

# Primary School Teachers' Classroom-based Assessment Feedback Culture in English Language

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## ARTICLE INFO

### Article History:

Received 05.02.2018

Received in revised form

19.05.2018

Accepted

Available online 01.10.2018

## ABSTRACT

Classroom-based assessment feedback is considered pivotal for language learning especially for ESL, where it is used for instruction and daily chores. It is important for Communicative Language Teaching curriculum, where the emphasis is to engage the learner in an interactive fashion. Through classroom-based assessment feedback learners are scaffolded to new knowledge and skill in English language. As a result, teachers' classroom feedback could be important in enhancing the language of a learner, although the question of relevant and appropriacy looms up. It would be difficult for learners to process classroom-based assessment feedback that develops and improves their English, if there is no alignment between the objective of a lesson and feedback from the teaching input. This article is concerned with the culture of primary school teachers' practice of classroom-based assessment feedback in English-speaking Cameroon where the language is a school subject as well as it is used across the curriculum. The researcher sat through 30 different lessons as a non-participant observer. In addition, 100 pages of photocopies from children's English language exercise books of lessons observed were collected. A semi-structured interview was also conducted with teachers observed. From the analysis of data, it was shown that teachers most of the times made classroom-based assessment feedback culture of learning, not for learning. It was also indicated that teachers conflated the notions of assessment feedback, evaluation, and test. While teachers were aware of feedback but it was only on the surface, just like Continual Professional Development (CPD). Several factors appear to work against effective classroom-based assessment feedback culture feedback such as government policy on school assessment, inadequate teacher professional development support, difficult working conditions, and lack of knowledge base for different domains of feedback. The findings are discussed and implications drawn regarding appropriate classroom-assessment feedback culture both in national and similar international contexts for teachers, teacher trainers, school supervisors, and researchers.

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### Keywords:<sup>1</sup>

Classroom-based assessment, feedback, assessment culture, language development, scaffolding, ESL curriculum reform.

## INTRODUCTION

Formal education in Cameroon is influenced by the Western system which was one of the results of colonial rule (see Shu, 1982; Omodiaogbe, 1992). With independence the state of Cameroon adopted an education system that had erstwhile been introduced by Britain and France when they ruled both parts as Trust Territories of the League of Nations and later as Mandated Territories of the United Nations (Nwana, 2000; Johnson, 2000).

Due to mitigating circumstances, for instance, over 240 Home Languages (HLs), diverse socio-political perspectives, and peoples from a plethora of backgrounds, the country adopted English and French as languages of instruction, business, government, the law, and media (Alowbwede, 1998; Kouega, 1999; Kouega, 2002; Bobda, 2004). English-speaking Cameroonians, at school, are required to study the whole curriculum in English and study French as a second official language, while French-speaking Cameroonians also do the reverse. There exists no instruction in HLs, even though the necessity is stated in the country's constitution. In 1998 Law No. 98/004 of 14<sup>th</sup> April was passed organising the Cameroon educational system into two subsystems, English-speaking and French-speaking. Article 15 (2) states that "the two educational systems shall co-exist with either maintaining its specificity in methods of assessment and certification." English language, therefore, has a huge impact on the school progress, achievement, and outcome of the Anglophone primary school pupil in Cameroon. Probably pushed by the global changes that were taking place in the 1990s, including educational reforms in many sub-Saharan African countries, (see Chisholm and Leyendecken, 2008; Hardman et al., 2009; Tabulawa, 2009; Hardman, et. Al., 2009; Altinyelken, 2010a; Altinyelken, 2010b), an ELT curriculum was designed for English-speaking primary schools (*National Syllabuses for English-speaking Primary Schools in Cameroon*, 2000).

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The English syllabi cover the six years of primary schooling; it is a cross-curricular based syllabi with a mix of communicative (notional/functional) and structural aspects of English language teaching-learning. The general goals are stressed in the "Preamble" of the *National Syllabuses for English-speaking Primary Schools in Cameroon*, 2000, 1):The English-Speaking Cameroonian Primary School pupil after six years of schooling would be able to:

- communicate his/her feelings, ideas and experiences both orally and in writing, listen attentively to utterance, stories, news items, instructions, poems and songs, and respond correctly to them orally and in writing,
- communicate correctly his/her ideas, feelings and experiences orally,
- read and understand authentic documents,
- write correct sentences or/and texts,
- further his/her education,
- pass the FSLC [First School Leaving Certificate] and Common Entrance Examination
- integrate actively in society with ease,
- behave well individually and in a group.

It can be assumed that not only appropriate teaching strategies matter but more so the assessment techniques especially classroom-based if the purpose is for learning, rather than of learning (Stoynof, 2012). The syllabus is built on the Communicative Language Approach which should embed both fluency and accuracy in language use. Classroom-based assessment feedback is a strategy that the teacher can correct, support and guide learners in language acquisition, development and improvement through scaffolding.

### **Motivation for the Study**

I became interested in this study because pupils' English language progress, achievement, performance and outcome fell short of their academic level, despite a change in "policy" of assessment to "séquence". "Séquence" is planned continuous assessment which comes up at specific periods and dates during the school year and the cumulative score determines pupils' promotion to the next level. The English language syllabi provide opportunities for the development of language pedagogy that may be child-friendly, interactive, processed-oriented, and help pupils to become confident and independent language users. It was important to investigate the culture of feedback made by the teacher after classroom-based assessment. Observation of pupils' English language exercise books seem to indicate haphazard feedback culture which does not help in scaffolding learning and learners as implied in the "Preamble" to the syllabus.

