

Moroccan EFL Secondary School Teachers' Current Practices and Challenges of Formative Assessment

Abdallah Ghaicha^[a]; Youssef Oufela^{[b],*}

^[a]Lecturer in Applied Linguistics, and Educational Assessment, evaluation, and Policy. Faculty of Letters and Human Sciences, Ibn Zohr University, PO box 29/S, Hay Addakhla, Agadir, Morocco.

^[b]MA in Linguistics & Applied Language Studies, Ibn Zohr University, Agadir, Morocco.

*Corresponding author.

Received 12 October 2020; accepted 20 December 2020

Published online 26 February 2021

Abstract

This study aims at achieving two fundamental objectives: (1) exploring the extent to which Moroccan EFL secondary school teachers apply questioning, teacher feedback, peer-assessment and self-assessment as forms of formative assessment, and (2) identifying the micro and macro challenges that render the effective utility of formative assessment difficult. Despite the theoretical prominence of formative assessment, it has not been adequately addressed by research in Morocco. Therefore, exploring formative assessment practices might lead to a great understanding of what practices Moroccan EFL secondary school teachers frequently draw on to assess learners formatively. Following an explanatory sequential mixed-method design, the present study has gathered data from 98 EFL secondary school teachers using both questionnaires and semi-structured interviews. The most important results reveal that not all formative assessment practices are frequently employed and that teachers experience a number of contextual, institutional and pedagogical challenges. The results obtained from this study are vital to different stakeholders: practitioners, teacher trainers, decision makers, researchers and teachers as well.

Key words: Formative assessment; Teacher feedback; Peer-assessment; Self-assessment; Questioning; Challenge; Learning

Ghaicha, A., & Oufela, Y. (2021). Moroccan EFL Secondary School Teachers' Current Practices and Challenges of Formative

Assessment. *Canadian Social Science*, 17(1), 1-15. Available from: <http://www.cscanada.net/index.php/css/article/view/12015>
DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.3968/12015>

INTRODUCTION

Problem Statement

Despite the existence of a huge body of experimental evidence that recommends the use of formative assessment, the latter is not being used, and instead there is a radical emphasis on traditional assessment, namely summative (Clark, 2012; Ghaicha, 2016; Ohlsen, 2007; Shumba & Kuze, 2011; Volante & Beckett, 2011). Apparently, there is a clear mismatch between research recommendations and classroom assessment practices. Such mismatch is obvious in the pedagogical inertia displayed by some teachers (Clark, 2012).

Although summative assessments have successfully been used as valid and reliable tools to measure students' learning and overall achievements, current research introduces strong evidence that the use of summative tests leads to deleterious effects (Black & Wiliam, 1998b; Harlen & Deakin, 2002; Harlen & Crick, 2003). This issue is known in educational research as the *backwash* effect (Bachman & Palmer, 1996; Bailey, 1999; Cheng, 1997; Hughes, 2003; Messick, 1996; Popham, 1987; Shohamy, 2001; Wall & Anderson, 1993). Backwash, a well-recognized phenomenon among teachers, educators and researchers, refers to "the direct impact of testing on individuals and it is widely assumed to exist" (Bachman & Palmer, 1996, p. 30).

Summative assessments were found to affect students' self-esteem and motivation for learning (Black & Wiliam, 1998b; Black et al., 2003; Harlen & Deakin, 2002; Harlen & Crick, 2003). Motivation for learning is defined as "the will to learn and the desire to maintain this will" (Johnston, 1996 as cited in Harlen & Deakin, 2002, p. 11). The will

to learn is related to the degree to which the student is ready to invest some effort into the learning process. Black & Wiliam (1998b) stated that

If students are given only grades or marks, they do not benefit from feedback. The worst scenario is one in which some students who get low marks this time, also got low mark last time and come to expect to get low marks next time. This cycle of repeated failure becomes part of shared belief between such students and their teachers (p. 144).

Summative assessments do not support students' learning (Black & Wiliam, 1998a). Students do not receive supportive, meaningful and precise feedback that helps them close the gap between what they understand and what they do not. Black et al. (2004) stated that "a numerical score or a grade does not tell students how to improve their work, so an opportunity to enhance learning is lost" (p. 13). Despite the fact that some teachers invest the results of their summative assessment formatively to a certain level, it actually does not often work. Black & Wiliam (1998b) stated that "for formative purposes, a test at the end of a unit or a teaching module is pointless. It is too late to work with the results" (p. 145). Summative assessments were found to encourage superficial learning (Black & Wiliam, 1998b, p.145) as well. Since such assessments are primarily designed to provide measurable results about expected learnings, students would develop the idea that obtaining the grade is really what matters regardless the means. Deep learning and understanding are no longer the motives.

Despite the continuous calls to swing the pendulum towards a learner-centered approach in assessment, a remarkable number of educational institutions have not overwhelmingly responded to such calls. Gardner's (1993) Multiple Intelligences Theory, that has informed educational practice for several decades, assumes that human beings are hard wired with a broad range of cognitive abilities (intelligences); implying that there is a variation among learners with respect to knowledge construction. Therefore, instructional and assessment practice must be designed in a way that accommodates all the individual differences. Yet, the current assessment practices enormously depend on norm-referenced tests that incorporate only the linguistic and logical mathematical intelligences (Black, 2000; Ochanji, 2000).

RATIONALE

The current study on formative assessment practices is, as a matter of fact, driven by personal and theoretical considerations. The personal considerations include the personal experiences that we managed to collect as EFL practitioners as teachers and graduate students who have been concerned with observing, discussing, and reflecting on issues of assessment within different EFL contexts and across diverse levels of education. It is too uncontested

that educational assessment is no longer at the pram. It has recently come to be a very important component of teaching and learning. What is more is that a lot of books, theses, articles, conferences and seminars have tackled issues relevant to assessment (Black & Wiliam, 1998a; Black & Wiliam, 1998b; Black et al., 2004; Black & Wiliam, 2005; Buck & Amy, 2009; Brookhart, 2013) ; Clark, 2012; Forbes, 2007; Frey & Douglas, 2007; Frey & Douglas, 2011; Herman et al., 2010; Irons, 2008; Hernandez, 2012. This fostered our obsession and motivation to investigate such a virgin and promising area. In addition to this, most research on the effects of formative assessment acknowledges that it is very useful to students' learning and should occur as frequently as possible. Therefore, there is an overly insistent need to examine the current state of formative assessment in the Moroccan context.

The theoretical considerations are two-fold. The first consideration is to fill a gap in assessment literature (Volante & Beckett, 2011). Despite the substantial amount of evidence that indicates the positive effects accompanied with the ongoing use of formative assessment on instruction and learning, a scant amount of studies addresses teachers' classroom practices of assessment. The second consideration is to extend the range of the challenges that impede formative assessment practices. The literature exhibits a limited number of problems that restrain the use of formative assessment, which propels our minds and intellectual wisdom to uncover other obstacles and contribute to the existing literature. Exploring the major restrictions and limitations of formative assessment can ultimately help both teachers and practitioners to develop solid solutions and promising alternatives to easily and successfully put formative assessment into classroom practice.

1. LITERATURE REVIEW

1.1 The Effect of Formative Assessment

A plethora of research have been highly pre-occupied with formative assessment (Black & Wiliam, 1998, Black & Wiliam, 2004; Buck & Trauth-Nare, 2009; Crooks, 1988; Dayal & Lingam, 2015; Hernandez, 2012; Ruiz-Primo & Furtak, 2006; Volante & Beckett, 2011; Wheatley et al., 2015). Now, more than ever, there is strong evidence of the effectiveness of formative assessment to support and improve teaching and learning. Landmark studies such as those of Crooks' (1988), Black & Wiliam's meta-analyses (1998b), and Black et al., (2004) have presented such evidence.

