The Internet Journal Language, Culture and Society
URL: http://aaref.com.au/en/publications/journal/
ISSN 1327-774X

The Effect of Formative Assessment Practice on Students' Writing Self-Regulation Development

Zelalem Berhanu Guadu[1]*, Dr Emily Joy Boersma[2], Dr Zewdu Emiru Jemberie[2]

[1]*Debre* Markos University, [2]*Bahir Dar University*
* *Corresponding author: PO Box 269, Debre Markos, Ethiopia; email: theberhanug@gmail.com*; Telephone: +251918141322

Abstract

Teaching essentially aims to make students self-regulated learners. Literature suggests formative assessment practice can help to attain this goal. This study examined the effect of formative assessment practice on students' writing self-regulation development. 95 first year university students (experimental, N=56 and control group, N=39) participated in the study. Quantitative data were collected through a ten point scale pre- and posttest which measured how frequently students performed each of the writing skills activities described in the questionnaire. After the pretest, participants were exposed to formative assessment practice in their writing classroom. During the intervention, participants shared learning goals and success criteria for each task with the instructor, took part in self and peer assessment based on the shared goals and criteria, revised their draft in line with the feedback and submitted the final draft to the writing instructor for further feedback. Finally, the instructor gave written and oral formative feedback and made remedial teaching (as necessary). After the intervention, posttest was administered to assess the writing self-regulation gain due to the intervention. Qualitative data were also gathered from the experimental group students after the intervention through semi-structured interview. While the quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics, the qualitative ones were analyzed via word description. The result revealed the experimental and control groups were not significantly different in their measure of writing self-regulation in the pretest, but the posttest showed a significant difference between the means of the two groups ($t(93) = -7.70$, $p<0.05$, $d=1$, strong effect size).

***Key words**:* formative, assessment, writing, self-regulation

Introduction

The success of any teaching and learning is strongly aligned with the method of assessment used. However, assessment has received inadequate attention by practitioners around the world despite its indispensable position for instructional success (Brown, 2003; Norton, 2007). In Ethiopia, continuous assessment, serving as a synonym for formative assessment, was introduced almost a quarter of a century ago (Ministry of Education, 1994), but local studies reveal that its actual practice is quite poor (Abiy, 2013; Habtamu, 2009; Takele, 2012). The studies reported that continuous assessment has been used for summative function and its formative function has been neglected. This contradicts with the primary goal of continuous assessment to foster instruction by playing a diagnostic role in identifying gaps and taking timely remedial measures (USAID, 2003).

Globally as well the assessment of writing in foreign language contexts has been highly dominated by the traditional views of testing by which assessment is used to grade students (Lee, 2017). In this view, assessment focuses on the written product, student performance and scores.

Over the last decade, however, assessment in English language teaching has made a move away from traditional forms of testing (Lee, 2017; Nilson, 2013). The movement resulted in more attention to the close link between assessment and instruction where teachers' evaluation of student learning,

their feedback, feedback from peers, and students' self-assessment play an important role in mediating students' learning and knowledge construction"(Lee, 2017:9). Following the paradigm shift in assessment, the traditional assessment of writing which focuses on the written products is giving way to the process-oriented one which utilizes the formative potential of assessment for promoting learning through the active involvement of learners and teachers at the different stages in the writing process (Lee, 2011).

Although scholars suggest that formative assessment of writing makes students self-regulated learners in writing (Macfarlane-Dick & Nicol, 2006; Sadler, 1989), there is no empirical evidence which confirms the cause and effect relationship between them (Yorke, 2003). This calls for an interventional study to determine the cause-effect relationships between formative assessment and self-regulation in writing. Research on effects of formative assessment in EFL teaching in general and in the teaching of writing in particular is very rare and inconclusive (Bruner, 2014). Thus, this research responded to the following two questions:

Has practicing formative assessment in the writing classroom any significant effect on the

1. Students' self-regulation in composition writing?
2. What does the students' view on their experience of the formative assessment practice intervention look like?

To answer the above research questions the null hypothesis "There is no statistically significant mean score difference in writing self-regulation between the control group and the experimental group" was formulated.

