

ANALYZING FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT PRACTICES OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHERS IN PAKISTAN

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ABSTRACT

Formative assessment is one of the most prized methods in our post-industrial and global world. One of the most serious indictments of the traditional evaluative methods of spoken and written English is their essential inadequacies and incompatibilities with the present-day pedagogical trends. Formative assessment in a second language (SL) is, indeed, one of the most difficult and most significant tasks we engage our students in as human beings. It is a mixed method study which employs an evaluative research method. Taking the theoretical framework in mind, the data have been collected to analyze the formative assessment practices in two of the universities of Pakistan, i.e., the National University of Modern Languages and the University of Gujrat. A questionnaire has been constructed, piloted and later on administered to 134 teachers in two of the universities of Pakistan. All teachers of two universities teaching productive skills in various cities of Pakistan participated in the study. To validate the findings of the questionnaire, interviews have also been conducted. On the whole, the findings of the study display that there are many inadequacies in the formative assessment practices of the teachers, and thereby some suggestions have been put forwarded to amend the formative assessment practices of the teachers.

Keywords: Formative assessment, communicative method, productive skills, Pakistan.

INTRODUCTION

Assessment is quite indispensable in university education all around the world. It has two forms, i.e., formative assessment and summative assessment. Summative assessment is carried out at the end of term; whereas, formative assessment is carried out during instruction. It helps to understand how effective the instruction is. It further helps develop learners' capacities and set up their credentials; it also helps learners integrate into various segments of society to execute diverse roles (McWhorter, 2012).

Second language (SL) assessment is given supreme substance, making it significant to comprehend its niceties (Cummings & Wyatt-smith, 2009). English language teachers who regularly collect data from language tests and portfolios or observations need to make educated decisions about learners (Luoma, 2004). Furthermore, formative assessment institutes the core of assessment in SL education and is a fundamental part of undergraduate courses in Pakistan and all over the world (Shahzad, 2018). In other words, it helps teachers find out how well the learners have understood the course contents, and provides teachers with the information about the effectiveness of teaching methodologies (Airasian, 2005).

Chapelle & Brindley (2010) further maintains that formative assessment helps diagnose learners' difficulties and problems in speaking and writing skills. Therefore, once these problems are recognized, the SL teachers can design and implement corrective tasks to help resolve the learners' problems. Airasian (2005) enlists some kinds of formative/classroom assessment techniques such as homework assignments, observation, diaries/anecdotal records, portfolios and worksheets.

It is very vital for language teachers to prioritize communication over grammatical, structural, interactional and pronunciation mistakes. Teachers should emphasize the accomplishment of communicational tasks instead of accuracy and fluency all the time. Indeed, assessing different kinds of linguistic competencies of the productive skills is quite demanding and challenging, and teachers have to realize and get proficiency in doing all these things (Shahzad, 2018).

Since Airasian (2005), Luoma (2004) and McNamara (2000) mention that written and spoken language assessment is usually performance based, it assists SL teachers to collect formal information about learners' real performance. SL teachers get a chance to accumulate information from learners' actual performance such as essays that they write, or when they give a speech, co-operate in a pair/group discussion, etc. Hence if recorded formally, these performances could provide SL teachers with the data that they can use to pass objective judgements about the learners.

Statement of the Problem

Formative assessment of productive skills, such as speaking and writing, is of great significance in improving SL teaching and learning process these days. Writing and speaking skills are, indisputably, challenging and hard tasks to teach and assess, for they are multidimensional skills demanding an effective use of formative assessment techniques in classrooms to fully develop. Since writing and speaking skills are a social practice, they have a diversity of purposes and audiences, and necessitate incessant decision-making and problem-solving processes at various stages, which should be provided through formative assessment (Kachru & Nelson, 2011; Khan, 2012; Shahzad, 2018). They, moreover, entail policy-driven, systematic apparatus, which ought to make sense outside of academia. However, ineffective formative assessment may steer to a loss of motivation and interest among learners. As the importance of formative assessment in speaking and writing skills cannot be underrated, it has to be carried out in such a way that learners grow in speaking and writing skills academically, performing an unpredictable set of tasks. The research study analyzes the formative assessment practices of English language teachers in speaking and writing skills of BS (Hons) in English and MA English students of University of Gujrat (UoG), and the main and the regional campuses of National University of Modern Languages (NUML).