Crooks (1988) in a meta-analysis of studies on classroom evaluation practices summarized results from 14 specific fields of research. Crooks (1988) indicated that classroom evaluation practices affect the learners' judgments of what is crucial to learn, self-perception,

competence, decision making and motivation. Black & Wiliam's (1998b), in their comprehensive and highly acknowledged work on formative assessment, where they examined 700 articles on formative assessment, is considered to be the most influential in educational assessment. They arrived at an important conclusion that "improved formative assessment helps low-achievers more than other students and so reduces the range of achievement while raising achievement overall" (p.141). The results of such studies reported a typical effect size between .04 and .07. Black & Wiliam (1998b) pointed out that such effect sizes are larger than most effect sizes for educational interventions.

In addition to this, Black et al. (2004) set up the Kings Medway-Oxford shire formative assessment project (KMOFAP), where they employed professional development (PD) at six schools in the UK. Black et al. (2004) stated that "we set up our main findings about classroom work under four headings: questioning, teacher feedback, self-assessment and peer assessment" (p.14). The study revealed firm evidence that improving formative assessment practices has a positive effect on raising learners' achievements.

1.2 Teacher Feedback

Teacher feedback is considered one of the core strategies of formative assessment (Black et al., 2004, p. 42). The effect of feedback on teaching and learning has been, for quite a long time, of a huge interest to educational researchers (Chan & Lam, 2010; Muralidharam & Venkatesh, 2010; Stevens & Aleamoni, 1985).

Research provides powerful experiment-based evidence that feedback affects learners' self-efficacy, learning, teaching and motivation to learn. Chan & Lam (2010) examined the effects of formative and summative feedback on 79 students' self-efficacy. The results showed that students in both groups experienced a decrease in self-efficacy from test 1 to test 2. However, the group that was given summative feedback displayed a large decrease in self-efficacy than the group that was given formative feedback. Feedback, as a matter of fact, is useful to learners as well as teachers. From a longitudinal quasi-experimental, Stevens & Aleamoni (1985) showed that feedback improves instructional practice and students' achievement.

Along with the experimental evidence, research provides qualitative account on how feedback is being practiced in educational institutions. Volante & Beckett (2011) qualitatively studied 20 teachers from two school districts in Ontario, Canada. The major results showed that teachers draw on feedback without grades. The majority of teachers (70%) claimed that when feedback is given without the grade, learners focus on improvement.

From a large scale study that followed a mixed-method design, Hernandez (2012) studied the views and practices of formative assessment in higher education.

Hernandez (2012) examined undergraduate students of Hispanic studies, academics and heads of subject in seven universities in the republic of Ireland. The findings showed that students are given feedback and the grade. Some students claimed that the grade is a motivator and encourages them to learn while others criticized this procedure. Some academics claimed that the giving of feedback is very useful to students learning. It is very demanding, though.

In another similar study that employed multiple data collection techniques, surveys, semi-structured interviews, field observation, and documents analysis, Bagley (2008) found that high school teachers (N=180) use narrative evaluations (detailed written feedback) for summative purposes. The results indicated that students perceived narrative evaluations to be more stressful than grades; yet, more helpful in terms of giving descriptions on students' performance.

Questioning as a Formative Assessment Strategy

Questioning is considered a technique of formative assessment that is used on a regular basis. It refers to the range of questions that promote formative discourse in the classroom. It has been an important issue in the last few decades. A considerable amount of research has targeted the nature and types of questions teachers ask during classroom sessions. Two essential aspects have been the focus of research: the wait-time after asking a question and the type of questions that are asked (Cho et al., 2012; Gall, 1970).

Research showed evidence on the effect of questioning on students' writing skills and understanding (Etimadzadeh et al., 2013). Bobby et al. (2007) found that prior formulated questions improve students' understanding of the topic. Lucking (1976) showed that the nature of teachers' questions has a significant effect on the way learners respond to literature.

Along with the experimental evidence on the use of questioning, research has also been interested in how questioning is being practiced in the classroom. Over the last thirty years, Hoetker & Ahlbrand (1969) inspired further research to investigate the teaching practices of secondary school. They reviewed studies from 1960s to 1980s as regards students-teacher interaction patterns. In their review, they observed that teachers asked a very large number of questions without allowing enough wait-time for students to reflect and think about the answer. They pointed out that such teacher authority and control show that teachers are doing almost most of the work and little effort is put into the process of developing students' thinking skills.

One year later and in a quite similar approach, Gall (1970) studied an important aspect of questioning technique. She reviewed research on questions that are asked during classroom discussions and distinguished between two kinds of questions: questions that recall

facts and questions that promote critical thinking. From the review of research, she discovered that two thirds of teachers' questions recalled just facts and knowledge. Hoetker & Ahlbrand (1969) also indicated teachers also initiated questions that called for short facts and students' main task was to produce very short answers.

In the KMOFAP, Black et al. (2004) found that teachers wait less than a second and then, if no answer is given, ask another question or answer the question themselves. They concluded that the consequence of such wait-time is that the only questions that work are those that can be answered quickly; that is, questions recalling for memorized formative facts. As a result, the dialogue is at a superficial level.

In one of the most comprehensive studies that targeted questioning, Chu et al. (2012) studied faculty teachers' (n=33) perceptions and practices of questioning technique. They concluded that questioning is perceived to be effective. They revealed that teachers ask open questions (66.7%) more than closed questions. With regard to wait-time, they reported that teachers wait only 2.5 seconds after asking questions. In comparison with the recommended wait-time (at least more than 4 seconds as mentioned by Moss & Brookhart, 2009), this is not enough.

1.3 Peer-Assessment

Research on peer assessment basically seems to concentrate on two dimensions: the first focuses on attitudes towards and perceptions of peer assessment; whereas, the second focuses on the effect of peer assessment on teaching and learning.

The effects of peer assessment that research documents are numerous. It allows learners to receive an extensive amount of feedback that in terms of time and effort cannot be given teachers (Janssen & Fernandez, 2012; Irons, 2008). It, too, manages the workload and provides learners constructive timely feedback (Iron, 2008). It increases student-student interaction and can be used to enhance learners' understanding about other students' ideas during the learning experience (Butler & Hodge, 2001 as cited in Wen & Tsai, 2006, p.27). It enables learners to develop constructs such as: conflict resolution, leadership, teamwork. It teaches them how to accept others' criticism and build their cognitive and social skills (Organization for Economic Co-operation and development, 2005).

1.4 Self-Assessment

Researchers, now more than any time, introduce self-assessment by students (Andrade, Du, & Mysek, 2010; Boud & McDonald, 2003; Goodrich, 1997; Hogaboam & Rolheiser, 2002; Ross & Starling, 2008). Self-assessment is perceived to be useful and important to learning (Boud, 1989; Boud & McDonald, 2003; McDonald, 2007). It has been shown that self-assessment helps learners to develop various skills. self-assessment allows learners to do some

of the work for themselves and teach them how to assume responsibility (Black & Wiliam, 1998b). It is also one of the most important elements that enable learners to develop skills of learning to learn (Overhard & Murphy, 2015). It helps learners become self-regulated and life-long learners (Boud, 1989; Boud & McDonald, 2003). It contributes to self-efficacy, because it learners a means by which they accomplish goals through the observation and interpretation of their performance (Ross, Hogaboam & Rolheiser, 2002).

