it is synonymous to grading; disregard the role of individual student in a group assessment; do not take syllabus objectives into consideration and ignore to measure higher thinking order (Abera, 2014).

Using the same assessment process for the same student affects student’s learning because every student has his or her own strengths and weaknesses (<http://intranet.dit.ei/ltc/html>). However, homework, laboratories, paper-and-pencil tests, quizzes, etc are repeatedly used in many classrooms to assess student’s learning. Besides, some form of credit is often given for students’ work in the form of grades (Wilson & Scalise, 2003). Similarly, according to the report of National Research Council of Education “How People Learn” (Bransford et al., 2000, as cited in Wilson & Scalise, 2003), feedback is offered infrequently and the feedback-grades on the tests, work sheets, homework, etc are representative of summative assessment that aim to measure the result of learning.

Some researchers have conducted studies on teachers’ beliefs and classroom practices. For instance, Cain (2012) examined the beliefs of three primary school teachers and classroom practices and found that the beliefs they gained from early school, home, and from their own

teaching had influenced their classroom practice. In Ethiopia, Abiy (2013) conducted a study on secondary school English language teachers' and students' perception, attitude, and the implementation of CA in four schools in Gojjam. Cain investigated teachers' beliefs and classroom practice as a whole, while Abiy attempted to examine both teachers' and students' perception, attitude and implementation of CA. However, this study will investigate the link between English language teachers' beliefs and practice of using CA.

1.3. Objectives of the study

1.3.1. Main objective

The main purpose of this descriptive survey study is to investigate preparatory schools English language teachers' beliefs about continuous assessment and their actual practice of using continuous assessment.

1.3.2. Specific Objectives

This study aims to:

- find out teachers' beliefs about continuous assessment;
- identify how teachers define continuous assessment;
- check the degree of teachers' practices of using continuous assessment;
- sort out assessment tools that the teachers frequently use;
- identify the correlation between teachers' beliefs and their actual practice of using continuous assessment and;
- find out factors that affect the use of continuous assessment.

1.4. Research questions

This study will attempt to answer the following questions:

1. What beliefs do teachers hold about continuous assessment?
2. How do the teachers define continuous assessment?
3. To what extent do teachers assess students' learning on a regular basis?
4. What assessment tools do the teachers frequently use?
5. What is the correlation between teachers' beliefs and their actual practice of using continuous assessment?
6. What factors affect the use of continuous assessment?

1.5. Significance of the study

It is believed that by understanding teachers' beliefs of CA and their actual classroom assessment practice, teachers, can benefit from reflecting on their assessment beliefs and experience of assessing their students, and other teaches-readers gain appreciations for why their beliefs are essential for the implementation of CA. Teachers can also benefit from this study by relating it to what they have learned about CA in their pre-service or in-service courses and to their own assessment practices and to the result of this study, which in turn, help them to assessing students in the most appropriate and proper manner. Furthermore, other researchers may use this study as a secondary source of information for investigating their own study.

1.6. Limitation of the study

This study had three major limitations. For one thing, the study was conducted in selected zone and included English language teachers and students in selected grades, grades 11 and 12. Although the study included all of the teachers, the number of teachers in the zone was very

small, and only a few students representative were included in the study, so they were not true representative of random sample. Secondly, due to time constraints, the lesson observation was carried out only for one period per each observed teacher. Further, the study samples were only teachers and students. The broad validity of the teachers' beliefs and CA practices could be obtained through a large sample representative and detail investigation.

1.7. Delimitation of the study

Because this study examined teachers' beliefs and their actual use of continuous assessment, it was delimited to investigating English teachers' beliefs' about CA and the practice of using CA in their classroom. It was also delimited to twelve governmental preparatory schools in Ilu Abba Bora Zone: Denbi, Gechi, Chewaka, Chora, Degga, Yayo, Darimu, Algae, Mettu, Gore, and Bure preparatory schools.

1.8. Definitions of key terms

Teachers' beliefs: English teachers' individual assumptions about CA. That is, what is true or false to them about CA.

Continuous assessment: Ongoing assessment that involves the use of a number assessment techniques and integration of instruction so as to shape and monitor the teaching-learning process and judge students' performance. It includes a much wider domain such as teacher assessment (teacher assessor), self-assessment and peer assessment (student assessors) and feedback provision on student oral and written work.

Assessment tool: This refers to assessment devices (e.g., paper-and-pencil tests, portfolios, interview/dialogues between a teacher and students, etc that teachers use to assess students' learning on a regular basis.

Chapter Two

Review of Related Literature

Below is a brief discussion on the concept of 'belief'. This is followed by description of continuous assessment. Next, assessment tools that can be used in language classrooms are discussed in detail. Some other issues such as student assessment (self-assessment and peer assessment), feedback provision and continuous assessment record keeping techniques are discussed one after the other. The last part of this chapter deals with studies conducted on teachers' beliefs and classroom practices.

2.1. Belief

Although the concept of beliefs is a popular issue in educational research, there is no consensus on the meaning of a belief (Borg, 2001). The difficulty in defining 'belief' arises from the confusion in how it differs from knowledge. Beliefs are "suppositions, commitment and ideologies" where as knowledge is "factual propositions and understanding"(Calderhead, 1996, as cited in Ertmer, 2005, P. 28). Ertmer then describes that people may accept something taking it as either true or false (believe it or not) after gaining knowledge of a proposition. As to Borg (2001), "a belief is a proposition which may be consciously or unconsciously held, is evaluative that it is accepted as true by the individual, and is therefore imbued with emotive commitment; further, it serves as a guide thought and behavior"(p.186).

A belief is unobservable tacit knowledge, which is derived from an individual learning and teaching ([http://fractus.uson.mx/Papers\(CERME./TG2_draft/TG2_Pehkonen-corr.pdf](http://fractus.uson.mx/Papers(CERME./TG2_draft/TG2_Pehkonen-corr.pdf)). In traditional classrooms, teachers are seen as "tellers of truth who inculcate knowledge into students" (Cohen, 1989, as cited in Parawat, 1991, p. 356), and the role of student is to listen,

read and do the prescribed exercises. Such consciously or unconsciously established beliefs are contradictory evidence (Nisbett & Ross, 1980, cited in Borg, 2003).

Many teachers are highly reliant on their core beliefs and less aware of them. Williams and Burden (1997, as cited in Mohammed, 2006) argue that teachers need to be aware of their beliefs so as to conceptualize their own implicit theories and how these theories affect their teaching. They discuss:

Teachers' beliefs about what learning will affect everything they do in the classroom, whether these beliefs are hidden or clear. Even if a teacher acts spontaneously, or from habit without thinking about the action, such actions are nevertheless encouraged by a deep-rooted belief that may never have been articulated or made explicit. If the teacher –as-educator is one who is constantly re-evaluating in the light of new knowledge his or her beliefs about language, or about how language is learned, or education as a whole, then it is crucial that teachers understand and articulate their own theoretical perspective (p.56).

2.2. Continuous assessment

Traditionally, the key role of assessment is to detect fast learners from slow learners. Such forms of assessment have classified students into two: winners and losers. As a result, some students have developed a sense of winning and are interested to learn more as they grow, where as others fail early and often falling farther and farther behind. Today, however, many school have emphasized more on helping all students succeed in schools than sorting students (Stiggins, 2007).

Continuous assessment has been used in many different countries. Continuous assessments are created by individual teacher and used in different countries in many different ways (National Institute for Educational Development (NIED), 1999; and Plessis et al., 2003). In some

countries, continuous assessment is considered as teacher grading. Others still refer to it running records, or curriculum-based assessment. In all cases, CA requires teachers to use a number of assessment techniques overtime to find out what students know and can do (Plessis et al., 2003). "Continuous assessment (also referred to as course work; school-based work) at senior secondary level, Grades 11-12 " (NIED,1999, P.36). According to Farrant (1980, as cited in ICDR, 1999), CA is an ongoing process or day-to-day teachers' observation of students at work. To do this, the teacher uses different kinds of tests and assesses them periodically .The teacher prepares the tests based on pre-selected syllabus objectives. These tests contribute to a student's final examination marks.

Assessment is continuous when it occurs on a regular basis as part of instruction, following a lesson, a topic, or a theme. In other word, continuous assessment is an ongoing assessment that aims to help learners, shape and direct the teaching-learning process (NIED, 1999). Continuous assessment is carried out on an ongoing basis. It is diagnostic and school-based process that employs various types of assessment tools to evaluate learner's performance (Zambia Ministry of Education, 2001, as cited in Kampambwe, 2010). Kampambwe then explains that school-based process in Zambia includes formative and summative assessment, on an ongoing basis.

Formative continuous assessment is any assessment that is given during the school year to improve learning and to assist, shape and guide the teaching-learning process. In this sense, all assessments that are carried out continuously during the school year are formative (NIED, 1999). Summative assessment is given periodically to measure what students know and do not know. Many scholars relate summative assessment only to standardized tests given at a state level, but they are also used at district level and school level. Some common examples of summative assessment include "state assessment, district bench mark or interim assessment, end of unit or chapter tests, scores that are used for accountability of records" (Garrison & Ehringhaus, 2010, p. 1). As to NIED (1999), end-of year examination, final summative assessments, are not continuous assessment." The Grade 11 examination, however, will be an

internal, and still formative examination....because it provides learners with information on the level at which they might enter to be tested in the Grade 12 end- of year examination. The Grade 12 examination will be external and final”(p.36).

Continuous assessment is both formal and informal assessment. Formal continuous assessments are those, which do not necessarily require planning, but provide essential information needed to know during the lesson. To assess students informally, various techniques can be used. For instance, a teacher may question a learner, observe a learner at work, reviews a learner's homework, talk to a learner and listen to a learner during a recitation. In informal assessment, letter grades are not usually assigned to a student's work. Formal assessments, on the other hand, are planned procedures used for gathering information about a learner to measure specific competence of the learner. Formal continuous assessment techniques may include short tests, quizzes, oral examinations, performance assessment tasks, examinations, projects and portfolios (NIED, 1999). From the description above, one can infer that CA involves gathering information about learners continuously to help learners and improve the teaching-learning process. To gather relevant information formally, informally, formatively, and/or summatively, a number of assessment tools can be used. CA may not require giving marks or grades, but contributes to the final grading or promotion.

Continuous assessment is away that provides opportunities for all students succeed in schools. Continuous assessment involves gathering information over a long period so that effective teacher can adjust classroom instruction in a way that meet the needs of all students equitably and ensure no one fails behind (Plessis et al., 2003). Similarly, MOE (2002) points out that assessing student's learning continuously offer chance for students not to be terror stricken by exams.

Educational professionals agree that the main reason for assessing student is to help them to learn (Rous &Townley, 2006). Plessis et al. (2003) state that the overall purpose of continuous assessment is to:

- find out what students know and can do
- gain confidence in what we say our student know and can do provide all children with opportunity to show what they know
- promote learning for understanding
- improve teaching
- help determine what kind of remediation and enrichment activities provide, to identify which students need assistance
- let the students know how well they are progressing in their own learning
- let parents know how their children are progressing
- lead to over all evaluation (pp. 8-10)

Continuous assessment provides valuable information for both teacher and students (Scanlan, 2012). Continuous assessment tells teachers lessons they need to repeat for students, which students need help and what they need. Students benefit from continuous assessment when a teacher, facilitator, “provide[s] students with constructive comments and suggestions where they may improve and acknowledgemet of the learning and thinking that has been shown in the assessment exercises”(Plessis et al., 2003, p.11), and they take responsibility for their own learning (OECD,2005).