Rationale and Significance of the Study

Formative assessment of productive skills, i.e. speaking and writing is very essential for learners in their academic career to pursue their education. In Pakistan, English is one of the official languages, and learners are required not only to correspond in English, but also to prove their proficiency in English in such critical exams as the Central Superior Services (CSS), Provincial Public Service (PPS), International English Language Testing System (IELTS) or Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), etc. Their spoken and written communicative competence is measured through them. Taking these reasons into mind, universities like the National University of Modern Languages and the University of Gujrat, Gujrat have opened up English departments where teaching of speaking and writing skills is an essential component of their curriculum. However, when these learners go for further education or look for jobs in the market, their written and spoken language performance remains problematic and stands in substantial need of improvement. Hence, the researchers decide to scrutinize the formative assessment practices regarding the development of productive skills, i.e. speaking and writing.

This research article is expected to be valuable for SL learners and teachers. It may help them mend their present practices of formative assessment concerning productive skills. More precisely, it may help them improve the quality of their activities, assignments and the test tasks they create for formative assessment. The study is likely to extend teachers' repertoire of strategies for diagnosing students' speaking and writing problems, and providing feedback and responding to learners' requirements.

Research Questions

- Q1. How do English language teachers use formative assessment in their speaking and writing classes?
- Q2. What techniques do English language teachers manipulate to carry out formative assessment to improve teaching and learning process?

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Keeping in mind the critical thematic narration of literature review, formative assessment can be carried out in the following ways.

Diaries/Anecdotal Records

Learners should know about their progress in speaking and writing skills in their classrooms. Diaries/anecdotal records are valuable tools to assemble data and evaluate learners' progress through formative assessment. They assist teachers to have record of the learners' actual performance in the classroom. When learners demonstrate any significant behaviors during speaking and writing skills, these observations should be formally documented/recorded. For this purpose, a multiple observations should be made every day, reaching the final decision about the inclusion of the observation to be recorded and used later on as data. Though it is a tiresome job, the observations must be noted soon after the behaviour is consistently observed (Airasian, 2005). This is one of the ways to collect data for formative assessment.

Portfolios

Another technique used in formative assessment is the use of *portfolios*. They are widely used to gather formal information about learners' performance, showing their work and accomplishments over a period of time (O'Malley & Pierce, 1996). Portfolios help link assessment with instruction. Intentionally selected samples of the performance usually make their place in portfolios. They display learners' growth and development towards their goals, and teachers manipulate them to assess their learners' ongoing learning. Lastly, teachers use them to judge and grade the learners (Airasian, 2005). Once learners' reflections and performances are gathered, these are assessed on criteria which are specified by both teachers and learners (Burke, 2005; Weigle, 2002).

Observations

Observation is another technique for formative assessment. Burke (2005, p. 149) maintains that observation is "one of the effective tools" that helps teachers to find out "what learners can do", and what they require further. However, observations must be documented for assessment purposes (O'Malley & Pierce (1996). Observational checklists can be used to record the data that teachers collect on day-to-day basis. They help find out whether the learners demonstrate the observed trait of their language or not. Documentation of observational checklists or rubrics in productive skills can help note the presence or absence of a specific aspect of communicative competence of a learner. Moreover, while documenting the observations, the teacher should make a decision how s/he is going to assess it later on (O'Malley & Pierce, 1996).

Portfolio assessment, a form of formative assessment, shares varied characteristics with essay tests in evaluating writing performance. For example, they both help measure the components of written discourse such as content, syntax, accuracy, appropriateness, richness of vocabulary, etc. (Douglas, 2014; Hyland, 2003 & Weigle, 2002).

Criteria for Formative Assessment

Scoring criteria for assessing productive skills play an important role. Criterion is a set of procedures that the SL assessors stipulate prior to formative assessment. Not only do criteria help guide the graders to mark the productive skills easily and speedily, but also they make the whole process of formative assessment valid and reliable. Hence, the scoring criteria play an important role in carrying out the formative assessment of productive skills (Underhill, 1987; Weir, 2005). In fact, criteria also help guide teachers as well as learners to know what teachers are looking for in their speaking and writing tasks and what feedback teachers can provide to learners to improve their productive skills.

