

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

**ESL TEACHERS' BELIEFS ABOUT ASSESSMENT FOR LEARNING IN
THE BOLE –BAMBOI DISTRICT OF THE SAVANNAH REGION OF
GHANA**

SEIDU ABDUL-JALIL



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**A Thesis in the Department of Applied Linguistics,
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submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, in partial fulfilment
Of the requirements for the award of the degree of
Master of Philosophy
(Teaching English as a Second Language)
In the University of Education, Winneba**

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DECLARATION

Candidate's Declaration

I, ABDUL-JALIL, SEIDU, declare that this submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person nor material which to a substantial extent has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma at the University of Education, Winneba or any other educational institution, except where due acknowledgement is made in the thesis.

SIGNATURE:

DATE:

SUPERVIOR'S DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of this thesis were supervised in accordance with the guidelines on supervision of thesis laid down by the University of Education, Winneba.

NAME OF SUPERVISOR: DR. SEFA OWUSU

SIGNATURE:

DATE:

DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to my parents Anyamu Gbolo, Alhaji Ibn Seidu Abdulai and Good Brother Mohammed Zakaria.



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I would like to convey my sincere thanks to Mohammed Zakaria for his support and words of encouragement throughout the period of my studies. Thank you so much and may Almighty Allah replenish you abundantly for making me have the feel of your belonging. I thank almighty for everything for enabling me to successfully complete this programmed in good health and joyfully.

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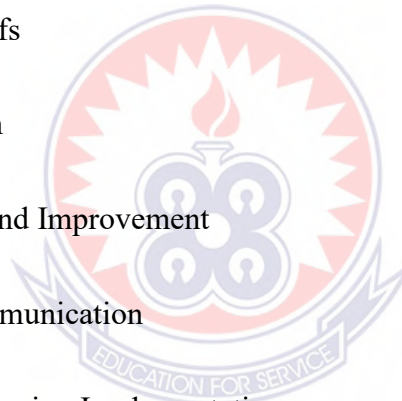
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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AFL: Assessment for Learning

CBA: Classroom-Base Assessment

CK: Content Knowledge

EFL: English as Foreign Language

ESL: English as Second Language

FGDs: Focus Group Discussions

FS: Field Survey

MM: Mixed Methods

NGO: Non-Government Organations

PCK: Pedagogical Content Knowledge

PDP: Professional Development Program

QM: Qualitative Method

QM: Quantitative Method

RITEs: Regional Institutes for Teacher Education

SCT: Social Cognitive Theory

SD: Standard Deviation

SEM: Structural Education Modelling

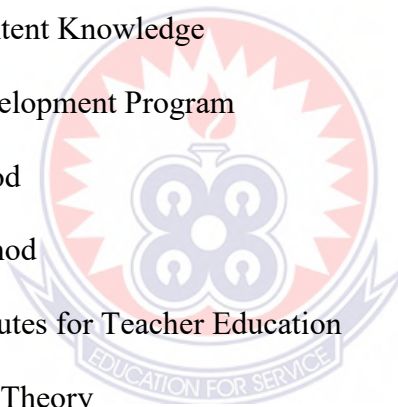
SISOs: School Improvement and Support Officer

SPSS: Statistical Package for Social Science

SRL: Self- regulated Learning

TFALTQ: Teacher Formative Assessment Literacy Technique Questionnaire

TOM: Theory of Mind



ABSTRACT

This study investigated the beliefs and practices of English as a Second Language (ESL) teachers concerning Assessment for Learning (AFL). A mixed-methods approach was employed, using a convergent parallel design grounded in the pragmatist paradigm. The research included all ESL teachers from senior high schools in the Bole District, totaling eighty-two participants. A census sampling method was used to involve the entire population. Data were collected via questionnaires and structured interviews. The analysis was carried out using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 27, employing descriptive statistics and percentages, while thematic analysis was applied to examine the qualitative responses from teachers. In terms of ESL teachers' beliefs about AFL, the findings generally indicated that teachers held positive views toward AFL practices in the region. The qualitative data further highlighted that participants acknowledged the significance of AFL and the value of feedback within the AFL framework as a learning tool. However, when examining the actual implementation of AFL in ESL classrooms, it was found that teachers largely did not apply AFL practices. This finding was corroborated by the qualitative data. Additionally, the study identified six key challenges faced by ESL teachers in implementing AFL: limited time in the curriculum, large class sizes and insufficient student engagement, inadequate resources, a lack of training and professional development opportunities, restricted access to technology, and an overloaded English curriculum that pressures teachers to cover content quickly. Despite these challenges, respondents expressed optimism that these issues could be addressed. Based on these findings, the study recommends the organization of relevant in-service training programs by the Ghana Education Service (GES) and individual school heads to support ESL teachers in overcoming these challenges.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Overview

This chapter presents the general introduction to the study. It discusses the background to the study, the statement of the problem, the purpose and objectives of the study, the research questions, and the significance of the study. The chapter also outlines the delimitation and limitations of the study and concludes with the organization of the research.

1.1 Background to the study

English language proficiency plays a critical role in learners' academic success, particularly in contexts where English serves as the medium of instruction. For students learning English as a Second Language (ESL), limited proficiency can significantly hinder comprehension, participation, and overall learning outcomes (Mubita & Mwanza, 2020). Teachers in such contexts face considerable challenges in both instruction and assessment, especially when learners struggle to understand classroom content and lack access to adequate learning materials (Ugwu, 2023). To address these challenges, ESL teachers are expected to employ innovative instructional and assessment strategies that respond to learners' diverse needs. However, teachers' willingness and ability to adopt such strategies are often influenced by their beliefs about assessment and learning.

Assessment occupies a central position in educational reform and instructional improvement globally. It serves as a link between teaching activities and learning outcomes by providing information on learners' progress, strengths, and areas requiring improvement (Koloi-Keaikitse, 2012). Amua-Sekyi (2016) explains that

assessment enables teachers to evaluate students' achievements in relation to instructional objectives, while also informing decisions regarding placement, feedback, and instructional planning (Kankam et al., 2014). Despite its importance, the concept of formative assessment remains complex, with no universally agreed definition, even after decades of scholarly engagement (William & Leahy, 2015).

Assessment for Learning (AfL), which emphasizes the formative use of assessment information, has gained prominence in language education due to its potential to enhance learning. The effectiveness of AfL largely depends on teachers' capacity to design appropriate assessment tasks and use assessment evidence to guide instruction (Green, 2018). Feedback, a core component of AfL, has been shown to positively influence students' learning and engagement when applied effectively (Zhang & Hyland, 2018).

Classroom assessment influences both how students learn and how teachers teach. McMillan (2013) distinguishes between assessment for learning, which supports learning during instruction, and assessment of learning, which evaluates learning outcomes at the end of instruction. While standardized and summative assessments are often used for accountability purposes, they may not adequately explain the reasons behind students' learning difficulties (Trumbull & Lash, 2013). In contrast, formative assessment provides ongoing information that helps teachers adjust instruction and supports learners' understanding and progress (Trumbull et al., 2013).

Teachers' beliefs about assessment have attracted increasing scholarly attention because of their influence on classroom practices. Brown and Remesal (2012) and French (2018) argue that beliefs shape how teachers interpret assessment

purposes and apply assessment strategies. Assessment may be summative, focusing on measuring outcomes, or formative, aimed at supporting learning (Black & Wiliam, 2018). Through assessment, teachers monitor learning, gather evidence, adapt instruction, and plan future teaching activities (National Task Force on Assessment Education for Teachers, 2016; Shepard et al., 2020).