2.3. Classroom assessment tools

Teachers need to use different assessment tools to assess student’s learning. Regarding this, Shepard (2000) explains the reason for using a variety of assessment tools as follows:

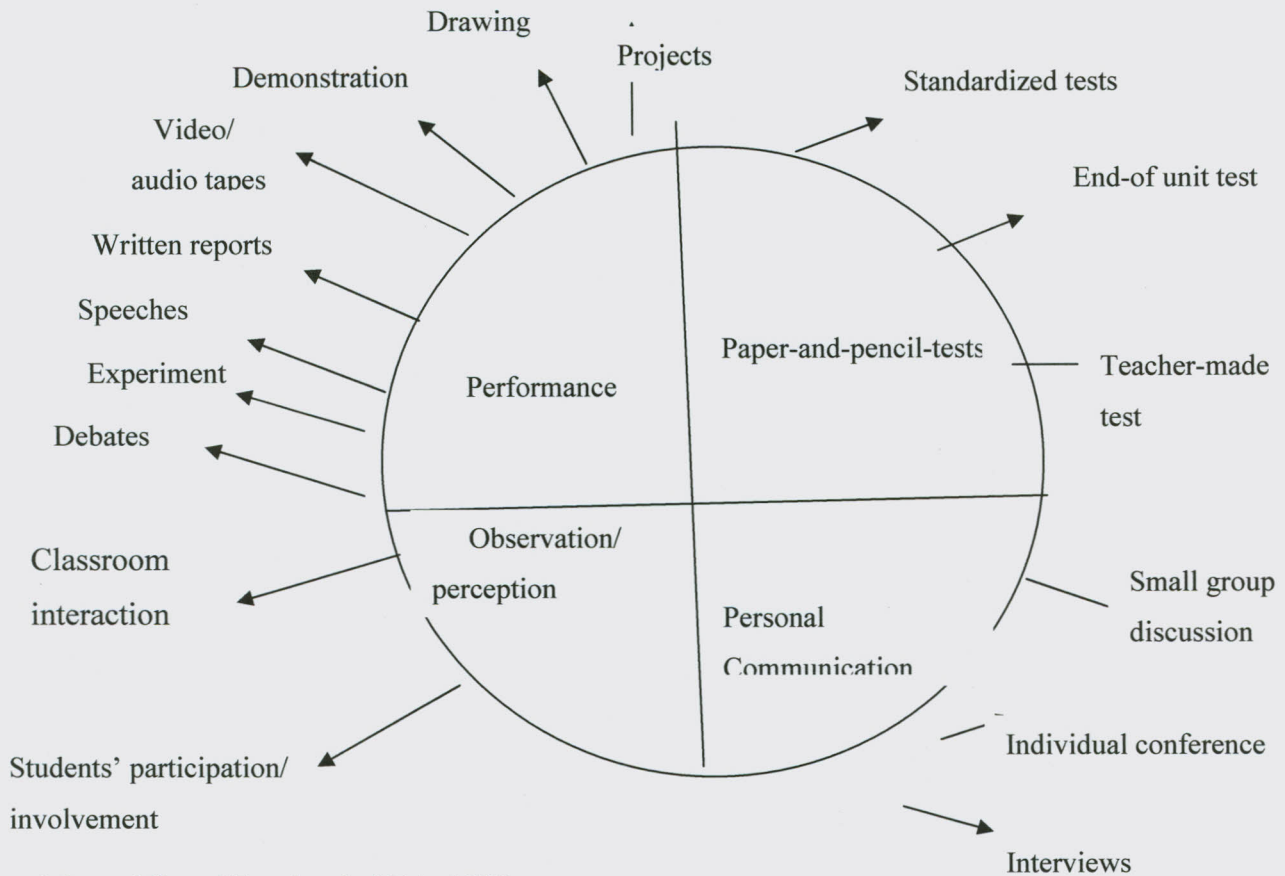
... not just different learning goals are amenable to assessment by different devices, because the mode of assessment interacts in a complex ways with the very nature of

what is being assessed. For example, the ability to retell a story after reading, it might be fundamentally a different learning constructs than being able to answer comprehension about the story; both might be important instructionally. Therefore, even for the same learning objectives, there are compelling reasons to assess in more than one way, both to ensure sound measurement and support development of flexible and robust understanding (p.48).

Learners can be assessed continually by using oral questioning, observation, pretest, homework, short quizzes, project and end of topic tests (NIED, 1999). Some other possible procedures for assessing learner's include teacher-student conference learner's diaries and journals, informal reading inventories, classroom reading aloud, portfolio book read, self-assessment of progress in reading (Alderson, 2000d, as cited in Alderson & Banerjee, 2001).

There are a large number of assessment tools that can be used in language classrooms. As stated above, the choice of the tools largely depends on what is being evaluated. Among the many different assessment tools, the following can be used in language classroom:

Figure 2.1. Assessment Tools



Adapted from Heartland ,AEA, 1992

Source:<http://edu.gov.ca/k12/cur/languages/spanish/s1to34-found/ass>

Performance assessment

Performance assessment tasks are short activities that require students to demonstrate their knowledge, skills, and strategies they have learned (<http://edu.gov.ca/k12/cur/languages/spanish/s1to34-found/ass>). Brown (2004) states that performance-based assessment is interactive tasks that require speaking, requesting, responding, or in combining with listening and writing. Performance tasks are part of an

ongoing instruction activities and can be included in observational-based assessment and they are among the entries of portfolio assessment (Shepard, 2000).

Paper-and-pencil Tests

Tests are formally prepared procedures used to measure individual ability, knowledge or performance. Most language tests require students to speak, listen, read and writing to a subset of a language. However, paper-and-pencil tests, selective response tests, do not elicit learners' communicative performance. They are used to assess knowledge-related aspect of students (Brown, 2004).

Observation-based assessment

Observation-based assessment can be used to assess learners while they doing a given task or after they have completed the activities. For example, when students read a passage, a teacher can observe and identify learners' word recognition skills and their ability to make sense of the text. As a follow up reading activities observation based assessment provide opportunity for students to think and talk about what they have read (Hilbert & Raphael, 1998, as cited in Shepard, 2000).

Questioning

Questioning student is essential to promote learning in both teacher-centered and student-centered classrooms. Research shows that effective teachers are found to ask many questions during their lesson, with very few questions to which students respond incorrectly or not (Brophy& Good, 2008, as cited in Westhood, 2008).Teachers need to think a head about the questions they want to ask their students. These questions should be included in their lesson

plan (Garrison & Ehringhaus, 2013; and NIED, 1999). Garrison and Ehringhaus (2013) explain the benefit of questioning and list examples questioning strategies as follows:

Asking better questions allows an opportunity for deeper thinking and provides teachers with significant insight into the degree and depth of understanding. Questions of this nature engage students in classroom dialogue that both uncovers and expand learning. An 'exit slip' at the end of a class period to determine students understanding of the day's lesson or quick checks during instruction such as 'thumbs up/down/or 'red/green' (stop/go) cards are also examples questioning strategies that elicit immediate information about student learning. Helping students ask better question is another aspect [of ongoing assessment] (p.4).

Teacher-students conference

Conferences are usually short meetings that can be held with a teacher and a student, or a teacher and a small group of students. With conferences, the teacher and students may discuss learning strength and areas of improvement. In teacher-student conference, it is possible to learn, the student's learning problems .For instance, a teacher is able to get a student's reading pattern and difficulties or interview to ask a question that are directly related to a particular aspect of student performance (<http://edu.gov.ca/k12/cur/language/spanish-/s1to34-found/ass>)

Portfolio assessment

Portfolios are another popular current form of assessment. Although portfolios are borrowed from the arts and from professional such as architecture and advertising, reformers suggest that portfolios of student work are essential to provide more authentic documentation of achievement. In teaching learning process, portfolios have paramount uses in collecting, keep and organizing teacher-students critiques and student reflection (Shepard,2000). Like in business setting, most writing for academic purpose involves much planning, editing, revising and redrafting, and usually involves the integration of information from a different sources.

Thus, portfolio assessment can play an important role for ESL writing assessment (Hampryon, 1996, as cited in Alderson & Banerjee, 2001).

2.4. Students as promoters of continuous assessment

We should stop holding the belief “that assessment is something that [teachers] do to students. It is not that [teachers] do not assess. But once again, that perspective is inappropriately narrow. [Teachers] aren’t the only ones who assess students. Students assess themselves too”(Stiggins, 2008, p. 4).The assessors, therefore, can be the teacher, the students himself or herself, or other students. In self-assessment, each individual is responsible to assess his or her own learning progress. As to Barbot (1991, as cited in Alderson & Banerjee, 2001) both the students and the teachers benefit from this technique. When a student assesses himself or herself, he or she gains self-confidence in his or her own judgment and sees error as something useful. Self-assessment also allows teachers to get valuable information on learning styles and areas that require remediation and feedback.

...self-assessment serves social and motivation purpose as well as improving cognitive performance. Engaging students in debates about standards and in reflecting on their own can increase students responsibility for their own learning and redistributive power, making the relationship between teacher and students more collaborative (Shepard, 2000, p. 61).

Student’s reflection about what they have learned can also serve to predict future teaching, and their feedback highlight focus areas that a teacher need to spend more time (Black et al., 2004).

Learners can also play an important role by evaluating other students. Learners who asses other students learn more about the topic they are assessing (Plessiss et al., 2003). Further, students often accept critics of their work more from their partners than that of their teachers. Peer-work is also useful because it offers chance for learners by taking the role of teachers and evaluators of others (Black et al., 2004).

2.5. Feedback as core features of continuous assessment

Continuous assessment is formative or assessment for learning. Contrary to traditional assessment, formative or CA involves the following:

The traditional way to think of formative use of assessment is teachers assessing frequently and using the results to plan the next steps in instruction. Assessment for learning goes beyond that. It involves teachers providing feedback. It also includes students-from clarifying targets to self-assessment to communicative with others about their own progress. It's this descriptive feedback and student-involvement aspect for learning that results in the remarkable achievement ... (Stiggins et al., 2007, p. 36-37).

It is a good practice when ongoing assessment provides constructive feedback to students' work. Constructive feedback helps students to learn from their performance. In doing so, they will look at their work and attempt to improve it, and they develop a positive feeling about themselves (Plessis et al., 2003).

Feedback can be given to students orally or in written forms (OCED, 2005; Plessis, 2003). For effective provision of feedback, care must be given to both forms of feedback, oral and written form. In relation to this, Black et al. (2004) suggest that students' learning can be enhanced by feedback through comments. However, commenting on student's work along with the giving of numerical scores or grades may bring negative effect because students may ignore comments when the marks are also given. These might surprise teachers, but who have stopped giving marks together with comments have begun to learn that students do more productively in improving their work.

Black et al. (2004) argue that "numerical scores or grades doesn't tell students how to improve their work as so an opportunity to enhance their learning is lost"(p.13). Comments can be

helpful feedback when students see those comments valuable to extend their learning. To be effective, feedback should cause thinking to take place. This way will change both teachers and students towards written work, and the assessment of student work will be seen less likely as a way of comparing one student with others so that the comment will help them improve.

Feedback should be timely (Brown, 2004; Plessis et al., 2003). Timely feedback is a useful part of continuous assessment. When students are given feedback on time, it tells them how they are progressing and how they can improve. If students are given feedback continuously on each assessed work, they can move forward with relation to this feedback(http://intranet.dit.ei/ltc/html_currentprojs.htm).

2.6. Continuous assessment record keeping

There are many ways that teacher use to record students' learning performance. These include rubrics, analytical lists, rating scale and checklists. When an activity has many parts and a teacher wants to assess different parts, a rubric can be used. For example, to analyze a story, identifying the major characters, summarizing the plot and coming to conclude about the main characters actions, a teacher could use a rubric. To do so students should be informed the criteria and weight for each point of the criterion. Similar to rubrics, criteria are stated for analytical lists and each criterion stands for one idea that students are expected to exhibit. Rating scale is useful when different answers can be drawn from the activity on an assessment. The checklist is used to determine whether a student is able to do a particular task or not. The checklist does not require much time. The teacher can easily fill it using a tick when he or she observes a learner exhibit a particular skill during the classroom learning (Plessis, et al., 2003).

It is essential to keep student's learning performance record book or checklist/sheet. Following the ministry guidelines, there must be enough columns in the checklist to record the marks

including totals and averages for a semester or term (Plessis et al., 2003). According to ICDR (1999), the proportion of marks to be allocated for CA and end of term test is determined by a school. The school decides either 40%: 60% for CA and end of term tests respectively or the same weight, 50%: 50%. For grade 1-4, it is advisable that the assessment needs to be based on CA for both terms, whereas from grade 5 onwards, a weight up to 40% could be allotted for CA and 60% to that of a final exam. Here are samples of assessment record book and record checklist or sheet.

Table 2.1: Sample assessment record book

Learners' name	Assessment 1	Assessment 2	Assessment 3	Assessment 4	Assessment 5	Assessment 6	Assessment 7	Assessment 8	Total of all assessment	Average of all assessment	End of term Grade [mark]	Comment

Source: Plessis, et al. (2003, p. 31)

Table 2.2: Sample record sheet, English

N O	Pupil's name	Green					Blue					Purple				
		Letters and sounds	Reads most used words	Writes sentences	Reads a story	Comprehension	Letters and sounds	Reads most used words	Writes sentences	Reads a story	Comprehension	Letters and sounds	Reads most used words	Writes sentences	Reads a story	Comprehension

Source: Plessis, et al., (2003, p: 41)

As mentioned above, there is no common CA materials that describe what to be done or used in each teaching and learning situation. Therefore, a teacher is expected to develop his or her own strategies for use in the schools and classroom as well.

2.7. Studies on teachers' beliefs and classroom assessment practice

Teachers' beliefs about teaching, learning, and learners are the most investigated areas in education (Calderhead, 1995, as cited in Borg, 2001). Many researchers (e.g. Bridley, 2001; Chang, Rogers, & Hu, 2004; Davinson, 2004; and Shohamy, 1998, cited in Shohamy, 2008) have conducted studies on teachers' beliefs and assessment practices, and the impact of external norm-setting and tests on these practices. Findings indicate that there is great diversity with reference to teachers' beliefs and assessment practice (Shohamy et al., 2008).

Some other studies also show inconsistencies between teachers' beliefs and their classroom practices. For instance, Buyukkarci (2004) investigated elementary school language teachers' beliefs and formative assessment practice. Buyukkarci found that the teachers have positive beliefs and attitude towards formative assessment. However, the teachers did not continuously assess learners' learning as required in the national curriculum. Uysal and Bardaki (2004) also examined primary level English language teachers' beliefs and practice grammar teaching. The study revealed that the teachers predominantly used traditional teaching approach that focuses-on-forms.