Literature Review

Formative Assessment: What it is

Formative assessment is a type of assessment intended to generate feedback on performance to improve and accelerate learning (Sadler, 1998). For Moss & Brookhart (2009), formative assessment is an active and intentional learning process that partners the teacher and the students to continuously and systematically gather evidence of learning with the goal of improving student achievement. The definitions illustrate that formative assessment is any activity undertaken by teachers, and / or students to generate feedback which helps to adjust teaching and learning. They also highlight that feedback is a central element in the formative assessment process and it generates from different sources, such as teachers, peers and students themselves. As Andrade and Heritage (2018, p.3) substantiate:

> *Teachers receive feedback about their teaching and their students' learning from evidence they obtain while learning is taking place, and students receive feedback from their teachers, peers, and their own self-assessment during the course of learning. In formative assessment, the purpose of generating feedback from these different sources is to help students take action to move forward in their learning.*

In the assessment of writing, feedback refers to "the information that comes back from readers to the writer" where the writer stands for a student and reader for any assessor, such as students, peers, or the teacher (Elashri and Elshirbini, 2013). In performance based formative assessment of writing, feedback plays an essential role in helping students close the gap between their actual and target level (Black & Wiliam, 1998).

Feedback plays a pivotal role in the writing process and in learning the skill by helping learners to distinguish their level of performance, take corrective actions on their writing if they do not perform well, share others' view and for the teacher to monitor and diagnose students' problematic areas in learning writing so that s/he can remediate (Mi, 2009; Littleton, 2011; Getchell, 2011; Asiri, 1996; Hino 2006, all cited in Elshirbini & Elashri (2013). Formative feedback on students' writing benefits students by making learning more effective, increasing achievement, modifying thinking or behavior toward work, and providing insight on how well students have performed (Purnawarman, 2011). Besides, it results in positive learning outcomes by providing students with concrete information on how to improve, encouraging them to be engaged more deeply, and promoting self-regulated learning (Anderson, n.d.).

Self-regulation and Formative Assessment in Writing

Self-regulation is defined as “a process that assists students in managing their thoughts, behaviors, and emotions in order to successfully navigate their learning experiences” (Zumbrunn, Tadlock & Robert, 2011, p.4). It is significant to the success of the learning process in creating better learning habits, strengthening study skills of students, helping learners to apply learning strategies to boost academic outcomes and encouraging them to monitor their performance and evaluate their academic progress (Ibid). Despite the numerous benefits to be derived from learners’ self-regulated learning practices and their greater involvement in the assessment process, “the message transmitted concerning how assessment practices link with promoting greater autonomy in language learning seems to have failed to come across with sufficient force to effect any really dramatic change within language learning communities”(Everhard & Murphy, 2015,p.8)because it is evident from the current practice that language learners still highly rely on their teachers to do their assessment for them.

In higher education institutions in particular, more emphasis must be given to strengthening the students’ self-regulatory skills because learners at this age level are already involved in the process of self-regulation (Bose & Rengel, 2009). Scholars emphasize that self-regulatory skills can be cultivated through practicing formative assessment and feedback (Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick, 2006; Sadler, 1989, 1998) because formative assessment mainly aims at generating both internal and external feedback on performance to improve and reinforce self-regulated learning. In this regard, Andrade and Heritage (2018:11) confirm that “Classroom assessments that provide process and self-regulation level feedback have the potential to be quite effective in promoting both achievement and self-regulated learning (SRL)”, and they believe that formative assessment can make this possible.

Students’ involvement in the formative assessment process helps them to clearly understand and use the general targets of learning a course and to set their own learning goals, select effective learning strategies to achieve the set goals, and assess their own progress to identify what has been successfully accomplished and what has not so as to close the gaps between the set goals and the real performances. Doing this enables students to be more confident, competent and self-regulated learners (Moss & Brookhart, 2009). In general, involving students in the process of formative assessment is believed to encourage learners to be not only self-regulated learners, but also to become more competent and confident (self-efficacious).

Despite the plethora of available literature to reveal the benefits of good assessment practice, formative assessment in particular, to augment students’ self-regulatory skills, their link so far is mostly theoretical(Andrade & Heritage; 2018).In addition, Everhard and Murphy (2015) stress that though the relationship between assessment and language learning has been studied in some depth in the past few decades, the relationship between assessment and autonomy in language learning in general and learning writing in particular is a relatively neglected area and it needs rigorous investigation.

