

JIMMA UNIVERSITY



COLLEGE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

**EFL TEACHERS' IMPLEMENTATION OF CONTINUOUS ASSESSMENT AND
LEARNERS' REACTIONS TO TEACHERS' PRACTICE: KAFA ZONE SECONDARY
SCHOOLS IN FOCUS**

BY

ADUGNA G/MICHAEL

**A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND
LITERATURE IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE
DEGREE OF MASTERS OF ARTS (TEFL)**

AUGUST, 2021

JIMMA, ETHIOPIA

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A THESIS SUBMITTED TO

THE DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE

OF MASTERS OF ARTS

IN TEACHING ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE (TEFL)

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JIMMA, ETHIOPIA

Acknowledgments

I would like to express my thanks to my advisor, Aberash Tibebu (PhD) as without her comment and guidance, the completion of this work may not have been possible. I am indebted to her for all her support and willingness to advise me to finalize this thesis.

I am also grateful to thank my co-advisor Tesfaye Gebeyehu (associate professor) for his constructive support to complete this research paper.

Special appreciation should also go to my brother Tesfaye G/michael and my sisters Tigist and Rahel G/michael for they are heart fully with me with their unlimited support during my study.

I would like to express my heart-felt thanks and appreciation to my wife, Almaz Bezabih, who always wishes for my success, through her everyday prayers and hard work.

I would also thank my friends for their genuine assistance, moral support and encouragement during my graduate study.

Abstract

The Purpose of this study was to investigate the EFL teachers' implementation of continuous assessment and learners' reaction to teachers' practices in Kaffa zone in the selected secondary schools. For this study, mixed method and descriptive survey research design was employed. Both quantitative and qualitative data were gathered through questionnaire, interviews and documents. Simple random and purposive sampling techniques were used to select the samples. Of the total sample size of the two study groups, 33 (94.2%) teachers and 249(89.89%) students filled in and returned the questionnaire. In addition, six schools' English language department heads were interviewed. The students' mark list and the data in continuous assessment papers were also analyzed to triangulate the effectiveness of the study. The collected data were analyzed using frequencies, percentages and words. The findings of the study indicated that the majority of the teachers had some awareness gaps about the principles, methods and techniques of continuous assessment in that they concentrated on summative components of assessment. The findings of the study from the students' response also show that English language teachers didn't implement a variety of continuous assessment techniques. Thus, the practice of continuous assessment was inadequate. Moreover, it was found that the majority of the teachers considered continuous assessment as continuous testing activities to measure students' performance. In addition, the majority of the teachers considered continuous assessment as tiresome and time consuming. Regarding feedback, the majority of the teachers (71%) did not provide timely feedback for the continuous assessment techniques. Students' basic skills were not continuously assessed. It was also found that national holidays and different meetings were the obstacles not to cover contents and this was one of the challenges of CA. There were some differences among schools in practicing continuous assessment from planning up to implementation. Thus, to improve the situation, it was recommended that the school administration should prepare manuals and guidelines to create the awareness of language teachers and students. Conducting training and different workshop with those concerned bodies is more advisable to increase the understanding of teachers in the area. Further research could be conducted especially to assess as to how basic skills such as listening, speaking and writing continuously in other woredas.

Key Words: continuous assessment, students, teachers

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ACRONYMS

CA: Continuous Assessment

TDP: Teacher Development Program

MoE: Ministry of Education

SNNPRG: Sothom, Nation, Nationalities and Peoples' Regional Government

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

This chapter highlights the background of the study, problem of the study, purpose of the study, research objectives and research questions. The scope of the study and significance of the study are also explained in this chapter.

1.1 Background of the Study

The Jomtien Declaration in Thailand about Education for All (1990) required definitions targets for quality improvement and it specified a need to assess students' achievement (Kellagan, 2003). This is why the White Paper (1992) on the Education for National Integration and Development recommended that schools should maintain a cumulative record card on continuous internal assessment including class performance. Since then, teachers have continued to carry out continuous assessment in secondary schools without waiting until the end of each term or year.

The Ethiopian Education and Training Policy proclamation (MOE, 1994) states that continuous assessment in academic and practical subjects should be conducted to ascertain the information of all rounded profile of students at all levels. As a result of this policy, secondary school students are supposed to be assessed using continuous assessment procedure. Furthermore, the revised national education & training strategy stated that assessment is the very important part of education in secondary schools as it ensures that the quality of education is reflected in real and practical skills (MOE, 2010).

The benefits of assessing students continuously and using different strategies rather than giving explanation is further stated by Mulu (2005), as a onetime final examination or test does not bring a complete or true picture of students' performance including the higher order thinking skills. Therefore, it is very important to assess learners regularly and continuously to prove their achievement and performance in different aspects of their learning instead of simply giving tests and examination, which cannot assess the entire complex learning outcomes.

Nowadays, scholars believe that students can learn best and become effective if continuous assessment is effectively implemented in the teaching learning process. That is why advanced

nations such as England, Spain, Australia and others are applying continuous assessment partially or wholly in their education system (Heaton, 1990).

Similarly, the Ethiopian Education and Training Policy(1994:9) states that “Continuous assessment in academic practical subjects including aptitude tests will be conducted to ascertain the formation of all rounded profile of students at all level.” Thus, the Ethiopian teachers’ education system, there have been continual changes in the curriculum and teachers’ profile since the 1994 education reform of the country. At present, the teacher education program is guided by the TDP (Teacher Development Program) document which is guided by a new view of education that promotes continuous assessment (ICDR, 1999). The document also states that in the teacher education, traditional way of assessing students like giving only final exams has to be replaced by continuous assessment that develops and inculcates higher order thinking skills at different levels of the education system, which is a paradigm shift.

Greaney (2001) defines assessment as any procedure or activity that is designed to collect information about the knowledge, attitude, or skills of the learner or group of learners. Assessment is therefore a process through which the quality of an individual’s work or performance is judged. When carried out as an on-going process, assessment is known as Continuous Assessment (CA). CA is a formative evaluation procedure concerned with finding out, in a systematic manner, the over-all gains that a student has made in terms of knowledge, attitudes and skills after a given set of learning experience (Ogunnyi, 1984). According to Aggarwal (1999), CA is not simply continuous testing. Continuous assessment does not solely depend on formal tests. CA is more than giving a test; it involves every decision made by the teacher in class to improve students’ achievement. CA may take different forms such as formal questions given to students during class, take-home assignments/exercises and recapitulation exercises.

Assessment is either internal or external. Internal assessment refers to school-based assessment, which includes class assignments, teacher-made tests, recap exercises, projects, field studies and all these tools form part of the classroom continuous assessment strategies. A continuous assessment strategy refers to the different tools/procedures used in the classroom to understand the academic achievement levels of learners in terms of their knowledge, attitudes and values.

Also a strategy in assessment is a purposefully conceived and determined plan of action. It is a pattern of assessment that seems to attain certain outcomes and to guard against others (Aggarwal, 1999). External assessment refers to tests that are produced by examining bodies away from school.

So, the researcher planned to assess EFL teachers' implementation of continuous assessment and learners' reaction to teachers' practices in the selected woredas of the secondary schools in Kaffa zone, in order to shape the learning.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The urgent need to promote learning and improve continuous assessment implementation and performance in secondary schools of selected Kaffa zone, S/N/NP/R/G, Ethiopia resulted into a range of related but different developments in continuous assessment at classroom levels. The resultant feature has been inconsistent assessment implementation and performance of students in secondary schools of selected Kaffa Zone, performance still varied from school to school. In this study the researcher wanted to identify some of the problems in assessing and evaluating students in secondary schools. The researcher also felt that the present systems of evaluation in secondary schools of Kaffa Zone were inadequate.

A research was conducted in Nigeria and Owolabia and Onuka(n.d) found that the challenges of using CA in Nigerian schools were students' inadequate preparation for assessments, teachers' poor test administration procedures, poor handling of scores and feedback, poor coverage of instructional contents by test contents, large classes, and lack of knowledge and skills of the appropriate evaluation techniques. Obioma (1984), stated that teachers in primary and junior secondary schools in Nigeria lacked knowledge of CA, and instead gave continuous tests.

In Ethiopia Meba (2008), conducted a research on CA and found that teacher educators and student teachers in Debrebirhan Teacher Education and Vocational Training College had a positive attitude towards continuous assessment; however, they did not apply it in oral assessment. The causes stated in Meba's finding assumed to be students' low level of English, the influence of the traditional assessment system and lack of assessment policy in the college.

Tebeje (2009), in his finding on CA reported that instructors and students in Dilla University had inadequate knowledge of CA. He also stated that instructors consider CA as an extra work load, which might be interpreted as a negative attitude towards CA.

Accordingly, few studies have been conducted on continuous assessment at colleges and high school levels. Birhanu (2004) conducted a research on teachers' assessment of student performance with an emphasis on continuous assessment at high school level. Besides, Desalegn (2001) carried out an evaluative research on the adequacy of the syllabus of teachers training institutes in preparing trainees to implement continuous assessment in the first cycle primary school. Moreover, Selamneh (2011) conducted a research on practice and challenges of continuous assessment for instructional improvement at college level. However, less attention has been given to EFL teachers' practices of continuous assessment and challenges they face in Kaffa Zone secondary schools.

In the above studies, the attitude of teachers and students, their perception and practice were studied. Especially, the studies conducted in Ethiopia focused on higher education teachers and students. In addition to this, most of the above studies were conducted in relation to continuous assessment in general not in a particular subject English.

Besides from the personal experiences of the researcher, teachers seemed to have the awareness gaps and clear understanding of the concept of continuous assessment. A teacher for instance, might interpret continuous assessment as continuous testing. This wrong conceptualization of the term will even affect the need to employ variety of techniques to assess learners' progress. It is worthwhile, therefore, on the part of the investigator to look into the EFL teachers' implementation of continuous assessment and challenges they faced in the selected secondary schools of Kaffa Zone.

Assessing students continuously in the teaching learning process has a lot of benefits. It can expose learners to experience creative reflections through which the teacher probes their understanding to elicit answers for the questions he or she poses. Concerning this, Elington and Early (1997) said that continuous assessment is carried out on an ongoing basis while students are actually working their way through a course. Similarly, Farant(1980) states that continuous

assessment is practiced on continuous basis to judge the quality of individual's work or performance.

Considering this, the researcher attempted to investigate EFL teachers' implementation of continuous assessment and learners' reaction to teachers' practices in the selected secondary schools of Kaffa zone.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The study had general and specific objectives.

1.3.1 General Objective of the Study

The general objective of the study was to investigate EFL teachers' implementation of continuous assessment and learners' reaction to teachers' practice in the selected secondary schools of Kaffa Zone.

1.3.2 Specific objectives of the Study

The specific objectives of this study were:

1. To identify EFL teachers' awareness of the implementation of continuous assessment.
2. To identify the methods and techniques that English language teachers employ to assess students' language skills.
3. To identify the purposes of continuous assessment given in the schools.
4. To find out the major challenges encountered in the proper implementation of continuous assessment in English classroom.

1.4 Research questions

Based on the problem stated and the objective outlined, this particular study tried to answer the following basic research questions.

1. To what extent EFL teachers are aware of principles of continuous assessment?
2. How do they implement CA in their classroom?
3. How do learners respond to EFL teachers' practices of continuous assessment?
4. What the challenges do EFL teachers face when implementing continuous assessment?

1.5 Significance of the study

In order to implement continuous assessment effectively and bring quality of education, English language teachers must know the concept of continuous assessment, its objectives, tools and techniques which should be used and how to make the right decision. In this study, such issues and other related ideas were discussed in order to give some hints to English language teachers. So, through this study English language teachers will get important ideas to look back on their practice and make corrections during the process of implementing continuous assessment.