In the present study context of ESL, feedback is assumed to be generic, entailing oral and written, even though much emphasis is laid on feedback made by teachers in pupils' exercise books after marking their work which might involve different fluency skills, and accuracy abilities. The focus in this study delimits itself to feedback or interaction underlying classroom-based assessment. Despite large literature and empirical studies on teacher feedback, very little has been done regarding ESL primary classroom-based assessment feedback (Hyland and Hyland, 2006; Ellis, 2009; Guenette, 2007; Stoynoff, 2012; Hollowel, 2011; Fagan, 2014; Akter, 2010; Rahman, et. al., 2011; Abbasnasab Sardareh and Saad, 2012). Due to lack of literature in the area educational and specific subject learning feedback is used to draw similarities or differences with teacher classroom-based assessment feedback culture or practice.

According to Sardareh (2016) feedback has many ways it is conceptualized. Askew and Lodge (2000) for example conceive feedback as a ping-pong game, some kind of gift. The behaviorists, Sardareh (2016) argues, perceive feedback as a gift to the pupils from the teacher and this hampers the development of interdependence or autonomy. Furthermore, the behaviorists' conceptualization of feedback, "encourages notions of failure/success, wrong/right." (p. 5). On the other hand, constructivists place learners at the center as knowledge constructors and feedback enhances a narrative that may add insights for reflection. However,

in this process as constructors of knowledge, the teacher still draws the agenda. Some constructivist voices have stressed the importance of effective feedback information, to tell the pupils where they are, where to proceed to, and how to take their learning ahead (Sadler, 2007; Hattie and Timperley, 2007). In the socio-cultural domain feedback is a sharing interaction between teachers and pupils, so it is viewed by Abbasnasab Sardareh and Saad (2012) as dialogic or a loop where there is mutual respect for all participants. Drawing from socio-cultural theory, also Fagan (2014, p. 46) cites Lantolf and Poehner (2014) who emphasize that learning originates in social interaction and classroom discourse analysts have indicated that the construction of teacher feedback turns can hinder or promote opportunities for language learning.

Still on conceptualization of feedback, Rahman, et. al. (2011) support the point that feedback has been a useful pedagogic practice as indicated by different studies that feedback is important in the teaching-learning process. For example, Ovanda (1992) concluded that feedback emerged in the literature as a strategy to facilitate both the learning process and teaching performance. This comes about through constructive, systematic feedback and evaluation.

Referring to oral teacher feedback, Fagan (2014) argues that it encourages classroom learning research with regard particularly to Corrective Feedback such as recasts, explicit corrections, clarification requests, confirmation checks, metalinguistic cues, elicitation, repetition of errors, and translation (Lyster and Ranta, 1997; Ranta and Lyster, 2007). A study found out that specific praise would be received by non-L1 English-speakers which included direct references to things they had successfully accomplished in English such as "good job" (Jenks, 2013). Similar findings have been made in studies of feedback-as-praise in the classroom. For instance, Reigel (2008) indicated a huge increased use of teacher praise when learners were on the verge of moving on to the next level in their English language program. Positive feedback, from prior work generally shows multiple uses and different effects across educational disciplines of learning such as how teachers are able to use such feedback for varied purposes; how positive feedback may affect learning opportunities, and how positive feedback could be given explicitly or implicitly. Therefore, feedback could either be positive or negative and may serve to show learners how well they have performed and also to motivate pupils and build a supportive classroom climate (Rahman, et. a., 2011).

Studies have shown that assessment and feedback can be helpful for teachers to monitor their pupils' language progress and gives the pupils an opportunity of planning for the next class (Rahman, et. al., 2011; Hollowell, 2011; Bachman and Palmer, 1996). Hattie and Timperley (2007) and Rahman, et al. (2011) hold strongly too that assessment and feedback is one of the greatest influences on learning and achievement. However, feedback may take a positive or negative dimension and could serve not only to demonstrate to learners how well they have performed but also to serve to motivate them and build a supportive classroom climate, thus showing the importance of classroom-based assessment and feedback in the teaching-learning practice. Akter's (2010) study concludes that giving feedback to learners on their performance was an important aspect of effective teaching.

A study by Sardareh (2016, p. 1) sought to investigate how the newly introduced formative assessment feedback was implemented by teachers in classrooms. The findings showed that using feedback systematically to support learning is rare and teachers are not aware of strategies to implement formative feedback to improve students' learning and use the information in their future instruction. Specifically, it was found that teachers sample, agreed the importance of giving feedback to pupils but remarked it was not really effective. Students did not know quite where they were going, nor what their level is. An interviewee suggested that it was important to choose word carefully before making a feedback because of the positive or negative impact on the learner (Sardareh, 2016, p.3). The interviewees also acknowledged the role of feedback in positioning where the pupil is, regarding the learning objectives. From the review of research studies, it may be assumed, ten, there are different 'cultures' of providing feedback which may differ depending on various variables.

### **The Present Study**

This article is concerned with the culture of primary school teachers' practice of classroom-based assessment feedback in English-speaking Cameroon where the language is a school subject as well as it is

used across the curriculum. The research question guiding the study is: What pedagogical culture underlies primary school teachers' classroom-based assessment feedback culture in English language Cameroon?