Empirical studies have revealed discrepancies between teachers' stated beliefs and their actual assessment practices. Ugwu (2023) found that although teachers viewed assessment as an essential aspect of teaching, many struggled to implement formative practices effectively. Similarly, Wang, Lee, and Park (2020) reported both alignment and misalignment between Chinese EFL teachers' beliefs and practices, with teachers expressing support for AfL but relying more heavily on summative assessment in practice.

Educational practices continue to evolve in response to societal and cultural changes. Lindqvist and Shuja (2013) note that education both influences and is influenced by societal transformations. In recent years, assessment practices have shifted from ranking learners toward supporting learning and addressing learning gaps (Shepard et al., 2020; Muskin, 2015). This shift reflects the view that learners are active participants in the learning process who share responsibility for their learning outcomes.

Despite these developments, research indicates that many teachers remain reliant on traditional assessment methods, often neglecting key principles of formative assessment (Singh et al., 2017; Ghazali et al., 2018; Ong et al., 2021). Factors such as gender, grade level, self-efficacy, and assessment literacy have been shown to influence teachers' assessment practices (Alotaibi, 2019; Fulmer et al., 2015; Hussain

et al., 2019). Additionally, uncertainty about alternative assessment methods continues to hinder effective formative assessment implementation (Halali et al., 2017). These challenges underscore the need to examine teachers' beliefs and practices regarding AfL, particularly in specific local contexts such as the Bole District of Ghana.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Although formative assessment is widely acknowledged as a powerful tool for enhancing learning in ESL contexts, evidence suggests that its implementation remains limited and inconsistent. Studies indicate that many teachers possess inadequate understanding of formative assessment principles, which affects their classroom practices (Arrafii & Suhaili, 2015). Scholars have emphasized the importance of formative assessment in ESL and EFL education, noting its role in promoting learner autonomy and providing meaningful feedback (Butler & Lee, 2010; Hill & McNamara, 2012).

According to Looney et al., (2018), formative assessment helps teachers identify learning gaps and design instructional strategies to address them. However, in contexts where assessment is predominantly examination-driven, teachers may prioritize certification outcomes over learning processes. This situation may contribute to examination malpractices and undermine genuine learning experiences (Ugwu, 2023; WAEC, 2017).

In Ghana, anecdotal records from the Ghana Education Service (GES) in the Bole District indicate persistent challenges in the use of assessment in ESL classrooms. Many teachers reportedly fail to use assessment data to inform instruction, resulting in disengaged lessons and poor student performance in English

language examinations (WAEC, 2021; Adaka & Ugo, 2015). Despite the recognized benefits of AfL, there is a lack of empirical research focusing on ESL teachers' beliefs, practices, and challenges related to AfL in the Bole District. This gap necessitates a systematic investigation to inform practice and policy.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The main aim of this study is to investigate the beliefs and instructional practices regarding ESL teachers Assessment for Learning in senior high schools within the Bole District of Ghana.

1.4 Specific Objectives

The specific objectives of this research are to:

1. Investigate the beliefs of ESL teachers concerning the purpose and role of Assessment for Learning (AFL) in senior high schools within the Bole District of Ghana.
2. Explore the application of Assessment for Learning (AFL) practices in ESL classrooms in senior high schools in the Bole District of Ghana.
3. Identify the challenges facing ESL teachers in senior high schools in the Bole District of Ghana through attempting to align their assessment practices with the principles of Assessment for Learning.

1.5 Research Questions

1. What are the perceptions of ESL teachers regarding the purpose and role of Assessment for Learning in senior high schools within the Bole District of Ghana?

2. How is Assessment for Learning integrated and applied in ESL classrooms in senior high schools in the Bole District of Ghana?
3. What challenges do ESL teachers in senior high schools encounter when attempting to align their assessment practices with the principles of Assessment for Learning in the Bole District of Ghana?

1.6 Significance of the Study

The findings of this study will contribute to teachers' understanding of effective Assessment for Learning practices and enhance their classroom assessment skills. The study will also add to the limited body of literature on AfL in ESL contexts, particularly within the Ghanaian educational setting.

Furthermore, the results may inform the Ghana Education Service (GES), school administrators, and teacher training institutions in developing assessment guidelines and professional development programmes that address teachers' specific needs. The study may also provide insights for policymakers on how to promote meaningful assessment practices that support learning rather than solely examination outcomes

Moreover, this study also proposes solutions for re-educating instructors and school teachers, including those teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL) or English as a Second Language (ESL), on the concept of assessment for learning and the necessary considerations when implementing formative strategies in the classroom. This will ultimately enhance student learning outcomes. The results of this study have the potential to provide valuable insights for educational assessment policies pertaining to assessment for learnings. These insights can inform the

development of policies that promote effective and meaningful assessment for learning practices in educational settings.

1.7 Delimitation

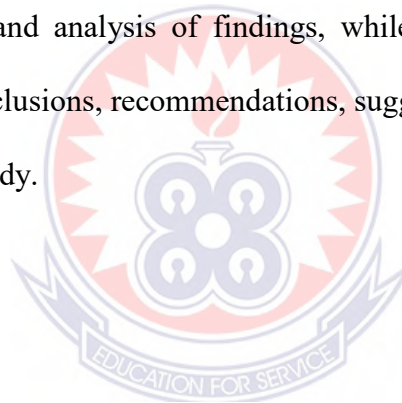
The research focused on five (5) public Senior High Schools located in the Bole Districts, where the researcher works as an ESL teacher. Specifically, the study involved English teachers from the second cycle staff of these schools. It deliberately excluded private senior high schools in the area, as the implementation of free senior high school education has led to a decrease in enrolment in private institutions.

1.8 Limitation

The primary objective of this research is to investigate the beliefs and practices of ESL teachers regarding Assessment for Learning. However, it is important to acknowledge that the study has certain limitations. Specifically, the focus of the study is on teacher beliefs and practices in the Bole District in the Savanna Region. Consequently, the findings of this study are constrained to the perspectives and opinions of the teachers within this particular study area. Nevertheless, despite these limitations, the results of this study will provide valuable insights into the teachers' perceptions. It is worth noting that this study involves gathering information directly from ESL teachers themselves. As a result, the researcher anticipates that the study may be limited in terms of the honesty of the responses obtained. To address this potential limitation, the researcher will clearly explain to the respondents that the information being collected is solely for research purposes.

1.9 Organization of the Study

The research is structured into five sections. The initial section provides the context for the study and addresses key elements such as: the problem statement, study objectives, research inquiries, study significance, constraints, scope, definition of terms, and the overall structure of the research. The subsequent section reviews relevant literature pertaining to the study, encompassing the theoretical, conceptual, and empirical frameworks. The third section outlines the methodology employed in conducting the research, covering aspects such as study location, design, target population, sampling methods, tools used, instrument validation, data collection procedures, data analysis strategies, and ethical considerations. Chapter Four delves into the presentation and analysis of findings, while the concluding Chapter Five offers a summary, conclusions, recommendations, suggestions for future research, and implications for the study.



CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter assesses pertinent scholarly literature related to ESL teachers' beliefs and practices concerning Assessment for Learning (AfL). The review critically examines theoretical perspectives, conceptual explanations, and empirical studies that inform understanding of assessment practices in ESL contexts. Specifically, the chapter explores key theories underpinning teacher beliefs, clarifies core concepts of assessment and AfL, discusses guiding principles of AfL, and synthesizes findings from related empirical studies. This review establishes a theoretical and empirical foundation for examining how ESL teachers' beliefs influence their assessment practices within classroom settings.