1.5 Challenges of Incorporating Formative Assessment

Despite the fact that there is a substantial body of empirical research on the effects of Formative assessment practices on learning and achievement, the successful implementation of formative assessment policy by teachers in classrooms is still constrained by several factors, formative assessment has not been adopted widely in classroom (Black & Wiliam, 1998). A general look at the literature, one can spot several problems that inhibit classroom formative assessment s. These problems relate to the learner, the teacher, and the learning context. The formative assessment practices seem to be constrained by the following major factors: (1) the inability of learners to understand the assessment criteria (Irons, 2008; Fontana & Fernandez, 1994), (2) out-of-class commitments (Irons, 2008; Feldman & Beatty, 2012), (3) teachers' understanding of assessment (Brown, 2004; Forbes, 2007; Shumba & Kuze, 2011), (4) inadequate teachers' training (Stiggins, 2006; Shumba&Kuze, 2011), time allocated to assessments (Irons, 2008; Ofsted, 2008; Feldman & Beatty, 2012), and inactive school culture (Black et al., 2004; Black & Wiliam, 2005).

The proliferation of the literature on the use of formative assessment ensures the existence of a huge body of experimental evidence that recommends its use; yet, the latter is not being used to a justified level. Instead, there is a radical emphasis on summative assessment as the most commonly traditional approach of testing student learning (Clark, 2012; Ghaicha, 2016; Kuze & Shumba, 2011; Ohlsen, 2007; Volante & Beckett, 2011). Seemingly, there is a conspicuous mismatch between research and classroom assessment practices.

Although summative assessments have successfully been used as valid and reliable tools to measure students' learning and overall achievements, current research introduces strong evidence that the sole use of summative testing leads to a damaging effect (Black & Wiliam, 1998b; Harlen & Deakin, 2002). Educational research labels this issue as backwash effect (Bachman & Palmer, 1996; Bailey, 1999; Cheng, 1997; Messick, 1996; Popham, 1987; Wall & Anderson, 1993).

Although the continuous calls to swing the pendulum towards a learner-centered approach in assessment, a remarkable number of educational institutions have not

overwhelmingly responded to such calls. Gardner's (1993) multiple intelligences theory, which has informed educational practice for several decades, assumes that human beings are hard wired with a broad range of cognitive abilities. The vast implication of Gardner's theory is that there is a variation among learners with respect to learning and knowledge construction. Therefore, instructional and assessment practices must be designed in a way that accommodate and cater for individual differences among learners. Yet, the current assessment practices enormously depend on norm-referenced and summative testing that incorporates only the linguistic and mathematical intelligences (Black, 2000; Ochanji, 2000).

The current article reports on a mixed method study which is conducted to investigate the extent to which Moroccan high school EFL teachers draw on formative assessment strategies and the major challenges that impede such practices. The study aims at (a) identifying the extent to which the teachers implement formative assessment practices such as questioning, teacher feedback, peer assessment, and self-assessment.

2. THE CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

A well-acknowledged reality is that teaching English language is very challenging to non-native speakers due to the relatively limited exposure to English in a foreign language context. Yet, research has continuously shown that feedback and scaffolding render the task of instructors quite easy as this helps learners to improve their leanings in a variety of ways. In Morocco, however, the learning and the teaching conditions make the job of teachers very hard. The use of formative assessment activities is critical to pave the way for learners. Given its importance, the investigation of formative assessment in Moroccan context is very important.

3. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The main objective of the study is to investigate the use of formative assessment practices in the Moroccan context. The first objective of the study is to determine the extent to which Moroccan EFL high school teachers implement Formative assessment practices such as questioning, teacher feedback, self-assessment, and peer assessment: classroom assessment practices developed in the KMOFP. The second objective is to identify the major challenges that hinder the successful pedagogical implementation of formative assessment practices.

4. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The choice of research questions (RQs) instead of research hypotheses is driven by the investigatory nature of the current issue. The study seeks to answer two main questions.

RQ 1: To what extent do Moroccan EFL high school teachers implement formative assessment practices such as questioning, teacher feedback, peer assessment, and self-assessment?

RQ 2: What are the major challenges that impede such practices?

5. METHODOLOGY

5.1 Research Design

This study adopted the explanatory sequential mixed method design. According to Creswell & Clark (2011), a mixed method design is a procedure for collecting, analyzing and "mixing" both quantitative and qualitative methods in a single study to understand a research problem (as cited in Creswell, 2012, p.532). An explanatory sequential mixed method design basically requires collecting quantitative and qualitative data orderly in two phases with one form of data collection preceding and informing the other (Creswell, 2012).

The adoption of a mixed method design is in fact justified by three main considerations. Firstly, to arrive at a better and microscopic understanding of a certain research problem and to satisfactorily answer particular research questions, it is quite necessary to combine both qualitative and quantitative data. Secondly, such design allows for the possibility to analyze data qualitatively and quantitatively (Creswell, 2012). On the one hand, the researcher can easily obtain numbers and percentages that can be statistically analyzed, tabulated and which can describe the frequency and occurrence of formative assessment practices and challenges of a large group of participants. On the other hand, the researcher can obtain words and themes elicited from interviews as well as different perspectives, which can ultimately be used to provide a complex picture of the issue. Thirdly, the researcher strongly believes that the nature of the topic being undertaken necessarily requires employing a mixed method design. This is because one single type of research would not fairly be ample to address the current research problem and answer the research questions.

5.2 Context of the Study

5.3 Participants

5.3.1 Population or Sample Description

The total number of participants in this study is 98 Moroccan EFL teachers from Agadir region, the South of Morocco; 92 were given a questionnaire, 15 were interviewed. Nine of them have already been given a questionnaire. The number of male teachers is 76 representing almost 78% of the total number, and the number of female teachers is 22 representing 22%. They all vary in their teaching experiences as can be seen in Table 1. As it is clearly displayed, the maximum year

of teaching experience is 17 while the minimum is 1 year. There are 10 teachers with one year of experience, representing approximately 11%. While, there is only one teacher with 17 years of experience. The mean teaching experience of participants is 6.66 years and the median age is 6 years. Since these values for the mean and the median are very closely similar, this shows that the data is not skewed towards one end of the scale.

Table 1
Statistics of teaching experience

Valid	98
Mean	6.66
Median	6.00
Mode	8
Minimum	1
Maximum	17

With respect to the process of selecting participants, a mixture of snow-ball and purposive sampling has been used. According to Creswell (2012), Snowball sampling requires the researcher to ask participants to identify others to become members of the sample. The implementation of such approach to sampling was influenced by so many factors. Among them are the characteristics and the availability of the target population. The researcher's limited access to a large number of participants imposed to purposively identify 30 participants and ask them to hand in/send the questionnaire to others whom they know and believe they are willing to co-operate.

The selection of participants for semi-structured interviews was based on purposive sampling. According to Creswell (2012), the criterion for choosing purposive sampling is based on the belief that participants are information rich. The researcher purposefully selected 15 participants who have an average teaching experience and which he believed can allow for a great learning about and understanding of the issue being studied.

5.4 Data Collection: Instrumentation and Procedure

5.4.1 Instrument

5.4.1.1 Questionnaire

As mentioned previously, the overall aim of this study is to bring to light the classroom formative assessment practices being currently undertaken by Moroccan EFL teachers and to identify the major challenges that impede such practices. This was achieved by administering a questionnaire which specifically aimed at obtaining some facts from each participant's practical perspective with respect to their formative assessment practices and challenges. Denscombe (2003) stated that "information from a questionnaire tends to fall into two broad categories – facts and opinions" (p.146).

The questionnaire, in this study, was deliberately adopted for multiple practical considerations. Firstly, previous research on teachers' formative assessment

practices involved questionnaire (Bagley, 2008; Hernandez, 2012; Kuze & Shumba, 2011; Wheatley, 2015). Secondly, it can be used with large numbers of subjects, and it can obtain information that is relatively easy to tabulate and analyze (Richards, 2011; Vanderstoep & Johnston, 2009). Thirdly, besides the easiness of coding data statistically, a questionnaire "tends to be more reliable because it is anonymous, it encourages greater honesty, it is economical in terms of time and money, and there is the possibility that it may be mailed" (Cohen et al., 2000, p.269).