Some studies, on the other hand, yielded consistent results. Kuzborska (2011) conducted a study on the link between the beliefs of eight teachers, and their teaching reading practice to advanced level. He used video simulated recall to obtain measures of the teachers' beliefs. The beliefs that were found as congruent with the practice of the majority of the teacher reflection was a skill –based approach to reading instruction that emphasize vocabulary, reading aloud, translation, and whole class discussion of text.



Johnson (1994) and Numeric (1996) (cited in Borg, 2003) reported that teachers' classroom practices is highly related to teachers' prior experience. Johnson found that teachers' classroom practices were mainly based on prior language learning experience. Numeric described that teachers' decision to promote or avoid specific instructional strategies was based on their own experience of the respective strategies as learners.

Chapter Three

Design and Methodology

In this section, the researcher attempted to discuss the design and methodology of the present study including the logic behind the selected methods. The researcher also briefly described target population of the present study, sampling techniques, instruments for data collection, data collection procedures and data analyzing procedures.

3.1. Design

The study required respondents to express their opinion and feeling, and describe their current classroom assessment practices. To study such issues, researchers often use descriptive survey research design. As to Muijs (2004), survey research design is often used because it is highly flexible and efficient to collect large amount of data within a short period at a reasonably low cost and effort. It is essential to obtain data regarding subjects' current practice, their opinion, feeling etc. Based on this ground, the researcher used descriptive survey research design.

Quantitative and qualitative methods can be used in the same study for collecting and analyzing data. In relation to this, Muijs (2004) points out that if researchers want to look at both breadth and depth, they use qualitative methods together with quantitative methods. They use the quantitative methods to get quantitative answer to describe a situation and make inferences and the qualitative method for depth and meaning. Thus, this study utilized quantitative and qualitative research methods to collect data and analyze the results.

3.2. Study population and sampling

The population of the study is English language teachers teaching in preparatory schools. The population that was accessible to this study includes all preparatory school English language teachers and students in Ilu Abba Bora Zone. As the researcher had been working in Ilu Abba Bora, convenience method was employed to select the target zone. Since this study investigated teachers' beliefs and their current classroom CA practice, participants of the study were Grade 11 and 12 English language teachers and students in the same grades. Thus, the issue of generalizability was mainly to teachers respondents.

As was mentioned above, the population of the study is teachers and students. According to information obtained from zone educational office, the total population of teachers and students in the target level of the school was 22 and 2146 respectively. Subjects of the study were selected in two ways: census, the inclusion of the whole population, and random sampling technique. Because the number of teachers was small, the census was used for teacher respondents, while random sampling was employed for students. As to Muijs (2004), when the population of the study is small, census is helpful. "Results from a census survey can be used to drill down into organization structure and high lights department results. Because all employs participate, there is a greater chance of obtaining responses that are representative of all sub-groups within the organization" (Parker, 2011, p. 4). Kothari (2004) also claims that a complete inclusion of all of the population can be crucial for accuracy.

The reason behind the use of the census was to obtain quantitative data so that all of the informants, teachers, filled the questionnaire. In the case of using interviews, however, teacher informants were selected randomly using lottery methods. To do this, because the number of teachers in the target schools was not the same, the schools that had the same number of teachers were paired first to give equal chance for the target schools. For instance, the school that had only one English language teacher was paired with the school with the same number,

and the teachers, then, got 50% chance to be selected. Teachers in each school were given a code 'A...U' and eleven teachers were selected as sample subjects. For document analysis, only the interviewed teachers' documents, lesson plans and assessment record registers, were checked. Classroom lesson observation was also made with interviewed teachers.

Sample respondents of students were selected randomly using lottery method. The number of students in each school was identified first. After determining the number of subjects, students per sections, the students' roll numbers were written on pieces of paper and then 181 students were picked up from the total student population.

3.3. Instruments for data collection

As mentioned above, the purpose of this study was to investigate English language teachers' beliefs about CA and their actual use of CA in their classrooms. In beliefs study, it is useful to obtain data through different instruments such as observation, teachers' daily log, interviews and questionnaire (Tatto & Coupland, 2003). The researcher, thus, used questionnaire, observation and interviews to collect relevant data for the study. In addition, teachers' daily lesson plans and assessment record registers (checklist) were also used.

The researcher prepared the questions in each instrument. Two educators examined the content validity of the questions in the instrument. Based on their comments, some modifications were made. In addition, pilot test was carried out with 10 Grade 9-10 English language teachers and 50 Grade 11-12 students. Two of the teachers had 28 and 29 years teaching experiences and taught Grade 11 and 12 English a few years ago, whereas the rest had 15-30 year teaching experience. Both groups of participants were asked to comment on the questionnaire. Sample students were told this exceptionally to comment on the questionnaire by underlining the words or phrases that confused them to understand the questions. Besides, some part of the questionnaire, particularly, the part that intended to answer 'What assessment tools do the

teachers use frequently?’ was commented by one of my colleague, mathematics teacher. Based on the comments, some ambiguous questions were modified. Except a teacher and two student respondents who filled the questionnaire incorrectly, all of the respondents returned the questionnaire.

3.3.1. Questionnaire

Questionnaires are the most popularly used instruments in statistical work to collect data in terms of respondents’ demographic characteristics, what respondents are doing, or have done in the past; and to find out what people think (their attitude, opinions, beliefs, interest, and values (Dornyei, 2010). Time and cost benefit also needs considerations (Gillham, 2008, as cited in Dornyei, 2010). Based on these facts and the objectives of this study, the researcher prepared the questionnaire for both teacher and student respondents.

As to Muijs (2004), questionnaires can be administered to the whole population when the number of participants of the study is small. To get quantitative data, the questionnaires were prepared and administered to the subjects of the study, although they were small. The teachers’ questionnaire aimed to collect data on teachers’ beliefs and teachers’ actual use of CA in their classrooms. Students’ questionnaire focused CA practices only.

Teachers’ questionnaire consisted of closed-ended items that require teachers to respond to statements on a five- points likert scale (i.e. strongly disagree to strongly agree) for both their beliefs and practice of using CA. The other closed-ended items in the questionnaire aimed to collect data on assessment tools that teachers frequently use in the classrooms. There were five options (i.e., never, 1-2, 3-4, 5-6, and 7 and more) for these questions. In the questionnaire, open-ended questions were also included.

Students' questionnaire dealt with teachers' actual use of CA in their classroom. This questionnaire has two parts. The first part concerned overall CA practices, and the other part focused on feedback provision. To sum, the teachers' questionnaire was used to identify how teachers defined CA, beliefs the teachers had regarding CA, the assessment tools that teachers frequently used, and teachers' actual practices of using CA.

Oppenheim (1992, as cited in Dornyei, 2010) argues that open-ended questions should be placed near the end of the questionnaire. Oppenheim notes that placing open-ended questions at the beginning of the questionnaire reduces respondents' enthusiasm. Oppenheim also notes that it is advisable to put personal information at the end of the questionnaire. For one thing, after going through the introductory phase, respondents are happy to look at some interesting questions dealing with the topic of the study instead of worrying about a set of personal questions that require filling like bureaucratic forms, for instance, passport application or hotel registration. The other reason for not introducing personal information too early concerns their susceptible character. When private matters or personal information like age, level of education, marital status, and so on is put at the beginning, it might create resistance in the respondents. Based on these facts, the researcher avoided placing open-ended questions and respondents' demographic characteristics at the beginning of the questionnaire.

3.3.2. Interview

Interview can play a pivotal role to gather in-depth information on participants' attitude, thought and action (Kendall, as cited in Harris & Brown, 2010). The interview was held with ten selected teachers to supplement the data that were gathered through the questionnaire. Each of the ten teachers was interviewed once individually. This interview consisted of structured and semi-structured questions. Interviewees' responses were recorded using a video-recorder to avoid loss of information.

3.3.3. Observation

According to Muijs (2004), observation is crucial to find out what actually occurs in classrooms setting rather than what participants of study report to us orally or in writing. As mentioned above, classroom lesson observation was made with ten teachers for forty minutes to collect data for the practicality of teachers' beliefs and continuous assessment in the actual classroom. Observation checklist that consists of open-ended was prepared and notes were taken during observation. This observation was also video recorded whenever necessary.

3.3.4. Document analysis

Richard and Lockhart (1994, as cited in Sze, 1999) suggest that some useful techniques for collecting data to investigate classroom practice include journals, lesson reports, lesson observation and the like. In an interview with Birello (16th April, 2012), Simon Borg, famous researcher of beliefs, suggests that asking teachers directly may not be productive. Indirect strategies can be a good way to explore teachers' beliefs. "... rather than asking directly, 'What are your beliefs?', to use a stimulus of some kind, e.g. a piece of teaching material such as a lesson plan from teachers' own work or an activity from a teacher own class and then use that as the basis of exploring beliefs" (p.89). The researcher, thus, looked at teachers' lesson plan (of five consecutive days of seven teachers and three of a single day daily lesson plans) to collect data about teachers' beliefs and CA practice to supplement data of the questionnaire. In addition, teachers' assessment record lists were checked to see if the teachers assessed students' performance continuously. For both instruments, the researcher prepared closed-ended and open-ended questions to collect relevant data.

3.4. Data collection procedures

As stated above, the data for the study were obtained through the questionnaire, interviews, observation, and document analysis. Questionnaires were distributed to respondents by the researcher and assistants, teachers. Assistants were given selected students' roll numbers and asked to explain the purpose of the study to the respondents. The researcher first contacted all of the teachers with the help of telephone except two, one chosen for lesson observation and interview. The interview data was collected next to lesson observation. This was followed by examining daily lesson plan and assessment checklists. Although the teachers were asked on the phone to bring their daily lesson plan of five consecutive days and assessment checklists of the first term of this year, three and two of the teachers forgot their daily lesson plan of the first for days and assessment checklists respectively. All of the data related to lesson observation, interview, daily lesson plan and assessment checklists were gathered by the researcher. The data obtained from the exceptional teachers were casual.

3.5. Data analysis procedures

The closed-ended data gathered through the questionnaire were entered and analyzed with help of SPSS version 20. The quantitative data intended to answer the questions (e.g., 'What beliefs do teachers hold about continuous assessment?', 'To what extent do teachers assess students' learning continuously?' and 'What assessment tools do the teachers use frequently?') were analyzed quantitatively using descriptive statistics of mean, standard deviation, median and frequency counts as well. The data obtained through the interview, lesson observation, daily lesson plan and assessment checklists aimed to answer the above questions, were analyzed qualitatively in parallel to the quantitative data. Pearson correlation coefficient was computed to work out the answer to "What is the correlation between teachers' beliefs and CA practice?". To check if there is statistically significant mean difference between teachers' beliefs and their actual use of continuous assessment, paired t- test was carried out. The data that were obtained

through the open-ended questions and interview aimed to answer questions such as ‘How do teachers define CA?’ and ‘What factors affect the use of CA?’ were analyzed qualitatively.

3.6. Ethical consideration

A letter of permission was obtained from the Department of English Language and Literature. Copies of these letter were sent to each of the 12 target schools to ask the respondents of the study for permission. Informants were told the purpose of the study and assured that their response would be kept confidential. Over three fourth of sample teachers were informed that they would be selected for classroom observation and interview, and their lesson plans and assessment record lists would be checked if they were chosen to participate in the study. This was done during questionnaire administration. The selected subjects were asked permission again for the interview and classroom observation. During the interview and lesson observation, they were assured that they had the right to stop recording whenever necessary. They were also informed that their names would never be identified in any way, but given code during analysis.

Chapter Four

Findings and Discussion

This section has two parts: findings and discussions. In the findings section, the data obtained through the questionnaire, interviews, classroom lesson observation, daily lesson plans and assessment checklists were analyzed based on the research questions. In the discussion part, the findings were interpreted in relation to the purpose of the study and to the literature review.

4.1. Findings

4.1.1. Demographic characteristics of participants of the study

Subjects of the study were 22 Grades 11 and 12 English language teachers and 181 students of the same grades. Of these samples, 19 male and 2 female teachers took part in the study. The others were 63 and 51, male and female Grade 11 students, 36 and 31, Grade 12 male and female students respectively. Two of the teachers were M. A. holders, and the rest were B.A. holders. Their teaching experiences ranged from 8-29 years with mean 19.3.

4.1.2. Teachers' beliefs

Research question 1: What beliefs do teachers hold about continuous assessment?

In the questionnaire, the number of the beliefs items was 15. A total score was computed from these 15 items, ranged from low

15 to high 75, and thus, the expected median was 45.5. Finding indicates all of the respondents had scores higher than the expected median, and the observed median was 61. Specifically, they scored 53-65.

Table 4.1 below shows overall picture of teacher respondents' response to beliefs statements. In the table, the number inside and outside the parentheses indicates percentage and number of respondents respectively. Almost all of the teachers (90.5%) strongly agreed or agreed that ongoing performance assessment enhanced student learning. As observed in the table, a large number of teacher respondents (85.7%) each also felt that CA could be applied and used to assess EFL students' learning in listening, speaking, reading, writing, vocabulary and grammar.