2.1 Theoretical Framework

A theoretical framework provides a lens through which a research problem can be examined and interpreted. It guides the selection of appropriate research approaches and supports meaningful interpretation of findings (Andrew, Pedersen, & McEvoy, 2019). The present study is anchored in Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) and Bloom's (1976) theory of curriculum development. These theories are considered relevant because they explain how teachers' beliefs, experiences, and cognitive processes shape instructional and assessment practices.

2.1.1 Social Cognitive Theory (SCT)

Social Cognitive Theory, advanced by Albert Bandura, emphasizes the dynamic interaction between personal factors, behavior, and environmental influences in shaping human actions. Within educational contexts, this theory suggests that teachers' beliefs and classroom practices are not formed in isolation but are influenced by prior experiences, social interactions, and institutional expectations. Teaching and learning occur within social environments where continuous interaction among teachers, learners, and the broader school context shapes professional beliefs and instructional decisions.

Research indicates that experiences within educational settings play a significant role in shaping teachers' beliefs (Pajares, 1992). Wenger (2000) further explains that shared experiences within professional communities create a collective learning culture that influences practice. In contexts where examination performance is emphasized as the primary indicator of success, teachers may develop beliefs that prioritize summative assessment over formative approaches such as Assessment for Learning. Consequently, teachers' assessment choices often reflect the values and expectations embedded within their working environments.

Social Cognitive Theory conceptualizes behavior as the outcome of reciprocal interactions among personal, behavioral, and environmental factors (Bandura, 1989). Personal factors include teachers' self-efficacy, expectations, and attitudes; behavioral factors involve instructional and assessment practices; and environmental factors encompass school culture, policy demands, and social influences. Understanding these interactions provides insight into how teachers' beliefs about assessment

influence their willingness and capacity to implement AfL practices in ESL classrooms.

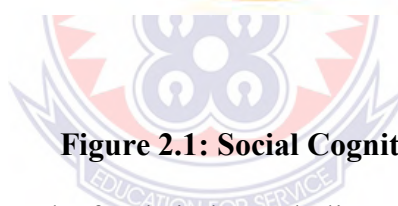
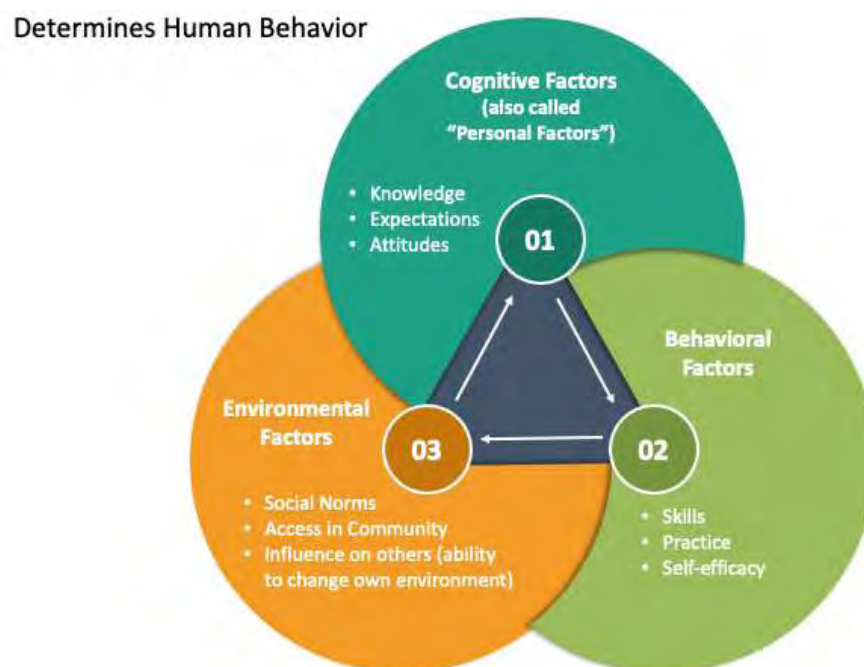


Figure 2.1: Social Cognitive Theory

In this illustration, the focal circle symbolizes the individual and their conduct. The personal elements (such as self-efficacy, outcomes expectations, goals and outcomes, attitudes, and personality) are portrayed as internal factors affecting behavior. The behavioral procedures (including observational learning, modeling, vicarious reinforcement, self-regulation, and reinforcement) are presented as the behaviors and actions that individuals partake in to accomplish their objectives and outcomes. The environmental factors (such as social context, cultural influences, social pressures, reinforcement contingencies, and obstacles and facilitators) are illustrated as external forces that mold and impact behavior (Bandura, 1989).

Social cognition comprises a range of cognitive capacities, including social learning, imitation, gaze following, and theory of mind (ToM). These abilities form essential foundations of social behavior in animals as well as human imitative culture. Language, by contrast, may be described as a bidirectional system that allows individuals to encode arbitrary thoughts into signals and to decode those signals back into meaningful thoughts. Although many animals possess communication systems that convey biologically significant information or emotional states through vocal, visual, or other modalities, humans alone have developed a system capable of expressing and understanding virtually any conceivable concept. While language is unique to humans, several of its underlying mechanisms are shared with other species (Fitch, Huber, & Bugnyar, 2010).

Social cognition and language evolution are deeply interconnected. Language acquisition in children depends heavily on advanced social-cognitive abilities, particularly the capacity to infer the thoughts and intentions of others in order to derive word meanings and engage in effective communication. This view is supported by Clark (2014) and Macnamara (1972). Following its acquisition, language becomes a powerful instrument for social cognition and occupies a central position in human culture. The social exchange of ideas enables the cumulative accumulation of knowledge, which underpins the increasing complexity of cultural domains such as science, technology, mythology, and religion. It is therefore plausible that social cognition and language co-evolved in a mutually reinforcing cycle, whereby progress in one domain promoted advancement in the other. Nevertheless, it remains unclear how human cognition—social or otherwise—would have developed in the absence of the cultural enhancement afforded by language.

Although language often appears to function as a unified system, it is in fact composed of multiple distinct yet interacting mechanisms that together give rise to linguistic competence. Collectively, these mechanisms constitute the faculty of language in a broad sense, many of which are also present in non-human animals. These components can be classified according to their roles in signaling, semantics, and syntax. Signaling mechanisms involve the perceptual and motor processes underlying spoken and signed communication, while semantic mechanisms support the formation, expression, and interpretation of concepts. Syntax refers to the mechanisms responsible for generating structural relations and linking signals to meanings. Both signaling and semantic processes are inherently social in nature. In linguistic interaction—whether spoken, signed, or written—signals must be learned, shared, and standardized within a speech community, requiring advanced imitative abilities. Semantic comprehension, in turn, depends on the capacity to infer a speaker's communicative intentions using indirect cues, such as eye gaze. For instance, when a child hears the word “*rabbit*,” they must consider numerous potential interpretations, including attributes such as “*eute*,” “*furry*,” “*hopping*,” or “*food*.” Despite this ambiguity, children typically identify the speaker's intended meaning by applying conceptual constraints that narrow the range of plausible interpretations. This phenomenon is well documented in the literature (Macnamara, 1972; Quine, 1970) and is attributed to the role of conceptual constraints in guiding word meaning acquisition (Markman, 1990).