Furthermore, it suggests alternative solutions to be used by teachers, students and principals to minimize the problems in the implementation of continuous assessment. Finally, the study could be used as an additional source of information for further studies.

1.6 Delimitation of the study

Conceptually the study focused on investigating EFL teachers' implementation of continuous assessment and learners' reaction to teachers' practice in Kaffa zone, three woredas namely: Chena, Shisho Ende, Bita and Wacha Administrative town there by to suggest better methods to implement it effectively with particular focus on grade nine. It was planned that the study was conducted by selecting students from six secondary schools in the academic year 2021 through simple random sampling. Based on this 277 learners were selected from the total population of 5561. 35 EFL teachers were also taken directly by purposive sampling technique. Contextually, the study was carried out with in Chena, Shisho Ende, Bita Woredas and Wacha Administrative town, Kaffa zone, SNNPR.

1.7 Limitations of the study

Different limitations hindered the progress of this research, for instance; unwillingness of a few respondents to fill in the questionnaire and return back on time, others continued to postpone the interview. This slowed down the process of data collection. However, the researcher appointed the respondents frequently and shown the commitment to complete this study successfully.

CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1. Definition of continuous assessment

Continuous assessment is a kind of assessment which involves multiple ways and formats to collect information about the students' progress in the teaching learning process.

O'Malley and Pierce (1996) state that the term authentic assessment is used to describe a variety of assessment form that reflect students' learning process, achievement and attitudes in classroom. Kellaghan and Greancy(2001) state that the term assessment in educational setting refers to any procedure or activity that is designed to collect information about the knowledge, attitudes, or skills of learner or group of learners.

Continuous assessment is a process of collecting and interpreting information to make decisions about learners based on what they know and can demonstrate in classroom instructions (Copper, 1996). From the above definition we can understand that continuous assessment is a process which is used to collect information about students' performance with regard to all learning outcomes made during the teaching learning process. In this definition we can see two main points:

- Continuous assessment is a tool which is used to collect information about the students.
- It involves interpretation of information to make decisions about the students.

Nowadays, a great emphasis is given to continuous assessment in schools. This repeated emphasis being given to continuous assessment is an evidence of its importance. Continuous assessment is regarded as a method of ascertaining what students gain from schooling in terms of knowledge, skill and character development, taking in to account all his or her performance in tests, assignments, projects and other educational activities during a given period of term, year or during the entire period of an educational level (Onuka, 2005,2006). It is also a method of using the recorded performance of each student to help him or her improve on his or her achievement through guidance. In other words, continuous assessment should be systematic, comprehensive and cumulative and guidance oriented. From the above definition of continuous assessment, we can look four main ideas:

- Continuous assessment is **systematic** in that it is done by planning and grading according to the age and experience of students and is given with intervals during the school year.
- Continuous assessment is **comprehensive** in that its focus is not only on academic skills. It embraces the cognitive, psychomotor and the affective domains. Students are assessed as a total entity using all the psychometric devices such as tests and non-test techniques.
- Continuous assessment is **cumulative** in that all the information collected about the students has to be pooled together before decisions are made.
- Continuous assessment is **guidance oriented** in that the information collected is to be used for educational, vocational and personal- social decision making for the students.
- Conceptually and as well as in practice, CA provides feedback to students and teachers. Such feedback provides information for the purpose of improving the students' performance or modifying the content, context and methods of teaching, as well as in making a variety of other decisions.

According to Chilora, et al (2003) Plessis, et al (2003) in Desalegn (2004, P.2) state it “ Continuous assessment refers to making observation periodically to find out what a student knows, understands and can do.”

Airasian(1997) on his side cited Continuous assessment is the process of collecting, synthesizing and interpreting information to aid in decision making. Assessment involves much more than scoring and grading than paper and pencil tests.

As MoE of Zambia (2005) cited in Kapambwe, (2010,99-107) “ Continuous assessment is defined as an on-going, diagnostic, classroom – based process that uses a variety of assessment tools to measure students' performance.” In addition, Airasian (1991) cited in Alausa(1999) describes continuous assessment as “ An assessment approach which should depict the full range of sources and methods teachers use to gather, interpret and synthesis information about learners, information that is used to help teachers to understand their learners, plan and monitor instruction and establish a favorable classroom culture.”

2.2 Principles of Language Assessment

Introduction

Basically, assessment is a means by which teachers are able to evaluate students' language progress and abilities. To do this, teachers make use of a variety of assessment methods to elicit data on student learning and achievements. Collecting these data, teachers analyze and interpret them so as to make decision about students' achievement or non-achievement (that is, pass or fail, or competent or yet not competent). Or based on the findings, teachers may improve students' learning (addressing problems, revising instruction, supporting students to develop the skills expected).

The assessment results may also be required for different purposes by other parties, such as students themselves, parents, employers, training institutions or/and society in general. These parties want to ascertain the credibility of assessment results that can be "assured through assessment procedures and practices that are guided by certain principles." (Geysler, 2004, p. 92)

This unit primarily focuses on principles of language assessment and on how these principles can be applied to assessments of all types. Among many, the basic principles of language assessment to be discussed in details in this unit include: practicality, reliability, validity, authenticity, and wash back.

Principles of assessments

Principles are used to design effective tests and can be applied in all kinds of assessments during construction, administration and scoring. Principles are many in numbers. For instance, Geysler (2004, pp.92-99) identified 13 principles that can apply to a variety of assessments. These include:

- Assessment as an integral part of learning that should focus on deep, active learning and involve high order of cognitive skills.
- Assessment as an integral part of program and module design.
- Assessment purpose determines the assessment methods and techniques
- Identify and apply relevant assessment criteria
- Assessment processes should be reliable
- Assessment task should be valid

- Assessment should be transparent
- Assessment should be fair
- Assessment should be practical
- Assessment workload should be realistic
- Assessment should include a wide range of approaches and methods
- Assessment should provide feedback to support the learning process
- Assessment should be integral to quality assurance procedures

In relation to identification of various principles of assessment, Brown (2004) came up with only five major principles: practicality, reliability, validity, authenticity and washback. Bachman and Palmer (1996, p.38) proposed six test qualities. These are reliability, construct validity, authenticity, interactiveness, impact, and practicality, which are used to assess the effectiveness of a test. In this section of the module, the five major principles or qualities which are identified by Brown will be discussed in details.

Practicality

This refers to the realization of assessment tasks. That is, can the assessment tasks be achievable in terms of expense, time, administration, and evaluation procedures? If a test demands much time (i.e., five or more hours), it cannot achieve its objective, for the test takers may get bored. If a test is excessively expensive, it cannot be practical, for the test takers may not afford that (e.g. proficiency test). Again in relation to administration, unless the people who will be involved in the test process (such as, interviewers, raters, scorers, computer operators, and invigilators) are trained and adequate in number in proportion to the number of examinees and unless the resources available do not consider the number of the examinees, unless the test is easy to administer, it may be impractical. The test also requires a scoring/ evaluation procedure that is specific and time-efficient.

Reliability

It refers to the measurement of consistency and dependability for an assessment tool. For instance, we say a particular assessment method is reliable if that method is consistently yielding the same or similar scores, when it is administered twice to the same students at different times in similar circumstances.

Validity

Validity refers to a means of checking a test whether it measures the intended learning outcomes or “what it claims, or purports, to be measuring.”(Brown, 1996, p. 231) Bachman (1990) and Brown (2004) consider validity as a very important quality of a test.

Authenticity

This is the fourth principle of language testing which has been identified by Brown (2004). It is defined by Bachman and Palmer (1996, p.23) as “the degree of correspondence of the characteristics of a given language test task to the features of a target language task.” According to Leung and Lewkowicz (2006) “Authenticity can be seen in terms of the extent to which a test or assessment task relates to the context in which it would normally be performed in real life.”(p.214)

Washback

Buck (1988, as cited in Bailey, 1996, pp.257-258) defines washback as follows:

There is a natural tendency for both teachers and students to tailor their classroom activities to the demands of the test, especially when the test is very important to the future of the students, and pass rates are used as a measure of teacher success. This influence of the test on the classroom (referred to as washback by language testers) is, of course, very his important; washback effect can be either beneficial or harmful.

2.3 Purpose of continuous assessment

In order to implement continuous assessment effectively, teachers should understand the purpose of continuous assessment. This is because, it will help those teachers who are going to implement this assessment technique to give due attention and increase their effort towards its proper implementation.

According to the perspective of measurement expertise, continuous assessment is purposely designed to improve teaching and learning for all students, not for filtering students out of educational opportunities (Pop, 1981). Continuous assessment is a dual purpose diagnostic instrument that is useful for both students and teachers. It enables students to understand the areas in which they are having difficulties and to concentrate their efforts in those areas,

meanwhile, it allows teachers to monitor the impact of the lesson on the students understanding (Desalegn, 2004). This idea is strongly supported. Teachers can modify their pedagogical strategies to include the construction of remediation activities for students who are not working at the expected grade level and creation of enrichment activities for students who are at or above the expected grade levels, hence continuous assessment supports a cycle self-evaluation and students specific activities by both students and teachers.

The other importance of continuous assessment to be considered is that it is intended to assess the curriculum as implemented in the classroom. It allows teachers to evaluate the effectiveness of their teaching strategies relative to the curriculum and to change these strategies as dictated by the need of their students (Desalegn, 2004).

According to Airasian (1997, P, 24), there are many purposes of continuous assessment; diagnosing students problems, judging students' academic performance, providing feedback to students, placing students, planning and conducting instruction, and establishing the classroom society.

Wintle and Harrison (2000, P. 8), also stated that “Assessment is at the very heart of the teaching and learning process. It helps us to evaluate our own teaching, to consider the strength and weaknesses of curriculum, to priorities our effort most productive, to diagnose difficulties with individual student and to allow us to pass on information to parents about students. Thus, assessment interacts with the curriculum, parents, the learners and the teacher.”

Dr.Lorna Earl and Katz (2008) also stated the following three purposes of assessment:

Assessment for learning: It is designed to give teachers information to modify different teaching and learning activities. It acknowledges that individual student learn in idiosyncratic ways, but it also recognizes that there are predictable patterns and path ways that many students follow. It requires careful design on the part of the teacher, so that they use the resulting information to determine not only what students know. Teachers can also use this information to streamline and target instruction and resources, and to provide feedback to students to help them advance their learning. It occurs throughout the learning process. It is interactive with teachers.

Assessment as learning: It is a process of developing and supporting meta-cognition for students. Assessment as learning focuses on the role of the students as the critical connector between assessment and learning. When students are active, engaged and critical assessors, they make sense of information, relate in to prior knowledge, and use it for new learning. This is the regulatory process in meta-cognition. It occurs when students monitor their own learning and use the feedback from this monitoring to make adjustments, adaptations, and even major changes in what they understand. It requires that teachers help students develop, practice and become comfortable with reflection, and with a critical analysis of their own learning.

Assessment of learning: It is summative in nature and is used to confirm what students know and can do, to demonstrate whether they have achieved the curriculum outcomes, and occasionally to show how they are placed in relation to others. Teachers concentrate on ensuring that they have used assessment to provide accurate and sound statements of students' proficiency, so that the recipients of the information can use the information to make reasonable and defensible decisions.

2.4 The Areas of Assessment in English Language Classroom

2.4.1 Assessing speaking skills

In present day, speaking is considered to be the essential skills of real life. Sarosdyet *al* (2006) state that Speaking belong to the out stage of language teaching process, when students are working on their language production, they are operating toward the communicative competence.