Table 4.1. Teachers' Beliefs about CA

Item No.	Statements	SD/D	Undecided	SA/A
1	Continuous assessment (CA) can be applied in English as a foreign language (EFL) classroom.	—	3 (14.3)	18 (85.7)
2	CA is essential to assess EFL students' learning in listening, speaking, reading, writing, vocabulary and grammar.	2 (9.5)	1 (4.8)	18 (85.7)
3	Ongoing performance assessment enhances student learning.	—	2 (9.5)	19 (90.5)
4	CA helps all learners succeed in the school.	6 (28.6)	3 (14.3)	12 (57.1)
5	CA helps learners see their progress.	2 (9.5)	3 (14.3)	16 (76.2)
6	Continuous classroom observation helps teachers know their students' needs.	1 (4.8)	3 (14.3)	17 (80.9)
7	CA enables teachers to discover learners'	1	4	16

	learning difficulties.	(4.8)	(19.0)	(76.2)
8	CA enables lower performing students get proper attention from their teachers.	2 (9.5)	—	19 (90.5)
9	CA is more helpful than traditional assessment to achieve the desired learning objectives of the target language.	2 (9.5)	4 (19.0)	15 (71.4)
10	Ongoing oral feedback provides opportunities for students to see how well they are doing at school.	1 (4.8)	—	20 (95.3)
11	Students take a great responsibility of their learning when they are given ongoing written feedback.	2 (9.5)	1 (4.8)	18 (85.5)
12	When students assess their classmates' learning periodically, they learn more about the topic they are assessing.	—	3 (14.3)	18 (85.7)
13	When students assess their own learning periodically, they feel a sense of ownership of their learning.	5 (23.8)	3 (14.3)	13 (61.9)
14	CA helps teachers look for new ways of teaching.	3 (14.3)	3 (14.3)	15 (71.4)
15	CA increases teacher- students interaction.	1 (4.8)	4 (19.0)	16 (76.2)

As observed in the Table 4.1, over seventy percent of the teachers strongly agreed or agreed to the statements that describe the benefit CA could provide for both teachers and students. Regarding the beliefs about student assessors, the number of teachers who believed that peer

assessment helped students to learn more about the topic they were assessing was slightly higher than the number of teachers who believed in the benefit of ongoing students' self-assessment.

Teachers' daily lesson plan aimed to see whether teachers' beliefs match with what they intended to do in the classroom. As observed, the five consecutive daily lesson plan of seven teachers and a single day daily lesson plan of three teachers indicated that teachers intended to assess students' learning using questioning strategies (eight teachers), and group and individual oral presentation. However, only 6 of the teachers (4 out of the seven and 2 out of the three mentioned above) described the questions they intended to ask during the lesson.

All of the teachers described how they intended to present their daily lesson in tables except some lesson element like lesson topic and objectives. The element in the table included date, time, content, teachers' activities, students' activities, evaluation and teaching aids. In some teachers' lesson, date was written above the table like the daily topic and objectives. In some other teachers' lesson, the element 'evaluation' was written under teachers' activity column next to stabilization, while others completely excluded this element.

Although assessment was not one of the elements in all of the teachers' lesson, some model questions were included under the teachers' activity and evaluation column. The questions included were described at different phase of the lesson. The objectives in all of teachers' lesson began with "After this lesson, students will/ would be able to ...". One of the Grade 11 teachers, for example, stated that "After this lesson, students will be able to develop accuracy in grammar regarding English plural formation, verb forms, and use and position of articles in sentences" in which the focus of the lesson was 'grammar' errors in sentences. In his lesson the teacher included questions like (e.g., "What do you feel about English grammar? How different is English from your mother tongue?"). Although all of the teachers began their lesson objectives using modal auxiliary 'will able to', not all teachers' includes performance

verbs. For example, TBaC1 stated that “After this lesson, students will be able to learn some possible future threats”.

To elicit learners’ understanding, other teachers described their intention using descriptive phrases like revises previous lesson by asking questions, discusses answers to the questions and rehearse the daily lesson by asking questions, but never listed the questions in the lesson plan. Data of the interview also show that interviewees believed in the benefit that CA provides to the teaching-learning process. When asked how CA improves the teaching-learning process, two of the teachers explained that while assessing, the teacher learns how students are improving their learning and identifies problems that in turn helps him adjust his lesson in a way that supports learners. They stated that:

...because through continuous assessment ... not only assess students’ achievement but also their progress. If the student is progressing or not ... With continuous assessment you can see their challenge or the road on which your students are walking. If the student is not on a good situation,...you can adjust your lesson...and even see their difficulty level. ...whether the student is mastering the skill or not... (TBaC2).
... teacher can see students’ improvement and difficulties (TBaC7).

The other teacher described that CA improved students’ learning by providing multiple of assessment ways for students. These techniques help students feel free to express oneself thoughtfully and share experience. The teacher said, “Continuous assessment give more chance and opportunities for students....do share their experience each other. They be free to explain their idea” (TBaC5).

In the word of one of the teachers, one can infer that CA helps both the teacher and students. The teacher get immediate information which helps him identify the lesson that seems difficult for students and needs remedies. Besides, the teacher distinguishes educational gap between students. The students are assessed while learning is going on, so they do not forget

what they have learned. This motivates them to learn happily. There was an evidence, for instance:

On the part of the teacher, it gives him a clue. It helps him to see his students from time to time and again the teacher can see the areas where students are weak, so he can give remedies or activities.... The other one is, individually, the teacher can understand how is, the degree to which his students in the classroom ...how the students manages to learn. It helps the teacher to see of these things. On the part of students, it motivates them; it energies them; it inspires them to observe his learning because the students may not forget Students can forget what he or she learned...a month before, so these things motivate students (TBaC3).

Another teacher stated that CA improved the student learning because it offered the opportunity to identify his or her strengths and weaknesses during the process.

When you evaluate your students' performance by using continuous assessment you can identify your students' performance, then if there is weakness on your teaching and learning process, you can improve that and if there is strength you can keep your strength, so that is the way continuous assessment improves the teaching learning process (TBaC6).

TBaC8 said that when we assessed students on a regular basis, "our target is to identify low achievers from high achievers" so that low achievers could keep pace with high achievers if they get adequate support from their teachers.

In response to the question 'What do you think is the advantage of continuous assessment when compared to exam?', teachers suggested that CA had a number of options that could be used to measure students' learning in all aspects of the language and to compensate for the student who missed class during the assessment. The student who was not successful in one assessment could work well in another, but this might be challenging with that of the exam.

The teacher also mentioned that continuous assessment is ongoing. The teacher observes students' learning and examines the process as well. Perhaps the exam consisted lots of marks, which might de-motivate students. For example, one of the teachers explained that:

During continuous assessment what you evaluate is, one, you evaluate the process or level of achievement of students. The students can improve themselves from assessment. But if you give tests to students out of twenty, sixty, or fifty and ...at once, this may de-motivate the students (TBaC2).

Another teacher said that exam covered various contents and determined overall performance of the student, for grading. The teacher said, "Exam is at the end. It is for math's, at the end of all content "(TBaC10).

4.1.3. Teachers' continuous assessment practices

Research question 2: To what extent do teachers assess students' learning on Continuously?

The number of continuous assessment practice items was 16. The total score was the sum of these 16 items, ranged from 16 to

80, and the expected median was 48.5. The result shows that the median of the observed scores was 51, which was slightly higher than the expected median. Specifically, only 19 percent of teachers had scores (40-48) less than the expected median, while the rest had 50-65. Six themes emerged from the data gathered regarding CA practice. These include:

Observation assessment

As observed in Table 4.2, almost all of the teachers reported that they used observation (95.2%) and oral questions (85.7%) to assess students' performance. Similarly, majority of the students (66.3%) and 69.3%) asserted that teachers moved round the class and used oral questions to assess students' learning respectively (Table 4.3).

Table 4.2: Teachers' Response to Continuous Assessment Practice (N= 21)

Item No	Statements	SD/D	Undecided	A/SA
16	Practically, I have used classroom observation to assess my students learning.	—	1 (4.8)	20 (95.2)
17	In practice, I have allowed my students to assess their own learning.	12 (57.2)	2 (9.5)	7 (33.3)
18	In practice, I have kept ongoing non-numerical record of every individual student's learning performance.	14 (66.6)	4 (19.1)	3 (14.3)
19	I have allowed my students to assess their classmates' learning.	8 (38.1)	2 (9.5)	11 (52.4)
20	I have given oral feedback on students' work.	3 (14.3)	—	18 (85.7)
21	I have given written description on students' written work.	5 (23.8)	3 (14.3)	13 (61.9)
22	Practically, I have used portfolio assessment (of the learners.	17 (80.9)	3 (14.3)	1 (4.8)
23	Practically, I have used end of unit(s) tests.	2 (9.5)	—	19 (90.5)
24	I have interviewed students to assess their communicative skill.	14 (66.7)	3 (14.3)	4 (19.1)
25	To assess my students' learning, I have used oral questions during the lesson presentation.	2 (9.5)	1 (4.8)	18 (85.7)
26	To assess my students' learning, I have	10	5	6

	used report-writing tasks.	(47.6)	(23.8)	(28.6)
27	I have used oral presentation to assess my students' learning.	3 (14.3)	2 (9.5)	16 (76.2)
28	I have given group work writing assignment to assess students' learning	3 (14.3)	2 (4.8)	17 (80.9)
29	I have used group discussion to assess my students learning.	5 (23.8)	2 (9.5)	14 (66.7)
30	While assessing my students' learning, I have made students debate on certain issues	12 (57.1)	4 (19.0)	5 (23.5)
31	I have used essay writing to asses my students' learning.	2 (9.5)	2 5)	(9. 17 (80.9)

Table 4.3: Students' Response to Teachers' Continuous Assessment Practice (N= 179)

Item No.	My English teacher:	SD/D	Undecided	A/SA
1	has assessed, checked, how well the students are improving their English.	45 (25.2)	48 (26.8)	86 (48)
2	has assessed students' learning by asking questions orally during lesson presentation.	23 (12.8)	32 (17.9)	124 (69.3)
3	has assessed students' learning by giving tests at the end of unit (s).	28 (15.6)	18 (10.1)	133 (74.3)
4	has observed students' learning by moving round the class.	37 (21.1)	26 (12.6)	116 (66.3)
5	has students' learning by making individual learner talk about a given topic in front of the class.	75 (42.3)	42 (23.4)	62 (35.3)
6	Has allowed students to assess their classmates' learning By looking at their class work, homework or by being a judge or chairperson of students' presentation.	72 (40.7)	45 (24.3)	62 (35)
7	has allowed students to identify their own strength and weakness.	93 (52.2)	42 (23)	44 (24.7)
8	has interviewed students individually or group of students' to assess their communicative skills.	95 (53.1)	38 (21.2)	46 (25.7)
9	has assessed students' learning by making the write an essay.	97 (54.4)	35 (19.3)	47 (26.3)
10	has assessed students' learning by making them write a report.	92 (52.3)	45 (23.3)	43 (24.4)
11	has assessed students' learning by giving tests just before the end of unit.	66 (37.1)	37 (20.6)	76 (43.3)
12	has assessed students' learning by making group of students discuss a given topic (group discussion).	78 (44.9)	32 (15.5)	69 (39.7)
13	has assessed students' learning by making them debate on a given topic.	96 (64.2)	37 (19.8)	46 (26)
14	has assessed students' learning by making them keep their own learning portfolio.	128 (72)	32 (17.3)	19 (10.7)

The lesson observation data also reveals that the teachers used questioning strategies. Of the ten observed teachers in classroom teaching, 4 of the teachers began the daily by asking questions orally to revise previous lesson, where as four of the teachers moved directly to explain about the present lesson. Two of the teachers were seen questioning strategies to activate students' background knowledge after introducing the topic of the daily lesson.

To probe teachers' follow up action, the teachers were asked how they assessed their students' learning in identifying the plot, the major characters, the setting, etc in a reading story (during classroom lesson). Although TBaC4 said, "... even if logically this kind of assessment ... very important in language classroom, I haven't used it yet due to high number of students in my classrooms. In fact, there is a reading passage which is fictional ... I haven't been using it", nine of the teachers replied that they used questions and students' responses to elicit their students' understanding. When asked if they used any criteria to determine whether students mastered the target skills, teachers responded that they did not.

Paper and pencil test (assessment)

Table 4.2 illustrates that about eighty percent of the teachers strongly agreed or agreed to the statement 'I have used end-of unit(s) tests to assess students' performance' while those who strongly disagreed or disagreed were below ten percent. In Table 4.3, the number of students who reported that teachers used end-of unit tests was by far greater than those who claimed that teachers gave those tests before the end of units, seventy-four and about forty-four percent respectively.

Performance assessment

As observed in Table 4.2, over three fourth of the teachers reported that they used essay writing and group work writing (80.9 %) each and oral presentation (76.2%). However, the number of teachers who reported that they used report writing (28.6%) and debate (23.8%) was below one-third. On the other hand, over half of the students reported that teachers did not use essay (54.5%), report (52.3 %) and debate (53.1%), although about twenty-six percent, twenty-four percent and twenty-six percent of the students claimed that teachers used essay, report and debate respectively (Table 4.3).