Zimmerman & Schunk (2011) argue that recent literature in the field of education has highlighted the potential benefits of integrating SCT principles into assessment practices to promote student engagement and achievement. Research

studies have shown that incorporating SCT-based strategies into assessment for learning can lead to increased student motivation, self-regulation, and academic success. By fostering a supportive learning environment that encourages active participation, collaboration, and reflection, educators can empower students to take ownership of their learning and develop the skills needed to succeed in school and beyond.

2.1.2 Bloom's (1976) Curriculum Development

Understanding teachers' instructional and assessment decisions requires an examination of their underlying beliefs about learning and cognition. Pajares (1992) argues that teachers' beliefs strongly influence how they interpret classroom situations and make instructional choices. In this study, Bloom's (1976) theory of curriculum development provides a useful framework for examining how teachers conceptualize Assessment for Learning (AfL) and apply it within classroom practice.

Bloom's taxonomy offers a hierarchical structure for organizing learning objectives according to levels of cognitive complexity. These levels range from lower-order thinking skills, such as remembering and understanding, to higher-order skills, including analyzing, synthesizing, and evaluating. By aligning instructional activities and assessments with these cognitive levels, teachers are better positioned to support progressive learning and deeper understanding among students.

Within classroom practice, Bloom's framework enables teachers to design assessment tasks that move beyond recall of information to the application and evaluation of knowledge. For example, in an ESL classroom, learners may first demonstrate knowledge by identifying vocabulary, progress to applying language structures in context, and ultimately evaluate or create original texts. Krathwohl (2002) emphasizes

that such progression encourages meaningful learning and supports the effective use of formative assessment strategies.

The relevance of Bloom's theory to this study lies in its emphasis on intentional alignment between learning objectives, instructional activities, and assessment practices. When teachers use AfL strategies informed by Bloom's taxonomy, they are able to diagnose students' learning needs at different cognitive levels and provide targeted feedback that supports improvement. This process reinforces the formative function of assessment as a tool for enhancing learning rather than merely measuring achievement.

Further support for this perspective is found in Bandura's (1986) and Pajares' (1996) assertions that teachers' beliefs and self-efficacy influence their instructional behaviors. Teachers who believe in their capacity to support learning are more likely to adopt assessment practices that emphasize feedback, reflection, and continuous improvement. Empirical studies have consistently shown that teachers' beliefs about teaching and learning are closely related to their classroom practices (Clark, 2012; Doyle, 1997).

Self-efficacy theory further explains that teachers are more inclined to engage in practices they feel confident implementing (Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 2007). In the context of assessment, teachers with strong self-efficacy are more likely to employ AfL strategies that require ongoing monitoring of learning and adaptive instructional responses. Bandura (1989) posits that such beliefs form the foundation of personal agency, influencing persistence, effort, and resilience in professional practice.

Overall, Bloom's curriculum development theory complements Social Cognitive Theory by explaining how teachers' cognitive beliefs shape assessment decisions.

Together, these frameworks provide a robust lens for understanding how ESL teachers' beliefs influence their implementation of Assessment for Learning in classroom settings.



Figure 2.2: Bloom's (1976) Curriculum Development Theory

Bandura (1986) and Pajares (1996) was contemporary theorist selected as the theoretical framework for this study in order to provide additional support for the notion that teacher beliefs and personal experiences play a significant role in their decision-making process when utilizing assessment data for learning purposes. Pajares (1996) argues that teachers' interpretation of their own performance has a direct impact on their self-beliefs, which subsequently influences and modifies their future performances. These performances by teachers serve as the cornerstone for equipping students with resilience and confidence to pursue their aspirations. Previous research has indicated a correlation between teachers' beliefs about teaching and learning and their instructional practices (Clark, 2012; Doyle, 1997).

Self-efficacy theory posits that individuals are more likely to engage in activities and contexts in which they perceive themselves as competent, while tending to withdraw

from situations that challenge their sense of capability (Brownell & Pajares, 1999). In educational contexts, teachers' self-efficacy beliefs, together with mastery experiences, form a fundamental part of their belief systems and significantly influence instructional choices and classroom practices (Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 2007). Over the last three decades, a growing body of research has consistently demonstrated that teachers' confidence in their ability to influence students' motivation and academic performance is strongly associated with meaningful outcomes within schools (Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 2007). From a social cognitive perspective, Bandura (1977) argued that self-efficacy beliefs shape individuals' levels of effort, goal commitment, perseverance, and capacity to cope with obstacles, a position later reinforced in educational research (Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 2007). Bandura (1989) further emphasized that beliefs about one's capabilities are central to the exercise of personal agency.

Empirical evidence also highlights the role of teachers' beliefs in shaping feedback practices. Gearhart and Wolf (1994) examined teacher social beliefs within the context of an in-service professional development program focused on writing assessment and feedback. Their findings indicated that teachers' interpretations of effective literacy feedback have a direct influence on students' progress as developing writers (Gearhart et al., 1994). Moreover, subsequent research has shown that the development of feedback practices grounded in assessment for learning is closely linked to teachers' underlying beliefs, particularly those that motivate their engagement with professional development activities (Anderson & Palm, 2017).

Teacher self-efficacy is similarly influential in the adoption and effective use of assessment for learning strategies. As key agents in the instructional process,

teachers must take into account learners' preparedness to understand and apply new knowledge. Consequently, teachers' confidence in their instructional abilities and their understanding of learning processes play a decisive role in shaping classroom behaviors and influencing student outcomes (Xiang, Yum, & Lian, 2020). Teachers' expectations regarding students' cognitive capacities inform their interactions with learners and may either strengthen or undermine students' own self-efficacy, thereby affecting educational achievement. In light of this, the present study seeks to examine teachers' perceptions of learning and their experiences with implementing assessment for learning practices. By synthesizing existing literature, the study aims to extend current understanding while emphasizing the need for continued research into how teacher beliefs shape assessment for learning and its impact on student learning.

Within Bloom's instructional framework, assessment for learning serves a critical function by guiding teaching decisions and supporting improved learning outcomes. Such assessments are designed to monitor students' understanding at different points throughout the learning process. The systematic collection and interpretation of evidence related to student performance enable teachers to identify learning challenges and modify instructional strategies in response. This continuous feedback mechanism supports adaptive and learner-centered instruction that accommodates individual differences among students (Marzano, 2011).

Marzano (2011) further noted that assessment for learning enhances student motivation and engagement by positioning learners as active participants in the assessment process. When students are provided with clear learning goals, explicit success criteria, and timely feedback, they are more likely to take ownership of their learning and work toward improvement. Embedding assessment for learning within

curriculum planning informed by Bloom's Taxonomy therefore promotes a responsive instructional environment that supports sustained student development and academic achievement.

2.2 Concept of Assessment

Assessment is a fundamental component of the teaching and learning process, serving both instructional and evaluative purposes. In educational practice, assessment is closely linked to instruction, as it provides information that guides teaching decisions and supports student learning. Ndalichako (2015) observes that assessment helps direct learners' attention to key learning objectives, builds confidence, and provides feedback that can enhance academic performance.

In the context of English language teaching, assessment plays a critical role in evaluating learners' proficiency across interconnected language skills, including listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Because these skills develop simultaneously, ESL teachers are required to adopt assessment strategies that capture learners' progress holistically. This necessitates careful planning to ensure that assessment practices yield valid and meaningful information about students' learning needs and achievements.