Celce-Murcia and Olshtain (2000) assume that speaking is the most difficult skills to acquire since it requires commands of both listening comprehension and speech production sub skills in unpredictable. Speaking skill is the ability to communicate to each other and involves the negotiation of the meaning between two or more persons and it is the interaction between people. Assessing speaking skills of English language learners aims to capture a student's ability to communicate for both basic communicative and academic purposes.

In addition, O'Malley and Pierce(1996) argue that speaking assessment should focus on a students' ability to interpret and convey meaning for authentic purposes in interactive context

and should assess speaking interaction and should include both accuracy and fluency, so the teachers have to use assessment activities that are as authentic as possible in educational setting by using certain activities such as using authentic language in listening and speaking activities because listening and speaking are interdependent oral language processes and need to be taught and assessed in an integrated manner; organize real –world activities e.g.: giving direction, giving opinions, also another important task which is giving students opportunities to use language in situations based on everyday life .Teacher should assess authentic language use in context ,both communicative and academic language functions, the ability to communicate meaningful, this assessment take various forms of activities such as oral interview, information gap, oral report and debates and conversation classes that are very common at advanced level , it is the best way to improve oral fluency.

In addition to that Sárosdy *et al* (2006) mention that there are great varieties of tasks that are employed to assess oral production. There are tasks that can be found at different language proficiency examinations such as reading aloud, role play, interview and discussion of topics.

O'Malley and Pierce (1996) mentioned that teachers should assess students' oral language twice at least each quarter or semester. This provides baseline data as well as information on improvement of language proficiency on a continuous basis.

2.4.2 Reading Assessment

Reading is a private complex process; it means that you are not face to face interaction. Also, reading is task reconstruction we are trying to get the meaning by the writer. Celce-Mercia and Olshtain (2000) argue that reading is the process of trying to understand a written text. The reader has to perform a number of simultaneous tasks: decode the message by recognizing the written signs, interpret the message by assigning meaning to the string of words, and finally, understand what the author's intention was. In addition, reading is producing literal comprehension. In reading comprehension, readers construct new knowledge from the interaction between texts and their own background knowledge. Any assessment requires planning and organization. O'Malley and Pierce (1996) mention that Assessment of reading must begin with the purposes of the assessment which are monitoring student progress, obtaining information not available from other sources, studying, evaluating or diagnosing reading behavior. In assessing reading skills, first teachers identify learners' needs, also teachers need to

assess both reading strategies and comprehension level of reading by identifying tasks and activities used in the class that serve for assessment, it means that teachers must provide a choice of reading selections and ensure that students are reading text, encourage them to reread the texts, and allow students to discuss what they read with the others to encourage social negotiation of meaning.

Moreover, teacher is responsible for how to collect information about the reading process taking into consideration the number of the students he teach and the time for assessment and monitoring their own learning, in order to monitor student progress in reading teacher should collect information at least twice or several time during the semester because the more collect information the better the teacher will be able to adjust the instructional goal to meet the students' need. Also teacher should provide students with feedback in systematic manner. In addition, students can assess themselves; this method helps both students and teachers become aware of students' attitudes, strengths and weaknesses in reading. It also encourages students become independent learners and it can take various formats such as checklists and question/answer. Moreover, students can also assess each other (peer assessment); teachers can ask them to rate their peers' reading comprehension and attitudes toward reading.

2.4.3 Writing Assessment

Celce-Murcia and Olshtain (2000) stated that writing is the production of the written word that results in a text but the text must be read and comprehended in order for communication to take place. Writing is production language skill that enables a language user to express ideas and communicate with each other. Writing assessment can be used for a variety of appropriate purposes which monitor what students actually do while writing and providing feedback to students on specific aspects of their writing and providing assistance to students, also it is useful primarily as means of improving teaching and learning by using multiple assessment of writing activities including written summaries and written letters.

O'Malley and Pierce (1996) mention that in assessing writing skills, first teacher should evaluate more aspects of writing which are the knowledge of the context, the procedural knowledge to organize the content and the knowledge of the convention of writing rather than grammar .Second, writing assessment should capture some of the complexity involved in writing

so that teachers can know in which aspects of writing students are having difficulty. As well as, students can assess themselves because self- assessment encourages students to think about their purposes in writing and to reflect on what and how much they are learning, also students can evaluate each other's writing through peer assessment, this involves the students in evaluation of writing of each student, it is not necessary to rate or grade everything. Each student produces but it want to ensure that students receive some form of regular feedback. Writing assessment play an important role in identifying student weakness and strengths, educational needs and determine what works most effectively for each student.

2.4.4 Assessing grammar knowledge independently

Assessing language knowledge is always reflected in the “four-basic skills”, speaking, listening, reading and writing. But considering some well-known proficiency tests erase the grammar component (Hughes, 1989, p. 141), the “structure and written expression” still remains as one part of the TOEFL tests, whose contents are similar to the section “use of English” in the First Certificate in English (FCE) in Cambridge Level Three. Wall, et al (1991, p. 214) suggest that if we want to decide the content validity, several elements need to be determined, that is, whether the tasks they are testing are the ones they intend to test; whether the sampling of tasks is adequate; and whether the level of difficulty of its components is proper.

The principles for communicative language learning guiding test construction in “structure and written expression” suggest that testees should know how to use different structures and useful expressions in language output to be effective and efficient speakers and writers, which could satisfy the original purposes of studying in North America. In FCE, testers are expected to demonstrate their knowledge on vocabulary and grammar and control of the language system¹ (First Certificate in English Handbook, 1997, p. 7). Nevertheless, the TOEFL test gives a higher requirement on vocabulary and syntax, which both belong to the grammatical knowledge, by setting an independent section as a grammar-like test.

However, it is more appropriate to say that “structure and written expression” section in the TOEFL test is more like a grammar subtest rather than a simple vocabulary test, which has been considered “an important trait in the measurement of an individual's overall performance in a language” (Rea-Dickins, 1991, p. 115). The grammar subtest here cannot be regarded as a skill subtest like listening or reading subtests, so we cannot help but wonder “What does this grammar

subtest measure? Is it a communicative test”. When we talk about the communicative competence, often we concern with “generalized abilities” (Skehan, 1991, p. 9), the abilities to express one’s meanings by using appropriate language in various contexts. In order to carry out a persuasive and rigorous assessment in the communicative test like TOEFL, we need to ensure that “the sample of communicative language ability in our tests is as representative as possible” (Weir, 1990, p. 11). Rea-Dickins (1991, p. 125) defines five factors to the “communicative” nature of a grammar test which I think two of them are quite necessary for the test: one is the contextualization of test items and the other is to put the instructions into focusing on meaning but not simply on form. Before we look at the content validity of “structure and written expression” section, some elements are needed consideration. They are mainly the format of test item to be used, the area of the content to be sampled, the number of the items in the area, and the level of item difficulty (Osterlind, 1998, p. 78). The purpose on the requirement of contextualized test items is to meet the heuristic functions of knowledge. Providing authentic material to solve problems and to develop thinking is “highly relevant to communication in the discipline or occupation concerned”. And the aim is to assess communicative proficiency in the subject concerned, not to test specific knowledge of it (Carroll, 1980, p. 38). In both part one and part two of “structure and written expression” section of TOEFL test, testees mainly focus on the selection of the appropriate form on sentence-based format, which hardly have to exchange the information during the whole process of production, although most of the topics relate with academic areas. The limited items of testing grammatical knowledge could not reflect the testees’ knowledge of grammar completely and have no practical usage to prove that the testees would be competent enough to meet the later requirements on academic learning. Moreover, the written expression part in this section seems to test the writing ability in an indirect way. However, we suspect this section could really decide whether the learners’ competence in writing could meet the later demands in academic study.

One of the remarkable features in the TOEFL test is its format of answering the questions in four answer options—multiple choices. From the aspect of scoring, it is highly reliable since all the scoring could be carried out by computers, thus easily “discriminate between high- and low-achieving students” (Ebel & Frisbie, 1991, p. 124). And it could offer more flexibility for assessing a diversity of content and psychological processes (Osterlind, 1998, p. 163). For a four-option test, students have 25% point for each choice which seems to be more complex and less

ambiguous than true-false decision item when making the correct choice. However, from the other side, not all the grammatical knowledge could be tested simply by choosing one correct answer from four choices. What's more, the distractors of the test items decide a lot on the validity of the content. The choices could not attain the effect of checking certain knowledge if the other three choices have little relation with knowledge that wanted to test or without looking at the given context, no higher order thinking skills are needed. What's more, students get credit to recognizing the wrong options through a process of elimination or simply guessing even though they still could not identify the correct option (Sax, 1997, p. 106; Ebel & Frisbie, 1991, p. 156). Moreover, the weakness of setting up easily-devised and objectively-scored tests of strings of linguistic items is that the testees may miss the essence of the measurement of communicative performance (Carroll, 1980, p. 9) and inhibit creativity and original thinking, and reduce all important knowledge to superficial facts (Osterlind, 1998, p. 164). Therefore, when the grammatical knowledge is simply tested in four-option multiple-choice, two criteria have been presented either to the task in the test item or the test takers' performance.

2.5 Advantages of continuous assessment

The fundamental objective of the introduction of continuous assessment was to correct the defects of the past system of assessment which focuses on one final examination. From the different definitions of continuous assessment already reviewed, it is an assessment approach which involves the use of various assessment instruments for assessing various components of learning, not only thinking process but including behavior, personality traits and manual dexterity which will give the whole sum picture of the individual.

Alausa (2005) said that one of the benefits of continuous assessment is that, it is guidance oriented since it involves data gathering over a long period of, it will yield more accurate data reaching the teacher early enough to modify instruction. It plays a vital role in diagnosing and remediating areas of learners' weaknesses.

Another advantage of continuous assessment is that it places at the center of all performance assessment activities. It encourages more teachers' participation in the overall assessment or grading of his or her learner.

As suggested by Paris (1991) teachers must be given opportunities to select and review assessment so that they become involved and knowledgeable in the process. Through this approach, teachers would be able to integrate assessment and assessment results in to instructional practices.

Continuous assessment is also advantageous to the learner because it reveals the ability of the learner early enough to make necessary adjustment for improved performance on the part of the teacher. Continuous assessment enables the teacher to assess the learner early enough and this will help the teacher to integrate the feedback for improved instructional techniques for the benefit of the learner.

In addition to this, if continuous assessment is implemented properly, it has many advantages. Some of the advantages of continuous assessment are the following:

- It helps to collect information about the students' performance as a feedback for decision making.
- It helps to accumulate records of students' progress. This gives a total picture of students' performance over a prolonged period.
- It gives opportunities for the students to monitor their own progress.
- It provides information from which teachers can get insights in to their own effectiveness. This is emphasized by Kothori(2004 : 249).
- It allocates students to groups. This is done in grading to assign students to a particular set or group by looking at about how they have been performing.
- It motivates students learning. Students become eager to know how they are progressing in the process of learning.

2.6 Characteristics and Management of Continuous Assessment

2.6.1 Characteristics of Continuous Assessment

In the guide for the National Professional Diploma in Education (NPDE) the following characteristics of continuous assessment are described (DESP, 1995:14):

- CA is not concerned only with giving learners a mark and a place in class. But to help teachers in identifying areas in which learners do not perform well. Teachers could then decide on the type of remedial work that would assist learners in the areas in which they do not perform well.
- Teachers do not only assess learners by means of tests and examinations, but can utilize various methods of assessment. For example:
 - ❖ Evaluating written work and homework on a daily basis.
 - ❖ Observation of learners' oral performance.
 - ❖ Debates, role-play and other oral work.
 - ❖ Monitoring learners working in pairs, groups and individuals.
 - ❖ Questioning learners to find out what they know and can do.
 - ❖ Listening to learners' responses to questions.
 - ❖ Taking note of the questions learners asked and the comments they make.
- Teachers assess the learners on a daily basis while normal teaching and learning takes place instead of waiting until the end of a section of work, the end of the term or the end of a year.
- The information obtained by the teacher on a continuous basis can help him to adjust his teaching methods accordingly in order for learners to improve their performance.