Although two teachers were seen using oral presentation during classroom lesson observation, only a little more than one third of the students (35.3%) reported that teachers allowed students to present a lesson orally in front of the class while about forty-three percent were below the neutral. In casual visit to TBaC8 classroom, for instance, one of the group representatives came in front of the class and first wrote the topic of his presentation on the blackboard 'Adverb'. The teacher went to the back row of the students leaving the stage for the presenter, holding a notepad for recording students' performance. The representative explained the lesson by writing examples and underlining the adverb phrases for clarification. The sample sentences the student used include:

Julia write very carefully.

Dad often goes to church every Sunday.

Thomas sang a song beautifully.

At the end of the student's presentation, although the examples seemed sentences taken from unspecified sources, the teacher gave correction but directly, by informing the student the subject-verb disagreement and then restating the correct sentence "Julia writes very carefully." Then, mentioning the different types of adverbs the student talked about, the teacher asked, "Can you say the use of the different types of adverbs...?" Finally, the teacher commented on accepted and unaccepted behavior of students' presentation and ended the lesson. In TBaC5

classroom, individual student appeared talking about his or her own topic. This teacher also asked some question at the end of each presentation, but never recorded students' performance.

Table 4.2 and Table 4.3 illustrate that portfolio assessment was not practiced yet as reported by about eighty percent and seventy-two percent of teachers and students respectively.

Communicative assessment

The percentage of teacher respondents who strongly agreed or agreed to the statement 'I have used group discussion' is much greater than those students respondents who reported that their teachers' used group discussion (Table 4.2 and 4.3 respectively. Table 4.2 shows that almost all of the teachers reported that they did not interview students to assess students' performance. In two classrooms, however, the researcher observed students who were sitting facing each other in groups, but none of the two classrooms were seen using either of the two forms of assessment mentioned above.

Students assessors

Both teachers and students can carry out classroom assessment. As observed in Table 4.2, the number of teachers who reported that they used peer-assessment was by far greater than those who strongly agreed or agreed to self-assessment item. However, about fifty-two percent and forty percent of the students claimed that they were not allowed to assess their own learning and their classmates' as well respectively, whereas about twenty-three and twenty-four percent of the students were unable to decide respectively (Table 4.3).

Feedback provision

Majority of the teacher respondents reported that they gave ongoing oral feedback (85.7%) and written feedback (61.9%) on students' work (Table 4.2). Students' response concurred

with teachers' response to oral feedback provision, although to that of written feedback provision vary (Table 4.4). That is to say, although teachers reported that they gave written feedback on students' work, over half of the students (51.4%) reported their teachers did not provide.

Table 4.4. Students' Response to Teachers' Feedback Provision (N = 179)

	Yes		No		Total
	N	%	N	%	
Does your English teacher comment on your oral learning activities (e.g., when you answer questions orally)?	123	68.7	56	31.3	179
Does your English teacher comment on your written work (e.g., by checking your class work writing exercise, home take writing exercises, etc)?	87	48.6	92	51.4	179

Table 4.5. Students' Response to Types of Feedback Teachers Used

			Respondents	
			N	%
Oral feedback	Traditional	Not correct/Wrong	54	43.9
	Less constructive	Good, good/nice work	65	52.8
		Well done	30	24.4
		Thank you/ thanks	32	21.9

Table 4.5. Students' Response to Type of Feedback Teachers Used (continued ...)

		Excel lent	57	46.3
		Others	9	7.3
	More constructive	That is a good idea. You have...	42	34.1
		Good. Can you give an example/can you be more specific?	27	21.9
Written feedback	Traditional	By using a tick (✓) for correct answers and 'X' for wrong	69	79.3
	Less constructive	Good, good/nice work	51	58.6
	More constructive	I think it would even make better if you...	14	16.1
		I really liked reading your writing for you have...	4	4.6
		Good, but it needs improvement...	15	17.2
		Others	3	3.4

Note: the data in Table 4.5 does not include students who said 'No' to the items in Table 4.4.

feedback by checking their exercise books. Regarding the types of feedback, the use of more constructive feedback provision was less common. Of the students who agreed that their teachers gave feedback on students' work, majority of the students claimed that teachers commented on students' work using a tick (✓) for correct answer and an 'X' for wrong

(79.3%) and good/nice work (52.8%) for written and oral feedback respectively (Table 4.5). There were some evidences in classroom lesson observation that some teachers were seen using some forms of oral feedback that do not describe reason for the praise. For instance, TBaC10 praised a student saying “very good” to the student’s answer “affluent, prosperous” while answering the teacher’s question “What is the synonym for the word ‘rich’?” Some other teachers, for instance, TBaC5 used fillers like feedback “Yaa ...” when satisfied with the response forwarded by a student in his classroom. Writing a sentence ‘Are you knowing the answer to this question?’, TBaC3 used “ok ...” moving his eyes from corner to corner in order to respond to the first student’s answer and wait for another response to his question “Who can correct this sentence?”

The researcher also attempted to collect data from teachers’ assessment record list or sheet that teachers used to record students’ learning performance. None of the checklist resembled either assessment checklist or assessment record book described in the literature. Checklists that the teachers used were the one that was locally called ‘mark list’. These checklists did not indicate the session of the assessment like that of assessment record book and/or assessment checklist or sheet, which demonstrates the type of skills assessed described in the literature. The two things observed in the checklist were individual students’ name and the percentage of marks scored by individual student.

In the interview, the teachers were asked the percentage of continuous assessment marks compared to that of the final exam. Majority of the interviewee replied 60% (CA) and 40 % (final exam). One of the teacher stated that “... give out of 60 continuously. Then, we change into 40 percent. Finally, we give as a test or final test out of 60 percent” (TBaC5). Another teacher, (TBaC4) said, “According to my school context, it differs from year to year. Sometimes, we mark out of 40, the other time out of 60”.

In the checklists observed, the assessment was carried out 6 times by five of the teachers, 8 times by 2 teachers and 4 times by a teacher. The five teachers and the teacher who assessed

four times allocated ten percent for each assessment, where as one of the two teachers who assessed eight times allocated five and fifteen each for the two and ten percent each for the others. The other teacher allocated ten percent for each eight assessments and converted into sixty during the semester.

Research question 4: What is the correlation between teachers' beliefs and their actual use of CA?

The statistical observed mean of the teachers' beliefs and CA practice was 3.96, SD = .213 and 3.27, SD = .340 respectively. The Pearson correlation coefficient was computed to see whether there was a significant relationship between the teachers' beliefs and CA practice or not. Table 4.6 shows that the obtained value was $r = -.554$, $n = 21$, $p = 0.009$. A paired t-test was carried out to examine the mean difference between the teachers' beliefs and CA practice. The result shows that the mean difference and the t-value was 0.68671 and 6.398, $p = 0.000$ (Table 4.7).

Table 4. 6. Statistical Correlation between Teachers' Beliefs and CA Practices

Correlation

		Belief	Practice
Belief	Pearson Correlation	1	-.554**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.009
	N	21	21
Practice	Pearson Correlation	-.554**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.009	
	N	21	21

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 4.7. Paired T-Test

Paired t-test

	Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	St. Deviation	Std. error	95% Confidence interval of the difference				
				Lower	Upper			
Pair 1 Beliefs- Practice	.6867	.49188	.10734	.46280	.9106	6.398	20	.000

Research Question 5: What assessment tools do the teachers frequently use?

The assessment tools teachers used were classified into four as to the categories demonstrated in the literature. Table 4.8 shows that teachers frequently used paper-and-pencil tests ($M = 1.90$, $SD = .261$). As demonstrated in the table, communicative assessment ($M = .54$, $SD = .150$) was the least frequently used. Specifically, oral questions ($m = 3.952$, $SD = .218$) and end-of unit(s) ($M = 2.7760$, $SD = .538$) were the most frequently used assessment tools, while portfolio assessment ($M = .095$, $SD = .300$) was the least of all.

Table 4. 8. How Frequently Teachers' Used Assessment Tools (N = 21)

Types	Assessment Tools	Mean	St. Deviation
Observation Assessment (M = 1.83, SD = .374)	Observation- by recording students' performance during classroom learning	0.333	0.577
	Observation- by asking questions without recoding	3.952	0.218
	Student's participation	1.190	0.679
Paper-and-pencil tests (M = 1.90, SD = .261)	End of unit(s) tests	2.760	0.538
	Short tests (quizzes)	1.952	0.740
	Exam (teacher-made))	1.000	0.000
Performance Assessment (M = 0.65, SD = .287)	Essay writing	1.000	0.000
	Oral presentation	1.047	0.669
	Report writing	0.381	0.497
	Projects	0.476	0.749
	Group work (writing) assignment	1.142	0.654
	Debate	0.381	0.589
Communicative Assessment (M = 0.54, SD = 150)	Teacher-student interview	0.142	0.358
	Group discussion	0.952	0.497
	Others	1.07	0.277

Research question 2: How do teachers define CA?

There were similarities and difference in the participants' definition of CA. Some teachers defined continuous assessment as it involves the use of a number of assessment tools. There is evidence of this definition in the following excerpts:

... to use different ways of assessing: by using project work, giving tests, by giving assignment, group, individual, by observing ... (TBaC9).

... to using different assessment methods: tests, oral questions, ... (TBaC1)).

To some teachers, CA refers to continuous testing. TBaC5, for instance, said that “ [It is] a kind of exam or test that can be given periodically or day to day to see students' improvement “.

Three teachers related CA to evaluation that can be carried out continuously. TBaC7, for instance, defined that CA refers “... to evaluate students on a continuous basis”. Similarly, TBaC6 said, “Continuous assessment means evaluating students' performance on what they learn or acquire in the actual class.”

Another teacher described that CA is identifying what students can and cannot do. “Continuous assessment means that identifying your students' progress, how much they understand, how much they do, how much they show an effective progress on what they have been doing”(TBaC4).In the definition of one the teachers, CA is something that provides information for a teacher. The teacher defined that “... for a teacher is a feedback ...” (TBaC10).



Research question 6: What factors affect the use of CA?

The interviewed teachers suggested that some students lacked motivation to take part in the assessment activities, so they tended to be dependent on each other and their attendance was even irregular. The following excerpt is evident for this:

... our students are not good readers nowadays they copy from each other. The other one is that not all students take part in the activities by which they are assessed. But rather ... some depend on each other ... sometimes they get accustomed to it and see it trivial, ... and sometimes our students do not come to class because continuous assessment takes place at least within 2 to 3 days, but the students become absent sometimes.... (TBaC3).

Others stated that school related problems affected the use of CA. One said that students' seats were not convenient to assess students from time to time. The other teacher pointed out that large class size was also among obstacles. This can be inferred from: "In one class there are about seventy or around eighty students. To assess each students in the class ... is difficult" (TBaC10).

Still another teacher stated that there was no specific assessment procedure in the school. Each of the teachers assessed students on his own ways. The teacher added that although, in the textbook, there were assessment activities at the end of each units and revision exercises at the end of the third units that required photo coping, they were forced to cut out some of the assessment activities because of shortage of papers and duplicating machine. The teacher stated that:

... there is no one and common rule of assessing student performance in the school. ... when we assess students' performance, each of the teachers uses his own way of assessment. ... in the text book, at the end of each units, there are assessment questions and after three units, there are revision exercises, but there are differences in the use of these assessment activities. We also have problems in our school. As I said earlier, in CA assessment, you use different kinds of activities. In order to use these activities, you need papers and duplication machine. But sometimes there is no

adequate papers, and there is no duplication machine. These can be a great problem (TBaC4).

4.2. Discussions

A score of 45.5 was the expected middle scores of the teachers' beliefs, and the scores above this value indicate strong beliefs towards CA. The study findings indicate that the teachers had strong beliefs about CA since the median of observed scores (61) was higher than the expected median (45.5).

The expected median of teachers' practices of using CA was 48.5. It was thought that scores higher than the expected median indicate teachers had made strong effort in using CA in their classrooms. The result obtained showed that the observed median of teachers' use of CA was 51, which was slightly higher than the expected median. However, result of the students' questionnaire indicates that the observed median was 41, which was lower than the expected median (42). From these results, one can easily infer that there were discrepancies between the teachers' reported CA practice and students' questionnaire results.

A significant negative Pearson correlation coefficient ($r = -0.554$, $n = 21$, $p = .009$) was found between teachers' beliefs and actual use of CA. This suggests that the less the teachers believe in CA, the more difficult teachers implement CA successfully. The paired t-test indicates that the mean difference was .6871, and the t-value was 6.398, which was significant at ($p < 0.05$). Since the observed p-value is less than the cut-off point 0.05 and the mean difference is greater than zero, it is concluded that teachers' beliefs have effect on teachers' use of CA.