## METHODOLOGY

The qualitative design (Cohen, 2005) was used in this study because it was likely to produce more valid and reliable results that may be used by teachers in classroom pedagogy and assessment. Use of convenience sampling was adopted and supported by Cohen (2005) that this method of sampling is alright for a small-scale research where no attempt to generalize is desired. Moreover, Pryor and Lubisi (2002) and O'Sullivan (2004) in their own empirical studies on South Africa and Namibia applied similar sampling technique. Eight female and two male teachers from two primary schools in an urban setting were selected as participants. They had teaching experiences of between six to twenty years with the majority being twelve years, from all six classes (Grades).

### Material

Then, non-participant classroom observation (teachers and pupils) and documentation (pupils' English language exercise books) and semi-structure teacher interview were used to collect data on classroom-based assessment feedback interaction (Sarantakos, 1998; Lankshear and Knobel, 2004; Kumar, 2005). With regard to the pupils, the researcher deliberately observed the fixed situations of the classroom. It is desirable to research children in their natural environments, such as the school or home because children are particularly reactive to strange people and strange situations. In this research the fixed observation included observation of lessons. Observation is a purposeful, systematic and selective way of watching and listening to an interaction or phenomenon as it takes place (Kumar, 2005; Lankshear and Knobel, 2004; Sarantakos, 1998). The observation took place throughout the school day in different classrooms (Grades) during English language lessons.

With pupils' English language exercise books, the researcher tried to find out the alignment among teaching, task, and feedback. Pupil participants were urban and semi-urban and 30 English language lessons of forty-five minutes each were observed. The researcher, after each lesson, generally walked through the classroom and randomly selected exercise books. The researcher with permission from the children went through different English language exercises and read comments/feedback from the teacher. This was to compare teacher feedback with the researcher's classroom observation notes.

Further, one hundred pages of photocopies from the children's English language exercise books of lessons observed were also available for analysis. Entire exercise books were not photocopied because most of the class sizes were large making it difficult to work through the whole book of each pupil. Second, this was a small preliminary study. Third, this data was meant to corroborate that of the observation.

A semi-structured interview was carried out with the ten participants who had been observed and whose pupils' English exercise books provided data samples for this study. Below is the question guide:

1. Some of the challenges pupils face in learning English language.
2. Strategies used in helping them.
3. Give pupils feedback after marking their English language exercise books. Give specific examples of feedback, please.
4. Your understanding of classroom-based assessment feedback.
5. Your thoughts on feedback or comments to pupils after marking an English language task or activity. Helpful to improve their English or not. How or how not?
6. Comments teachers have made as feedback, for example, "Good", "Foolish". What would you say about words that are encouraging, motivating, or discouraging, demotivating pupils?
7. Type of feedback you think may bring an improvement in pupils' English?
8. Many teachers have developed a culture of making insulting feedback or comment for feedback.
9. Avenue exists for professional development. Teachers consulted in selecting a theme for professional development.

## Data Analysis

Descriptive interpretive approach was used for data analysis. Both the pupils' English language exercise books and the semi-structured teacher interview were content analyzed. While data from the former instrument was listed and latter discussed, data from the latter data was categorized and interpreted in light of the research question. Principal trends were highlighted in the discussion and suggestion.

## FINDINGS

Findings from the semi-structure interview shows that the class-size cuts in the middle. While five teachers acknowledged a class of thirty pupils, the rest said theirs were more than fifty children. This question was asked to find out if overcrowded classrooms may be hurdles to relevant classroom-based assessment feedback practice. However, the official number in Cameroon to a class recommended by government policy is sixty.

The next question wanted to inquire if children loved English language and if they were any reasons. Nine out of ten teachers answered positively. This implies that the pupils are ready and motivated already to learn the language. As for reasons they loved English some teachers reported:

- Because it's cross-curricular
- It helps them to read and write
- They like English because at Level 1 (Classes/Grades 1 and 2) most lessons are accompanied with colourful visuals and real objects something kids love;
- Because they understand the lessons properly; cos they enjoy the lessons; cos the lessons are interesting.

The teacher who had said pupils do not love English gave as reason:

- Not at all because of their home background, that is the way they have been brought up and their context eg fishing, plantation background.

Perhaps the teacher is referring to a former school because the area of research has no fishermen but some children whose parents work in a plantation.

The researcher wanted to know if teachers distinguished between English language lesson preparation and that of mathematics. This was because both subjects carry the greatest time distribution on the curriculum. The importance of the subjects is therefore reflected in the frequency of lessons. Responses from participants express different practices but not quite clear.

How is your preparation of an English lesson? How is it same and different from that of mathematics?

- Preparation of English lessons are dependent on what the topic is eg a reading lesson will be different from word and sound building
- Differences between English and maths – maths deals with figures
- It depends on the English lesson
- Lessons will differ in preparation because several domains are involved. The only similarity with maths is that both are organized in the same way into stages
- Teaching aids used in both lessons
- English is quite diff compared to maths
- Not very different all the times

The next question asked participants to name some of the challenges pupils face in learning English language.

- Spelling, reading, pronunciation, as a result of poor foundation
- Some parents can't make available textbooks to their children; lingua franca eg Pidgin English
- Difficulty in sound combination; reading difficulty
- Combining sounds to form words; reading difficulties
- Pronunciation of sounds; letter recognition

- Reading and speaking.

It was though that being aware of the challenges pupils face in learning English would be the first pointer to building a useful classroom-based assessment feedback culture.