2.6.2 Management of continuous assessment

- The management of CA is one of the teachers' responsibilities. The basic principles underlying management of CA are (DoE, 2000:18):
- Designing: This concept refers to planning backwards. The outcomes to be addressed through teaching and learning are first clearly stated before developing the teaching and learning activities the learner will be engaged in. In their planning teachers should start by identifying outcomes to be assessed from those to be addressed through teaching and

should then choose appropriate assessment techniques and activities to be used when assessing the chosen outcomes.

- **Clarity of focus:** According to this principle everyone involved should have a clear picture of what is expected at the end. This implies that teachers must ensure that learners are clear about the criteria against which they are to be assessed and what they are expected to demonstrate.
- **High expectations:** This implies that teachers must assist learners to their full potential.
- **Expanded opportunities:** This refers to the fact that teachers should find multiple ways exposing learners to learning opportunities that which help them demonstrate their full potentials in terms of knowledge, skills, values and attitudes.

2.6.3 Taking attendances in English class

Why attendance is important in helping every student succeed? (Arnecia Moody, LCSW-C, LICSW, LCSW)

One of the most important things students can do to reach the goal of success is also one of the most basic: **attend school every day on time!**

By attending class regularly, student is more likely to keep up with daily lessons and assignments and take quizzes and tests on time. Research has shown that child's regular attendance may be the greatest factor influencing his/her academic success.

Some of the greatest benefits for attending school regularly are:

- **Achievement:** Students who attend school regularly are more likely to pass reading and math assessments than students who do not.
- **Opportunity:** For older students, being in school every day gives them a chance to learn more about college and scholarship opportunities and to learn the important information to build a successful academic record.
- **Exposure to the English language:** Regular school attendance can also help students who are learning English by giving them the opportunity to master the skills and information they need more quickly and accurately.

- **Being part of the school community:** Just by being present at school, your child is learning how to be a good citizen by participating in the school community, learning valuable social skills, and developing a broader world view.

2.7 Challenges when implementing continuous assessment

Teachers mostly experience several challenges in implementing continuous assessment based on the respective curriculum. Some of these challenges are:

- Teachers' attitude and perception towards CA.
- Large class size.
- Appropriateness of learning materials.
- Teachers and administrators' inadequate competence to design and administer appropriate tools.
- High level stress in test marking.
- Lack of time.

Quansah (2005) addressed the issue of using simple questions that help for simple marking, lack of similarity between teachers in implementing continuous assessment as major challenge in implementing CA.

Kapambwe (2010) on his side stressed on the following factors as the challenges of implementing continuous assessment:

Staffing

The ratio of teachers to students: Due to less number of teachers some teachers were found to handle more classes. And this makes teachers become bored to assess this large number of students continuously.

Remediation and enrichment

Although CA should be well integrated with the teaching learning process, most teachers still felt that CA took a lot of time for teachers. As a result, teachers got concerned that the time spent on remediation and enrichment was excessive, and many teachers did not believe that they would finish the syllabus with CA. This implies that before implementing CA teachers develop

resistance to the proper implementation of CA. As stated above teachers thought that there is time constraint before really practicing it.

Continuous assessment places much power in the hands of teachers. This power is often abused by the teachers who award scores even when tests are not administered (Ezeudu, 2005). In addition to this, (Ezeudu, 2005) stated that large class resulting from prerequisite skills by teachers, lack of materials and facilities necessary for acquisition of skills in the psychomotor domain and poor supervision or administration of CA practice in various schools is one major challenge of implementing CA. Teachers tended to view assessment as an isolated aspect of teaching rather than an integral part that supports and nurtures learning. The view that CA is a distracter to their work and lack of integrity by some teachers resulted in to a tendency to submit inflated continuous assessment scores.

Large class size

Large class size is one of the major challenges in implementing CA. If the class is large, the work load to teachers become higher as they were required to mark and keep records of the students' progress. In line with this (Kapambwe 2010), stated that most teachers failed to appreciate the need to administer assessments on an on-going basis such as weekly, fortnightly or after a topic.

Students' attitude

For learning to take place effectively and for students to become successful, students should be ready and motivated to learn. Students' readiness and motivation refers to the extent to which they are willing to do assignments and participate in practical projects and other tasks (Ayalew et al, 2009). Unless students are willing and committed, no learning will take place. No potential will be realized unless the students respond to a challenge. No matter how good the curriculum is, how cognitively correct the teaching method is, unless the teacher is able to motivate his or her students to stimulate about their teaching and make commitment in it, he or she will have given them little of lasting importance (Black and Broad Foot, 1982).

Teachers' attitude

Factors related to teachers may include inadequate professional skills, poor subject matter, unfair evaluation and lack of interest in their profession, punctuality and respect for students. These factors may result in developing negative attitude and it becomes difficult to make student-centered method practical. Positive teachers' attitude exists when teachers have confidence in their ability to teach and committed to teaching and co-operate with each other. Teachers are committed to teaching learning and care about their students, when they set high standard of work and behavior and model themselves. Teachers are co-operative when they plan school activities and teach collaboratively and when they share ideas with each other and when teachers and administrators work together on whole school issues (Argali, MW, 2001).

Knowledge and skill of teachers

Teachers need to have the knowledge and skill of CA in order to implement it effectively. They should have the knowledge of the application and the theoretical concepts such as, types, forms purposes and techniques of CA. A clear concomitant of the knowledge constraint in assessment development and practice is the degree of skill which the teacher has developed for using the various techniques. There tends to be mystique about assessment technique which is largely unwarranted (Black and Broad Foot, 1982).

2.8 Assessment methods, tools and techniques

As stated by the Department of Education (DoE, 1997a:3) CA must be undertaken using assessment tools and techniques. Teachers should have sound knowledge of what each technique offers. A variety of methods, appropriate tools and techniques which commensurate with the learners' needs must be used. The chosen methods, tools and techniques must provide a range of opportunities for learners to demonstrate knowledge, skills, values and attitudes. There are a wide range of assessment strategies that may be used to measure learners performance or the achievement of learners. An assessment tool that is chosen must be aligned to fit the identified purpose of assessment, and the teachers choice of method depends to a great extent on what is to be assessed (Facilitators' Guide,2000:22).

Department of Education discussed the following assessment methods, tools and techniques in their assessment policy (DoE, 1998b:25).

2.8.1 Assessment methods

Assessment methods relate to the procedures the teachers wishes to follow in order to assess the learners. The procedures include: self-assessment, peer assessment and group assessment.

- Self-assessment: In self-assessment students are guided to take responsibility for their own learning. A learner assesses his or her own performance against the desired outcomes and is then able to decide what he or she needs to do in order to improve his or her own performance.
- Peer assessment: Peer assessment is the process of using learners to determine one another's achievement against clearly defined outcomes (Torrance,1995:87). This can involve individual tasks where learners assess one another or group tasks where one learner assesses how another learner performed in a group task.
- Group assessment: - Group assessment can be used for a task where a group of learners work together to achieve an outcome. This is when groups within one class assess each other's performance on a given task with specified criteria (Lazarus, 1997:123).
- Learners should be encouraged to work effectively with others in a team, groups, organization and community. Some activities are better done in pairs or groups of learners. Some of the activities that can work well when done in pairs or groups are role-play, drama, acting, debates, and discussions, brainstorming and sharing ideas (Lorraine, 1996:267).

2.8.2 Assessment tools

- ❖ An assessment tool is an instrument that the teachers use when assessing the learners and which is appropriate to the method of assessment. The following are some of the assessment tools suggested in the Facilitators Guide (2000:29):
 - ❖ Observation sheets
 - ❖ Rubrics or assessment grids
 - ❖ Class lists
 - ❖ Journals

Observation sheet: - It is one kind of assessment tool which teachers use to record their observations about the learners. Teachers observe the learners against criteria. The specific skills,

behavior, pattern and achievements that the learner demonstrate must be linked to the learning program outcomes and be readily observable (Le. Grange and Reddy, 1998).

Rubrics or assessment grids: - A rubric is a set of criteria that is used to ensure that different parts of a task are assessed. A rubric can be assigned in the form of a grid. It can, however, simply be a list of what is assessed, who assesses and what assessment key is used. A rubric is a handy tool for gathering information. It can seldom be used on its own to determine whether an assessment criterion or a specific outcome has been achieved. Thus, other rubrics and assessment tools could be used in a given learning experience to contribute towards formal recording (Brown, 1998:118).

2.8.3 Assessment techniques

A technique may be a special way in which the teacher uses a method and tool to provide opportunities for learners to demonstrate their performance. It may also be the way the learner chooses to demonstrate evidences of attainment (Artel and Spandel, 1991:72).

Assessment techniques include interview, conferencing, written assignments, oral questions and answers, portfolios and performance assessments. The Department of Education explains these assessment techniques as follow (DoE, 2000a:28):

- Interviews: - It can be held between learner and teacher or learner and learner, or they can involve parents as well. Interviews can be both formal and informal and can include discussions.
- Conferencing: Refers to a group of learners having an effective dialogue about a project. It is a common binding interest to reach a certain targeted outcome. With this technique teachers act as consultants or coaches. They have control over the meeting and have the responsibility of directing the communication. Conferencing demands a thorough and thoughtful preparation on the part of the teacher (Pander Horst and Mc Donald, 1997:94).
- Written assignments: Written assignments should be assessed using a set of criteria or a marking memorandum. This should be given to the learners for them to note their performance and to know how to improve their future levels of performance.
- Oral questions and answers: This is where learners listen attentively; interact with the teacher or with other role-player and respond with interest.

- Portfolios: - Portfolio is a purposeful confection of a learner's work such as: projects, Journals, assignments etc. This exhibits to the learner, parents, teachers and other interested bodies to see the progress of the learner in relation to the expected outcomes (Artel and Spondel, 1991:87).
- Performance assessments: Performance assessment focuses on the process as well as the product. The learners' to think, imagine, and solve problems and to produce an acceptable performance or product are assessed. This technique can also be used to assess the learners' growth towards achieving the outcomes (Vandar Horst and Mac Donald, 1997:169).

2.9 Continuous assessment in the context of Ethiopia

In 1994 the education and training policy declared continuous assessment in academic and practical subjects, including aptitude tests will be conducted to ascertain the formation of all round profile of students at all levels.

As MoE (2010) every teacher should make regular check on the progress of all students in each subject. This is done through continuous and formal assessment. It is intended to be spontaneous and natural part of the teaching learning process, not merely an activity that takes place at the end of term or year.

The main requirement of the implementation of the revised curriculum is the planning of assessment tasks as part of the school program that will show teachers whether or not students are achieving the expected competencies. These tasks are intended to be undertaken throughout the school year. Such assessment is known as continuous assessment.

As the MoE (1999) cited in education quality assurance package blue print, short comings related to assessment include:

- Lack of understanding of policy guideline by some implementers.
- Lack of proper control and supervision mechanisms, especially at school and regional levels.
- Lack of commitment on the part of teachers and students regarding continuous assessment, which at the end of the day results in unrealistic or fabricated continuous assessment marks.

2.10 Research findings on continuous assessment

Although the concept of continuous assessment is introduced in recent times, various studies were conducted both in Ethiopia and abroad about it.