Assessment in English language education is primarily concerned with determining the extent to which instructional objectives are being achieved. Yolanda (2017) explains that assessment provides evidence of how effectively instructional goals influence learners' language use. Similarly, Khairil and Mokshein (2018) note that assessment benefits both teachers and learners by identifying strengths, weaknesses, and areas requiring improvement. For teachers, assessment data inform instructional adjustments, while for learners, feedback enhances awareness of learning progress.

Assessments may serve formative or summative purposes depending on when and how they are conducted. Summative assessment is typically administered at the end of an instructional period to evaluate overall learning outcomes and assign grades (Harlen, 2005). Although summative assessment provides a snapshot of achievement, scholars argue that numerical scores alone may not fully represent learners' competencies at a given point in time (McClam & Sevier, 2010).

Wiliam (2011) defines AfL as the systematic collection and use of evidence about students' learning to inform teaching and help learners improve. Rather than focusing solely on outcomes, AfL emphasizes feedback, reflection, and instructional adjustment throughout the learning process.

Research has demonstrated that AfL plays a significant role in enhancing student engagement and academic performance. According to Khairil and Mokshein (2018), formative assessment supports continuous monitoring of learning and encourages students to take an active role in their educational development. Feedback derived from AfL practices helps learners understand learning expectations, recognize areas for improvement, and develop positive attitudes toward learning.

Overall, assessment functions as both a measure of learning and a means of promoting it. Effective assessment practices require teachers to balance formative and summative approaches while aligning assessment strategies with instructional goals. In ESL classrooms, this balance is particularly important, as ongoing assessment supports language development and informs teaching practices that respond to learners' diverse needs.

2.3 Principles of Assessment for Learning

Assessment for Learning (AfL) is grounded in the principle that assessment should function as an integral part of the teaching and learning process rather than as a terminal activity. Brookhart (2013) explains that AfL involves the systematic collection and interpretation of evidence about learners' understanding for the purpose of informing instructional decisions and improving learning outcomes. The principles underpinning AfL emphasize its formative nature and its role in supporting student growth.

One key principle of AfL is that assessment should be continuous and embedded within everyday classroom activities. Stiggins, Arter, Chappuis, and Chappuis (2006) argue that effective AfL extends beyond formal tests to include observations, classroom discussions, questioning techniques, and student self-assessment. Through such practices, teachers are able to monitor learning in real time and make timely instructional adjustments.

Another fundamental principle is the emphasis on formative feedback. AfL prioritizes feedback that guides learners toward improvement rather than merely judging performance. Feedback may take various forms, including written comments, oral explanations, peer assessment, and self-reflection. When feedback is timely and specific, it helps learners identify strengths, address misconceptions, and develop strategies for improvement (Stiggins et al., 2006).

AfL also focuses on individual learner progress rather than comparison among peers. This principle encourages teachers to design assessments that allow learners to understand their learning goals and track their progress over time. By emphasizing

progress, AfL supports differentiated instruction and fosters a learning environment that recognizes individual differences and learning needs.

Student involvement is another central principle of AfL. Learners are expected to understand assessment criteria and actively participate in the assessment process. Transparency in assessment expectations enables students to take ownership of their learning and develop self-regulation skills. Engaging students in self- and peer-assessment further enhances their ability to reflect on learning and make informed improvements.

Finally, fairness and equity are essential principles of AfL. Assessments should be inclusive and free from bias, providing all learners with equal opportunities to demonstrate their understanding. Teachers are encouraged to consider learners' diverse backgrounds and make appropriate accommodations to ensure that assessment practices are valid and reliable (Stiggins et al., 2006). Collectively, these principles position AfL as a learner-centered approach that supports meaningful and sustained learning.

2.4 Empirical Review (Related Studies)

An empirical review enables researchers to situate their study within existing scholarship by examining findings from previous investigations and identifying gaps in knowledge. Kuranchie (2021) emphasizes that such reviews help establish the current state of research and provide justification for new studies. This section synthesizes empirical studies related to teachers' beliefs, practices, and challenges in implementing Assessment for Learning in ESL and related educational contexts.

2.4.1 Teachers' Beliefs about the Purpose and Role of Assessment for Learning

Thomas (2013) examined the role of assessment in enhancing learning and observed that, in many classroom contexts, the fundamental purpose of assessment is not consistently foregrounded in instructional practice. In alignment with the views of Barnes, Fives, and Dacey (2015), Thomas's work is grounded in the assumption that teachers' beliefs and attitudes significantly shape their instructional philosophies and practices. The study compared classroom assessment beliefs among trained and untrained middle and secondary school teachers. Findings indicated that teachers across both groups acknowledged the importance of assessment in supporting student achievement. Nevertheless, Thomas (2013) reported that teachers who had received formal training demonstrated a degree of hesitation in adopting student-centered assessment approaches. This reluctance was largely attributed to entrenched school cultures that prioritize testing and examinations over the use of assessment for learning as a tool to inform instruction. Collectively, these studies underscore the strong relationship between teachers' perceptions of assessment and their actual classroom practices.

Shi (2022) explored the perceptions and instructional practices of primary school ESL teachers regarding the implementation of assessment for learning. Employing a mixed-methods approach, the study combined questionnaire data with semi-structured interviews. The survey involved 47 ESL teachers from five primary schools in S City, from which ten participants were randomly selected for interviews. The results revealed that teachers demonstrated limited conceptual understanding of formative assessment, and their application of formative assessment strategies was largely ineffective. This shortfall was attributed to inadequate knowledge of

assessment principles, metacognitive processes, and pedagogical content related to formative assessment, as well as limited competence in implementing the stages of the formative assessment cycle. Consequently, the study emphasized the need to strengthen teacher education and professional development in assessment for learning.

Ugwu (2023) investigated secondary school teachers' beliefs concerning the purpose, significance, and guiding principles of assessment within the Ibadan metropolis in Nigeria. The study involved 47 Literature-in-English teachers and adopted a mixed-method research design that integrated quantitative and qualitative approaches. Quantitative data were collected using the Literature-in-English Teachers' Assessment Beliefs Questionnaire, which demonstrated a reliability coefficient of .76, alongside the Literature-in-English Students' Class-Assessment Checklist. Qualitative data were obtained through interviews with ten teachers. The findings revealed that although teachers viewed assessment as an essential element of teaching and learning, they encountered difficulties in effectively translating their beliefs into classroom practice. The study did not explicitly identify the sources of these inconsistencies, indicating the need for further investigation. Based on the findings, several recommendations were proposed to enhance assessment practices.

Song and Koh (2010) focused on the relationship between teachers' beliefs about student learning and their assessment practices. Two self-report questionnaires were developed to measure teachers' learning beliefs and their use of assessment for learning strategies. Preliminary results suggested that teachers who viewed learning as an active process and recognized students' responsibility to monitor and evaluate their own understanding were more inclined to adopt assessment for learning practices. These practices included strategic questioning, gathering evidence of learning,

providing formative feedback, encouraging peer and self-assessment, and clarifying learning objectives and success criteria. To further examine the underlying factors influencing these beliefs and practices, semi-structured interviews were conducted. Analysis of the interview data revealed three central themes: teachers' intrinsic commitment to supporting student learning, beliefs surrounding feedback and diagnostic assessment, and tensions between assessment of learning and assessment for learning.