Methods

Design of the Study

The study used an embedded quasi-experimental design. This design is used when a single data set is unable to sufficiently answer all the research questions (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2007), or when it is necessary to examine “how participants in the treatment condition are experiencing the intervention” (Creswell, 2012, p. 544). The study followed a pretest-intervention-posttest procedure in which the quantitative data from the writing self-regulation questionnaire was supplemented by the qualitative data from the experimental group students’ post intervention semi-structured interview.

Participants

The target population of the study was first year Debre Markos University students of the year 2017. There were a total of 2,500 students from seven colleges and 53 sections, all taking Basic Writing Skills course. Two sections from departments of Biotechnology (N=66) and Agricultural Economics (N=41) were randomly selected to participate in the study and they were randomly assigned to the experimental and control group, respectively.

The intervention

The intervention in this quasi-experimental study was formative assessment practice in composition writing classes which pursued nine weeks. One trained instructor was purposively selected to teach both the experimental and the control group students considering his teaching qualification, performance, experience and interest. The researcher provided the experimenter-instructor with a week's discussion-based training before the intervention began on what formative assessment is and its purpose, benefits of formative assessment, main components of formative assessment and the formative assessment procedures that should be followed in a composition writing class. During the intervention, students from both the experimental and control groups were exposed to several paragraph and essay writing tasks to elicit evidence of their learning. The tasks were identical for the experimental and the control group students except that they were performed following different assessment procedures.

The first step in the formative assessment process starts with the experimenter-instructor identifying the learning goal(s) for a lesson or a sequence of lessons and determining the criteria for success. The learning goal identifies what students are expected to learn during the course of the lesson and the success criteria identify what it takes to meet the learning goal. The teacher and the students share the goals and success criteria at the beginning of the lesson so that they both work for achieving them.

While instruction is going on, the instructor offers students a pre-planned composition writing task in order to draw evidence of how student learning is progressing toward the set goal. Then, the evidence is examined and interpreted by peers, the students themselves and the instructor in relation to the success criteria to determine the status of learning. Based on the evidence, feedback is provided to close the gap. The feedback need to answer three major questions, namely what the goals are, what progress is being made toward the goal and what activities need to be undertaken(Heritage, 2010).

Based on the feedback, both the instructor and the students plan the action they will take to match the instruction and the learning with the goals established at the beginning of the lesson. At this stage, the instructor gives remedial instruction according to the students' needs and the students re-write their composition to close the gap between their current learning and the intended learning goal. The formative assessment process implemented in the intervention was based on Heritage's (2010, p.15) formative assessment model.

On the other hand, the tasks in the control group were performed following the usual procedure i.e. first explanation is given about how to write a particular type of composition; second a model written text is presented and discussed. After that students are instructed to write a composition on a given topic/on the topic of their choice. In the meantime, the teacher advises students to use techniques like brainstorming, planning, drafting and writing the final draft. Lastly, students submit the final paper to their teacher for final feedback.

Instruments

In this study both quantitative and qualitative data gathering instruments were used: the self-regulation questionnaire and the semi-structured interview, respectively.

Writing Self-regulation Scale

The writing self-regulation scale elicited how often students regulate themselves on the various writing activities when they are engaged in writing. The scale was adapted from Kanlapan and Velasco (2009). They constructed it using Zimmerman's (2002) characterization of the self-regulation processes and contextualizing it for writing. Zimmerman had eight subscales of self-regulation which include goal setting, adopting strategies for attaining goals, monitoring performance, restructuring physical and social contexts, managing time, self-evaluating methods, attributing causation to results and adapting future methods all of which were included in the questionnaire of this study. 40 items were used to generate data about the subjects' writing self-regulation skill.

Among the 40 items, 1-5 belong to goal setting. They measure the students' skill of formulating objectives intended to be achieved in accomplishing a specific task. Items 6-11 concern the students' use of strategies for attaining the goals. These items assess the participants' utilization of appropriate strategies to successfully perform a task and achieve the intended objectives. Those from 12 to 15 deal with monitoring performance, which refers to how frequently the students keep track of their progress in the task they are doing. The items from 16 to 19 are about restructuring physical and social

context so as to make it compatible to one's goal. Items from 20 to 24 assess the extent of participants' management of time. Items 25 to 30 assess self-evaluation skill which refers to comparisons of self-observed performances against some standard, such as one's prior performance, another person's performance, or an absolute standard of performance. Items 31-35 concern attributing performance to results which is concerned with beliefs about the cause(s) of one's errors or successes. Finally items 36-40 assess adapting future methods. These items measure the participants' use of potential techniques that can be used to enhance output in the future.