Good correlation may imply causal connection between variables, but it is not advisable to reach unjustified conclusions. For instance, the result of investigation of the relationship between the number of hours a person exercises per week and his or her serum cholesterol

(SCL) may produce a high negative correlation. However, it is not good to conclude that exercise is the cause of reduction in cholesterol, perhaps other factors, eating less fat or exercising less stress can be causes (Cohen & Lea, 2004). On the other hand, Rokeach (1968, as cited in Pedersen, 2003) notes that people may not honestly and accurately represent their beliefs. Thus, rather than only relying on statistical data and asking the teachers directly what were their beliefs, the researcher attempted to compare teachers' stated beliefs with what they said, planned and did.

The questionnaire result indicates that teachers believed that continuous observation of students' learning enabled teachers to learn about their students needs. There was evidence in the interviewees' responses that teachers believed that CA improved the teaching-learning process by offering students see their progress and by providing essential feedback to teachers on how the teaching/learning was going on. CA requires collecting information about student continually.

One of the ways that can be used to get such ongoing information is by asking questions. As discussed in the literature, teachers need to include questions that enable them to obtain regular information about their students' learning. It was observed in teachers' daily lesson that majority of the teachers planned to question students. Black et al. (2004) argue that the major purpose of teacher's preparation "is to plan improve teaching action. So, for example, the planning of questions and activities has to be in terms of their learning function" (p. 19). Although majority of the teachers had attempted to use the planned questions during lesson presentation, the lesson objectives of some teachers were not stated in a form that paves ways for assessment. In line with this, Brown (2004) contends that lesson objectives should be set up in a way that lends itself to assessment. Contrary to lesson objectives like "Students will produce yes/no questions with final rising intonation", objective, for instance "Students will have fun through a relaxed activity and thus enjoy their learning" cannot be assessed (p. 32-33).

CA can be carried out by observing students' learning. As to Westwood (2008), assessment can be made informally or formally by giving a specified set of procedures or checklist. For instance, a teacher may listen to a student who read aloud, look at how a student plan to write a story, notes techniques a student use to spell unfamiliar words, etc. The lesson observation data indicated that over half of the teachers observed in the classroom were seen asking students using the pre-planned questions and circulating round the class to observe students' learning.

Teachers admitted that they did not keep non-numerical record of students' performance during classroom learning. The lesson observation data also showed that only a teacher was seen recording students' performance during oral presentation. Plessis et al., (2003) pointed out that it could be difficult to observe all learners every day, but it is useful to keep track of students' learning to identify low performing students from high performers to give extra support for the former and tasks for quick learners keep the stimulated learning.

The interview data also indicates that all of the teachers except one, who had no experience in using reading story tasks, were more likely concerned with using questions and students' response than criteria to determine whether students mastered the skill of identifying plot, setting, major characters, etc in a reading story tasks. This implies that the teachers had not accustomed to using story analysis rubrics. In relation to this, Plessis et al. (2003) point out that to learn whether students analyzed a story properly, a teacher could use story analysis rubrics. They suggest that to develop rubrics, teachers need to develop the task for assessment that is related to expected learning (curriculum objectives). The main points the task and qualities for each point should also be identified a head including criteria of those qualities.

Although there were some interaction between teachers' beliefs and actual use of CA, there were several discrepancies. For instance, almost all of the teachers believed performance assessment enhanced student learning. However, different types of performance assessments

such as report writing, project, debate and portfolio assessments were not performed practically (see Table 4.2).

The use of end-of unit(s) tests was more common than tests given before the end of units (see Table 4.3). End of unit(s) tests do not fully help teachers to learn which student is progressing, or which lessons require re-teaching. In line with this, Wiliam (2013) notes that:

... rather than an end of unit test, the teacher could schedule a three-fourth of the way through the unit test. Rather than grading, the teacher could use the information gleaned from the test to decide which aspect of the unit need to be re-taught or, if the student have all done well, provide some extension material (p. 17).

Majority of the teachers believed that ongoing students' self-assessment and peer assessment led students to be responsible for their own learning and to conceptualize more about the lesson they were assessing respectively. But the result shows that there was little evidence of both self-assessment and peer- assessment practice (Table 4.3). Research shows that an integrated practice of formal and informal self-assessment led students to assume greater responsibility of his or her own learning (Barron & Darling-Harmond, 2008). Garrison & Ehringhaus (2013) noted that when there is no students' self-assessment, there is no CA.

Feedback is a subset of assessment. As to Brown (2004), informal assessment, for instance, can be unplanned feedback like "saying 'Nice job!', 'Good work!' 'Did you say can or can't?' I think you mean to say you broke the glass, not you break the glass'" (p. 5). Through feedback students learn how much they are progressing. As to Stiggins (2002), CA informs students to look at their learning, how to improve performance on the coming assessment sessions. Though a large percent of the teachers and students claimed that teachers gave oral feedback on students' work, little evidence was observed in terms of ongoing constructive oral feedback. Stiggins (2008) argued that effective feedback specifies why the praise is given. For example, feedback such as "That is good Mark. I can see that you have already gone back and checked the spelling" are more motivating than short descriptive phrases like

“Well-done” and “Satisfactory” (Westwood, 2008, p. 63). This kind of continuous constructive feedback helps students believe that success is within their hands if they keep trying (Stiggins, 2008).

Regarding written feedback, majority of the students also claimed that teachers did not comment on students’ written work by checking students’ exercise books. In line with this, Westwood contends that to determine the amount of work performed per a lesson, comment on accuracy and quality of work, and to identify learning difficulties that student faces, the teacher needs to look at each student’s exercise book at least weekly.

The teachers were asked how they identified whether or not the student mastered the skill of identifying plot, major characters, setting and the like in a reading story tasks during classroom lesson. With exception to one, who stated that he had no experience of letting students do such exercises, all of the interviewed teachers stated that they used questions and students’ responses only, but not used any criteria to determine whether the students mastered or not.

Teachers were also asked the definition of CA. Some teachers defined CA as it served as a means to identify what students could do and could not do. Others defined CA as it involved a variety of assessment techniques. It was described in the literature that CA requires teachers to employ multiple of assessment techniques, but the use of a number of assessment tools alone does not guaranty CA practices. Some teachers limited it to one form of CA, tests given on a regular basis, while some others still related to evaluation, judging overall performance of students. None of the teachers described that CA requires the integration of instruction and curriculum. As to Kentucky Department of Education (March, 2004, as cited in Rous & Townley, 2006), CA is formal and informal assessment that are carried out regularly and integrated with instruction and curriculum to improve, guide and direct the teaching and learning process.

As indicated above, teachers had strong beliefs towards CA. However, the data of the interview show that their beliefs were affected by multiple of factors, which were in agreement with Fang (1996, cited in Ertner, 2005), as stated in the literature, who contends that inconsistencies between teachers' beliefs and classroom practice happened when contextual factors interfered with teachers' ability to put their beliefs practically. Contextual factors could be little weekly time, large class size, difference between motivation level of students and learners' English proficiency, teachers' workload and motivation, etc. Interviewees said that students lacked motivation. Consequently, students tended to be passive to play their roles in the assessment activities and dependent on each other. They also stated that their attendance was even irregular.

Absence of specific assessment procedure was another problem. It was reported that each teacher assessed on his or her way. There was also difference in the use of assessment activities given in the textbook. Perhaps this was because of lack of adequate papers and duplication machine. It was also observed that some teachers assessed students' learning four times per a semester. Other still assessed eight times during a semester. This indicates that there is no uniform and common procedure on the number of assessment every student should complete per a term.

Besides, the percentage of CA marks during the semester differed from school to school.

The questionnaire result shows that teachers were not given any training on CA at their work environment. Training broadens teachers' understanding and assessment skills. Richards (2005) claims that in many situations, course teachers learned were somewhat theoretical and might not match the requirements of the present teaching career. For example, they may come across difficult tasks for which they have not taken any training such as the preparation or supervision of entrance tests. Thus, it is essential to add their professional knowledge and keep up to date with the theory and practices in the field to improve their teaching skills.

In sum, teachers had strong beliefs towards continuous assessment. Although teachers' questionnaire result regarding CA assessment practice show that teachers had attempted to use CA in their classrooms, the data obtained through mixed methods such as students' questionnaire, assessment checklist and classroom observation indicate that the teachers did not implement CA properly, and this is in agreement with Abiy (2013) findings. Regarding assessment tools, paper-and- pencil tests were the most frequently used tools. It was also observed that teachers' perception of the definition of CA was also low. It was also illustrated that factors like absenteeism, learners' reluctance, absence of clear assessment procedures and inadequate papers had affected the use of CA.

Chapter Five

Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations

This chapter is classified into three: summary, conclusion and recommendations. In the summary section, the researcher has summarized the introduction, the statement of the problem, the literature, the methodology and the findings of the present study. Conclusions drawn from the result of the study are presented next to the summary. Based on the study result, some follow up actions are suggested in the recommendation section.

5.1. Summary

The purpose of this study was to investigate English language teachers' beliefs and their actual use of CA in their classroom. The study was conducted in twelve preparatory schools in Ilu Abba Bora Zone. The participants of the study were 22 Grade 11 and 12 English language teachers and 181 students of the same grade.

Beliefs have a significant influence on how teachers think about classroom practice (Tatto & Coupland, 2003), and because they influence different aspects of teachers' behavior, teachers rely on traditional approaches to teaching and learning (Parawit, 1992). English language teachers' beliefs have paramount importance to students' language learning assessment. According to Rea-Dickins (2004), foreign language teachers are agents of classroom assessments because they are designers and implementers of assessments, and interpreters of students' learning performance gathered through those assessments.

Language learning and teaching has to be interactive. To serve as a bridge between teaching and learning, assessment, particularly, continuous assessment is vital. According to Plessis et al. (2003), many countries have adopted CA in many different ways. In Ethiopia, CA has been

introduced at all levels of schools since 1994 (FDRGE, 1994). However, the extent to which teachers implement new forms of assessment and whether the restructuring succeed or fail depends on the teachers' beliefs and knowledge that they possess in terms of learning assessment and its relation to instruction. Thus, to improve education by reorganizing assessment practice, we need to understand teachers' beliefs about how they assess learners' learning (Bliem&Davinsory, 1997). Therefore, this study attempted to answer the following questions:

- What beliefs do teachers hold about continuous assessment?
- How do teachers define continuous assessment?
- To what extent do teachers assess students' learning continuously?
- What assessment tools do teachers frequently use?
- What is the correlation between teachers' beliefs and their actual practice of using continuous assessment?
- What factors affect the use of continuous assessment?

To gather relevant data of the study, questionnaire (for both teachers and students), interview, classroom lesson observation, teachers' daily lesson plan and checklists that the teachers used to record students' learning performance were employed. The study utilized both quantitative and qualitative methods to analyze the data obtained through these instruments. The data gathered through tools mentioned above were analyzed and interpreted in parallel to the research question.

Six themes emerged from the study results. These are teachers' beliefs, CA assessment practice, assessment tools frequently used, definition of CA, relationship between teachers' beliefs and CA practice, and problems.

Teachers' beliefs

Teachers were first requested to rate their response on five-point options, strongly disagree to strongly agree. The result shows that statistically, the observed median of teachers' beliefs was higher than the expected median. The interview data also reveals that teachers believed that CA was essential to support student learning. When asked how CA improves the teaching and learning process, for instance, they stated that CA provided information to both teachers and students. They expressed that this information was helpful to modify the teaching and learning. On the part of the teacher, ongoing information gathered through assessments enabled teachers to learn pupils' progress and learning difficulties so that the teacher was able to adjust teaching to help those students who needed support. On the part of students, because students got information immediately, they learned their strength and weakness. Other teachers also believed that CA avoided students' fear of forgetting what they learned before and tension.

Continuous assessment practices

The observed median (51) of the teachers' stated CA practice was higher than the expected median, 48.5. However, students' questionnaire data result shows that the observed median was lower than the expected median, which was 41 and 42 respectively. Teachers' reported that CA practices indicated that teachers were concerned more about using informal continuous assessment, observation and questioning strategies, and formal summative continuous assessment (e.g., end of unit tests) than formal continuous assessment, which requires, for instance, setting criteria (e.g., identifying plot, setting, etc in a reading story tasks during classroom learning). The lesson observation data also shows that teachers engaged learners in oral questions to learn how much they had grasped the previous and present lesson. Although the students' response concurred with the assessment activities mentioned above, there was little evidence regarding essay, report and debate assessment practice. Both the

teachers and students stated that teacher-students interview and portfolio assessments were not practiced yet. Regarding assessors, both group respondents claimed that the assessments made were teacher dominant.

Although the observed checklists appeared mark record lists, they revealed that there was variation in the number of assessments made. The data obtained indicated that the number of ongoing assessment carried out by teachers ranged from four (the least) to eight (the highest). Similarly, the percentage CA marks ranged from forty to sixty and vice versa to final exam in one term or semester. In sum, the overall result regarding CA practice indicates that teachers did not properly use CA in their classrooms.

Relationship between teachers' beliefs and continuous assessment practices

The relationship between teachers' beliefs and their CA practice was negatively significant at ($p < 0.05$) statistically, and the strength of the relationship was moderate. Some of their stated beliefs were in agreement with their actual practice. For instance, teachers believed that CA helped to see students' progress, learning difficulties and needs. There were a number of ways the teachers used to obtain this information. Of these techniques, there was evidence of this in the teachers' lesson plan and classroom lesson observation. As discussed above, teachers' frequent inclusion of some model questions in their lesson plan and use of these questions during lesson were some indication. With some exception, majority of these teachers felt happy to observe students by moving round the classroom and asking questions.