For these purposes, the constructs illustrated on the *Common European Framework of Reference* (CEFR, 2001) scale need to be commensurate with the syllabus and overall objectives of the course. The communicative competence constructs for the productive skills to be measured on the CEFR (2001, pp., 28-29) are as follows: *range, accuracy, content, pronunciation, fluency, rhetorical organization, coherence and mechanics*.

There exist three levels on the CEFR (2001) document of teaching, learning and assessment. It proposes teachers and examiners a general idea of what they ought to do for the learners, and what, in their turn, they should prepare to go through various language learning developmental stages from A1 to C2. Furthermore, the CEFR scale puts forward descriptors that demonstrate the particular criteria for

the SL teachers to assess the learners precisely for the construct under evaluation (Luoma, 2004; Weir, 2005). This way, standardization can be realized in the formative assessment procedures.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The researchers have employed a mixed-method research approach, i.e., quantitative and qualitative approach to carry out the research, and the research method is evaluative. A semi-structured questionnaire has been used to collect the data. It has been pilot-tested and Cronbach Alpha has been applied to confirm its reliability on SPSS (21 version). The reliability on Cronbach Alpha has been .91. The questionnaire has ten questions in all. It has eight closed-ended and two open-ended questions. Later on, a semi-structured interview has been employed to gather and validate the data amassed through the questionnaire. The quantitative data has been analyzed through SPSS and the qualitative through thematic analysis (Best & Kahn, 2003).

The researchers have collected the data from two of the universities of Pakistan, i.e. the National University of Modern Language (NUML) and its various campuses, and the University of Gujrat, Gujrat. These universities have been selected because they offer their students courses such as *essay writing* and *speaking skills*, i.e. productive skills in their BS English and M.A. English departments. Having taken permission from the Deans of the English departments, the participants were contacted. All the teachers teaching the courses of *essay writing* and *speaking skills* have been the population of the study. Since the population of the study has not been huge, all participants have been taken as the sample.

Participants (Sample)

Overall 134 teachers from various parts of Pakistan participated in the study and its representation is given below in Table 1. This table gives their demographic information. Moreover, 69 male and 65 female teachers participated in the study. The questionnaire has been administered to 150 participants and 134 returned the questionnaire. On the other hand, twenty two teachers volunteered to give interviews.

Table 1. Demographic information

<i>Location</i>	<i>Age</i>		<i>experience</i>	
	Frequency		Frequency	Frequency
<i>Islamabad</i>	61	under 30 y	36	Less than 5 y
<i>Lahore</i>	11	31-40 years	76	5-10 y
<i>Faisalabad</i>	8	41-50 years	15	11-15 y
<i>Multan</i>	8	over 50 years	07	16-20 y
<i>Peshawar</i>	13			Over 20 y
<i>Karachi</i>	10			
<i>Hyderabad</i>	5			
<i>Gujrat</i>	18			
<i>Total</i>	134		134	134

Data Analysis

This section of the research article presents the analysis of the data carried out analytically and submits the findings of the study. It has been predominantly a quantitative research study. The data, collected through a questionnaire, is analyzed below.

Data Analysis of the Questionnaire

The questionnaire has ten questions: five are related to writing skills and five to speaking skills. The data have been coded and put into the SPSS. The first item in the questionnaire is about how teachers keep *record of the classroom writing performance* of the learners. Record keeping of the learners' writing remains at the heart of SL teaching and learning process. Record keeping usually takes different forms such as folders, diaries and portfolios, and is an effective tool for trailing the individual learner's contribution over a period of time in the classroom (Airasian, 2005). The analysis of the item is represented below.

Table 2. Summary of Q 1. Record keeping

How do you keep the record of the classroom writing performance of the learners?			
	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
portfolio	12	9	9
diaries	17	12.7	12.7
observations	63	47	47
none of them	42	31.3	31.3
Total	134	100	100

Table 2 above reveals that 12 responders exploit *portfolios* to keep the record of their learners' writing performance, and 17 responders use *diaries* to keep track of the learners' writing performance. Further, 63 responders *observe* their learners' classroom writing performance, and 42 responders manipulate none of the techniques to keep record of the individual learner's performance, which shows that they give no importance to record keeping of the learners' formative performance.