Husain (2013) examined secondary school English teachers' perspectives on formative assessment, with particular attention to their understanding of formative assessment, classroom practices, and challenges encountered during implementation. A descriptive-correlational research design was employed, incorporating both quantitative and qualitative data. Questionnaires and semi-structured interviews were administered to purposively selected English teachers from schools in the Kuantan district. Quantitative data were analyzed using SPSS, while interview responses were compared to explore teachers' experiences and understandings. Although most ESL teachers demonstrated sound knowledge of formative assessment, misconceptions were evident among some participants. The study also identified several implementation challenges, notably the burden associated with entering assessment data online, which contributed to teachers' perceptions of formative assessment as administratively demanding.

Noori, Shafie, Mashwani, and Tareen (2017) investigated Afghan EFL lecturers' perceptions and practices regarding assessment, as well as the challenges they faced in implementing formative assessment. Using a qualitative case study design, the research involved three English language lecturers and relied primarily on

semi-structured interviews for data collection. The findings indicated that all participants held favorable attitudes toward formative assessment and expressed a preference for it over summative assessment. Despite these positive perceptions, summative assessment remained more frequently used in practice. This discrepancy was attributed to institutional constraints such as university regulations, large class sizes, and limited instructional time. The study concluded by offering recommendations aimed at facilitating more effective formative assessment practices within the Afghan EFL context.

Ochour, Opoku-Afryie, and Eshun (2022) examined social studies teachers' conceptions and practices of formative assessment in public Junior High Schools within the Techiman Municipality of Ghana's Bono East Region. The study sought to identify gaps in practice and propose strategies for improving formative assessment in social studies instruction. All 95 social studies teachers from the municipality's 84 public Junior High Schools participated in the study. Data were collected using a 50-item questionnaire that included two open-ended items and were analyzed using descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations. The findings revealed that while teachers possessed an accurate conceptual understanding of formative assessment and acknowledged its importance, their classroom practices did not fully reflect formative assessment principles. External pressures, particularly those related to grading and continuous assessment requirements, were found to influence teachers' practices. The study recommended reducing grading-related pressures to enable teachers to engage more meaningfully in formative assessment.

Taylor (2017) investigated teachers' understanding of formative assessment as conceptualized by Black and Wiliam (2009), emphasizing the mindset underlying its effective implementation. The study examined whether English Language Acquisition teachers demonstrated an understanding of formative assessment principles in their instructional practices. Data were collected through observations of five classroom lessons taught by different teachers in an upper secondary school in Sweden, as well as a questionnaire that captured teachers' perspectives on formative assessment. The findings revealed considerable variation in teachers' definitions of formative assessment, which was reflected in their instructional approaches. Only one teacher successfully incorporated all five key formative assessment strategies into classroom practice. The study concluded that a more comprehensive understanding of formative assessment corresponded with stronger integration of its principles in teaching, highlighting the need for sustained professional training.

Ndalichako (2015) explored secondary school teachers' perceptions of assessment using a large-scale survey involving 4,160 Tanzanian teachers. Data were collected through a questionnaire that captured demographic information and teachers' views on assessment. The results indicated that slightly over half of the respondents (50.7%) believed that the primary purpose of assessment was to inform teaching and learning decisions. Additionally, a significant proportion of teachers agreed that assessment plays a vital role in motivating learners, building students' confidence for final examinations, and improving performance through constructive feedback.

Schildkamp et al. (2020) conducted a systematic literature review to identify the key prerequisites required for teachers to effectively implement formative assessment. A total of 54 studies were analyzed to address the central research question concerning the essential teacher-related conditions for successful formative assessment. The review revealed that formative assessment practices are influenced by multiple interrelated factors, including teachers' knowledge and skills (such as data literacy), psychological factors (such as perceived social pressure), and social factors (including collaboration among teachers). These findings have important implications for the design of professional development programs and teacher education initiatives focused on formative assessment.

Swaie and Algazo (2023) examined the purposes and techniques of classroom-based assessment employed by EFL teachers in Jordanian secondary schools. Data were collected through an online survey of 54 teachers, followed by semi-structured interviews with three participants. Survey data were analyzed using descriptive statistics in SPSS, while interview data were transcribed and thematically coded. The findings revealed that teachers used assessment for multiple purposes related to instruction, student performance, and administrative requirements. A range of assessment techniques was reported, with teacher-developed tests being the most commonly used. Teachers' assessment choices were influenced by factors such as the national examination system (Tawjihi), students' proficiency levels, and teachers' own assessment knowledge. The study emphasized the need to enhance teacher training and professional development to strengthen classroom-based assessment practices.

Singh et al. (2022) conducted a qualitative case study investigating alternative assessment strategies used by in-service ESL teachers in Malaysian classrooms. The study involved eleven teachers and utilized semi-structured interviews, classroom observations, and document analysis for data collection. Findings indicated that teachers employed a variety of assessment approaches, including formative, summative, alternative, informal, online, self-, peer-, portfolio-, and school-based assessments. Despite the emphasis on alternative assessment methods, teachers continued to rely heavily on summative assessment. Some teachers, however, incorporated assessment tasks that allowed students to demonstrate creativity, productivity, and competence. The study highlighted the importance of providing teachers with adequate training and exposure to contemporary assessment practices.

Arrafii and Sumarni (2018) explored secondary school English teachers' understanding of formative assessment and the factors influencing their assessment literacy. Using the Teacher Formative Assessment Literacy Questionnaire (TFALTQ), the researchers assessed teachers' knowledge and practices related to formative assessment. The instrument demonstrated acceptable internal consistency ($\alpha = 0.67$), and exploratory factor analysis revealed strong factor loadings with a KMO value of 0.72. The questionnaire was administered to 243 English teachers from public and private secondary schools in central Lombok. The results indicated limited understanding of formative assessment among teachers and identified four dimensions of formative assessment literacy: accountability-oriented assessment, examination-driven learning, procedural approaches to assessment, and passive student roles. Regression analysis further revealed that inadequate assessment training and gender significantly predicted teachers' understanding of formative assessment.

Finally, Sidhu, Kaur, and Chi (2018) examined the implementation of CEFR-aligned school-based assessment (SBA) in Malaysian primary ESL classrooms. Data were collected through surveys, interviews, and document analysis involving TESL teachers from five randomly selected schools in Damansara. The findings showed that SBA implementation did not align with formative assessment principles, despite teachers' generally positive attitudes toward the approach. Teachers reported limited understanding of the CEFR-aligned curriculum, minimal feedback practices, and insufficient opportunities for student reflection, peer assessment, and self-assessment. Major challenges identified included time constraints, large class sizes, heavy workloads, and inadequate professional training, all of which hindered effective implementation.

2.4.2 How Assessment for Learning is implemented

Within ESL classrooms, particularly in the Ghanaian basic and secondary school context, assessment for learning is viewed as an ongoing process that occurs throughout instruction rather than at the end of a teaching cycle. This approach actively engages learners, promotes the development of self-regulated learning skills, and equips students with the competence and confidence required for continuous learning beyond formal schooling. The Assessment Reform Group (2002) defines assessment for learning, commonly referred to as formative assessment, as the systematic gathering and interpretation of evidence that supports both teachers and learners in identifying current levels of understanding and determining appropriate strategies for improving learning outcomes. In ESL settings, formative assessment practices such as questioning, classroom interaction, and feedback play a critical role

in supporting language development. In contrast, summative assessment in Ghanaian schools is largely examination-oriented and focuses on measuring learner achievement at the end of a term or academic year.