When participants were asked about strategies they used in helping pupil overcome the challenges mentioned above they said:

- By helping them identify letters and sounds; identifying vowel sounds; more work to faster pupils; always organize extra classes
- Increasing weekly frequency of trouble spots;
- Homework
- Repeating difficult letters and sounds
- Use group reading; homework so parents may help them; each child to own a reading text book
- Children are encouraged to speak in English but some still continue using Pidgin English back home
- Children should be initiated to sound and word building from nursery phonics
- Textbook aid was donated by a Korean Volunteer
- Parents encouraged during PTA to make school provision to pupils.

Participants have mentioned an array of things they would engage in to solve the language learning challenges of pupils but many of them would be not be related to feedback.

A direct question was then asked about feedback

Do you give pupils feedback after marking their English language exercise books? Could you give specific examples of feedback, please?

- I give encouraging comments
- Feedback such as 'wrong spelling', 'tense', 'capital letter' in a sentence; 'give equal spacing after each word, irrelevant material, out of topic', 'good, very good, fair, excellent'
- Do corrections and explain
- Good, very good, fair (of the 10 participants only the two males made any worthwhile feedback and gave examples. One female merely mentioned 'good, very good and fair' as feedback. [Researcher's comments])

It is possible that teachers are not used to the concept of classroom-based assessment feedback. In order to throw more light on the researcher's query there was a follow-up question:

What do you understand by classroom-based assessment feedback?

- Assessment done after the lesson
- Test the pupils to see level of attainment
- The assessment and comments made in a child's book either written to appreciate, encourage or motivate the child to have interest in the subject. No negative comment
- An evaluation method after the exercise has been corrected to find out if children understood teacher after the correction
- Evaluation that is done in class ie at the commencement stage
- Evaluation done in class at the re-investment stage
- Comments made after correcting children's work. Negative comments should be avoided but more encouraging.

Many of the responses point to the fact that teachers have different meaning of classroom-based assessment feedback.

What do you think of feedback or comments to pupils after marking an English language task or activity? Do you think it could be helpful to improve their English or not? How or how not?

- Feedback should be encouraged. Yes, feedback is helpful, it will improve their English
- Some of the comments are encouraging; the tick tells them they've done well
- Feedback motivates them; it encourages them to develop interest in learning the language; it helps them to improve their language
- Feedback helps the child realize their errors, take corrections and avoid them next time
- Yes, for feedback especially for weak children, it will wake them up
- Yes, because we learn through corrections.

There is an awareness shown by teachers but it is possible that they may still maintain a different culture of feedback.

Look at some comments teachers have made as feedback, for example, "Good", "Foolish". What would you say about words that are encouraging, motivating, or discouraging, demotivating pupils?

- Words could motivate or discourage a child
- Encouraging words make the child work harder
- It's good to use motivating words, rather than discouraging words that might lead to frustration and they might tend to hate the subject
- Encouraging remarks tend to make the pupils work harder
- Discouraging words put them down
- Motivating words will encourage them to do better unlike discouraging words which may make some pupils run from school.

Teachers do indeed engage in praise feedback which may be a strong motivation for those at the initial stages.

Do you think single phrases feedback can help pupils' English language development?

- Yes. I think it's the best to use; at times but not often; to an extent particularly for children at Level 1 [aged about 5 to 6 years]; to an extent for slow learners; yes, if the comment does not make the child feel terrible'

Surprising this question gets only one response.

What type of feedback would you say may bring an improvement in pupils' English?

- "Better you could do better, put more effort, fair; good, better", encouraging feedback, not those to break the pupil's moral; feedback like 'good, very good', ticks (*about half of participants left this question blank, and those who attempted it merely rambled, making no argument; conflated perspective of feedback?*]).

Another illustration that teachers do not feel confident enough talking about classroom-based assessment feedback.

Why do you think many teachers have developed a culture of making insulting feedback or comment for feedback?