A plenty of discrepancies had been observed between teachers' beliefs and practices of using CA, although there were some congruencies. The teachers believed that performance assessment was essential to promote student learning, but majority of this forms of assessment like report writing, debate, project, and portfolio assessment were not successfully implemented. The teachers also showed concern to the importance of ongoing student-

involved assessment, but practically, there was little evidence. Further, the analysis of paired t-test indicated that there was significant mean difference that suggests teachers' beliefs had effect on teachers' use of CA.

Assessment tools frequently used

A number assessment tools can be used in language classrooms. However, as demonstrated in Table 4.8, paper-and-pencil tests, end of unit tests and observation assessment, asking questions orally without recording students learning performances were the first and the second frequently used assessment tools.

Definition of continuous assessment

Some teachers attempted to define CA as it involved a variety of assessment techniques. It was described in the literature that CA requires teachers to employ multiple of assessment techniques. Others stated that CA was a means to identify what students could and could not do. In contrast, some teachers limited it to one form of CA, tests given on a regular basis, while some others still related to evaluation, judging overall performance of students. Although teachers expressed some facts in describing CA, none of the teachers had fuller and deeper understanding of definition CA.

Factors that affect the use of continuous assessment

The interview data reveal that there were several factors that affected the use of CA in the classroom. For one thing, students lacked motivation to take part in the assessment activities by which they were assigned to be assessed. The major purpose of assessment is to support students' learning. Unless students are engaged actively in the assessment activity, it is difficult to get relevant information regularly. Secondly, teachers expressed that students'

attendance was irregular. Thirdly, there were no adequate material resources such as paper, photo copying and/ or duplicating machine. It was said that in the textbook, there were assessment activities at the end of each unit and revision exercise at the third unit. Some of these assessment activities required photo copying, and duplication. Because of shortage these materials, the teachers were forced to cut out some of these activities. Fourthly, the teachers stated that there was no specific assessment procedures that determine how many assessment individual student should complete per a semester. Consequently, each teacher assessed students at different intervals and times. Fifthly, the number of students in some schools was large, although this was not a case to some schools. Further, none of the teachers got on- the job training directed to CA.

5.2. Conclusions

To conduct this study, some data gathering tools such as questionnaire, interview, classroom lesson observation, daily lesson plan and assessment checklist were employed. The data obtained through these instruments are concluded as follows: the questionnaire data result shows that the teachers have strong beliefs about CA. Many of the surveyed teachers believe in the benefit that CA contributes to student learning. They express that CA promote student learning and helps teachers get immediate feedback about teaching and learning. The observed teachers' daily lesson plans reveal that teachers have concern about questioning students frequently, but informally.

Regarding CA practice, teachers' questionnaire indicates that the teachers have attempted to apply CA in the classroom. However, the result of the student questionnaire suggests that CA is not fully practiced yet. In fact, both teachers and students agreed that teachers have made use of some forms of CA, informal continuous assessment and summative continuous assessment. Despite some limitation, the lesson observation data also indicates that the teachers have used questioning and informal observation. The interview data and assessment

checklist data show that there is no uniformity on the number of assessment made, and the proportion of CA marks and final exam per a semester. Students' learning assessment have been made 4 (the least) to 8 (the highest) times, and the proportion of CA marks and final is 40% : 60% in some schools, whereas in others 60% : 40% per a term respectively.

With reference to assessment tools, teachers use paper-and-pencil tests, and informal observation overweigh other forms assessment. The teachers reported that they frequently use end-of unit(s) tests and questioning strategies.

The interaction between teachers' beliefs and CA practice is negative relationship. This relationship is significant at ($p < .05$). The paired t-test indicates that there is a significant mean difference between teachers' beliefs and their actual use of CA.

Teachers define CA in many different ways. The result shows that none of the teachers have fuller and deeper understanding of definition of CA. Besides, the study indicates that there are a number of factors that affect the use of CA effectively. These include students' reluctances, absenteeism, lack of resources (e.g., inadequate paper, photo coping and duplication machine) and absence specific assessment rules in the schools.

5.3. Recommendations

This study suggests that teachers believe that CA is central to English language teaching and learning. It is believed that CA is a valuable link to the teaching and learning for achieving certain learning objectives dealt with the process rather than the end product. To assess students' English language learning continuously, the following need consideration:

- Schools need to fulfill teacher support materials. Teacher support materials initiate and assist teachers while using CA. The enable teachers clear up with implementation barriers.

- School principals need to show affection when teachers come up with new ideas or implementation barriers.
- Training that emphasizes the use and implementation of CA is crucial factor in encouraging teachers to experiment with CA. Training widens teachers' understanding about CA, too. Thus, there should be collaboration between schools and Ministry of Education to provide training that focuses on how to assess and record students' learning continuously.
- There is little evidence of student assessors. Teachers need to think a head and capitalize students' contribution in the assessment activities..
- The study indicates that teachers' use of formal summative continuous assessment overweighs other forms of CA. Therefore, teachers need to employ other forms of assessment including performance assessment and communicative assessment.
- It is reported that students lack motivation to take part in the assessment activities by which they are assessed, and their attendance is even irregular. Students lack motivation for a variety of reasons. Students need improved access to learning environment. Thus, teachers need to undertake situation analysis relating to the learning environment and assessment activities. Teachers need to help them recognize the link between assessment and learning because perhaps their reluctances to take part actively in the assessment activities may be due to misconception about assessment, the use of inappropriate strategies or confusion about what to do, but not lack of ability.
- School need to establish specific assessment procedures in line with the target subject and provide assessment record book or checklist that clearly demonstrates the type, number of assessment and percentage of CA marks per a semester.

- CA requires a resource rich learning environment. Therefore, schools need to fulfill resources such as paper, photo coping machine and duplication machine.
- Finally, further study is needed for detail investigation.

References.

- Abera Mamaru (2014). Classroom assessment manual for primary and secondary school teachers. Addis Ababa: National Educational Assessment and Examination Agency.
- AbiyYigzaw (2013). High school English teachers' and students' perceptions, attitudes and actual practice of continuous assessment. *Academic Journal*, 8 (16), 1489-1498. doi:10.5897/ERR2013.1573
- Alderson, J.C. & Banerjee, J. (2001). Language testing and assessment (part 1). *Language Teaching*, 34, 213-236. doi: 10.1017/S02614448010001707
- Ataged Sisay (2010). A comparative study on the practices of continuous assessment between Addis Ababa University and Unity College University. *Academic Journal*, 8 (16), 1461-1469. doi: 10.5897/ERR08.132
- Birello, M. (2012). Teacher cognition and language teacher education: Beliefs and practice: A conversation with Simon Borg. *Bellaterra Journal of Teaching & Learning Language & Literature*, 5(2), 88-94
- Black, P., Harrison, C., Lee, C., Marshal, B., & Wilson, D. (2004). Working in the black box: Assessment for learning in the classroom. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 86(1), 8-21. Retrieved from: http://www.datause.cse.ucla.edu/DOCS/pb_celar_2004pdf
- Bliem, C. L., & Davinsroy, K. H. (1997). Teachers' beliefs about assessment and instruction in literacy (CSE Report 421). Retrieved from University of Colorado at Boulder, National center for research evaluation, standards, and student test. Web site <http://www.cse.uda.edu/products/Reports//TECH421.pdf>
- Borg, M. (2001). Teachers' beliefs. *ELT Journal*, 55 (2), 186-188. Retrieved from <http://www.elt.oxfordjournals.org/content/55/2/full.pdf>
- Borg, S. (2003). Teacher cognition language teaching: Review of research on what language teachers think, know, belief, and do. *Language Teaching*, 36 (2), 81-109. doi:10.1017/S0261444803001903

- Brown, H. D. (2004). *Language assessment: principles and classroom practice*. New York: Pearson.
- Buyukkarci, K. (2014). Assessment beliefs and practice of language teachers in primary education. *International Journal of Instruction*, 7 (1),107-120. Retrieved from <http://www.e-iji.net>
- Cain, M. (2012). Beliefs about classroom assessment: A study of primary school teacher in Trinidad and Tobago. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, 2(3) Retrieved from <http://ijhssnet.com>
- Cohen, B. H. & Lea, R. B. (2004). *Essentials of statistics for the social and behavioral sciences*. USA: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
- Denscombe, M. (2003). *The good research guide: for small-scale social research projects* Maidenhead: Open University Press.
- Dornyei, Z. (2010). *Questionnaire in second language research (2nd Ed.)*: Construction, administration, and processing. New ork: Rout ledge.
- Ertmer, P. (2005). Teacher pedagogical beliefs: The final frontier in our quest for integration. *ETR&D*, 53 (4), 25-39. Retrieved from <http://www.blog.lib.umn.edu/ced/terj/ertmer=2005.pdf>
- FDRGE (1994). *Education and training policy*. Addis Ababa: St. George Printing Press. Garrison, C. & Ehringhaus, M. (2013). Formative and summative assessments. Retrieved from http://www.amle.org/portals/o/pdf/article/Formative_AssessmentArticle
- Harris, L. R. & Brown, G. L. (2010). Mixing interview and questionnaire methods: Practical problems in aligning data. *Practical assessment research and evaluation*, 5(1). Pare online. <http://www.net/getch/asp?/v=15n=1>
- ICDR (1999). *Teacher education handbook*. Addis Ababa: MOE.
- Kampambwe, W. M. (2010). The implementation of school-based continuous assessment in Zambia. *Academic Journal*, 5(3), 099-107
- Kothari, C. R. (2004). *Research methodology: Methods and techniques (2nd ed.)*. New Delhi: New Age International Publications.

- Kellaghan, T, &Greaney, T. (2003). *Monitoring performance: Assessment &examination in Africa*: ADEA.
- Kuzborska, I. (2011). Links between teachers' beliefs and practices and research on reading. *Reading in Foreign Language*, 23(1), 102-128.Retrieved from <http://www.nflrc.hawaii.edu/rfl>
- MOE (2002).The education and training policy and implementation. Addis Ababa: MOE.Mohammed, N. (2006). *An exploratory study of the interplay between teachers' Beliefs, Instructional practices and professional development (Doctoral Dissertation)*. University of Auckland, Maldives.
- Muijs, D. (2004). *Doing quantitative research in education with SPSS*. New Delhi: Sage Publications.
- NIED (1999).Towards improving continuous assessment in schools: A policy and information guide. Okahandj: Ministry of Basic Education and Culture.
- OCED (2005). Policy briefs. Retrieved from <http://www.oecd.org/publications/policybriefs>
- Parawat, R. S. (1992). Teachers' beliefs about teaching and learning. A constructivist perspectives. *American Journal of Education*, 100 (3), 354-395. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1085493>
- Parker, S. (2011).Sampling VS census: A comparative analysis. Retrieved from <http://www.tensemployeeinsights.com>.
- Pedersen, S. (2003).Teachers' beliefs about issues in the implementation of a student-centered learning environment.*ETR& D*, 51 (2), 57-76
- Plessis, J. D., Prouty, D., Schubert, J., Habib, M. & St. George, E. (2003). Continuous assessment: a practical guide for teachers. Retrieved from <http://www.equip123.net/equip1/masa/docs/CAPracticalGuide-Teacherpdf>
- Rea-Dinkins, p. (2004).Understanding teachers as agents of assessment. *Language Testing*, 21, 249-258
- Richards, J. C. (2005). *Professional development for language teachers: Strategies for teacher learning*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Rous, B. &Townley, K. (2006). *Building a strong foundation for schools success*:

- Kentucky's early childhood continuous assessment guide. Frank fort, Kentucky Department of English.
- Saad, M. R., Sardareh, S. A., Habib, M., & Ambarrwati, E. (2013). Iranian Secondary School EFL teachers' assessment beliefs and roles. *Life Science Journal*, 10(3), 1638-1647. Retrieved from <http://www.lifesciencesite.com>
- Scalise, K. & Wilson, M. (2006). Assessment to improve learning in higher education: The bear assessment system. *Higher education*, 52, 635-668. doi:10.1007/s10734-004-7263-y
- Scanlan, C. L. (2012). Assessment, evaluation, testing and grading. Retrieved from <http://www.umdj.edu/idsweb/idst5350/assess. eva.ltestgrade.html>
- Shepard, L. A. (2000). The role of classroom assessment in teaching and learning (CSE Report 517). Retrieved from University of Colorado at Boulder, Center for the study of evaluation. Web site <http://www.cse.uda.edu/products/reports/TECH517.pdf>
- Shohamy, E., Inbar-Lourie, Q., & Poelner, M. E. (2008). Investigating assessment: Perception and practices in the advanced foreign language classroom (Report No.1108). University of park PA: Centre for Advanced Language Proficiency. Web site http://www.calper.la.psu.edu/docs/pdfs/studiesreports/CALPER_Ass
- Stiggins, R. (2007). Assessment through the student's eyes. *Educational Leadership*, 64(8), 22-26. Retrieved from <http://www.ets.org./ati>.
- Stiggins, R. (2008). Assessment manifesto: A call for the development of balanced assessment system. Portland: ETS Assessment Training Institute.
- Stiggins, R. J., Arter, J. A., Chappuis, J., & Chappuis, S. (2007). *Classroom assessment for learning: Doing it right-using it well*. Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Pearson Education Inc.
- Sze, P. (1999). Reflective teaching in second language teacher education. *Educational Research Journal*, 14(1), 131-155. Retrieved from http://hikier.cuhk.edu.hk/journals/wpcontent/uploads/2010/06/erj_v14n1-131-155.pdf

- Tatto, M. & Coupland, D. B. (2003). *Teacher education and teachers' beliefs: Theoretical and measurement concerns*. Information Age Publishing.
- Uysal, H. H. & Bardaki, G. (2014). Teachers' beliefs and practice of grammar teaching focusing on meaning, form, or forms? *South African Journal of Education*, 34(1), 1-16. Retrieved from <http://www.sajournalofeducation.co.za>
- Westwood, P. (2008). *What teachers need to know about teaching methods*. Camberwell, Vic.: ACER Press.
- William, D. (2013). Assessment: The bridge between teaching and learning. *Voice from the Middle*, 21(2), 15-20
- Wilson, S. M. & Peterson, P. L. (2006). *Theories of learning and teaching: What they mean for teachers?* Washington, DC: National Educational Association.