Kanlapan and Velasco (2009) used the Cronbach's Alpha to check the reliability of the items in the writing self-regulation questionnaire. They computed the Cronbach's Alpha for each subscale, as well as for the overall scale. The overall Cronbach's Alpha was reported to be 0.94 indicating that the reliability of the instrument to measure the intended construct (self-regulation skill in writing) was very high. The reliability of all the subscales (goal setting, strategies for attaining goals, self-monitoring, restructuring context, time management, self-evaluation, attribution of causation to results, and adapting future methods) were checked to be 0.77, 0.74, 0.76, 0.74, 0.86, 0.71, 0.69, and 0.84, respectively (Kanlapan and Velasco, 2009). However, this researcher also checked the reliability of the same instrument for the context of this study. Accordingly, the overall reliability of the writing self-regulation scale was 0.96 and the reliability for the eight sub-scales were 0.82, 0.81, 0.80, 0.67, 0.85, 0.86, 0.79, and 0.87 Cronbach's alpha, respectively.

Interview

In order to back up the data obtained quantitatively through the writing self-regulation questionnaire and to answer a research question related to the participants' experience of the intervention that is not addressed by the quantitative analysis, qualitative data were collected through partially structured interview with student participants in the experimental group. The interview explored information from sample participants regarding their experience of the intervention. The semi-structured nature of the interview enabled the researcher to collect in-depth data from the respondents in an organized manner as it gives an opportunity to ask follow-up questions and probe more information based on the participants' response to the general questions.

Data Analysis

The data were analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively. The data gathered through pretest and posttest questionnaire were analyzed using SPSS version 16 whereas the qualitative data from interview were analyzed using word description and thematic categorization techniques.

Results

Comparing Pre-intervention Measures between Groups

This section of the quantitative data analysis is concerned with analyzing the pre-test scores to identify the extent of pre-intervention mean score difference between the control group and the experimental group on the dependent variable writing self-regulation. Table 1 demonstrates both the control group and the experimental group participants' mean score of writing self-regulation is below the expected mean of 50 which signifies that there needs to be an intervention to maximize the participants' writing self-regulation. In addition, the table demonstrates the writing self-regulation mean score of the experimental group (48.32) exceeds that of control group (47.37) by 0.95, and the experimental group's standard deviation of the pre-intervention writing self-regulation score (10.51) is greater than that of the control group's (9.11) by 1.4. Nevertheless, to determine the significance level of the mean difference between the two groups, an independent samples t-test should be run.

Table 1: Writing Self-Regulation Pre-intervention Descriptive Statistics of the Control Group and the Experimental Group

Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Control	39	47.37	9.11	1.46
Experimental	56	48.32	10.51	1.41

In Table 2, the Levene's test shows the significance level on the writing self-regulation variable is 0.65. As this value is greater than the cut-off point 0.05, the control and the experimental groups are assumed to have the same variance on the variable. To decide whether there is a significant difference between the mean of the control group and the experimental group, the column labeled 'sig. (2-tailed)' situated under the 't-test for Equality of Means' section has to be referred. Hence, the significance level of the difference between the control group and the experimental group is 0.65 which is larger than the conventional cut-off point (0.05). Therefore, the result of the independent samples test conducted to compare the initial writing self-regulation scores of the groups reveals there was no significant difference in scores between the control group(M= 47.37, SD= 9.11) and the experimental group(M=48.32, SD= 10.51; t(93)= -0.46, p>0.05).

Table 2: *Comparison of the Control Group and the Experimental Group's Pre-Intervention Writing Self-Regulation Mean Using Independent Samples T-Test*

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		**t-test for Equality of Means**		
	F	**Sig**	**t**	**df**	**Sig(2-tailed)**
Equal variances assumed	.205	.652	-.46	93	.65
Equal variances not assumed			-.47	88.5	.64

Comparing Pre- and Posttest Measures within Groups

This Part of the analysis is concerned with comparing the control group and the experimental group participants' mean gain between the pretest and posttest. This was done using a paired sample t-test and presented in Table 3. As shown in this table, a paired sample t-test was calculated to compare the pretest and the posttest writing self-regulation mean score. The mean on the pretest was 47.37(SD=9.11), and the posttest mean was 46.90(SD=11.42). No significant difference from pretest to post test was found (t (38) =0.28, p>0.05. According to the paired samples t-test analysis conducted on the control group's pretest and posttest mean scores, it was found that the traditional (product-oriented) approach of teaching writing did not help to increase the participants' writing self-regulation.