The questionnaire subsumed five sections. It also comprised two types of questions: twenty six closed questions and one open-ended question (Appendix 1). In closed questions, five possible answers were suggested and participants had to choose one single answer. Such questions were employed to collect data about participants' formative assessment practices and challenges. In open-ended questions, participants had to answer one question in an unstructured manner. Such a question was employed to assist the researcher obtain spontaneous in-depth information. Denscombe (2003) stated that "open-ended questions are advantageous since the information encapsulated in the responses is more likely to reflect the richness and the complexity of views held by respondents" (p.156).

It is worth-mentioning that the design of the questions in both questionnaire and semi-structured interview was closely related to the findings of the literature on formative assessment. Some questions regarding the use of formative assessment practices were drafted based on practices identified by Black et al. (2004) and Volante & Beckett (2011). Questions regarding the challenges that encounter teachers were developed based on the study of Lee, Feldman & Beatty (2012). It is also worth noting that the design and the structure of Likert scale questions on the questionnaire were based on Lee, Feldman & Beatty (2012).

5.4.1.2 Semi- Structured Interview

In order to fully understand Moroccan EFL teachers' formative assessment practices and challenges, a semi-structured interview was conducted with 15 participants (9 of them have already been given the questionnaire). According to Kothari (2004), a semi-structured interview is different from structured and unstructured interviews. In structured interview, "the researcher follows a rigid procedure laid down, asking questions in a prescribed form" (p. 98). In unstructured interview, "the researcher is characterized by a flexibility of approach to questioning and the interviewer is allowed great freedom to ask" (p. 98). Semi-structured interview is neither structured nor unstructured and it is more flexible. The semi-structured interview enabled the researcher to gather in-depth understanding of teachers' formative assessment and expanded the range of challenges.

The semi-structured interview was selected, since a

completely structured interview may have been overly confining to gather in-depth qualitative information. Addedly, an entirely unstructured interview might not have been able to yield the desired data because it might have led to the loss of focus (Kothari, 2004). Therefore, the semi-structured was employed because of the belief that it is very flexible and that the researcher can control the flow of the interview to eventually support and inform data that the questionnaire already produced.

The fifteen semi-structured interviews took approximately 19 minutes each. In each interview, participants were asked a range of general open-ended questions that were written down on the interview protocol (Appendix 2), and which were related to their formative assessment practices and challenges, as well as more specific questions related to specific details about implementing each formative assessment practice. Sample questions included:

Does the need to finish the curriculum restrict your formative assessment practices? If yes, can you elaborate?

Are students motivated during formative assessment activities?

As a teacher, how would you describe school culture?

5.4.1.3 Validity of the Instrument and Piloting the Instrument

Denscombe (2003) stated that detailing is highly required to design an effective questionnaire. If the questionnaire is not adequately designed, there is a huge possibility that the internal validity is likely to be affected. Creswell (2012) pointed out that ambiguity and imprecision in a questionnaire design might lead to a remarkable misinterpretation or result in various interpretations by participants. Subsequently, the questionnaire no longer measures what is designed to measure.

To maximize internal validity, the researcher piloted the questionnaire prior to its distribution. The goal was to intentionally assure the appropriateness and clarity of the items, and to spot out potential problems that might have threatened the validity of data. The researcher deliberately chose five participants to fill in the questionnaire. Participants who were piloted expressed their concerns about certain unclear acronyms that were used in the questionnaire, simply because they were not mentioned in the questionnaire. Some questions were reported to be comprehensive, ambiguous and vague. Participants' feedback allowed clarifying certain statements, organizing and ordering some of the closed questions, and discarding some questions. Some of the expressions were further modified and re-written.

Based on their feedback and suggestions, several items were paraphrased, re-written or replaced with meaningful ones. Examples of the items that have been modified are presented below:

FA was re-written as formative assessment.

FAPs was re-written as formative assessment practices.

How often do you employ formative feedback? was re-written into five other detailed statements. Each statement is followed by five suggestions (always, often, sometimes, rarely, and never). Examples of such statements are: I provide students with feedback, I..... provide clear feedback, I..... provide timely feedback, Iprovide specific feedback, I..... allow students to dialogue after the provision of feedback.

As regards administering the questionnaire, the researcher employed three approaches to deliver the questionnaire to the participants. The first approach involved the researcher, himself, personally handing over a hard copy to the available participants to fill it in and receive it as soon as they finished. The second approach involved the researcher sending a Google drive soft copy via G-mail to the participants who have shown consent to collaborate but were distant in the instant of collecting data. The third approach involved the researcher asking some participants to submit the questionnaire to others in person.

5.5 Data Analysis: Measures and Procedure

Since the study was grounded on mixed method design, the process of analyzing data followed two different approaches: qualitative and quantitative. The open-ended questions in the questionnaire and the interview questions were analyzed qualitatively, whilst the closed questions in the questionnaire were analyzed quantitatively.

5.5.1 Questionnaire Analysis

Provided the descriptive nature of the current study and the kind of data collected, it is very obvious that the analysis of data will entirely depend on frequencies and percentages. Closed questions in the questionnaire were analyzed using the most widely available statistical software, SPSS. The first step in the analysis was coding the data. Each closed question represented a variable and each variable had a couple of items. Next in order, items were assigned a numerical value. For instance: (Always = 5, often = 4, sometimes = 3. Public = 1, individual = 2, written as 1, oral as 2, weaknesses = 1, strengths = 2, both = 3, not a barrier = 1, small barrier = 2, moderate barrier = 3, large barrier = 4). A database was set and data were entered.

Some data were analyzed using percentages and measures of central tendency to fully describe participants and represent variations among them in terms of gender and teaching experience, while other data were analyzed using descriptive statistics such as cross-tabulation and frequencies. The researcher chose both tables and graphs to visually represent the findings. Some of the data were presented in figures so that the trends could be seen more easily. Some data were presented in tables for easy comparisons.

5.5.2 Interview Analysis

The fifteen semi-structured interviews that were previously conducted during the data collection phase yielded a huge amount of qualitative information. Although it was time consuming, the researcher himself chose to transcribe the recorded material to be au formative assessment it with the interviews. The analysis of such information orderly followed four inter-related steps that were recommended by Creswell (2012).

The first step was preparing and organizing the data. This step involved storing and ordering the recorded materials by amount. Next in order, each individual material was transcribed into text data. Each material yielded a certain number of pages. The second step was exploring and coding the data. This step involved reading the whole materials several times so as to make a general sense of it. On the margins and the sides of each material, concepts and short phrases were written. After this, each material was coded. This involved the use of labels to describe parts of the material (sentences and paragraphs).

The third step was coding the data. This step involved the use of codes to build and develop themes that represent larger meanings. Subsequently, themes were reduced and organized. The fourth step was representing and reporting the data. This step involved creating a table to visually represent the major findings of the interview. A narrative discussion was followed that summarized, in details, the major findings from data analysis. The representation of data was supported by quotes mentioned by participants.