Appendix A

1. Questionnaire

Questionnaire for English Language Teachers: Grades 11 and 12

Dear Teacher, This questionnaire is intended for research purpose to collect data on English language teachers' beliefs about continuous assessment and their actual use of continuous assessment in their classrooms. In other words, the purpose of the study is to investigate English language teachers' beliefs and practice of using continuous assessment in their classrooms. Therefore, your responses are essential for the success of this study. The researcher would like to assure you that the responses you provide will be treated confidentially and used for the study purpose only. Please, respond to each question genuinely. Thank you very much.

Direction I: The following statements are related to individual teacher's beliefs about continuous assessment and their actual use of it. There are options ranging from 'strongly disagree' to 'strongly agree'. Please, indicate your response with a cross (X) marking in the appropriate box.

Options: Strongly disagree = 1; Disagree = 2, Undecided = 3, Agree = 4, Strongly agree = 5

No.	Statements	1	2	3	4	5
1	Continuous assessment (CA) can be applied in English as a foreign language (EFL) classrooms.					
2	CA is essential to assess EFL students' learning in listening, speaking, reading, writing, vocabulary and grammar.					
3	Ongoing performance assessment enhances student learning					
4	CA helps all learners succeed in the school.					
5	CA helps learners see their progress.					
6	Continuous classroom observation helps teachers know their students' needs.					
7	CA enables teachers to discover learners' learning					

	difficulties.					
8	CA enables lower performing students get Proper attention from their teachers.					
9	CA is more helpful than traditional assessment to achieve the desired learning objectives of the target language					
10	Ongoing oral feedback provides opportunities for students to see how well they are doing at school					
11	Students take a great responsibility of their learning when they are given ongoing written feedback timely					
12	When students assess their classmates' learning periodically, they learn more about the topic they are assessing					
13	When students assess their own learning periodically, they feel a sense of ownership of their learning					
14	CA helps teachers look for new ways of teaching					
15	CA increases teacher-students interaction					
16	Practically; I have used classroom observation to assess my students learning					
17	In practice, I have allowed my students to assess their own learning					
18	In practice, I have kept ongoing non-numerical record of every individual students' learning performance					
19	I have allowed my students to assess their					

	classmates' learning					
20	I have given oral feedback on students' work					
21	I have given written description on students' written work					
22	Practically, I have used portfolio assessment (of the learners')					
23	Practically, I have used end of unit(s) tests					
24	I have interviewed students to assess their communicative skills					
25	To assess my students' learning, I have used oral questions during the lesson presentation					
26	To assess my students' learning, I have used report writing tasks					
27	I have used oral presentation to assess my students' learning					
28	I have given group work writing assignment to assess students' learning					
29	I have used group discussion to assess my students' learning					

30	While assessing my students' learning, I have made students debate on certain issues					
31	I have used essay writing to assess my students' learning					

Direction II: The following assessment tools (techniques) can be used in language classrooms. From your experience, how frequently have you used the tools during a semester? Indicate your response by using an 'X' in the appropriate box.

No	Assessment Tools	Never	1-2	3-4	5-6	7 and More
32	End-of unit(s) tests					
33	Group work (writing) assignment					
34	Short tests (quizzes)					
35	Report writing					
36	Essay writing					
37	Project					
38	Debates					
39	Oral presentation					
40	Observation –by asking questions without recording students' performance					
41	Observation—by recording learners' Performance					
42	Students participation					
43	Teacher-students interview					
44	Group discussion					

45	Exam (teacher-made)					
46	Portfolio assessment					

47. Could you list some other assessment tools you have used? Please, indicate how many times you have used during a semester?

A. _____ C. _____

B. _____

Direction III: Respond to the following questions by putting a cross(X) in the appropriate box and writing your answers wherever necessary. There is no right or wrong answer to each question. Please answer them based on your belief and experience. Thank you.

48. Have you ever taken any on-the-job training on continuous assessment at your work environment?

A. Yes B. No

49. If your answer to question '48' is 'yes', on which of the following topic have you taken the training? (Your answer can be one or more, and write if there is any)

A. Importance of continuous assessment (CA)

B. Ways of implementing CA

C. How to record CA marks D. Others _____

3. Do you assess your students' learning by using continuous assessment?

A. Yes B. No

50. If yes, how? _____

51. If no, why not? _____

52. What does continuous assessment mean to you?

Background Information

1. Sex: Male Female
2. Experience in years _____
3. Qualification: B. A. /B. ED. M. A. Other _____

Questionnaire for Grade 11 and 12 Students

The purpose of this questionnaire is to collect data on English language teachers' actual use of continuous assessment in their classrooms.

Dear student, the questions and statements below are related to the practice of continuous assessment in your English language classrooms. The researcher hopes that you will respond to each question kindly and honestly. Thank you.

Direction I: Please, indicate your response by using a cross (X) in the appropriate box.

Background information

1. Sex: Male Female
2. Grade Level: 11th 12th

Direction II: There are 5 options ranging from 'strongly disagree' to 'strongly agree'. Please, indicate your response by using a cross (X) in the appropriate box.

Options: Strongly disagree = 1, Disagree = 2, Undecided = 3, Agree = 4, Strongly agree = 5

No	My English teacher:	1	2	3	4	5
1	has assessed, checked, how well the students are improving their English					
2	has assessed students' learning by asking questions orally during the lesson presentation					
3	has assessed students' learning by giving tests at the end of unit(s)					
4	has observed students' language learning by moving round the class					

5	has assessed students' learning by making individual student talk about a given topic in front of the class					
6	has allowed students to assess their classmates' learning by looking at their class work, homework or by being a judge or chair person of students' presentation					
7	has allowed students to identify their own strength and weakness					
8	has interviewed students (individual or group of students) to assess their communicative skills					
9	has assessed students learning by making them write an essay					
10	has assessed students' learning by making them write a report					
11	has assessed students' learning by giving tests just before the end of each unit					
12	has assessed students' learning by making group of students discuss a given topic (group discussion)					
13	has assessed students' learning by making them debate on a given topic					
14	has assessed students' learning by making them keep their own learning portfolio					

Direction III: Respond to the questions below by circling the letter of your answers.

15. Does your English teacher comment on your oral learning activities (e. g., when

you answer questions orally)? (circle one answer only) A. Yes B. No, never

16. If your answer to question '15' is 'A/Yes', which of the following words or phrases

your teacher used when you or your partners answer your teacher's questions orally?(circle the letter of your answer(s); your answer can be one or more)

- A. Good, good/nice work
- B. Well done
- C. That is a good idea. You...
- D. Good. Can you give me an example/can you be more specific...?
- E. Thank you/thanks
- G. Not correct/wrong
- H. Excellent

Please, write here some other words or phrases that your English teacher used when he or she commented on your oral work: _____

17. Does your English teacher check your written work to assess your learning (e.g., by checking your class work writing exercises, home-take writing exercises, etc)?

- A. Yes
- B. No, never

18. If your answer to question '17' is 'A/Yes', which of the following words or phrases

your English teacher used when he or she commented your written work?(You can circle one or more answers)

- A. Good, good/nice work
- C. I think it would make even better if you...
- B. By using a tick (✓) symbol for correct answers and/or an 'X' for wrong
- D. I really

liked reading your writing for you have... E. Good, but it needs improvement...

Please, write here some other words or phrases that your English teacher used when he or she commented on your written work:

Thank you.

Appendix B

Interview

The purpose of this interview is to collect data on English language teachers' beliefs about continuous assessment and their actual use of continuous assessment in their classrooms.

Respected teacher, I would like to thank you first for your cooperation. As I am going to record your responses using a video-recorder, you have the right to ask me to stop recording whenever there is something that you don't want to be recorded. Besides, I want to assure you that the information you provide will be confidential.

Respected teacher,

1. Do you assess your students' learning by using CA? If 'yes', go to 2 and then 3-9. If 'no', go to 3 and then 11-14.
2. How do you assess continuously?
3. What does continuous assessment mean to you?
4. Do you think continuous assessment improves the teaching learning process?
5. What do you think is the advantage of continuous assessment when compared to final exam?
6. When your students do learning tasks (during classroom learning), for instance, a reading story tasks that require students to identify the plot, the major characters, the setting, etc., how do you check whether your students have mastered these particular skills or not?
7. Are there any criteria that you use to determine your students' understanding in terms of these particular skills?
8. What percentage is continuous assessment marks per a term when compared to final exam?
9. What are some of the factors that affect the use of continuous assessment in your classrooms?
10. Why not?
11. What does continuous assessment mean to you?

12. Do you think your present techniques are more helpful than continuous assessment?

13. How do you see your students' understanding of your lesson?

14. What are major problems you have come across while assessing your students?

Thank you.

Appendix C

3. Document Analysis

I. Document Analysis

1. Daily Lesson Plan

Aim: To collect data relevant to answer question 'To what extent do teachers assess students' learning on a regular basis?' and to check whether or not what teachers believe go with their daily activities.

Inclusion of Assessment Activities

1. How does the teacher plan to assess student's learning?
2. How often does the teacher include some model questions (If there is any)? In which phase of his or her lesson?
3. What other types of assessment techniques does he or she plan to use?
How frequently?
4. What does the teacher's lesson objective look like?

2. Assessment Record List or Sheet

Aim: To collect data on the practicality CA.

I. How does teacher record students' learning performance?

1. What are the main elements of this assessment record list?
2. How many times did he or she assess?
3. What percentage is CA marks per a term?
4. What assessment tools has he or she used?

Appendix D

4. Lesson Observation

Lesson Observation Checklist

Aim: To identify the degree of teachers' practices of using CA in their classroom.

To supplement data in the questionnaire

I. How does the teacher assess students' learning

1. Does he or she check homework, class work, etc)
2. Does he or she ask questions?
3. Does he or she record students' learning performance?
4. How does the teacher provide feedback on students' work?
5. Does he or she allow students to assess their own learning?
6. Does he or she invite students to ask for clarification?

Respondents' (teachers) Response to Questionnaire Items

Teachers' Response to How Frequently They Used Assessment Tools (N = 21)

Assessment Tools	Never	1-2	3-4	5-6	7 and more
Observation--- by recording students' performance	15 (71.4)	5 (23.8)	1 (4.8)	---	----
Observation - by asking questions without recording students' performance	-----	-----	-----	1 (4.8)	20 (95.2)
Students' participation	3 (14.3)	11 (52.4)	7 (33.3)	-----	-----
End of unit(s) tests	-----	-----	6 (28.6)	14 (66.7)	1 (4.8)
Short tests (quizzes)	-----	6 (28.6)	10 (47.6)	5 (23.8)	-----

Exam (teacher-made)	-----	21 (100)	-----	-----	-----
Essay writing	4 (19.0)	13 (61.9)	4 (19.0)	-----	-----
Oral presentation	4 (19.0)	12 (57.1)	5 (23.8)	-----	----- -
Report writing	13 (61.9)	8 (38.1)	-----	-----	-----
Project work	14 (66.7)	4 (19.0)	3 (14.3)	-----	----- -
Group work (writing)	2 (9.5)	15 (71.4)	3 (14.3)	1 (4.8)	
Debate	14 (66.7)	6 (28.6)	1 (4.8)	-----	----- -
Portfolio assessment	19 (90.5)	2 (9.5)	-----	-----	----- -
Teacher-student interview	18 (85.7)	3 (14.3)	-----	-----	----- -
Group discussion	3 (14.3)	16 (76.2)	2 (9.5)	-----	-----
Others		12 (57.1)	1 (4.8)	-----	----- -



This work is licensed under a
Creative Commons
Attribution – NonCommercial - NoDerivs 3.0 License.

To view a copy of the license please see:
<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/3.0/>

This is a download from the BLDS Digital Library on OpenDocs
<http://opendocs.ids.ac.uk/opendocs/>