Table 3: *Summary of Paired t-test for the Control Group*

Variables(in pair)	**Mean**	**SD**	**Paired Difference**		**t**	**Sig. (2-tailed)**
			M	**SD**		
SREBI-	47.37	9.11	.47	10.42	.28	.78
SREAI	46.90	11.42				
(N=39; df =38)						

SREBI=writing self-regulation before the intervention, SREAI= writing self-regulation after the intervention

In the next table (Table 4), the experimental group participants' pretest and posttest result on their writing self-regulation was analyzed using paired samples t-test. Like the control group students', the experimental group students' pretest and posttest score was analyzed via paired samples t-test. Accordingly, the mean of the pretest score was 48.32 (SD=10.51), and the posttest mean score was 62.92 (SD=8.86). A significant increase from pretest to posttest was found (t (55) =7.80, p<0.05, d= 1.0, large (strong) effect size. Therefore, based on the paired samples t-test calculated to compare the pretest and the posttest mean scores of the experimental group students on their writing self-regulation, a significant mean gain was observed due to the formative assessment practice intervention.

Table 4*: Paired Samples T-Test for the Experimental Group*

Variables (in pair)	Mean	SD	Paired Difference		t	Sig. (2-tailed
			M	SD		
SREBI-SREAI (N=56; df =55)	48.32 62.92	10.51 8.86	-14.60	14.02	-7.80	.000

SREBI=writing self-regulation before the intervention, SREAI= writing self-regulation after the intervention

Comparing Post-Intervention Measures between Groups

In this section, the post-intervention test scores were analyzed using independent samples t-test to ascertain the existence of significant mean difference between the control group and the experimental group after the formative assessment intervention. The analysis sought to answer the research question 'Has formative assessment practice any significant effect on the students' self-regulation in composition writing?' and to test the hypothesis 'There is no statistically significant mean score difference in writing self-regulation between the control group and the experimental group'. In order to answer the question and test the hypothesis, the data collected through questionnaire was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics.

Table 5 displays the control group and the experimental group's post-intervention writing self-regulation mean and standard deviation. Accordingly, the experimental group's mean score (62.92) exceeds the control group's (46.90) by 16.02, and the control group's standard deviation (11.42) exceeds that of the experimental group's (8.86) by 2.56. However, this statistic alone is not sufficient to determine the existence of significant difference between the two groups. To do this, an independent samples test should be computed.

Table 5: *Writing Self-regulation Post intervention Descriptive Statistics of the Control Group and the Experimental Group*

Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Control	39	46.90	11.42	1.83
Experimental	56	62.92	8.86	1.18

Table 6 demonstrates the significance level of the post-intervention writing self-regulation mean difference between the control group and the experimental group. The independent samples t-test comparing the mean scores of the groups found a significance difference between the means (t (93) =-7.70, $p<0.05$, d=1, strong effect size). The mean of the control group was significantly lower (M=46.90, SD=11.42) than the mean of the experimental group (M=62.92, SD=8.86). It can be deduced from the result that applying formative assessment strategies in the writing classroom is more effective than using the traditional (product–oriented) method of assessment to increase the students' composition writing self-regulation.

Based on the analysis, the research question "Has formative assessment practice any significant effect on the students' self-regulation in composition writing?" has got affirmative answer and the null hypothesis "There is no statistically significant mean score difference in writing self-regulation between the control group and the experimental group" has been rejected. In contrast, the alternative hypothesis 'There is a statistically significant mean score difference in writing self-regulation between the control group and the experimental group due to formative assessment intervention' has been accepted.

Table 6*: Comparison of the Control Group and the Experimental Group's Post Intervention Writing Self-regulation Mean Using Independent Samples T-Test*

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means		
	F	Sig	t	df	Sig (2-tailed)
Equal variances assumed	3.77	0.06	-7.70	93	0.000
Equal variances not assumed			-7.36	68.29	0.000

Qualitative findings

In order to supplement the data gathered quantitatively through writing self-regulation questionnaire, semi-structured interview was used to collect qualitative data from four randomly selected students in the experimental group at the end of the intervention. The data were intended to answer the research question "What does the students' view and experience on the formative assessment practice intervention look like?"