Table 2
Gender feedback provision Cross-tabulation

		Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Feedback provision			Total
					Often	Always		
Gender	Male	F 0	4	16	12	38	70	
	%	0%	67%	89 %	67%	76%	76 %	
	Female	F 0	2	2	6	12	22	
	%	0%	33%	11 %	33 %	24 %	24%	
Total %		F 100%	0	6	18	18	50	92
			100 %	100 %	100%	100%	100%	

Table 3
The provision of specific and clear feedback

The provision of specific feedback		
	Frequency	Percentage
Never	3	3.3%
Sometimes	14	15.2%
Often	2	2.2%
Always	73	79.3%
Total	92	100%
The provision of clear feedback		
	Frequency	Percentage
Never	3	3%
Often	8	9%
Always	81	88%
Total	92	100%

6. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the study show how Moroccan high school EFL teachers understood Formative assessment practices and the extent to which they applied them. The results are presented and discussed in accordance with the research questions. This section presents the major results and each question is followed by a discussion.

RQ 1: To what extent do Moroccan EFL high school teachers implement formative assessment practices such as questioning, teacher feedback, peer assessment, and self-assessment?

With respect to the frequency of teacher feedback, the analysis of data has revealed that the majority of teachers are committed to provide feedback. 50 participants reported that they always provide feedback to students. Eighteen participants reported that they often give feedback. Eighteen participants reported to sometimes give feedback. However, only 6 participants reported that they seldom provide feedback.

With regard to the provision of specific and clear feedback, the analysis of data has showed that the vast majority of teachers are committed to provide clear and specific feedback. From Table 2, one can clearly notice that 79.3% of them reported they always provide specific feedback to learners. One can also observe that 88% of teachers do give clear feedback.

As far as the timing of feedback is concerned, the analysis of data has showed an obvious disinclination of teachers to provide immediate feedback to students when they are assessed. As graph 1 clearly shows, 33% reported to often provide immediate feedback. Only 17% of teachers are always committed to give feedback. It is also obvious that the majority of teachers (approximately 43%) reported that they sometimes provide timely feedback to learners that obviously indicate that feedback is being given but not as timely as required.

Feedback might be delivered in public or individual forms, which is always dependent on teachers and the circumstances in which they teach. Graph 2 shows the way teachers choose to deliver feedback to students. As apparent, teachers tend to give public feedback more than individual one. Sixty five per cent of teachers tend to

deliver feedback publicly to learners while approximately 35% deliver it individually.

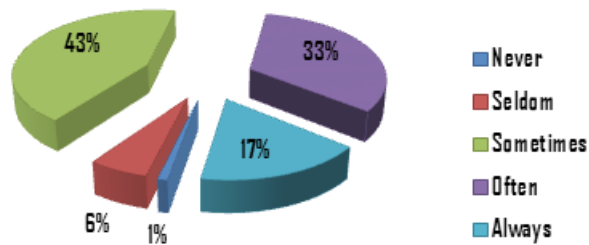


Figure 1
The provision of timely feedback

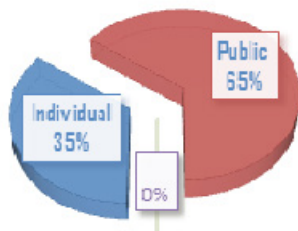


Figure 2
The percentage of the provision of public and individual

Table 4
The percentage of asking open-ended questions and giving wait-time

	Asking open-ended questions	Waiting for hands up	Giving wait-time
Always	63%	35%	34%
Often	18.5%	42%	58%
Sometimes	18.5%	16%	10%
Seldom	0%	7%	0%
Never	0%	0%	0%

Questioning, as mentioned before, incorporates both asking closed and open-ended questions and requires extended-wait time. It has been found that the majority of teachers (almost 63%) always ask open-ended questions. Yet, when it comes to extended wait-time, the majority of teachers do not give students adequate time to think and discuss. It is clear that while 34% reported to always give wait-time, 35% just wait for hands up.

Table 5
The percentage of peer-assessment implementation

	The use of Peer Assessment	Assuring students' involvement in Peer Assessment	Using rubrics in Peer Assessment
Always	29%	50%	59%
Often	25%	33%	33%
Sometimes	33%	13%	5%
Seldom	9%	4%	3%
Never	4%	0%	0%

The analysis of data related to peer assessment has showed that whilst almost one third of participants (29%) always implement peer assessment, the majority of

participants (33%) reported they sometimes employ it. It has also been observed that the majority of teachers (50%) always assure students' involvement in peer assessment, and 59% use rubrics in peer assessment.

Table 6
The percentage of self-assessment implementation

	The use of Self-Assessment	Assuring students' involvement Self-Assessment	Using rubrics in Self-Assessment
Always	25%	46%	61%
Often	27%	27%	33%
Sometimes	16%	25%	3%
Seldom	20%	2%	3%
Never	12%	0%	0%

With regard to self assessment, it has been found that the vast majority of teachers (32%) seldom and never implement it. It has also been shown that there is an insignificant percentage of teachers who always employ self assessment (25%).

In this study, the vast majority of teachers (74%) reported they "always and often" provide feedback. This is consistent with (Black et al., 2004; Hernandez, 2012) and very consistent with Volante & Beckett (2011) who indicated that 70% of teachers provide feedback without grades (feedback solely). This result is inconsistent with Kuze & Shumba (2011), who showed that feedback is not being given in South Africa due to limited assessment literacy. The mere continuous provision of feedback could mean that Moroccan EFL teachers overly realize the significance of feedback, or that the context where they teach includes low-achievers with low English proficiency, and thus requires careful scaffolding towards the main objective of instruction.

It was also found that 97% provide clear feedback and 88% provide specific feedback. This is consistent with Shute (2008) who pointed that for feedback to be effective, it should be understandable and specific. It should determine the things that are wrong and indicates ways to improve them.

Despite providing clear and specific feedback, it was clearly shown that participants do not provide immediate feedback. Only 17% are always committed to giving immediate feedback. This result, however, completely contradicts (Black & Wiliam, 1998a; Black & Wiliam, 1998b; Stuart, 2004; Shute, 2008; Irons, 2008) who emphasized the importance of giving immediate feedback, and quite concurs with Bagley (2008) who showed that teachers provide only summative feedback to learners. Immediate feedback means feeding students back right after they mistakenly respond to an item or a problem or in the case of summative feedback right after the test or quiz.

In this study, 65% reported to give public feedback in comparison with 35% that reported to give individual feedback. The variation among teachers in terms of the

way of presenting feedback is likely to happen due to multiple factors. First, teachers use individual feedback, perhaps because they want to help each single low-achieving student understand his or her weakness in depth. Second, teachers may recognize that problems probably vary from one student to another and that to meet such variant needs, individual feedback needs to be employed. On the other hand, teachers employ public feedback because they probably want to draw all students' attention to the mistake. Second, teachers may notice that learners make the same mistake over and over. Third, teachers may want to increase learners' involvement in the class, improve their pronunciation and develop their communicative skills through engaging them in an oral discussion (Camp, 2010).

The social constructivist perspective assumes that cognitive development, in general, and language learning, in particular, are promoted through social interaction. One of the most notable theoretical assumptions of the constructivist approach is that learning is an active and constructive process and that learners are diverse and inherently social (Vygotsky, 1978). Therefore, questioning is very important.

In this study, 63% reported they always use open-ended questions. This result contradicts that of Gall (1970) and Black et al. (2004), who indicated that the majority of questions teachers asked are closed and typically recall memorized facts. Yet, it is consistent with Chu et al. (2012), who found that teachers asked more than 66% of open-questions. It has been shown that 34% of participants give wait-time before students answer questions while

35% wait just for hands up. It is very obvious that the percentage of teachers who only wait for hands up (35%) is higher than the percentage of teachers who give wait-time (34%). The implication here is that effective teacher questioning is quite being hindered by inadequate wait-time. This is somewhat consistent with Chu et al. (2012) who found that teachers waited less than 2.5 seconds.

The inadequate wait-time also implies that there is a huge emphasis on a teacher centered approach. EFL learners, when responding to questions, may need some time to think and reflect. To fully understand and respond to the question, learners might be involved in a cognitive and meta-analysis process that requires time and effort.