The next item is about how many times a teacher *scores or marks a learner's classroom written work*. Scoring or grading learners' classroom work, in formative assessment, signifies giving them corrective feedback, which is usually given in the shape of codes, symbols, comments or grades. This feedback, in the form of comments, is usually given in the margin and learners are required to rectify their work in its light. There are many chances of learners' improvement in writing if the teacher grades their work, providing them feedback many times in a semester (Truscott, 2007). The analysis of the item is provided in Table 3 below.

Table 3. Summary of Q 2. Classroom performance of writing

How many times do you test learners' classroom performance in writing in a semester?			
	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
1 time	21	15.7	15.7
2 times	47	35.1	35.1
3 times	32	23.9	23.9
4 times and more	34	25.4	25.4
Total	134	100	100

Table 3 displays that 21 responders mark their learners' work *once* in a semester; 47 responders score their learners' work *twice* in a semester, and 32 responders, *thrice* in a semester. Moreover, only 34 responders maintain that they grade their learners' work *four or more* times in a semester. The data, in fact, demonstrate that almost 51% teachers assess their learners' work just once or twice in a semester, which, indeed, is not a good practice. If the learners' classroom performance is assessed properly and effectively, and corrective feedback is provided to them timely, there are many chances that the learners will perform better in final exams. It is also documented through interviews that the teachers usually grade their learners' writing assignments once or twice in a semester, signifying that formative assessment has not been given importance.

The next item in the questionnaire is about the *use of criteria* employed to grade the learners' classroom writing performance since criteria expounds in detail what precise skills or abilities such as range of vocabulary items, syntactic structures, fluency in writing, cohesion and coherence, etc. the teacher should look for in writing, and this way formative assessment's role in giving feedback can be prioritized. The analysis of the item is presented below.

Table 4. Summary of Q 3. Criteria for classroom writing performance

Do you use any criteria to test the classroom writing performance of the learners?			
	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Yes	88	65.7	65.7
No	33	24.6	24.6
no idea	13	9.7	9.7
Total	134	100	100

Table 4 above exhibits that 88 responders use *criteria* to score the classroom performance of the learners, whereas, 33 do not use any *criteria* to assess the classroom essay writing performance of the learners, and 13 have no idea about the *criteria* to be used to grade the classroom writing performance of the learners. This shows that 46 responders either do not use or have no idea about the criteria to be used to grade the learners, and it makes the whole process of assessment quite whimsical and subjective.

The next item has been about *rating scales*, used to grade the classroom writing performance of the learners. In language assessment, *rating scales*, in fact, elucidate the criteria against which decision is to be made about the quality of written discourse the learners have created. Rating scales further exemplify implicitly or explicitly the theoretical basis of test design and development, ensuring consistency and validity in language assessment (McNamara, 2000). The analysis of the item is presented below in Table 5.

Table 5 Summary of Q 4. Criteria for grading

What criteria do you use to grade the classroom performance of the learners?			
	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
holistic scales	26	19.4	19.4
analytical scales	37	27.6	27.6
primary trait	5	3.7	3.7
no idea	66	49.3	49.3
Total	134	100	100

Table 5 above displays that 26 responders exercise *holistic* scales to grade the classroom writing performance of the learners; whereas 37 use *analytical* scales to score the writing performance of the learners; and only five employ *primary trait* scales to measure the learners' classroom writing performance. On the other hand, 66 responders maintained that they have no idea about scales or criteria. This shows that almost half of the teachers do not have any particular criteria to measure the formative assessment of the learners, and those who use scales, in fact, do not have any idea about them. It is verified by the data collected through interviews, too. The last item on the questionnaire was about *feedback* on the writing assignments of the learners because feedback is an essential part of language teaching and learning. Timely and effective feedback on written assignments not only aids to give self-awareness and confidence to learners, but also offers motivation for further revision and writing. Corrective feedback in writing can be of logical ordering of ideas, supporting ideas and their appropriateness, known as higher-order feedback, and it can also be about words, phrases, grammatical structure and spellings, known as lower-order feedback. In short, it assists to recognize problem areas in learners' writing (Elbow, 2000). The analysis of this item is provided below in Table 6.