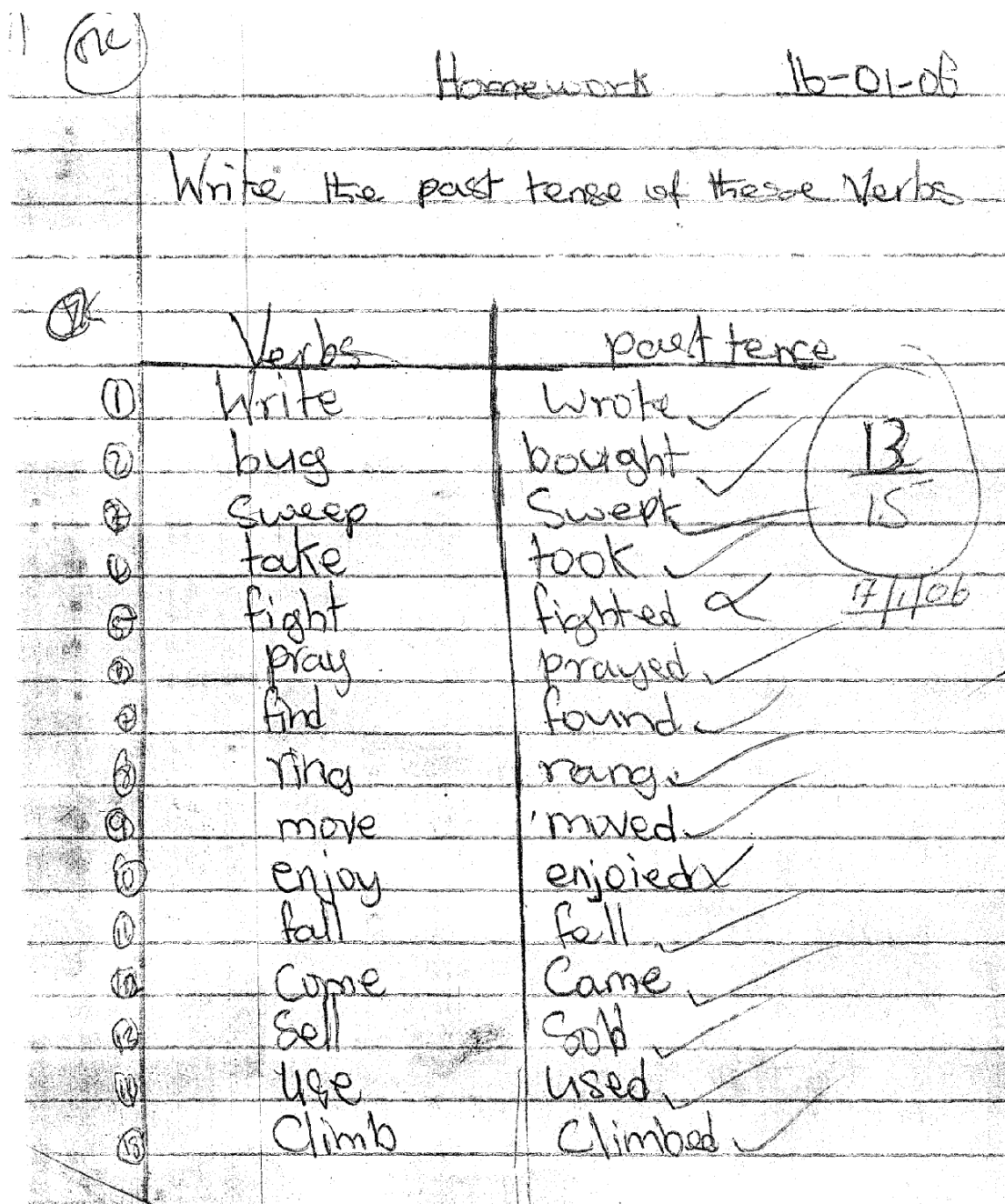
- Because young teachers want to complete their syllabus in time without taking into consideration pupils' learning
- They [*such teachers*] lack professional ethics and their training didn't go through them
- Can't say because each and everyone has their own way of evaluation
- Trained teachers who have done child psychology will not insult a child
- Insults may be transferred aggression on children due to teacher poor working conditions eg low salary
- It's a matter of habit from their environment (*Few participants tried answering this question, and those who attempted it didn't say much. Researcher's comments*)

Does any avenue exist for professional development? Are teachers consulted in selecting a theme for professional development?

- No idea
- No
- To a large extent no avenue exists as decisions always come from the top and are imposed on teachers. Meanwhile to a lesser extent, professional development exists through classroom teaching, pedagogic seminars, symposium, workshop, and related events

Teachers do not seem to understand the concept and practice of professional development because observation and experience show that it takes place, albeit not consistently, nor regularly.

Analyses from the pupils' exercise books show classroom-based assessment feedback culture that revolves around praise and negative feedback or comments.



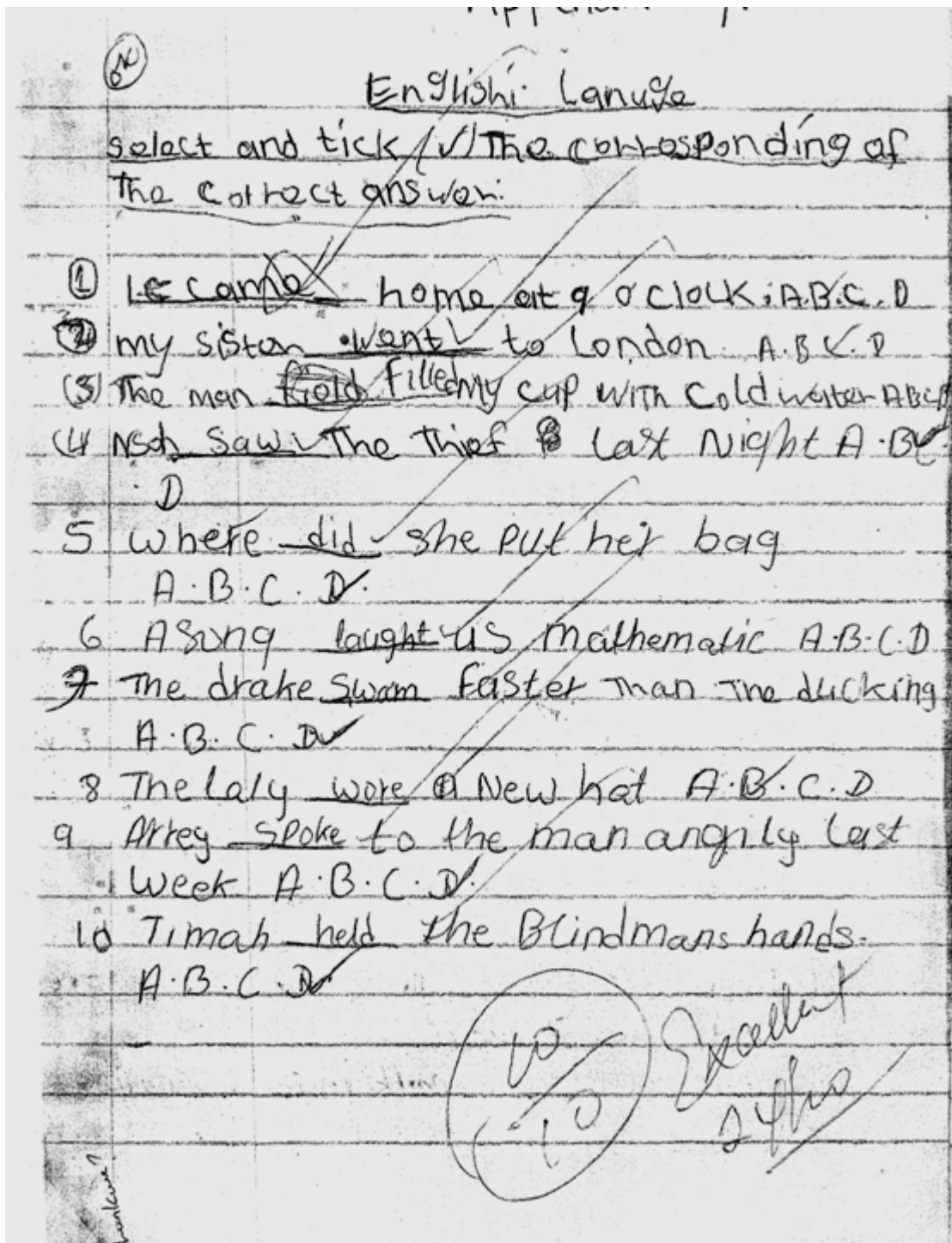
Numbers 5 and 10 (Sample 1), in the exercise are marked wrong and the locations of the errors are indicated implying a negative feedback as compared with the others indicating praise.