With regard to peer assessment and self-assessment, only 25% of teachers reported to always use self assessment. Almost 32% reported they rarely and never employ self assessment. This result hugely contradicts that of Volante & Beckett (2011) and quite agrees with that of Herman, Osmondson & Silver (2010). The data disclosed that the majority of teachers (33%) sometimes experienced peer assessment. This is quite similar to the result obtained by Volante & Beckett (2011), who showed that teachers found peer assessment very difficult to properly implement.

Obviously, there is a clear mismatch between research recommendations and teachers practices, which is manifested in the mere low frequency of both self-assessment and peer assessment. Such mismatch can possibly be explained by the fact that teachers face several challenges that limit and hamper their implementation of formative assessment practices.

Table 7
The frequencies and percentages of the main challenges that impede teachers' implementation of formative assessment practices

Challenges/ criteria	Not a barrier	Small barrier	Moderate barrier	Large barrier
The lack of prep time to plan activities that integrate	9 9.8%	9 9.8%	30 32.6%	44 47.8%
Students' motivation to engage in the assessment process	54 58.7%	24 26.1%	11 12%	3 3.2%
The inability of learners to understand the assessment criteria	4 4.3%	4 4.3%	23 25%	61 66.4%
The lack of class time to implement Formative assessment practices	12 13%	30 32.6%	27 29.3%	23 25%
Inadequate training on formative assessment	24 26%	12 13%	20 21%	36 40%
Teachers' outclass commitments	12 13%	4 4.3%	5 5.4%	71 77.5%

RQ 2: What are the major challenges that impede such practices?

Table 7 shows that there are several challenges that hamper formative assessment practices. Teachers reported some of them to be major such as teachers' outclass commitments (77.5%), the inability of learners to understand the assessment criteria (66.4%), the lack of preparation time to plan activities that integrate Formative assessment practices (47.8%), and inadequate training on formative assessment (40%). It has also been observed that students' motivation to be engaged in the assessment process does not constitute a challenge.

Data from the interviews also revealed a number of constraints that affect the implementation of formative

assessment practices negatively. These constraints were gathered, analyzed and then arranged into the following categories.

Table 8
The major challenges that undermine teachers' implementation of formative assessment practices

The main challenges
Teacher workload
Time factors
Large classes
High-stakes testing/curriculum pressure
Limited teacher training
Students low level
Discouraging school culture

As regards teacher workload, participants reported that one of the disadvantages of formative assessment is that it leads to an extra burden. Teachers implementing formative assessment are required to keep track with students' learning throughout the whole academic year through the provision of detailed feedback and monitoring learners' work.

With respect to the challenge of large classes, participants reported that formative assessment activities are being affected by large classes. The latter do interfere with any effort to implement educational innovations such as extracurricular activities. A large number of students per classroom would make it hard for the teacher to monitor each individual learner. Teachers need to spend more time and attention in order to provide feedback. It is very stressful and sometimes impractical for teachers within the very limited time.

Participants, in particular, those who teach the second year baccalaureate, reported that the need to finish the curriculum and prepare students for high-stakes national exam affects their application of formative assessment practices. They expressed that such pressure causes them to take control of their students' learning experiences and deprive them from a wide range of learning opportunities. Addedly, participants revealed that every classroom exhibits a wide range of learners' differences. While some learners have a high proficiency level in English, others can barely speak and write it. This, subsequently, affects teachers' initiatives of using innovative ways of assessing learners.

It was also indicated by some participant interviewees that the testing culture that prevails in schools affects learners' academic performances. For example, school authorities do not actually uphold teachers' efforts to employ formative assessment strategies, which could eventually affect students' performance on summative tests. Furthermore, there is a very limited, if not absent interaction, among high school EFL teachers. They rarely exchange assessment-related knowledge and tools.

Teachers, in this study, find it quite hard to practice teacher feedback, self-assessment, and peer assessment. As it was indicated, there is an apparent tendency towards finishing the curriculum from the part of teachers that is simulated by high-stakes testing. This is very consistent with the results of (Bailey, 1999; Cheng, 1997; Feldman & Beatty, 2012) who demonstrated that preparing learners for accountability assessments hinders the use of formative assessment. Sometimes, the pressure put on teachers to finish curriculum leads to the reduction of feedback provision.

Limited teacher training in formative assessment, in particular, and educational assessment, in general, was identified as being an inhibiting factor. This finding is very consistent with that of (Shumba & Kuze, 2011; Stiggins, 2006) who pointed out that teachers have a limited

preparation of classroom assessments. The lack of teacher training in assessments makes teachers unable to design or identify activities that promote deep understanding. In addition to this, practices such as self-assessment and peer assessment require teachers to be assessment literate. Typically, a trained teacher is supposed to know how to design rubrics, quizzes, questions and tests that can yield evidence on students' learning and progress. Yet, being untrained teacher, so many learning opportunities will be lost in vain.

Teachers' out of class commitments was further explored qualitatively among high school teachers, PhD and MA holders, some of whom work in different institutions at the same time and overly overloaded with work which puts extra-burden on their shoulders. This had reduced the time that should be spent on formative assessment to the minimum. This finding is in consistence with that of Irons (2008) and Feldman & Beatty (2012), who pointed out that teachers have commitments, which are most of the time done at the expense of formative assessment activities and remedial work. This fact has to be reconsidered to grant formative assessment its pedagogical status and hence lead students' achievements towards positive conclusions.

The inability of learners to understand the assessment criteria was also reported to be a barrier, though teachers explain the assessment criteria. This probably explains the low frequency of peer assessment and self-assessment. This result amounts to that of Fontana & Fernandez (1994) and Iron (2008). This, in many respects, implies that learners lack basic training in peer assessment and self-assessment or that classroom subsumes a large number of low-achievers with a very low proficiency level which, as a consequence, make it difficult to implement such practices.

It was also reported that some schools do not encourage and promote teachers' cooperation as regards formative assessment in particular and assessment in general. This outcome is somewhat similar to that of Black & Wiliam (2005) who previously mentioned that the social setting of classroom, the community it forms, and the quality of interactions within that community, all have a powerful effect in such innovations as better classroom discourse and peer assessment and self-assessment. Based on the findings, it was revealed that there is no encouragement from the part of school staff (administrators, school managers, counselors, and other teachers) to enlighten teachers on how to effectively put formative assessment into practice. This questions the state of action research practice, discussion, experience sharing among professional language communities to help teachers exchange and get inspired as engaged practicing instructors.

The most notably and tremendously perplexing result is over-crowdedness. All participant interviewees

reported this challenge and the inhibition it creates when implementing formative assessment. Shah & Inamullah (2012) indicated that crowded classrooms not only make it difficult for students to concentrate on their lessons but inevitably limit the amount of time teachers spend on innovative teaching methods such as cooperative learning and group work. Even though Shah & Inamullah (2012) studied the effect of overcrowded classrooms on academic performance, it is apparent that this affects formative assessment use, as well.

CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

This section puts forward a number of pedagogical recommendations that aim at enhancing the previously existing formative assessment practices and raise Moroccan high school EFL teachers' awareness on the importance of formative assessment and suggesting ways of providing a systematic feedback to students.

To fairly maximize the expected outcome of formative assessment, EFL teachers need to consider the provision of immediate feedback. The latter helps learners quickly remedy their problems. The provision of delayed feedback, in formative activities, may decrease the efficiency of such assessments and demotivate learners to overcome their mistakes (Black & Wiliam, 1998b; Shute, 2008).