2.10.1 International Research findings on CA

In Zambia school based continuous assessment is defined as an ongoing diagnostic process that used a variety of assessment tools to measure learners' performance. NoE (2004) the ministry of education introduced school based CA for two reasons: certification and selection. The criticism on the educational field on high stakes examination of having harmful effect on students learning has been increasing. Kapambwe (2010) studied teachers' implementation of CA in Zambian schools. In his findings he indicated that teachers emphasized continuous testing instead of continuous assessment. Kapambwe stated that this occurred because of the past influence of traditional objective-based assessment.

On the other hand, Owolabia and Onuka(n.d) found the challenges of using CA in Nigerian schools to be students' inadequate preparation for assessments, teachers' poor test administration procedures, poor handling of scores and feedback, poor coverage of instructional contents by test contents, large classes, and lack of knowledge and skills of the appropriate evaluation techniques. Obioma (1984), stated that teachers in primary and junior secondary schools in Nigeria lacked knowledge of CA, and instead give continuous tests.

2.10.2 National research findings on continuous assessment

In Ethiopia Meba (2008), conducted a research on CA and found that teacher educators and student teachers in Debrebirhan Teacher Education and Vocational Training College had a positive attitude towards continuous assessment; however, they did not apply it in oral assessment. The causes stated in Meba's finding assumed to be students' low level of English, the influence of the traditional assessment system and lack of assessment policy in the college.

Tebeje (2009), in his finding on CA reported that instructors and students in Dilla University had inadequate knowledge of CA. He also stated that instructors consider CA as an extra work load, which might be interpreted as a negative attitude towards CA.

Birhanu (2004) in his research stated that proper handling of students' assessment in general and CA in particular in high school level in selected high schools in Addis Ababa is poor and not up to the standard compared to the contemporary assessment system.

Most findings further indicate that the major problems in implementing CA include: lack of awareness about the techniques and procedures of CA, lack of guidelines, inadequate preparation of teachers on CA, lack of technical support, unmanageable large class size, lack of adequate learning materials, lack of adequate supervisors who can guide practitioners, lack of students motivation and students negative attitude towards project works and assignments. According to his study, these were found to be practical problems in implementing CA in high schools (Birhanu, 2004 E.C).

By assessing the students continuously, their ability to achieve the competency can be monitored day-to-day, they can be informed about their achievement and encouraged to perform better, the results obtained can be used for promotion. Similarly, information on their achievement can be used to parents, administrators and other concerned bodies. New plan for effective teaching and learning can be made, records can be kept about students' progress throughout the term and year finally, those with learning difficulties can be identified, so that remedial work can be provided and those who are talented and gifted can be provided with enrichment work MoE (2010,P. 59).

In the above studies, the attitude of teachers and students, their perception and practice were studied. Especially, the studies conducted in Ethiopia focused on higher education teachers and students. In addition to this, most of the above studies were conducted in relation to continuous assessment in general not in a particular subject English.

This study, however, focused on secondary schools English language teachers' practices and the challenges they faced in implementing continuous assessment in English classroom in order to ascertain the students' achievement in the language skills. The study focused only on English language teachers and students

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The chapter has presented the relevant literature particularly on EFL teachers' implementation of continuous assessment and learners' reaction to teachers' practices. This chapter discusses the methodology utilized in this study. Further, the chapter presents the research design, sample selection procedures, how validity and reliability was maintained. This chapter also highlights the procedures used for carrying out the field study and data analysis.

3.1 Research design

Descriptive survey research design was employed for this study. It was selected for the reason that it enabled the researcher to obtain current information about EFL teachers' implementation of continuous assessment and challenges they face in the selected secondary schools of three woredas, in Kaffa zone, SNNPRG. It was also relevant to collect detailed and a variety of information concerning continuous assessment. Moreover, Kothari (2004) stated that the major purpose of descriptive survey is description of the state of affairs as it exists at present. Furthermore, he explained that the main characteristic of descriptive survey is that it enables the researcher to come up with what has happened or what is happening.

This study employed the mixed method because the method helped the researcher to see the issue under study both from qualitative and quantitative perspective. And the method was appropriate to bring a solution which is understandable and implemented by all the consumers of the research findings. Further, mixed method was used to complement the weakness of one method by the strength of the other method. Quantitative research method was used to analyze a data which were quantitative in nature, whereas qualitative method was used to collect and analyze the qualitative data obtained from interviews and document analysis.

3.2 Data sources and Study site

3.2.1 Data sources

Having a real source of data in the process of a study is unquestionable to address the basic questions. To have valuable data, both primary and secondary sources were used in the study.

3.2.1.1 Primary Sources

Primary sources were obtained from English language teachers and students from the selected secondary schools of three woredas Shisho Ende, Bita, Chena and Wacha administrative town in Kaffa zone, SNNPRG. Therefore, questionnaires were distributed to English language teachers and students to collect the data. Interviews were also used as the main data source for the present study.

3.2.1.2 Secondary Sources

Secondary data were obtained from documents. In this regard, assessment of documents related to the areas of the study was consulted at the selected secondary schools. These documents included students' mark list and teachers' daily assessment report.

3.2.2 Study site

The specific study area was limited to secondary schools in three woredas namely: Shisho Ende, Bita, Chena and Wacha administrative town in Kaffa Zone. The researcher selected these three woredas and one administrative town randomly hence they could represent the whole secondary schools in the selected woredas.

3.3 Sample Size and Sampling Techniques

The area under study, which is Kaffa Zone, has twelve (12) woredas and two (2) administrative towns. The classification of this zone into woreda and administration town is for the purposes of provision of effective administration and facilitating the guidance and support to teaching and learning processes and other sectors development.

However, in terms of facilities and background of teachers, those secondary schools found in administrative towns are more beneficial than those found in woredas. As a result, the researcher categorized the zone into two strata, which are administrative town and woredas. On top of this, one out of two administrative towns and three out of twelve woredas were selected using simple random (lottery method) sampling techniques from the two strata. Thus, for this study Wacha administrative town, Chena, Shisho Ende, and Bita woredas were considered.

Moreover, a total of 6 (40%) secondary schools from the three woredas and one administrative town were incorporated in the study. And from these schools, Wacha Secondary School was taken directly in the study and simple random (lottery method) sampling techniques was used to select five secondary schools from the three woredas. These schools are: Kulish Secondary School, Shishinda Secondary School, Kuta Shoray Secondary School, Bita Millinium Secondary school and Wareta secondary school. Likewise all the available numbers of vice directors and language department heads were taken from the selected secondary schools and administrative town. In the case of teachers from the total of 35 respondents, 35 (100%) of English language teachers were taken from each school by purposive sampling technique. Furthermore, multistage sampling technique following simple random (lottery method) was employed to select 277 students out of 5561 students in these sampled high schools. The aim was to create equal chance for the population to be included in the sample.

Table 1 Sample Size and Sampling Techniques

R.N	Secondary schools	English Department heads			Teachers			Students		
		Pop	Sample	%	pop	Sample	%	Pop	Sample	%
1	Shishinda	1	1	100	8	8	100	1458	72	5
2	Wacha	1	1	100	9	9	100	1514	75	5
3	Bitamili milinium	1	1	100	8	8	100	1317	66	5
4	Kuta Shoray	1	1	100	3	3	100	397	20	5
5	Wareta	1	1	100	3	3	100	473	24	5
6	Kulish	1	1	100	4	4	100	402	20	5
Total	6	6	6	100	35	35	100	5561	277	5
Sampli ng Tech.	Simple random	Purposive			Purposive			Simple random		

Source Woreda Education Offices 2013 E.C

3.4 Data collection instruments

Quantitative and qualitative data were collected using different data collecting instruments. Among these, questionnaire, interview and document analysis were employed for the study to collect primary and secondary data.

3.4.1 Questionnaires

For this study, questionnaire was the important data collecting tool. It was used as the data collecting instrument to get sufficient primary data. Both open-ended and close-ended questions were prepared for teachers and students. The questionnaire was prepared for teachers and students separately.

3.4.2 Interview

The other instrument that was employed for the collection of primary data for the study was an interview. It was helpful to supplement the information gathered through other instruments, as well as for the clarification of some unforeseen information. Consequently, a face-to-face communication was held with English language teachers and language department heads.

3.4.3 Document Analysis

In addition to the above instruments of data collection, document analysis was used to gather secondary data. Therefore, reliable information was gathered from the six selected secondary schools. Essential documents, like schools plans for the implementation of continuous assessment, student mark list and teachers' assessment report paper were analyzed.

3.5 Controlling Mechanisms of Erroneous Results

In order to ascertain the validity of instruments, expert opinion was sought from the vice academic directors and peers on face, content and format of the questionnaires and interviews. Consultations with the directors, peers helped to identify errors and offer the opportunity to modify and improve the instruments. Also to ascertain the validity and reliability of the research instrument, a pilot study was conducted in two secondary schools within the same woredas that did not participate in the actual study.

3.6 Methods of Data Analysis

The collected data were analyzed using a number of techniques. The data was analyzed after editing, coding, and tabulating. The analyses were carried out by descriptive statistics in which frequency and percentage was used to present the results in the form of tables.

The data collected through interview and document analysis were analyzed qualitatively (words were used to narrate the results).

3.7 Ethical considerations

Throughout the study, the researcher used appropriate citation and valued the work of others in order to avoid plagiarism. Furthermore, the factual information which was obtained from respondents and secondary sources were kept confidential.

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 Introduction

The first part of this chapter deals with the personal information of participants while the second section deals with the analysis of the findings of the study in relation to the basic research questions. The second part of this chapter deals with the presentation and analysis of data gathered from groups of participants using questionnaire, interview and documents. The questionnaire was administered to teachers and students, while the interview was conducted with department heads, and vice academic directors at the selected secondary schools. In order to get more information, documents (students mark list and continuous assessment question papers) were analyzed from the selected secondary schools.

4.2. Background and Characteristics of Participants

Questionnaires were distributed to the groups of teachers and student participants. Out of 312 questionnaires 282 (90.5%) were filled and returned. Out of the total 282 questionnaires, 33(94.2%) and 249(89.89%), distributed to teachers and students respectively were filled, returned and analyzed by the researcher. All the groups of participants of the selected secondary schools were asked to indicate their personal information in the questionnaire. Their responses were summarized on the next page.

The following table presents the personal information of teacher participants. It focuses on qualification, teaching experience and weekly work load.

Table 1: background information of teacher participants in the research area

No	Items	Teacher respondents Characteristics	N	%
1	Qualification	Diploma	2	6.06
		BA/BED Degree	21	63.63
		Masters	10	30.30
		Total	33	100
2	Teaching experience	0-3 year	4	12.12
		4-7 year	9	27.27
		8-11 year	11	33.33
		12-16 year	5	15.15
		17 and above	4	12.12
		Total	33	100
3	Weekly load	Below 10	1	3.03
		10-15	8	24.24
		16-24	16	48.48
		25 and above	8	24.24
		Total	33	100

The data in the table 1 show that 2(6%) were diploma holders, 21(64%) were BA/Bed graduates, 10(30%) were holders of masters of art (MA in TEFL). This shows most of English language teachers in the sampled schools fit to the level of the secondary schools in Ethiopia.

Secondly, teachers in the sampled schools had different work experiences. Four (12%) teachers had 0-3 years teaching experience, 9(27%) teachers served for about 4-7 years, 11(33%) of the

teachers in the school had 8-11 years of experiences, 5(15%) of teachers served for about 12-16 years and 4(12%) teachers in the sampled schools taught English for 17 years and above.

Regarding the teachers' workload, 16(49%) of the teachers had 16-24 teaching load per week. This shows in the research area (Kaffa Zone) teachers had work load which hindered them to practice the continuous assessment in their school.