Table 6 Summary of Q 5. Feedback on written assignments

Do you give feedback on the writing assignments of the students?			
	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Yes	125	93.3	93.3
No	6	4.5	4.5
no idea	3	2.2	2.2
Total	134	100	100

Table 6 designates that 125 responders provide *feedback* to their learners on their writing assignments; contrarily, only six provide no feedback at all, and only three have no idea about it. Additionally when they were asked in interviews about the sort of *feedback* they provide to their learners, they responded differently and it is mostly about the linguistic items such as vocabulary, grammar and fluency in writing that they expounded.

The next items in the questionnaire relate to the formative assessment of speaking skills, which is also a part of productive skills. Hence, the first question is about the record keeping of the spoken language classroom performance of the learners.

Table: 7 Summary of Q 6 Record keeping of classroom performance

How do you keep the record of the classroom performance of the learners?			
	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Portfolio	11	8.2	8.2
Diaries/ anecdotal records	23	17.2	17.2
observations	72	54	54
None of these	28	21	21
Total	134	100	100

Table 7 above displays that more than half of the responders use observations which are never recorded. They, in fact, make mental notes. In interviews, some interviewees categorically told the researchers that they rely on observations and do not record them at all. It invalidates the whole process of formative assessment. If observations are not recorded, it becomes difficult for the teachers to remember who performed what and how to help improve the speaking skills of individual learners. The data also show that many responders do not use any of the techniques mentioned above for record keeping of the classroom performance; whereas, only a few of them employ portfolios and diaries for record keeping.

The next item is about how many times they evaluate the spoken language performance of the learners in a semester. Its result is shown in the table below.

Table 8 Summary of Q 7 Evaluation of spoken language performance

No of times you evaluate learners' spoken language performance in a semester			
	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
One Time	90	67	67
Two Times	17	13	13
Three Times	13	10	10
Four Times or more	14	10	10
Total	134	100	100

This table shows that most of the responders opt for formative assessment of the spoken language once in a semester which is not a good sign for the improvement of speaking skills. It appears from the data that it is the discretion of the teachers that how many times they want to assess the learners in a semester. Thus, only a few teachers assess the learners more than once in a semester. In fact, the results show that there is no organized and systematic way of assessing the learners during a semester. Their method of carrying out the formative assessment is subjective and unnatural.

The next item is about the criteria used to carry out the formative assessment of the learners. Its result is displayed below.

Table 9 summary of Q 8 Criteria for spoken language performance

Do you use criteria to evaluate the spoken language classroom performance of the learners?			
	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Yes	54	40.2	40.2
No	80	59.7	59.7

Total	134	100	100
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Fifty four responders say that they use criteria to mark or grade the spoken language performance of the learners, whereas 80 respondents state “no” against this option. The next question was about the rating scale or bands used to mark the spoken language classroom performance of the learners. Its results are shown below.

Table 10 summary of Q 9 Rating scales for classroom performance

What kind of rating scale do you use to evaluate the classroom performance of the learners?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
NR	67	50.0	50.0
Holistic Scales	13	8.8	8.8
Analytical Scales	28	23.5	23.5
Bands	12	5.8	5.8
If any other	14	11.7	11.7
Total	134	100.0	100.0

NR stands for ‘not responded’, and half the teachers did not respond to the question as in the previous question more than half of the teachers stated that they do not use any criteria at all. Those who have responded against the options, there exists no consistency in the answers. Moreover, when they were asked in the next question to name the scale, they could not answer the question. The results of the interviews also show that no scales of any kind whatsoever are used at the universities, but the responders did mention *pronunciation*, *fluency* and *grammatical structures* as criteria which they keep in their mind while carrying out the assessment of spoken language. Besides, they did point out that they look for the confidence and style of delivering the speech in the classroom.

In brief, having going through the results of the questionnaires administered to the teachers, we can say that their method of formative assessment does not match up with the criteria and standards set by any document like CEFR (2001) or any testing expert.

Data Analysis of the Interviews

Data analysis has been carried out keeping in mind the thematic analysis. Some of themes are: record keeping of the productive skills such as writing and speaking, criteria for scoring, and the kinds of rating scales.