The provision of feedback is inevitable; as the majority of teachers have reported that sound implementation of effective feedback is sometimes impeded by contextual factors such as over-crowdedness. Therefore, EFL teachers can alternatively draw on techniques such as peer, public and oral feedback.

Under particular circumstances, the provision of written feedback should be considered as well though learners may vary in terms of aptitude, learning styles and cognitive skills. It is very likely that some students outperform others in the acquisition of knowledge. In this respect, EFL teachers, every now and then, have to draw on individualized written feedback to scaffold low-achievers and help them meet their needs.

There should be a shift to or at least a combination of teacher-centered and student-centered assessment approaches. Peer assessment and self-assessment have to be used by teachers because they are authentic formative assessment activities that help learners develop different psychological and social constructs such as co-operation, responsibility, self-reliance, self-regulation skills. Such constructs will definitely be needed in particular contexts outside the classroom. Bachman & Palmer (1996) label this context as TLU domain and it refers to the range of situations learners are expected to perform particular skills outside the test itself.

The role of EFL teachers should not be circumscribed to the provision of feedback, but also educating learners on how to assess themselves, their peers, use evidence

from self-assessment and peer assessment to adapt learning, use rubric, and teach students how to share their thinking in a collaborative way.

Teacher training on formative assessment is highly recommended. There should be a shift from the focus on the theoretical assumptions to the practice of assessment inside the training centers. Sufficient opportunities must be given to teachers to enable them acquire a practical knowledge of assessment. It is critical to develop teachers' assessment literacy, and efforts must target developing teachers' knowledge of the theoretical constructs that define assessment tasks, their design, their purpose and their implementation before undertaking any professional work. Even in-service teachers, who have not had the chance to be trained, should be engaged in professional development, short-term trainings and practical workshops on the theoretical grounding of assessment, its standards, standardized practices, internal mechanisms, impacts on the teacher's practices and accountability, students' achievements and accountability and the system and societal accountability measures.

RESEARCH IMPLICATIONS

Based on the current study, multiple issues further emerged and which are worth investigating. Such issues are related to formative assessment literacy and knowledge. The current research has investigated high school EFL teachers' Formative assessment practices and challenges. However, it is highly recommended to study teachers' knowledge, understanding and conceptions of formative assessment. Further research in this area would yield significant data about whether EFL teachers are knowledgeable and have a microscopic understanding of Formative assessment practices or not.

Furthermore, to assure that formative assessment is used by all EFL teachers, and to ascertain its efficacy on students' learning. It would also be so useful to study teachers' formative assessment practices on a large scale. The current research addressed these issues within a limited geographical space. This, in effects, yielded space-based data. However, more informative data would have been elicited and taken into account if a large area was investigated.

CONCLUSION

Whilst current educational research continually inform instructional practices through implementing different formative assessment activities to uphold and monitor students' learning, this study has actually revealed that not all Formative assessment practices are frequently used by Moroccan high school EFL teachers. First, while the majority of teachers reported to always give specific and clear feedback, they reported they sometimes give

immediate feedback. Second, it has shown that effective questioning is being affected by limited wait-time. Third, it has shown that the use of self-assessment and peer assessment was quite limited, not all of teachers always implement them. It has also shown that teachers experience a number of restrictions (time, limited training, out-class commitments, inability of learners to explain the assessment criteria, teachers' workload, students' low level, large classes, discouraging school culture, high stakes tests and curriculum pressure) that render the implementation of formative assessment somewhat difficult. The vast implication is that formative assessment is being affected by unnumbered challenges, which requires an urgent interference from policy makers, educational officials and other stakeholders. A number of suggestions were put forward to optimize formative assessment practices in high school EFL context.

REFERENCES

- Andrade, H. L., & Gregory, J. C. (2010). *The handbook of formative assessment*. New York: Routledge.
- Andrade, H. L., Du, Y., & Wang, X. (2008). Putting rubrics to the test: The effect of a model, criteria generation, and rubric-reference self-assessment on elementary school. *Educational Measurement: Issues and Practice*, 15(2), 3-13.
- Andrade, H. L., Ying, D., & Kristina, M. (2010). Rubric-referenced self-assessment and middle school students' writing. *Assessment in Education*, 17(2), 199-214.
- Bachman, L. F., & Palmer, A. S. (1996). *Language testing in practice: Designing and developing useful language tests*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Bagley, S. S. (2008). High school students' perceptions of narrative evaluations as summative assessment. *American Secondary Education*, 36(3), 15-32.
- Bailey, K. (1999). *Washback in language testing*. TOEFL Monograph Series. Princeton, NJ: Educational Testing Service.
- Black, P. (2000). Research and the development of educational research. *Oxford Review of Education*, 26(3), 407-418.
- Black, P., & Wiliam, D. (1998a). Assessment and classroom learning. *Assessment in Education*, 5(1), 7-74.
- Black, P., & Wiliam, D. (1998b). Formative assessment: Raising standards. *School Science Review*, 80(291), 39-46.
- Black, P., & Wiliam, D. (2005). Changing teaching through formative assessment: Research and practice. The King's-Medway-Oxfordshire Formative assessment Project. *English Literature Review*, 223-240.
- Black, P., Harrison, C., Lee, C., Marshall, B., & Wiliam, D. (2004). Working inside the black box: Assessment for learning in the classroom. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 9-20.
- Black, P., Harrison, C., Lee, C., Marshall, B., & Wiliam, D. (2003). *Assessment for learning: Putting it into practice*. Berkshire, England: Open University Press.
- Bobby, Z., Koner, B. C., Sridhar, M. G., Nandeesh, H., Renuka, P., Setia, S., & Asmathulla, S. (2007). Formulation of questions followed by small group discussion as a revision exercise at the end of a teaching module in biochemistry. *Biochemistry and Molecular Biology Education*, 35(1), 45-48.
- Boud, D. (1989). The Role of assessment in students grading. *Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education*, 14(1), 20-30.
- Boud, D., & McDonald, B. (2003). The impact of self-assessment on achievement: The effects of self-assessment training on performance in external examinations. *Assessment in Higher Education*, 10(2), 209-220.
- Boud, D., Ruth, C., & Jane, S. (2006). Peer learning and assessment. *Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education*, 24(4), 413-426.
- Brindley, C., & Susan, S. (2006). Peer assessment in undergraduate programmes. *Teaching in Higher Education*, 3(1), 79-90.
- Brookhart, S. M. (2013). *How to use and create rubrics for formative assessment and grading*. Alexandria: the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
- Brown, H. D. (2004). *Language assessment: Principles and classroom practices*. New York: Longman.
- Buck, G. A., & Amy, E. T. (2009). Preparing teachers to make the formative assessment process integral to science teaching and learning. *Journal of Science Teacher Education*, 20(5), 475-494.
- Butler, S. A., & Hodge, S. R. (2001). Enhancing student trust through peer assessment in physical education. *Physical Educator*, 58(1), 30-42.
- Camp, C. L., et al. (2010). Comparative efficacy of group and individual feedback in Gross Anatomy for promoting medical student professionalism. *Anatomical Sciences Education*, 3, 64-73.
- Chan, C. Y., & Shui-Fong, L. (2010). Effects of evaluative feedback on students' self-efficacy in learning. *Instructional Science*, 38(1), 37-58.
- Cheng, L. (1997). How does washback influence teaching? Implications for Hong Kong. *Language and Education*, 11(1), 38-54.
- Cho, H. Y., et al. (2012). Analysis of questioning technique during classes in medical education. *BMC Medical Education*, 12(39), 1-7.
- Clark, I. (2012). Formative assessment: Assessment is for self-regulated. *Educational Psychology Review*, 24(2), 205-249.
- Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K. (2000). *Research Methods in Education*. London: Routledge Flamer.
- Creswell, J. W. (2012). *Educational research: Planning, conducting, and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research*. Boston: Pearson Education.
- Creswell, J. W., & Clark, P. V. L. (2011). *Designing and conducting mixed methods research*. 2nd Edition, Sage Publications, Los Angeles.
- Crooks, T. J. (1988). The impact of classroom evaluation practices on students. *Review of Educational Research*, 58(4), 438-481.