In order to answer the question, data were gathered from the students based on the interview questions which sought the participants' belief and experience towards the improvement of their writing self-regulation. Accordingly, the participants claimed that they benefited a lot from the experimenter-instructor's student-centered approach of teaching. They stated that the instructor gave them the opportunity to help one another in pairs and groups. Sileshi, in this regard, elaborated the experimenter-instructor's student-centered approach of teaching composition writing,

> *"What one understands may not be understood by another. Students understand better when a student tells them rather than the teacher tells them. Except that the time was limited, we learnt so much from our writing teacher's approach".*

Melaku, supporting Sileshi's view, mentioned that much of his writing skill development in this course came from working together with peers. He thought that 50 up to70 per cent of the development in his composition writing skill is due to his working together with peers and the instructor. He recommended that if sufficient time was given for students to perform the different writing activities and if the students worked together supporting one another, the students' writing ability would be improved too much better than this.

As Robel believes, his ability to write independently has improved much since the start of the composition writing course. However, he does not dare to say that he can write effectively independently (without getting support from his teacher and classmates), but he also believed when criteria are given about what he was going to write, he could write better. Sileshi also stated, "Though I have some tense problems, now I can independently write a composition; I can keep the organization of my writing; I can write a composition keeping its quality of coherence and unity."

Generally, the interviewees' belief regarding the development of their writing self-regulation showed that their ability to write independent of their teacher and peers maximized. They believe that the experience of working together during the writing process assisted them not only to independently write paragraphs and essays keeping their quality of organization, coherence and unity but also to enhance their composition writing skill. This change up on the students' writing is believed to have resulted from the formative assessment intervention.

Discussion

The results of the independent samples t-test analysis undertaken to compare the writing self-regulation posttest mean scores of the control and the experimental groups showed that the experimental group, which learnt composition writing applying formative assessment procedures, significantly out-

performed the control group, which learnt following the traditional (product-oriented) methods of assessment. The study, therefore, confirmed the positive impact of formative assessment practice on students' writing self-regulation development. In addition, the qualitative result confirmed the participants' writing self-regulation and writing ability maximized due to the formative assessment intervention.

The result is consistent with Khodadady and Khodabakhshzade (2012) who reported the positive effect of portfolio and self-assessment, both of which are elements of formative assessment, on the students' writing self-regulation and writing ability. It is also in line with Wingate (2010) and Ghoorchaei & Tavakoli (2010) who proved the positive effect of portfolio assessment and formative feedback, respectively, on students' writing ability.

Although the three studies reached similar results, they followed different approaches during the intervention. For example, this study applied Heritage's (2010) model of formative assessment which follows procedures of setting task goal(s) and criteria of success, performing a task, assessing the task (by peer, self and instructor) to generate feedback based on the set goal(s) and criteria, and writing final draft incorporating the feedback. In addition, both qualitative and quantitative data were used as the source of data and the study was conducted in a different setting. The study by Khodadady and Khodabakhshzade (2012) used self- and portfolio assessments as formative assessment strategies and though qualitative and quantitative approaches were used the instruments used for gathering the data were different. On the other hand, Wingate's (2010) result depended on only qualitative data gathered through students' interview and comments on students' texts.

Both the quantitative and the qualitative results are in support of claims in the current literature that the practice of formative assessment, regardless of which techniques have been used, has a large and positive effect in improving language learning in general and learning to write in particular. The finding stands against critical reviews who doubtfully criticize findings on the positive impact of formative assessment due to methodological shortcomings in conducting the studies and it consolidates the positive results on the effect of formative assessment.

Conclusion

The finding of this study revealed that practicing formative assessment in composition writing class could significantly improve the students' self-regulation in writing. And it seems comprehensible that when the students' writing self-regulation develops, students are motivated to exert more effort on their learning to write and their ability to write is believed to boost as a consequence. This implies that the learners' composition writing ability can be enhanced through the use of formative assessment in the writing classroom. Therefore, it is recommended that composition writing instructors apply formative assessment principles in the classroom so as to improve the learners' writing self-regulation and then their writing performance.

References

Abiy, Y. (2013). High school English teachers' and students' perceptions, attitudes and actual practices of continuous assessment. *Academic Journals*, 8(16), 1489-1498.