The conceptual underpinnings of formative assessment are informed by extensive research across disciplines, including language education. Each of the five key strategies of formative assessment corresponds to classroom assessment techniques commonly employed in ESL instruction. However, Wiliam and Leahy (2015) emphasize that the effectiveness of formative assessment does not lie in the isolated application of individual strategies, but rather in their deliberate and integrated use. While the application of a single strategy may yield positive learning outcomes, authentic formative assessment reflects the coherent enactment of all five strategies. Wiliam (2011) provides empirical evidence demonstrating that ESL learners achieve improved outcomes when they are encouraged to reflect on clearly articulated learning criteria. In language classrooms, such reflection supports learners' understanding of communicative goals and performance expectations. Although existing studies emphasize the importance of clarifying learning intentions, limited attention is given to the teacher mindset required for effective implementation. Nevertheless, Wiliam highlights the importance of distinguishing between language learning objectives and the contextual features of classroom tasks. ESL teachers are therefore encouraged to design learning activities that promote meaningful language use while allowing room for learner creativity and expression.

In the Ghanaian ESL context, teachers cannot always assume that intended learning outcomes align with learners' actual language development. As learners actively construct meaning through interaction and practice (Wiliam, 2011), formative

assessment becomes essential for eliciting evidence of learning during instruction. Regular feedback from students enables teachers to make timely instructional adjustments, particularly in large and linguistically diverse classrooms common in Ghana. To support this process, Wiliam recommends the use of practical classroom tools such as exit tickets, mini whiteboards, letter corners, Popsicle sticks, and ABCD cards, which can be easily adapted to resource-constrained ESL classrooms. These tools are typically used alongside effective questioning strategies that prioritize cognitive engagement over affective responses. ESL teachers are therefore expected to develop competence in posing purposeful questions and interpreting learners' responses accurately. When learners provide incorrect responses, the focus should be on identifying language-related misconceptions and providing scaffolding rather than simply correcting errors. As Wiliam (2011) suggests, teachers should critically reflect on what students' responses reveal about their thinking and language development.

Within formative assessment, feedback functions not only as an informational input for instructional decision-making but also as a critical mechanism for enhancing ESL learners' language development. Building on the framework proposed by Hattie and Timperley (2007), effective feedback in ESL classrooms is expected to address three fundamental considerations: clarification of learning goals ("Where am I going?"), evaluation of learners' current progress ("How am I going?"), and identification of appropriate subsequent actions ("Where to next?"). These components—commonly conceptualized as feed up, feedback, and feed forward—offer a systematic structure for feedback that facilitates continuous learner improvement. In the Ghanaian ESL context, the purposeful application of formative feedback is particularly valuable for narrowing the gap between curriculum

expectations and learners' actual language competencies, thereby strengthening instructional effectiveness and learner achievement.

With regard to the fourth formative assessment strategy, students often demonstrate a tendency to prioritize grades, reflecting a performance-oriented mindset rather than a focus on deep understanding. In contrast, formative assessment seeks to cultivate classroom environments that emphasize collaboration and cooperative learning. Such environments encourage learners to support one another in achieving shared learning goals, and through peer teaching, students consolidate and extend their own understanding. To sustain this collaborative culture, teachers are required to establish clearly defined group goals that promote collective responsibility. At the same time, individual accountability remains essential to ensure that all learners contribute meaningfully to group outcomes, a principle that teachers must deliberately reinforce (Wiliam, 2011).

According to Wiliam (2011), the initial stage of formative assessment involves the clear articulation, communication, and shared understanding of learning objectives and success criteria. Beyond simply stating learning goals, teachers must guide students in understanding the processes required to achieve these goals. Decomposing overarching objectives into manageable sub-targets enables learners to engage with learning goals in a more accessible and purposeful manner. Bremner (2014) explains that monitoring student learning enables teachers to determine how learners are progressing in relation to specified targets. Through systematic monitoring, educators can assess the degree of alignment between intended outcomes and actual student learning. This monitoring process constitutes the core of formative assessment, as it provides teachers with essential evidence regarding students' prior knowledge,

misconceptions, learning potential, and skill gaps. Clearly defined learning goals therefore underpin effective monitoring and form the basis for the provision of meaningful and constructive feedback.

The fifth formative assessment strategy emphasizes self-regulated learning (SRL), which involves learners' ability to manage their own learning through metacognitive awareness, strategic action, and sustained motivation. SRL, often referred to as learner autonomy (Holec, 2011), does not develop spontaneously but requires deliberate instructional support. Although teachers cannot directly instill motivation, they can model learning-oriented mindsets that prioritize knowledge construction over performance outcomes. Teachers are encouraged to demonstrate metacognitive practices by creatively developing strategies that address learners' difficulties, such as designing discovery-based activities that support self-evaluation and reflection (Holec, 2011). Ketabi (2014), in examining classroom assessment practices within ESL contexts, highlighted the dominance of grading practices while acknowledging the value of formative assessment and the need for further research. Notably, much of the existing literature does not adequately explore the relationship between teachers' understanding of formative assessment principles and their practical enactment in ESL classrooms.

Akyina and Oduro-Okyireh (2019) observed that numerous studies have documented a persistent gap between curriculum prescriptions and actual classroom implementation. Similarly, Enu (2021) underscored the limited mechanisms available in Ghana to ensure effective curriculum enactment at the classroom level. This disconnect has significant implications for learner development, particularly in relation to the cultivation of critical thinking and problem-solving skills required for

meaningful societal participation. Addressing this gap necessitates urgent and sustained efforts to integrate formative assessment practices more effectively into classroom instruction. Although teachers often express positive attitudes toward formative assessment, several studies have reported that many educators fail to implement it consistently due to contextual and systemic constraints (Alotaibi, 2011; Bezabih, Yigzaw, & Garad, 2019; Hui, Brown, & Chan, 2017; Yan & Brown, 2021). These challenges contribute to a misalignment between formative assessment theory and classroom practice, resulting in missed opportunities to enhance student learning.

Abdulla (2019) explored the perceptions of three Grade Six teachers regarding the effectiveness of assessment for learning within the framework of a newly introduced curriculum. Employing a qualitative research design, data were collected through in-depth interviews with teachers from a school in Hulhumale. The findings indicated that teachers generally perceived assessment for learning as a valuable approach for understanding and improving student performance, and they viewed the assessment policy underpinning the new curriculum as well designed. However, significant implementation challenges were identified, including large class sizes, limited instructional resources, time constraints, and inadequate professional training. Suggested interventions included reducing class sizes, assigning additional teachers to classrooms, expanding training opportunities, and allocating sufficient time for formative assessment activities. The study's findings offer insights that may assist educators in identifying and addressing barriers to effective assessment implementation, thereby maximizing student learning outcomes.

Cahyani and Arini (2022) investigated the assessment practices employed by English teachers at MAN Sukoharjo, focusing on both the types of assessments used

and their implementation processes. Adopting a descriptive qualitative methodology, the researchers collected data through classroom observations, interviews with three English teachers, and document analysis. Data analysis followed the Miles and Huberman framework, which includes data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. Methodological triangulation was employed to enhance the credibility of the findings. The results revealed that teachers predominantly utilized formative and summative assessments and adhered to established assessment procedures. The authors contend that documenting these practices contributes meaningfully to the existing body of knowledge and provides a foundation for future research on classroom assessment.