Regarding students, 277 grade nine student participants were taken as a sample of the study. Out of these students, 249 (90%) participants filled and returned questionnaires.

4.3. Results and discussions

Data were analyzed and interpreted in relation to the objectives of the research. Based on the data collected from participants, in order to reach on the result the analysis and discussions are presented as follows:

4.3.1 Continuous assessment training before service program

New teachers should develop awareness about principles, methods and techniques before they are engaged in the actual implementation of continuous assessment. Therefore, the following table shows whether teachers took the training before they started teaching.

Table 2 Continuous assessment training before service program

N O	Item	Response	Teacher participants	
			Frequency	%
1	Did you take any form of continuous assessment training during your pre service program in English language?	Yes	28	85
		No	5	15
		Total	33	100

The data presented in the table 4 above show that the respondents were asked if they had taken continuous assessment training during their pre-service program. Accordingly, the majority 28 (85%) participants took training on continuous assessment while 5 (15%) didn't take training before they started to do the actual work. The minority numbers 5 (15%) respondents showed

there was skill gap that should be improved to develop EFL teachers' capacity before they were engaged in the actual work while the majority of the participants had got the necessary training.

4.3.2 In-service training background of teachers on continuous Assessment

In-service training, such as periodic refreshment courses, workshops, seminars and conferences are essential parts of the ongoing work and development of teacher training education in order to fit to the current trends in the application of continuous assessment. The effective implementation of continuous assessment depends on continuous and practical training of teachers and students. If this is so, there will be progress on teaching learning activity.

Table 3 In-service training background of teachers on continuous Assessment

NO	Item	Response	Teacher participants	
			Frequency	%
2	How frequently do you take training on the implementation of continuous assessment during your service program?	Always	-	-
		Usually	-	-
		Sometimes	7	21.21
		Rarely	7	21.21
		Never	19	57.57
		Total	33	100

As it can be seen in the table 5 more than half of the teacher respondents (79%) did not take any training on continuous assessment during their service time. On the other hand, 21% participants took training during their service time.

Therefore, a few teachers (21%) were given the training during their service program, whereas the majority of language teachers (79%) still need to take the training program in order to build their capacity on continuous assessment especially in English language. This may affected the continuous assessment practice process that teachers were expected to implement in the teaching learning activity.

4.3.3 Teachers' awareness about principles, methods and techniques of continuous assessment

Regarding principles of continuous assessment, Jorolimk and Paker (1997) & Ruddell (1997) suggested that continuous assessment should focus on learning, its goals are to encourage, assist and enhance learning, not to punish student who perform poorly. Reward students who struggle to take risk for their learning. Teachers should treat continuous assessment as an integral part of curriculum and instruction.

Table 4 Teachers' awareness about principles, methods and techniques of continuous assessment

No	Item	Response	Teacher respondents	
			No	%
3	I have awareness on the principles, methods and techniques of continuous assessment.	Strongly agree	2	6.06
		Agree	5	15.15
		Strongly disagree	11	33.33
		Disagree	7	21.21
		not sure	8	24.24
		Total	33	100

As it can be seen from the above table, the majority of the teacher 26(78.98%) respondents said that they had no awareness about principles, methods and techniques of continuous assessment in English language. The minority (21%) of the respondents said that they had awareness on the principles of continuous assessment.

Therefore, the analysis from the data show those 58% respondents had to develop awareness on the principles, methods and techniques of continuous assessment in English language class.

4.3.4 The attitudes of English language teachers and students towards continuous assessment

Teachers are committed to teaching and learning and care about their students when they set high standard of work and behavior and model themselves (Argali, MW, 2001). Considering the above idea, the following table may indicate teachers' and students' attitude in the research area.

Table 5 English language teachers and students interest towards continuous assessment

R N	Item	Teacher respondents		
		Responses	Freq.	%
4	To what extent are you interested to assess your students continuously?	Always	5	15.15
		Usually	4	12.12
		Sometimes	9	27.27
		Rarely	13	39.39
		never	2	6.06
		Total	33	100
	Item	Student respondents		
		Responses	Freq.	%
	To what extent are you interested to be assessed continuously in English language?	Always	9	3.61
		Usually	25	10.04
		Sometimes	98	39.35
		Rarely	62	24.89
		never	55	22.08
		Total	249	100

As it can be seen in the table above, the minority of teacher respondents (27%) had interest to assess their students continuously. On the other hand 39% of the teacher participants had no interest to assess their students continuously.

Therefore, as it is clearly stated by Argali, MW (2001), the minority of teachers (39%) in the research seemed to develop negative attitude towards assessing students continuously.

Similarly student respondents were asked if they liked to be assessed continuously in English language. Accordingly, the majority of student respondents (53%) said that they had an interest to be assessed however the minority of student respondents (47%) said that they had no interest to be assessed continuously in English language class.

As a result of the above analysis, 47% student respondents result showed that there was negative attitude to be assessed continuously in English language class.

4.3.5 Teachers' commitment to incorporate different continuous assessment techniques into their lesson plan

A technique may be a special way in which the teacher uses a method and tool to provide opportunities for learners to demonstrate their performance. It may also be the way the learner chooses to demonstrate evidences of attainment (Artel and Spandel, 1991:72).

Table 6 Teachers' commitment to incorporate continuous assessment techniques into lesson plan

R N	Item	Response	Teacher respondents	
			Freq.	%
5	How often do you incorporate continuous assessment techniques into your lesson plan?	Always	2	6.06
		Usually	3	9.09
		Sometimes	17	51.51
		Rarely	6	18.18
		never	5	15.15
		Total	33	100

Table 6 shows 66% teacher respondents incorporated continuous assessment techniques into their lesson plan. On the other hand, 34% teacher respondents did not incorporate different continuous assessment techniques into their lesson plan.

Therefore, the result shows 34% English language teachers were not committed to incorporate different continuous assessment techniques into their lesson plan.

4.3.6. Teachers' implementation of different methods to assess their students continuously

Learners should be encouraged to work effectively with others in team, groups, organization and community. Some activities are better done in pairs or groups of learners. Some of the activities

that can work well when done in pairs or groups are role play, drama, acting, debates, and discussions, brainstorming and sharing ideas (Lorraine, 1996:267).

Table 7 Teachers' implementation of different methods to assess their students continuously

R N	Item	Response	Teacher respondents		Student respondents		Total	
			Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
6	To what extent do English language teachers implement different methods to assess students?	Always	3	9.09	20	8.03	23	8.15
		Usually	8	24.24	75	30.12	83	29.43
		Sometimes	17	51.51	96	38.55	113	40.07
		Rarely	5	15.15	45	18.08	50	17.73
		never	-	-	13	5.22	13	4.60
		Total	33	100	249	100	282	100

The data in the table 7 indicated that 85% of teacher respondents implemented different continuous assessment methods. But 15% of teacher respondents said that they did not implement continuous assessment methods.

Similarly student respondents were asked if English language teachers implemented different methods to assess students continuously. The result shows 77% of the students respondents said that their English language teachers implemented different continuous assessment methods whereas 23% students said their English language teachers didn't implement different methods in the classroom.

The average results from both teachers and student responses show that 81% of the English language teachers implemented different continuous assessment methods. But 19% of English language teachers did not implement different methods as it can be seen in the table above.

4.3.7 Teachers' frequent assessment on a daily bases

According to Chilora,et al (2003), continuous assessment is making observation periodically to find out what a student knows, understands and can do. Based on this idea, the following data were gathered to investigate English language teachers' implementation of continuous assessment in the selected schools.

Table 8 Teachers' frequent assessment on a daily bases

R N	Item	Responses	Student Respondents	
			NO	%
7	How frequently do English language teachers continuously assess learners on a daily bases instead of waiting until the end of a section, term or year?	Always	00	00
		Usually	22	8.83
		Some Times	94	37.75
		Rarely	117	46.98
		Never	16	6.42
		Total	249	100

As it can be seen in the table 8, 53% of the student respondents said that their language teachers did not continuously assess them, whereas 47% students said that English language teachers assessed them continuously.

The results show that 53% of the English language teachers did not implement the formative continuous assessment technique.

4.3.8 Assessing students' basic skills

Sárosdyet *al* (2006) explains that there are great varieties of tasks that are employed to assess oral production. There are tasks that can be found at different language proficiency examinations such as reading aloud, role play, interview and discussion of topics.

On the basis of the views of the scholar Sárosdyet *al*, the following data were collected to see if English language teachers continuously assessed their students' basic skills i.e. listening, speaking, reading and writing.

Table 9 Assessing students' basic skills

R N	Items	Response	Teacher respondents		Student Respondents		Total	
			Freq.	%	Freq.	%	NO	%
9	To what extent do English language teachers continuously assess students' basic skills?	Always	00	00	00	00	00	00
		Usually	2	6	8	3	10	3.5
		Sometimes	13	39	45	18	58	20.5
		Rarely	18	55	171	69	189	67
		Not at all	00	00	25	10	25	9
		Total	33	100	249	100	282	100

The data in table 9 show that 45% of the teacher respondents said that they continuously assessed their students' basic skills while the majority (55%) of language teachers didn't assess students' basic skills continuously.

But student respondents' results revealed that 79% of English language teachers did not assess students' basic skills. Therefore, it is possible to say that students' basic skills were not assessed continuously in the sampled schools.

4.3.10 Responses of teachers and students on the provision of feedback

Feedback has been considered as a basic thing for learning (Rown free, 1987). Moreover, it is a crucial feature of the teaching learning process for it contributes directly to the progress in learning through the process of formative assessment and directly through the development of pupils' academic self esteem

Table 10 feedback given to students on continuous assessment tasks

R N	Item	Response	Teacher respondents		Student Respondents		Total	
			Freq	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
10	The extent of teachers' provision of feedback to students	Always	2	6	00	00	2	1
		Usually	15	46	8	3	23	8
		Sometimes	13	39	65	26	78	28
		Rarely	3	9	155	62	158	56
		Never	00	00	21	9	21	7
		Total	33	100	249	100	282	100

Regarding feedback provision, as presented in table 10, student participants were required to reply whether they were given feedback or not. Thus, 71% student respondents said that their language teachers did not give feedback to students. However, 91% of the teacher participants said that they gave feedback to students. The result revealed that there was statistically significant difference between teachers and student participants' response. This means that 62% of the language teachers did not give feedback to students. The analysis of the interview also revealed that teachers assessed students for marking purpose rather than for checking progress. From this we can understand that the results of continuous assessment were not used properly or it was practiced for grading or product rather than for the process. As a result, it could not improve both the learning and teaching activities and also put negative impact on the quality of education. Timely feedback serves a good purpose.

4.3.11 Taking attendances in English class

By attending class regularly, student is more likely to keep up with daily lessons and assignments and take quizzes and tests on time.

Therefore, every time before starting the lesson, taking attendance and documenting it for the continuous assessment purpose is expected from every teacher. The following data were gathered from teachers and students if regular attendance was taken by EFL teachers in the selected secondary schools in the academic year 2021.

Table 11 responses of teachers and students for taking attendances in English class

R N	Item	Response	Teacher respondents		Student respondents		Total	
			Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
11	How often do English language teachers take attendances in their English class?	Always	1	3.03	00	00	1	0.5
		Usually	2	6.06	00	00	2	1
		Sometimes	18	54.55	73	29.31	91	32
		Rarely	12	36.36	150	60.24	162	57
		Never	00	00	26	10.45	26	9
		Total	33	100	249	100	282	100

Regarding taking attendance, as presented in table 11, 73(29%) students responded that their language teachers took attendance whereas the majority (71%) of the student respondents said that their language teachers did not take attendances.