Andrade, H. L. & Heritage, M. (2018).*Using formative assessment to enhance learning, achievement, and academic self-regulation*. New York: Taylor & Francis Group

Black, P. & Wiliam, D (1998). Assessment and classroom learning. *Assessment in Education*, *5*(1), 7-71.

Boss, J. & Rengel, Z. (2009). A model formative assessment strategy to promote student- centered self-regulated learning in higher education. *US-China Education Review*, *6*(12), 29-35.

Brown, H.D. (2003). *Language assessment: Principles and classroom practices*. USA: Longman

Bruner, T. (2014). *An intervention study of formative assessment in English as foreign language writing classes in Norway*. Presentation given at the IAEA conference in May 2014, Norway.

Creswell, J. W. & Planoclark, V. L. (2007). *Designing and conducting mixed methods research*. London: Sage Publications.

Creswell, J. W. (2012). *Educational research: Planning, conducting, and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research (4th Ed.).* USA: Pearson Education.

Elashri, A.F. & Elshirbini, I. I. (2013). The impact of the direct teacher feedback strategy on the EFL secondary stage students' writing performance. Mansoura University, Unpublished PhD Thesis.

Everhard, C.J. & Murphy, L. (2015). *Assessment and autonomy in language learning*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Ghoorchaei, B. & Tavakoli, M. (2010). The impact of portfolio assessment on Iranian EFL students' essay writing: A process-oriented approach. *GEMA Online Journal of Language Studies, 10 (*3*).*

Habtamu, T. (2009). *EFL instructors' implementation of continuous assessment with reference to 2nd and 3rd year English department students of Dilla University*. AAU: Unpublished MA Thesis.

Heritage, M. (2010). *Formative assessment: Making it happen in the classroom*. USA: Corwin

Kanlapan, M.T.C.E. & Velasco, J.C. (2009). Constructing a self-regulation scale contextualized in writing*. TESOL Journal*, *1*, 79-94. Retrieved from http://www.tesoljournal.com

Khodadady, E. & Khodabakhshzade, H. (2012). The effect of portfolio and self-assessment on writing ability and autonomy. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, *3*(3), 518-524.

Lee, I. (2017).*Classroom writing assessment and feedback in L2 school contexts*. Singapore: Springer Nature.

Ministry of Education. (1994). Education and Training Policy. Addis Ababa: Ministry of Education.

Moss, C.M. & Brookhart, S.M. (2009). *Advancing formative assessment in every classroom: A guide for instructional leaders.* New York: ASCD.

Nicol, D.J & Macfarlane-Dick, D. (2006). Formative assessment and self-regulated learning: A model and seven principles of good feedback practice. *Studies in Higher Education*, *31*(2), 199-218.

Nilson, L.B. (2013). *Creating self-regulated learners: Strategies to strengthen students' self-awareness and learning skills*. USA: Stylus Publishing.

Norton, L. (2007). Using assessment to promote quality learning in higher education. In A. Campbell. & L. Norton, (Eds.) *Learning, teaching and assessing in higher education: Developing reflective practice (pp. 92-101)*, Learning Matters.

Purnawarman, P. (2011). Impacts of teacher feedback on ESL/EFL students' writing. Blacksburg: Unpublished PhD Dissertation.

Sadler, D.R. (1989). Formative assessment and the design of instructional systems. *Instructional Science, 18*, 119–144.

Sadler, D.R. (1998). Formative assessment: Revisiting the territory. *Assessment in Education*, *5*(1), 77- 84.

Takele, A. (2012). The state of continuous assessment practices in secondary schools of Oromia Special Zone: Challenges and prospects. AAU, Unpublished MA Thesis.

USAID (2003). *'*Continuous assessment*.' Education Quality in the Developing World, 1*(1), 1- 3.

Wingate, U. (2010). The impact of formative feedback on the development of academic writing. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education.35 (5),* 519–533.

York, M. (2003). *Formative assessment in higher education: Moves towards theory and the enhancement of pedagogic practice*. *Springer*, *4*(5), 477-501.

Zumbrunn, S., Tadlock, J. & Roberts, E. (2011). Encouraging self-regulated learning in the classroom: A review of the literature. *Metropolitan Educational Research Consortium (MERC)*, Virginia Commonwealth University, 117-123.