However, there are comments which generally are descriptive word that may be motivating, discouraging or insulting, repetitive and confusing at times (see Samples 2-4; Appendices 1.1-1.5).

However, some of the 'feedback/comment' used by teachers would seem to construct positive and negative feelings in pupils. Some appear to motivate by reinforcing pupils' language development. Sample 2 is an example of a motivating feedback. The comment is praising, "Excellent", and been in a context where assessment of learning appears to be the order of the day, the child is likely happy at such encouraging comment because warm words of praise are going to follow from parents and guardians which in most cases would not be the same were the situation different. Ironically, this is merely surface feedback, compared to indepth descriptors which may help the learner interpret the scores.

### Sample 2: Motivating feedback

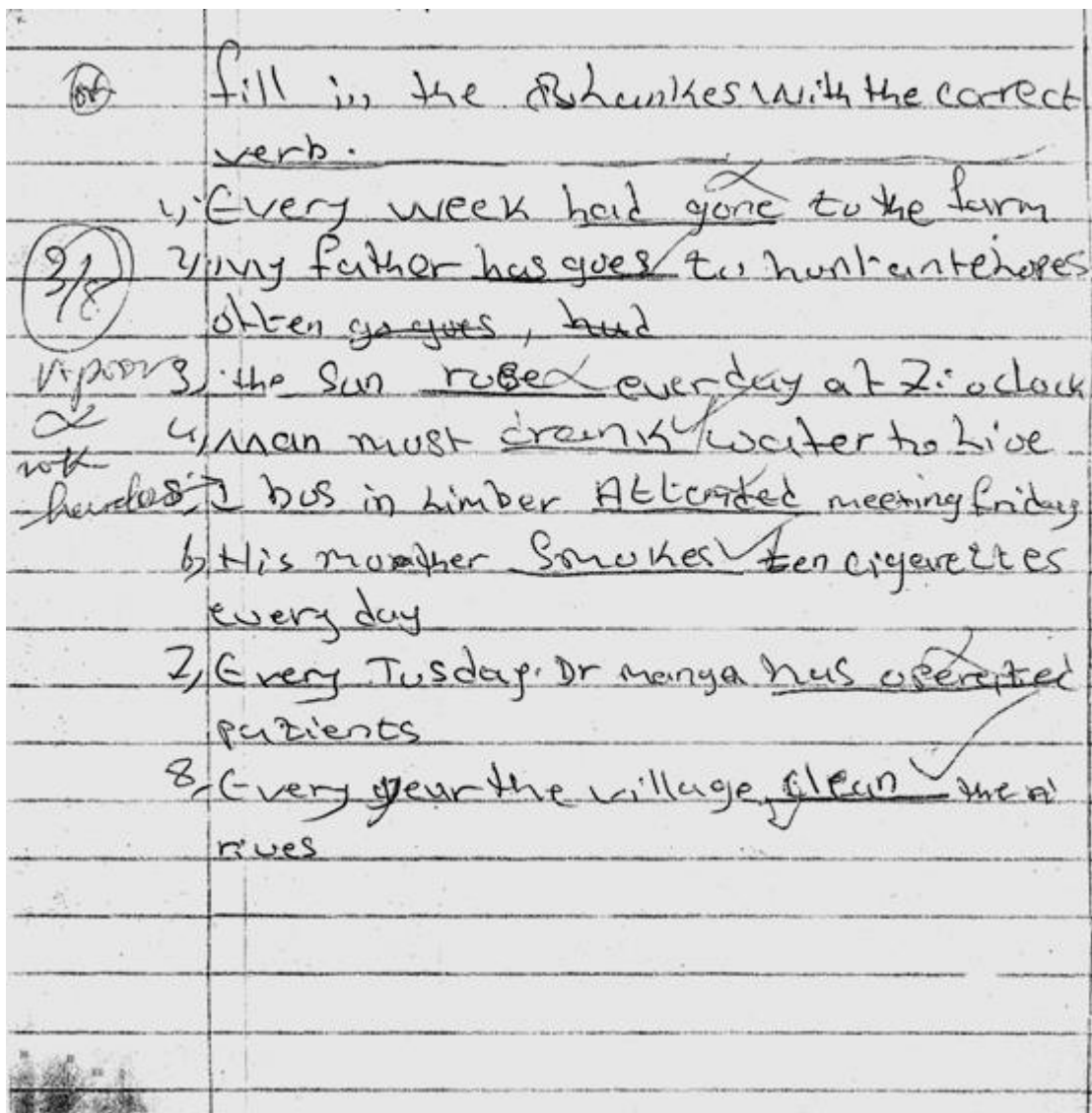




Other comments are discouraging and insulting as in Sample 3. Such a comment may discourage a pupil because the insult "Foolish" in no way shows the child what is wrong with the composition nor how to improve on it. There is no indication that the teacher is expecting any revision from the child.

**Sample 3: Discouraging and insulting feedback**





The teacher's feedback to a pupil who scores 4.5/10 is "Poor" (Appendix 2) and with a score of 5/10 the comment is "Not very bad" (Appendix 3). The teachers do not seem to have a definite cut off mark used in describing each score. For example, in Appendix 4 a child scores 20/20 and the feedback is "Very good", another child scores 7/8 and the feedback is "Excellent" (Appendix 5) while in Appendix 6 another child scores 16/30 and has a feedback of "Good", and in Appendix 3 with a score of 5/8 it is "Not very bad" and on the same page with a score of 4/6 the feedback is "Very good".

From the data, there is an apparent misnomer assessment score and assessment feedback. There appears conflated. From the data it is clear that assessment feedback culture is taking place mostly from closed questions. Feedback most often is not elaborated nor meaningful in supporting children develop in the English language they need for instruction and communication.

## DISCUSSION AND SUGGESTIONS

The research question for this study asked what pedagogical culture underlies primary school teachers' classroom-based assessment feedback in Cameroon. Findings show that some variables which could impact classroom-based assessment feedback culture, such as class-size and learner readiness to learn English are favourable in the Cameroon context. Furthermore, there were indications that though most teachers acknowledged a difference between preparations of an English and mathematics lessons, they found it difficult to say in what aspects. This may be due to lack of knowledge or the "one-size fits all" policy directive imposed on lesson plans for all the subjects on the curriculum. The implication could be that all pedagogic domains are equally routine.

The finding that teachers are aware of the challenges faced by their pupils in English language is an important consideration for planning provision of assessment feedback. It would probably be more focused, and pupil-relevant not merely a praise word. However, while the findings show that teachers do make feedback, all of their examples are single-words which may not be helpful for independent learning (Sadler, 2007; Hattie and Timperley, 2007). This is similar to conclusions arrived at in Sardareh (2016, p. 1). Akter (2010) also stressed that giving feedback to learners on their performance was an important aspect of effective teaching though it might be argued on the strategy of feedback is cardinal.