- Dayal, H. C., & Lingam, I. L. (2015). Fijian teachers' conceptions of assessment. *Australian Journal of Teacher Education, 40*(8), 42-58.
- Denscombe, M. (2003). *The Good research guide for small-scale social research projects*. Maidenhead: Open University Press.
- Etemadzadeh, A. & et al. (2013). The role of questioning technique in developing thinking skills: The Ongoing Effect on Writing Skill. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences, 70*, 1024-1031.
- Everhand, C. J., & L., Murphy. (2015). *Assessment and autonomy in language learning*. USA: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Fisher, D., & Frey, N. (2007). *Checking for understanding: Formative assessment techniques for your classroom*. Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. Alexandria, VA.
- Fontana, D., & Fernandes, M. (1994) Improvements in mathematics performance as a consequence of self-assessment in Portuguese primary school pupils. *British Journal of Educational Psychology, 64*, 407-417.
- Forbes, E. W. (2007). *Improving the knowledge and use of formative assessment: A case study of a model of formative assessment in a K-3 science curriculum*. (University of Delaware). ProQuest Dissertations and Theses, Retrieved from <http://ezproxy.msu.edu/login?url=http://search.proquest.com/docview/304859992?accountid=12598>.
- Frey, N., & Fisher, D. (2011). *The formative assessment action plan: Practical steps to more successful teaching and learning*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD.
- Gall, M. D. (1970). The use of questions in teaching. *Review of Educational Research, 40*, 707-721.
- Gardner, H. (2004). *The Unschooled mind: How children think and how school should teach*. New York: basic books.
- Ghaicha, A. (2016). Theoretical framework for educational assessment: A synoptic review. *Journal of Education and Practice, 7*(4), 212-231.
- Ghaicha, A., & Ait Taleb, A. (2016). Investigating the effectiveness of peer reviewing in a Moroccan University EFL writing Class. *Higher Education of Social Science, 11*(5), 1-12.
- Goodrich, H. (1997). Understanding rubrics. *Educational Leadership, 54* (4), 14-17.
- Harlen, W., & Crick, R. D. (2003). Testing and Motivation for Learning. *Assessment in Education: Principles, Policy & Practice, 10* (2), 169-207, DOI: 10.1080/0969594032000121270
- Harlen, W., & Deakin, C. R. (2002). A systematic review of the impact of summative assessment and tests on students' motivation for learning. *Research Evidence in Education Library, 1*. London: EPPI-Centre, Social Science Research Unit, Institute of Education.
- Hattum-Janssen, V., & Fernandes, J. M. (2012). *Peer feedback: quality and quantity in large groups*. 40th SEFI Conference, 23-26 September 2012, Thessaloniki, Greece.
- Herman, J. L., Osmundson, E., & Silver, D. (2010). Capturing quality in formative assessment practice: Measurement challenges. CRESST Report 770. National Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards, and Student Testing. Retrieved from <http://www.cse.ucla.edu/products/reports/R770>.
- Hernandez, R. (2012). Does continuous assessment in higher education support students learning?. *Higher Education, 64*, 489-502.
- Hoetker, J., & Ahlbrand, W. P. (1969). The persistence of the recitation. *American Educational Research Journal, 6*, 145-167.
- Irons, A. (2008). *Enhancing formative assessment and feedback*. London: Routledge.
- Kothari, C.R. (2004). *Research methodology: Methods and techniques* (2nd ed.), New Age International Publishers, New Delhi.
- Kuze, M. W., & Almun, S. (2011). An investigation into formative assessment practices of teachers in selected schools in Fort Beaufort in South Africa. *Journal of Social Science, 29*(2), 159-170.
- Kuze, M. W., & Almun, S. (2011). An investigation into formative assessment practices of teachers in selected schools in Fort Beaufort in South Africa. *Journal of Social Science, 29*(2), 159-170.
- Lee, H., A., Feldman., & Beatty, L. D. (2012). Factors that affect science and mathematics teachers' initial implementation of technology-enhanced formative assessment. *Journal of Science Education and Technology, 21*(5), 523-539.
- Lucking, R. A. (1976). A study of the effects of a hierarchically-ordered questioning technique on adolescents' responses to short stories. *Research in the Teaching of English, 10*(3), 269-276.
- Lucking, R. A. (1976). A study of the effects of a hierarchically-ordered questioning technique on adolescents' responses to short stories. *Research in the Teaching of English, 10*(3), 269-276.
- McDonald, B. (2007). Self-assessment for understanding. *The Journal of Education, 188*(1), 25-40.
- Messick, S. (1996). Validity and washback in language testing. *Language Testing, 13*(3), 241-256.
- Ochanji, M. (2000). Rethinking the role of the science teacher: Eschewing standardized testing in formative assessment vor of authentic assessment. *The Science Teacher, 67*(5), 24-27.
- Ofsted (2008). *Assessment for Learning: the Impact of National Strategy Support*. London: Ofsted. Retrieved from <http://dera.ioe.ac.uk/9309/>.
- Ohlsen, T. M. (2007). Classroom assessment practices of secondary school members of NCTM. *American Secondary Education, 36*(1), 4-14.
- Popham, W J (1987). The Merits of measurement-driven instruction. *Phi Delta Kappan, 68*, 679-682.
- Richards, J. C. (2001). *Curriculum development in language teaching*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Ross, A. J., Anne, H., and Carol, R. (2002). Student self-evaluation in grade 5-6 mathematics effects on problem-solving achievement. *Educational Assessment, 8*(1), 43-58.

- Ross, J. A., & Michelle S. (2008). Self-assessment in a technology-supported environment: the case of grade 9 geography. *Assessment in Education*, 15(2), 183-199.
- Ruiz-Primo, M. A., & Maria, E. F. (2006). Informal formative assessment and scientific inquiry: exploring teachers' practices and student learning. *Educational Assessment*, 11(3&4), 205-235.
- Shah, J., & Inamullah, H. M. (2012). The impact of overcrowded classroom on the academic performance of students at secondary level. *International Journal of Research in Commerce, Economics and Management*, 2(6), 9-12.
- Shohamy, E. (2001). *The power of tests: A critical perspective on the uses of language tests*. London: Pearson.
- Shute, J. V. (2008). Focus on formative feedback. *American Educational Research Association*, 78(1), 153-189.
- Stevens, J. J., & Aleamoni, L. M. (1985). The use of evaluative feedback for instructional improvement: A longitudinal perspective. *Instructional Science*, 13(4), 285-304. <https://doi.org/10.1007/BF00117573>
- Stiggins, R., (2006). *Balanced assessment systems: Redefining excellence in assessment*. Portland, OR: Educational Testing Service.
- Vanderstoep, S.W. & Johnston, D.D. (2009). *Research methods for everyday life blending qualitative and quantitative approaches*. Jossey-Bass, San Francisco.
- Volante, L., & Beckett, D. (2011). Formative assessment and the contemporary classroom: Synergies and tensions. *Canadian Journal of Education*, 34(2), 239-255.
- Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind in society*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Weathly, L., et al. (2015). Feeding back to feed forward: Formative assessment as platform for effective learning. *Kentucky Journal of Higher Education*, 3(2), 1-29.
- Wen, M. L., & Tsai, C. C. (2006). University students' perceptions of and attitudes towards (online) peer assessment. *Higher Education*, 51(1), 27-44.