Having taken the permission from the departments, the interviews were conducted with the volunteer teachers, and twenty of them agreed to be interviewed. According to the interviewees, most of the teachers used the technique of observation to assess the classroom performance of the learners, and these observations are not recorded at all. On the contrary, some of the interviewees pointed out that they do keep record of the learners’ classroom performance using diaries.

The next theme which emerged from the reading and re-reading of the answers was about “criteria for scoring” the speaking and writing skills of the learners. The data establish that most of the teachers particularly looked at the language of the learners. Hence, linguistic competence instead of communicative competence has been the focus of their attention. They graded the speeches and the essays by checking them for grammatical mistakes such as lexis, syntax, spelling and pronunciation, etc. Some of the respondents, however, did address the “content, ideas and organization” as well.

Regarding linguistic competence, responses included: “language should be formal and up-to-the mark”, “I specifically test topic, content, grammar of the essay written by students”, “clarity, ideas”, “sentence formation, neatness, organization of ideas”, “I have no comments”, “formulation and organization of ideas and grammar”, “vocabulary of the students”, “I test whether they know which type of essay they are to write or not”, “performances are measured in terms of attendance, discipline, classroom participation and presentation skills”, “pronunciation” etc. (Interview data)

These answers demonstrate that the teachers have their own internalized criteria. More often than not, the linguistic competences such as *pronunciation*, *grammar*, *spelling* and *punctuation* have been the focus of most of the teachers, and they keep them in mind while marking the assignments or speeches of the learners. Furthermore, it can be said that they test the knowledge of the learners.

The next question in the interview was how the teachers kept the record of the classroom performance of the learners. In this regard, some of the answers are reproduced here: “mental notes”,

“I keep the record of the students’ performance in mid-term exams”, “through their discussion in the class on a specific topic”, “we keep students’ test record”, etc. (Interview data)

The two open-ended questions in the questionnaire were also about how they keep the record of the learners’ performance and criteria they use to assess the learners. Here, some of the respondents did not give the answer and those who gave talked about linguistic competencies, and usually had their own subjective criteria to assess the performance of the learners in productive skills.

The questionnaires and interviews establish that there is, in fact, no formal record keeping of the learners’ classroom performance of writing and speaking skills. The result of the mid-term exam is merely and hurriedly shared with the learners and its record is kept by the teachers and the administrative staff. Further, we can say that the process of marking or grading the learners is very subjective and does not use any standard criteria set by any testing expert such as Bachman (1990), Bachman & Palmer (1996), McNamara (2000) and Luoma (2004).

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

Having analyzed the data collected through questionnaires and interviews, these are the findings of the study:

- Most teachers keep no record of the learners’ assignments and do not use portfolios or diaries.
- Teachers do not use any rating scales with rubrics to mark or grade the learners’ speaking and writing skills. In fact, they do not have any standard or well-framed document to grade the formative assessment of the learners.
- They focus on linguistic competencies of the learners, and they do not emphasize the communicative competence of the learners.

CONCLUSION

The study was conducted to assess the formative evaluative practices of the teachers in two of the universities of Pakistan. In this regard, the data were collected through questionnaires, and interviews were also conducted. The data display that the teachers have not been given any criteria to judge the classroom performance for writing and speaking skills. Most of the teachers had their own subjective, internalized and usually inadequate criteria. For the measurement of classroom performance, some teachers talked about the presentations and confidence during the presentations as criteria for writing and speaking skills; some just talked about the ideas; some talked about the tenses and structures, etc. Moreover, some of the teachers give more weight to ideas and content, and some of them privileged linguistic competence over communicative competence. Nobody talks about discursal aspects of writing and speaking. The data reveal that some of the teachers claimed to have been using holistic scales; some have been utilizing primary trait scales and some have been employing analytic scales, but the fact is that most of them do not have any idea about any of these scales and they do not use any of them with rubrics to score the learners’ skills. Moreover, instead of using portfolios or any sort of diaries to record the formative assessment, the data show that classroom presentations have been used to grade the learners. Keeping in mind the lacunas found in the formative assessment of the teachers’ practices, the following suggestions have been recommended:

- Communicative competence of the learners should be prioritized in productive skills.
- Record-keeping through diaries or portfolios should be carried out for formative assessment.
- Standard criteria as laid out in Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR, 2001) should be adopted for formative assessment, or a similar document should be developed to be used for formative assessment.

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