It was found out that teachers' understanding of classroom-based assessment feedback is conflated. Teachers were mixing it with assessment, evaluation and test. The culture in practice as exemplified by extracts from teachers' interviews and pupils' exercise books. It is more a culture underpinned by assessment of learning and little of assessment for learning. It is realized that teachers seem to be confused with the concept and practice of classroom-assessment feedback. The more reason why they interpret assessment feedback merely as a praise mechanism same as in Jenks (2013; Reigel, 2008) when pupils showed signs of moving to the next level. However, most of the times assessment feedback is so negative that pupils might be affected psychologically.

Teacher feedback it was seen, is discouraging and insulting same as other studies (Sardareh, 2016, p.3). Rahman, et. al. (2011) argument anyway that feedback could either be positive or negative and may serve to show learners how well they have performed and also to motivate pupils and build a supportive classroom climate. It can be concluded that teachers do not really know the culture of classroom-based assessment feedback in spite of evidence that concludes that it can be helpful for teachers to monitor their pupils' language progress and gives the pupils an opportunity of planning for the next class (Rahman, et. al., 2011; Hollowell, 2011; Bachman and Palmer, 1996). Similar evidence is provided by Hattie and Timperley (2007) and Rahman, et al. (2011) who hold strongly too that assessment and feedback is one of the greatest influences on learning and achievement.

However, awareness and implementation of classroom-based assessment feedback are two things that often go parallel. Sardareh's (2016) study is an example, where the newly introduced formative assessment feedback was implemented by teachers in classrooms but findings showed that using feedback systematically to support learning is rare and teachers are not aware of strategies to implement formative feedback to improve students' learning and use the information in their future instruction. While teachers agreed of the importance of giving feedback to pupils they remarked it was not really effective. Students did not know quite where they were going, nor what their level is. It is a different context with objectives that are not the same but the overall aim could be transported to the Cameroonian situation with similar results judging from the conclusions of this study, where teachers are generally aware of feedback but do not know deeply how it might be used in developing pupils' language.

This study reveals that teachers in the samples practice a culture of assessment feedback of ranking even though some linked it to language improvement. There was a difference, therefore, between teacher belief and pedagogic practice. Classroom-based assessment feedback culture to be aligned properly with the syllabus aims and objectives would need to be more pedagogically supportive, timely and pupil-focused. With the current beliefs and practices, it would be difficult for learners to develop the spirit of independence and autonomy in English language learning.