English language teachers were also asked if they took attendance during the English class for the continuous assessment purpose. Based on this 64% teachers said that they took attendances, while 36% teachers said that they did not take attendances.

From the analysis, it is possible to understand that 29% of English language teachers did not take attendances during English class.

4.3.12 EFL teachers' practices of continuous assessment in their school currently

The analysis of the data from the questionnaire show that EFL teachers were asked what did they know about continuous assessment and how did they practice it in their schools. As a result of the analysis, teacher respondents said that continuous assessment is assessing students on continuous bases to identify the weaknesses and strengths of students. And almost all teacher respondents said that they implemented continuous assessment in their schools based on the programs and weights given from their schools.

Student respondents were also asked what continuous assessment was for them and they responded that continuous assessment is a system of taking tests and exams continuously after covering some courses or chapters. Based on this response it is possible to depict that continuous assessment is thought as a summative practice for students.

4.3.13. The major challenges in the proper implementation of continuous assessment

English language teachers in the sampled schools were asked what major challenges they faced in the proper implementation of continuous assessment. But few respondents in the sampled schools said that students' foreign language competence, different meetings and national holidays which were obstacles to cover content and the assessment technique given by school curriculum committee were the major problems in the proper implementation of continuous assessment.

Student respondents were also asked about the challenges in the proper implementation of continuous assessment and they reported that most English language teachers were not punctual and wasted time. For this reason, they rushed to cover the content but not to assess students. Some other students also said that English language teachers had no interest to assess students continuously, did not give feedback, did not identify the weaknesses and strengths of students, did not manage classroom and etc. The minority (15%) student respondents said that as English is a foreign language, they thought continuous assessment is a challenge for them.

4.3.14 Possible Solutions Suggested By Teachers and Stake Holders to Solve the Problems of Continuous Assessment

English language teachers suggested the following solutions to solve the problems of continuous assessment.

- In-service training or work shop program should be given to develop the awareness of teachers.
- The school administration should follow up the proper implementation of continuous assessment.
- Students should be assessed continuously for the purpose of assessment for learning.
- Educational time schedule should be implemented properly in order to cover the content of the lesson.
- The assessment technique shouldn't be pre-decided by the school administration.

4.3.13 Continuous Assessment Techniques Used by Teachers as reported by Teachers and Students

The following data was collected from teacher and student respondents if English language teachers used different continuous assessment techniques in the sampled schools in the academic year 2021.

Table 12 Continuous Assessment Techniques Used by Teachers

R / N	Item	Response	Participant category				Total	
			Teachers		Students			
			NO	%	NO	%	NO	%
1	Class work	Everyday	8	24	12	5	20	7
		Sometimes	10	31	75	30	85	30
		When necessary	12	36	23	9	35	12
		Rarely	3	9	104	42	107	38
		Don't use	00	00	35	14	35	12
		Total	33	100	249	100	282	100
2	Home work	Everyday	12	36.36	25	10.04	37	13.12
		Sometimes	14	42.42	92	36.94	106	37.58
		When necessary	5	15.15	32	12.85	37	13.12
		Rarely	2	6.06	82	32.93	84	29.78
		Don't use	00	00	18	7.22	18	6.30

		Total	33	100	249	100	282	100
3	Oral question	Everyday	22	66.66	141	56.62	163	57.80
		Sometimes	7	21.21	56	22.49	63	22.34
		When necessary	2	6.06	5	2.00	7	2.48
		Rarely	2	6.06	47	18.89	49	17.38
		Don't use	00	00	00	00	00	00
		Total	33	100	249	100	282	100
4	Presentation	Everyday	00	00	00	00	00	00
		Sometimes	9	27.27	25	10.04	34	12.05
		When necessary	12	36.36	78	31.32	90	31.91
		Rarely	5	15.15	44	17.67	49	17.37
		Don't use	7	21.21	102	40.96	109	38.65
		Total	33	100	249	100	282	100
5	Project work	Every day	00	00	00	00	00	00
		Sometimes	00	00	00	00	00	00
		When necessary	12	36.36	80	32.12	92	32.62
		Rarely	00	00	00	00	00	00
		Don't use	21	63.63	169	67.87	190	67.37
		Total	33	100	249	100	282	100
6	Quiz	Every day	00	00	00	00	00	00
		Sometimes	9	27.27	52	20.88	61	21.63
		When necessary	12	36.36	60	24.09	72	25.52
		Rarely	12	36.36	137	55.02	149	52.85
		Don't use	00	00	00	00	00	00
		Total	33	100	249	100	282	100
7	Self- assessment	Always	2	6.06	10	4.01	12	4.25
		Sometimes	7	21.21	45	18.07	52	18.45
		When necessary	8	24.25	48	19.27	56	19.85
		Rarely	10	30.30	55	22.08	65	23.05
		Don't use	6	18.18	91	36.55	97	34.37
		Total	33	100	249	100	282	100
8	Interview	Always	00	00	00	00	00	00
		Sometimes	3	9.09	18	7.22	21	7.45
		When necessary	5	15.15	20	8.03	25	8.86
		Rarely	5	15.15	30	12.04	35	12.41
		Don't use	20	60.60	181	72.69	201	71.27
		Total	33	100	249	100	282	100

As it is presented in Table 12, item 1, participants were asked how often English language teachers used class work in assessing students learning continuously. In light with this technique, 91% teachers said that they implemented, whereas 9% of teacher respondents said they did not give classwork to students. Student respondents were asked the same question and 35% students

said that their language teachers used classwork as a continuous assessment technique. However, 56% of student respondents said that their English language teachers did not use classwork as a continuous assessment technique. The result from the table shows that there was significant difference between two participants' from each response. Therefore, it confirmed us that there was some gap of using class work as continuous assessment techniques.

Concerning homework, 94% of teachers said they used homework as a continuous assessment technique, 6% language teachers responded that they didn't use homework as a technique to assess the students' learning continuously. Similarly, 60% students said that teachers didn't use homework as a technique of continuous assessment.

Regarding the results from the table there was significant difference between teachers' and students' responses. This indicated homework was not considered as continuous assessment technique by few teachers in the schools.

Regarding the use of oral question, 22(67%) teacher participants and 141(57%) of student participants respectively responded that oral question was used every day in assessing students' learning. About 56(23%) students and 7(21%) teachers said that teachers used oral question sometimes in assessing students' progress. Concerning the results from the table, there were statistically similarities between teacher and student participants' responses concerning by using oral question in assessing students' progress in learning.

Regarding item No 4 in table 16, the data show that 64% teacher respondents said that presentation was used in assessing continuously teaching learning progress and 34% teachers said they didn't use it as a technique of continuous assessment. This means, the participants' perception regarding using presentation as techniques of continuous assessment is different. However, 41% student respondents said that English language teachers implemented presentation as a technique of continuous assessment and 59% students said their teachers didn't implement it. Therefore, the result shows differences between teacher and student respondents.

As it can be seen in table 11, teacher and student participants were asked how often the project work was used as continuous assessment technique. The analysis show that 12(36%) teachers and 80(32%) students responded that project work was used when necessary. In the same way

21(64%) teachers and 169(68%) student respondents said that project work was used in the sampled schools.

As it is presented in table 12, participants were also asked how often quiz was used as continuous assessment technique. Thus, 27% teachers and 21% students replied respectively that sometimes quiz was used in the continuous assessment practice. Similarly, 36% teacher and 55% student respondents answered that quiz was rarely practiced as a continuous assessment technique in the sampled schools. The result from the table shows that there are some differences between teacher and student responses. This indicated that some language teachers may have problems of applying quiz as a continuous assessment technique.

On the other hand, 36% teachers and 24% students responded that quiz was given as a continuous assessment technique to enhance students' learning when necessary. This indicated that participants had understanding about the implementation of quizzes in continuous assessment practice.

As it can be seen in table 12, participants were also asked how often self-assessment technique of continuous assessment was used in assessing the students learning. The analysis from the data show that, 52% teachers said that they used self-assessment as a technique of continuous assessment, whereas 48% teachers reported that they did not it as a continuous assessment technique in the sampled schools. Student respondents were also asked the same question and 41% of them reported that their language teachers used self-assessment as a technique of continuous assessment, while 59% student respondents said that their teachers did not use it.

As it is presented in table 12, participants were also asked how often interview was practiced in continuous assessment. The analysis from the data showed that 24% teachers and 15% students respectively reported that interview was used in assessing students' learning continuously. In contrast, 76% teachers and 85% students said that there was no the practice of interview in the process of assessing students' performance. Therefore, it is possible to say participants had the problem of awareness about the implementation of interview in continuous assessment practice.

In general, the results of the analysis of the data show that teachers did not use different assessment methods and techniques of continuous assessment similarly in continuous way.

4.4 The analysis of the interview and document analysis

To triangulate the reliability of the data, students' mark list was used as a document, because attendance was taken as criteria of continuous assessment in the sampled schools.

The documents of students' mark list show that students were given almost equal marks under the attendance column for the continuous assessment technique. This may indicate that English language teachers were not taking attendance continuously. But at the end of the semester, students were graded from 5%. If attendance is not taken regularly, continuous assessment technique may lack objectivity.

The analysis of the interview from the key informants (English language teachers) show that the challenges in the proper implementation of continuous assessment in the sampled schools were the school management problem, teacher's inadequate knowledge about the principles of continuous assessment, students' reaction when they were assessed continuously and etc.

The results from interview and document analysis also show that the practice of continuous assessment in high school context was unmanageable for a number of reasons.

English language teachers and department heads were asked the purposes of continuous assessment in their schools. Accordingly, the analyses of the interview results show that English language teachers' assessment purpose was directly related to assessment of learning. Assessment for learning purpose was hardly practiced in the schools.

To sum up, administrative issue, students' foreign language competence, teachers' inadequate knowledge in the continuous assessment area, problem in time management and others were the main challenges in implementing continuous assessment in the schools.

4.4 Solutions suggested by respondents to improve continuous assessment practice

Respondents were asked to suggest possible solutions for the problems they mentioned; consequently they forwarded the following solutions.

- The school administration should build teachers' and students' attitude towards continuous assessment through awareness creation programs, such as conducting workshops, seminars.
- The administration and educational offices should motivate teachers by providing moral incentives such as further training in their field, and material incentives.
- The school administration should follow and support the practical implementation of continuous assessment.

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter presents the overall summary, conclusions and the recommendations forwarded were presented consecutively.

5.1 SUMMARY

It is an undeniable fact that in recent times many schools have come to the understanding of the importance of the role of continuous assessment practice in improving quality and student improvement. Schools are therefore encouraged to practice continuous assessment to improve their effectiveness. Therefore, on the whole, this study sought to investigate in detail the EFL teachers' implementation of continuous assessment and learners' response to teachers' practice in the selected secondary schools of Kaffa zone. To this end, the following leading questions were formulated:

- To what extent EFL teachers were aware of principles of continuous assessment?
- What challenges did EFL teachers face when implementing continuous assessment
- To what extent did EFL teachers employ different methods and techniques to assess students' language skills continuously?
- To what extent did English language teachers assess students based on the purposes of continuous assessment?
- How did EFL learners respond to EFL teachers' practices of continuous assessment?

This study employed mixed method approach and descriptive survey research design. In conducting this study, six secondary schools were selected using simple random selection and purposive basis from Kaffa Zone. From these secondary schools, 282 sample participants or 249 students and 33 teachers were selected based on simple random (lottery method) and purposive sampling techniques respectively. Furthermore, the schools' vice academic directors and English language department heads were included in the study through purposive sampling. In the process, data were collected from teachers and students through questionnaire. In addition a personal interview was held with the schools vice academic directors and English language department heads. Moreover, document analysis was made to get additional information on the issue under study. The quantitative data were collected, identified, edited, coded, tallied,

tabulated and analyzed through descriptive statistics. The data obtained from participants through open ended questions and interviews, were also analyzed qualitatively in narrative form. The results obtained through these three tools were triangulated to create holistic picture of the study.