This study set out to investigate primary school teacher' classroom-based assessment feedback culture in English language in Cameroon. From the findings it is concluded that the children are all enthusiastic learning English and such spirit needs to be maintained for total engagement and progress. There is the likelihood that if the culture of classroom-based assessment feedback is more constructive there would be even greater interest in English.

Teachers' knowledge of pedagogical concepts and practices is limited. Awareness does not necessarily equal indepth understanding. Surface meaning is what seems to be the interpretation of concepts and practices which carve a culture of its own. Teacher Continual Professional Development (CPD) is a requisite, particularly as the context is under resourced. There is, therefore, the necessity for CPD to provide teachers

insights of the notion and practice of classroom-based assessment feedback to involve pupils in the process (Beets and van Louw, 2011). CPD may be school-based and the queries of the classroom teacher should guide the workshop themes. Help with resources and materials dealing with strategies of classroom-based assessment may be made available to teachers. In Cameroon, like many under resourced contexts, primary school teachers' preparation may be inadequate, just as their qualifications. These shortcomings affect teacher knowledge base but CPD builds the gap. The more reason why CPD ought to be reinforced in the course of the year, and lend an ear to teachers' voices, not only those of education superiors.

In order to achieve best practice in classroom-based assessment feedback, teachers must have the capacity to enable them know the difference between on-going and summative assessment. In other words, feedback from the teacher seeks to improve the learner's English language, whereas summative is test or exam-oriented (see Saputrii, et. al, 2018). While supporting Pryor and Lubisi's (2002) argument that summative, sorting, function of assessment is inevitable and cannot be wished away, it is crucial, however, that it does not swamp the function of more informal assessment to act as constant steer towards more process teaching and learning; that is, continuous assessment component where learners are assessed during learning programmes.

Some of the teacher classroom assessment feedback and comments would be very demotivating to children who are at the basic level of English language learning (see Karaağaç, 2017). Teachers especially ought to realise the importance of motivating children in learning English as a second language. They would hardly find a gainful career without advancing in their studies which take place in English. Motivating children does not only end at praises but would be more engaging if learners can fall back to them as reference. Lack of informative feedback leaves the learner frustrated, not knowing what is wrong with their work, task or project and how to improve on them. Learners are not encouraged to begin engaging in self-study or beginning to develop autonomy since there are no pointers to indicate the way. It becomes difficult to implement the Communicative Language Approach which should not be all traditional where everything is controlled by the teacher. Good classroom-based assessment feedback culture is inclusive and empowers learners to reflect and make reasoned judgements.

Teachers, therefore, need to be aware of the role of feedback. They must bear in mind the various strategies that could be used depending on the purpose and emphasis. Teachers have to think about feedback that would be appropriate for learners' developmental age because any feedback that does not communicate with the learner is a waste of time. If classroom-based assessment feedback is to be for learning then teachers have to help the pupils by guiding them on the long road to developing their English language. Insinuations from teacher interview implies they are targeting assessment for learning, so it is vital they know how to go about this domain of assessment feedback.

Training institution and school relationship requires reviewing. Experience and observation show that there is a lacuna between the two. As a result, training institutions hardly covers content that is current which teacher candidates are going to meet on the field upon graduation. It would be good to involve teachers and trainers in program development for teacher training institutions. Training institution must be proactive in introducing current debates and trends in teaching and learning, while adoption would be determined by other factors.

Assuming that classroom-based assessment is for learning, government policy for assessment may be a barrier. The case of "séquence" in the present situation is an example, where it is practiced rather as summative assessment taking away the aim of learning. Government education policy at times is drawn up by inexperienced people who sometimes are untrained in the area of education policy. At other times, consultants are hired from abroad and are expected to develop policy for an unfamiliar context (Tabulawa, 2009). The result most often is failure of education policy because local realities are overlooked. Once teachers do not believe in a policy, there would hardly be effective implementation.

Taking into consideration the difficult teaching context (Hardman, 2009) may hamper the effective practice of classroom-based assessment feedback. For example, large-class size common in urban government schools in Cameroon and other contexts. What is more, there is usually a single teacher for this

number of children teaching all subjects on the curriculum. The work load is heavy for one person whose condition of employment is not encouraging. It is difficult, then, to monitor each classroom-based assessment meticulously that would provide sufficient support to the children.

Teacher in the present research have indicated what they think and how they practice classroom -based assessment feedback in English language. The pedagogic culture of assessment feedback is more of learning. Even though they are aware of some strategies of providing assessment feedback yet they most seem confident at taking charge of it. Little relationship exists with the purpose or function of assessing a task except to rank learners. Such culture with time could fossilise and reinforce teachers' ideas of classroom-based assessment feedback as a separable operation and militate against a greater integration.

The principal objective of classroom-based assessment feedback is to foster the involve the pupil in constructing their own knowledge which means that for it to grow fruitfully there has to be a culture that encourages the learner. At the second language context, assessment feedback may provide an opening to enhance self-study, revision, and reflection. However, effective implementation is hampered in difficult context by a number of factors, such as lack of resources, inadequate teachers and training of teachers, ineffective CPD, language policy and education policy. There is a huge gap, it seems in the knowledge base and teachers are most concerned with the bureaucratic function of assessment (Rea-Dickens, 2001). She underlines that teachers do not seem aware of practicing the learning and learner function that provides information of children's feedback and improvement. Classroom-based assessment feedback culture brings into focus the role of the learner which is pivotal in Young Learner language learning.

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