5.2 Findings of the study

Based on the research question, after analysis was made using the data gathered from participants, the following findings are drawn.

1. A few teachers (15%) didn't take training about continuous assessment before they started the actual work.
2. The majority of the English language teachers (79%) didn't take in-service training program.
3. It was found that 79% teacher respondents had no awareness about principles, methods and techniques of continuous assessment.
4. The majority of the teachers didn't include a variety of continuous assessment techniques in their plan and did not use it in the class room activities. As a result, the implementation of continuous assessment was far from what is needed, and they concentrated on few tools like oral questions, group work, and classwork.
5. It was found that the majority of the teachers considered continuous assessment as a summative assessment and waited until the end of a course or a unit.
6. The majority of teachers responded that there was no timely support for teachers from school administration.
7. The majority of English language teachers said that students' basic skills were not continuously assessed.
8. Timely feedback was not given in most schools. However, feedback was given for marking purpose rather than checking purpose.
9. In some schools attendance was not taken regularly by English language teachers, but it was considered as a continuous assessment technique.
10. It was found that students' foreign language competence, different meetings and holidays were obstacles to complete content. The assessment techniques those were given by the school administration were also some challenges in implementing continuous assessment properly.

11. The majority of the teachers used continuous assessment results for grading system rather than for the improvement of students learning.
12. The majority of students' interest was to get mark through paper test but not to bring what was needed through continuous assessment.

In general, the study indicated that lack of teachers' awareness about CA, teachers' inadequate knowledge of the way and techniques of continuous assessment practice, lack of interest of the teachers and students concerning continuous assessment, poor administrative support, the problem of using the time schedule properly and considering continuous assessment as continuous testing were the major factors in the proper implementation of continuous assessment in the secondary schools.

In light of the findings, the following conclusions were drawn.

There is no doubt that well practiced continuous assessments have a valuable asset to the schools and thereby increases the students' performance by providing necessary information about their progression. With this understanding, the high schools understudy has practiced continuous assessment. These high schools could not strictly follow all the methods of practicing continuous assessment processes. The implementation of these processes is shown as follows:

1. Most teachers had no training in their in service program. This made teachers not to update themselves on continuous assessment implementation. Though few teachers took the training, they did not practice it well. So, the practice of continuous assessment in secondary schools of Kaffa zone was low.
2. The majority of the teachers didn't implement different continuous assessment techniques. Students couldn't get chance to show their performance through different techniques. The effort made in this regard was low.
3. Students pointed out that their teachers did not give feedback. This in turn made students conclude that their teachers were unfair about marking and did not use continuous assessment for guiding their learning.
4. There were no provision of continuous assessment guidelines and ground rules in teaching learning activities to assess learners' theoretical concepts and practical skills. In

the absence of guide line it is difficult to use continuous assessment to assess students in meaningful way.

5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is the concern of educational leaders and/or researchers to create favorable condition for the good implementation of continuous assessment in schools. This study on the EFL teachers' practices and challenges of continuous assessment will contribute to the effective implementation of continuous assessment. Taking the findings of this study into account, the researcher has forwarded the following recommendations to the stakeholders.

1. The school administration together with other educational offices should provide timely and effective in-service training to English language teachers.
2. Practical and incentive training for both teacher and student should be provided to change their knowledge, attitude and skills of continuous assessment. Specifically the training should focus on:
 - How and when to provide feedback to students,
 - How and when to practice self and peer assessment,
 - How to incorporate different continuous assessment techniques in the lesson plan,
 - How to practice assessment for learning.
3. Experience sharing among departments and with other colleagues in different schools should be facilitated by the school administrator, department heads to discuss the issue of practicing continuous assessment in their plan and set an objective with teacher prior the starting of practice.
4. Involving students in continuous assessment process helps them to take responsibility, develop confidence, and broaden their knowledge, attitude and skills.
5. Further research could be conducted especially on how to assess basic skills such as listening, speaking, reading and writing continuously in other wordas.

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Appendices

Appendix A

JIMMA UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

Program: M.A in Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL)

Questionnaire to be filled by English language teachers

Dear teacher, the following questions are prepared to gather information related to EFL teachers' implementation of continuous assessment and learners' reaction to teachers' practices in English language in the selected secondary schools of Kaffa zone. Therefore, you are kindly requested to answer each question as much as possible.

Dear respondent, the information you provide will be used only for research purpose and will remain highly confidential. There is no need to write your name. Your genuine responses to all items across all the sections of the questionnaire contribute a lot to the successful completion of this study.

Thank you very much!

I. General information

1. Name of the school _____

2. Sex: M _____ F _____

3. Qualification

a) BA/Bed _____

b) MA _____

c) Please indicate if other than the above

4. Teaching experience in the high school

a) 0-3 yr _____ b) 4-7 yr _____ c) 8-11 yr _____ d) 12-16 yr _____ e) 17 and above _____

5. Teaching load per week

a) Below 10 _____ b) 10-15 _____ c) 16-20 _____ d) 21 and above _____

II. Main data information

Circle the letter which you think of the answer.

1. Did you take any form of continuous assessment training during your pre service program in English language? a) yes b) no
2. How frequently do you take training on the implementation of continuous assessment in your service program? 5/always 4/ usually 3/ sometimes 2/ rarely 1/ never
3. I have awareness on the principles, methods and techniques of continuous assessment? 5) strongly agree 4/ agree 3/ strongly disagree 2/ agree 1/ not sure
4. To what extent are you interested in assessing your students continuously? 5/always 4/ usually 3/ sometimes 2/ rarely 1/ never
5. How often do you incorporate continuous assessment techniques into your lesson plan?
a) always b/usually c) sometimes d) rarely e) not at all
6. To what extent do you implement different methods to assess your students continuously? a) always b)usually c)sometimes d)rarely e) not at all
7. To what extent do you continuously assess your students' basic skills? a)Always b)usually c)sometimes d)rarely e)not at all
8. To what extent do you give feedback to your students continuously for all kinds of continuous assessment techniques? a/ always b/usually c/sometimes d/rarely e/never
9. How often do you take attendances in your English class? a)always b)usually c)sometimes d)rarely e)not at all

III. Give brief answers for the following questions.

10. As an EFL teacher what is continuous assessment to you and how do you practice it in your school currently?
11. What are the major challenges you encounter in the proper implementation of continuous assessment?
12. For what purpose do you continuously assess your students in English language?
13. Does the school administration plan, support and supervise the proper implementation of continuous assessment?
14. What do you suggest to solve the problems of continuous assessment?

IV. Indicate by “x” tick the assessment techniques you use to assess your student on the space provided.

15. To what extent do you implement the following techniques to assess your students continuously?

NO	Assessment method	Always	Usually	Sometimes	Rarely	Don't use	Total
1	Class work						
2	Home work						
3	Oral question						
4	Presentation						
5	Project work						
6	Quizzes						
7	Interviews						
8	Self-assessment						

Thank you very much!

Appendix B
JIMMA UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

Program: M.A in Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL)

Questionnaire to be filled by students

Dear student, the following questions are prepared to gather information related to EFL teachers' implementation of continuous assessment and learners' reaction to teachers' practices in English language in the selected secondary schools of Kaffa zone. Therefore, you are kindly requested to answer each question as much as possible.

Dear respondent, the information you provide will be used only for research purpose and will remain highly confidential. There is no need to write your name. Your genuine responses to all items across all the sections of the questionnaire contribute a lot to the successful completion of this study

General information

1. Name of the school _____
2. Sex M____ F____
3. Grade a) 9th____ b) 10th____ c/11th____ d/ 12th _____

Main data information

I. Circle the letter which you think of the answer.

1. To what extent are you interested to be assessed continuously in English language class?
5/always 4/ usually 3/ sometimes 2/ rarely 1/ never
2. How often do English language teachers incorporate different continuous assessment techniques in the class room? a/ always b/usually c) sometimes d) rarely e) not at all
3. To what extent do English language teachers implement different methods to assess students continuously? a) always b)usually c)sometimes d)rarely e) not at all
4. How frequently do teachers assess learners on a daily bases while normal teaching instead of waiting until the end of a section, term or year. a)always b)usually C)sometimes d)rarely e)never

5. To what extent English language teachers continuously assess students' basic skills? a) always b)usually c)sometimes d)rarely e)not at all
6. To what extent teachers give feedback to students continuously for all kinds of continuous assessment techniques? a)always b)sometimes c) usually d) rarely e)none
7. How often do English language teachers take attendances in English class? a)Always b)usually c)sometimes d)rarely e)not at all

II. Give brief answers for the following questions.

8. What is continuous assessment to you?
9. What are the major challenges of continuous assessment in English language?

III. Indicate by “x” tick the assessment techniques you use to assess your student on the space provided.

10. To what extent do English language teachers implement the following techniques to assess students continuously?

NO	Assessment method	always	Usually	Sometimes	Rarely	Don't use	Total
1	Class work						
2	Home work						
3	Oral question						
4	Presentation						
5	Project work						
6	Quizzes						
7	Interviews						
8	Assignments						

Thank you very much!

Appendix C
JIMMA UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

Program: M.A in Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL)

Interview for vice academic directors and department heads

The purpose of this interview is to obtain information about EFL teachers' implementation of continuous assessment and learners' reaction to teachers' practices in English language in Kaffa Zone in the selected secondary schools. The researcher asks you to cooperate in giving your response towards the stated question.

Your genuine responses contribute a lot to the successful completion of this study. You are, therefore, kindly requested to provide genuine information.

General Information

1. Qualification _____

2. Years of service _____

Main data information

As it is clearly stated in the Education and Training policy (1994), that continuous assessment should be practiced in schools, in relation to this,

1. How do EFL teachers implement continuous assessment in your school?
2. How do you think teachers' awareness about continuous assessment methods and techniques?
3. What are the major challenges of continuous assessment in your school?
4. Some teachers may think continuous assessment is continuous testing where as others say it is gathering information about students' progress. Which one do you think is right for you? Why?
5. Does the school administration plan, support and supervise the proper implementation of continuous assessment?

6. How do you explain English language teachers' performance towards giving feedback to students?
7. Do English language teachers implement different techniques of continuous assessment like interview, quiz, oral question, and so on in your school? If not, why?

Thank you very much!

Appendix D
JIMMA UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

Program: M.A in Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL)

Check list for document analysis (continuous assessment papers and students' mark list)

The following check list is prepared to analyze documents of students' mark list i.e. continuous assessment copies about EFL teachers' implementation of continuous assessment and learners' reaction to teachers' practices in Kaffa Zone in the selected secondary schools.

1. Students' mark list in the selected schools has continuous assessment formats a/ excellent _____ b/ very good _____ c/good _____ d/ fair _____ e/ unsatisfactory _____
2. Mark given for attendances is based on continuous follow up and attendance paper a/ by attendance paper _____ b/ no mark is given for attendance _____
3. Continuous assessment papers include major skills a/ excellent _____ b/ very good _____ c/good _____ d/ fair _____ / unsatisfactory _____
4. Continuous assessment papers show that different techniques were used by EFL teachers in the selected secondary schools a)always _____ b)usually _____ c)sometimes _____ d)rarely _____ e)not at all _____
5. The number of students in the mark list is manageable to implement continuous assessment in the selected secondary schools a/ _____ very large _____ b/ large _____ c/ manageable _____ d/below the expected _____

Thank you!!!