Asif and Naz (2021) examined undergraduate ESL teachers' language assessment practices in Punjab, with a focus on institutions in Faisalabad and Lahore. The study aimed to evaluate prevailing assessment methods, compare teachers' perceived assessment competence with their actual practices, and identify factors influencing assessment decisions. A mixed-method research design was employed, incorporating surveys and language assessment knowledge tests to collect quantitative data. The survey captured demographic information and assessment techniques used to evaluate language skills, including reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics in SPSS alongside thematic analysis. Findings revealed a discrepancy between teachers' reported assessment practices and those observed in classrooms. Although teachers claimed to employ diverse assessment methods, observations indicated a predominant reliance on traditional paper-based assessments. The study highlighted the need to align teachers'

assessment beliefs with classroom practices and to address contextual factors shaping ESL assessment.

Felton (2021) explored instructional strategies used by ESL teachers to support ESL learners, drawing on Gagné's conditions of learning theory as the study's theoretical framework. Using a qualitative exploratory case study design, the researcher employed purposive sampling to select high school ESL teachers. Data collection involved ten semi-structured interviews and ten classroom observations, which were analyzed using Hatch's nine-step typological approach. The findings indicated that ESL teachers employed targeted instructional strategies such as motivational reading, vocabulary development, content scaffolding, and structured reading instruction to enhance learners' English proficiency. The study recommended the implementation of district-wide professional development programs to equip ESL teachers with effective instructional strategies. Such initiatives were deemed critical for improving learners' literacy skills and supporting academic success and graduation outcomes.

Xiao and Yang (2019) investigated the role of formative assessment in promoting self-regulated learning among secondary school students learning English as a foreign language. Recognizing self-regulated learning as a cornerstone of lifelong learning, the study addressed a gap in the literature concerning how formative assessment practices facilitate learner autonomy. Classroom observations and interviews with two teachers and sixteen students revealed that teacher-guided formative assessment practices supported students' engagement in goal setting, monitoring, and reflection. Participants perceived formative assessment activities and

feedback as instrumental in fostering deeper understanding and self-regulatory capacities in English language learning.

Abdul Razak et al. (2023) examined the relationship between Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) and Classroom-Based Assessment (CBA) among secondary school ESL teachers in Selangor, Malaysia. Using a five-point Likert-scale survey, data were collected from 338 teachers across 27 secondary schools. Covariance-based Structural Equation Modelling was employed to analyze the data. The findings indicated high levels of PCK among teachers, with content knowledge scoring highest, followed by pedagogical knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge. Classroom-based assessment practices were also reported at high levels. The analysis revealed positive relationships between pedagogical knowledge and CBA, as well as between pedagogical content knowledge and CBA, while no significant relationship was found between content knowledge alone and CBA practices. The study recommended continuous professional development initiatives targeting both PCK and CBA to enhance ESL instructional outcomes.

Ho (2014) explored English language teachers' perceptions and use of formative assessment in a Hong Kong primary school engaged in a partnership with an educational NGO. Thirteen in-service teachers participated in the study, which employed questionnaires and interviews to examine perceptions and contextual factors influencing formative assessment practices. The findings indicated that teachers held favorable views toward formative assessment and integrated it into their daily instruction. Enhanced collaboration among teachers and institutional support were identified as key factors contributing to improved formative assessment practices.

Ní Chróinín and Cosgrave (2013) examined the impact of integrating assessment into primary physical education teaching on teachers' perceptions of assessment and learning. The study involved five primary teachers from Limerick and Dublin who participated in focus group discussions, lesson design and implementation, reflective journaling, and follow-up interviews. Data were analyzed qualitatively using constant comparison methods, with trustworthiness ensured through peer debriefing. The findings demonstrated that embedding assessment within instruction provided structure and direction to teaching and learning, improved feedback practices, and informed future lesson planning. Despite challenges related to planning time, access to assessment resources, and differentiation, the study concluded that assessment integration enhanced both teaching quality and learner engagement.

2.4.3 Challenges ESL Teachers face in Formative Assessment Practices

Literature has demonstrated that in educational settings outside of Western countries, where teacher-centric practices and high-stakes public examinations are prevalent, the integration of formative assessment encounters obstacles. For example, research conducted in Saudi Arabia revealed that the successful adoption of formative assessment methods was hindered by the dominance of teacher-centric instructional approaches and the pressure on educators to ensure students' performance in examinations. Additionally, teachers' limited comprehension of formative assessment principles and the strategies for incorporating them into classroom practices contributed to the challenges faced (Al-Wassia, Hamed, Al-Wassia, Alafari & Jamjoom, 2015). In Indonesia, Arrafii & Sumarni (2018) discovered through a survey of 243 school teachers that English educators lacked a comprehensive understanding

of formative assessment. Similarly, a study conducted concurrently in Malaysian secondary schools (Sidhu et al., 2018) identified "time constraints, classroom size, heavy workloads, and inadequate training" as the primary barriers to the effective implementation of the CEFR-aligned SBA.

The two main objectives of school assessment are formative and summative evaluation. The Ministry of Education (MoE, 2018) highlights the importance of feedback derived from assessment, which benefits various stakeholders such as learners (providing feedback on their learning), teachers (providing feedback on their instruction), curriculum designers (providing feedback on the curriculum), and district, regional, and national education directorates (providing feedback on the utilization of resources). Scholars in the field of education concur that formative assessment refers to any assessment that prioritizes enhancing students' learning, as emphasized by Rivai, Ridwan, Supriyati, & Rahmawati (2019) and Taylor (2017).

Asare & Afriyie (2023) conducted a study to explore the resource-related factors influencing basic teachers' adoption of formative assessment in their classrooms. The researchers utilized a descriptive survey design and employed a multistage sampling procedure to select 300 teachers from the six circuits in the Cape Coast Metropolis of Ghana. Data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics (mean values, SD) and inferential statistics (two-way ANOVA). The study identified time, workload, overcrowded curriculum, class size, and the number of lessons as key barriers to the effective implementation of formative assessment. Results indicated that there was no statistically significant interaction effect of gender and grade level on the resource-related barriers. Additionally, grade level and gender did not show statistically significant main effects in relation to the resource-related barriers. The

study concludes with recommendations and implications for policy, practice, and future research.

Andersson & Palm (2017) conducted a study emphasizing the importance of teacher training in formative assessment, where the integration of various strategies is deemed essential. Their research revealed the necessity for training not only in the individual components of formative assessment but also in understanding how the 5 key strategies interact synergistically. The study was carried out in a Swedish municipality, with one group of mathematics teachers participating in a professional development program (PDP). These teachers dedicated 144 hours over one term to learning about formative assessment, in addition to spending 72 hours on reading literature, planning, and reflecting. On the other hand, the control group did not undergo any form of training. The results showed a significant improvement in student outcomes for the PDP group compared to the control group. The training equipped teachers with practical classroom activities, ample opportunities for hands-on practice with positive results, a deeper understanding of the link between theory and practice, expert guidance, sufficient time for learning, and a process-oriented approach. Andersson & Palm's study underscores the intricate nature of formative assessment and underscores the critical role of training in this area.

Hussain, Shaheen, Ahmad, & Islam (2019) conducted a study on the classroom assessment practices of secondary school English teachers at the 10th-grade level in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The researchers gathered data from 235 English teachers in District Mardan and Swat using a questionnaire. The collected data were analyzed using Mean, Standard Deviation, and independent sample t-test. The findings of the study revealed that teachers predominantly utilized objective type tests, homework assignments, oral presentations, and question answering during

instruction, while neglecting alternative assessment methods such as one-minute tests, presentations, group projects, and self, peer, and portfolio assessments. The main challenges identified included issues related to time management, lack of assessment training, overcrowded classrooms, and ensuring the psychometric properties of assessment tools. On the other hand, opportunities in classroom assessment practices were highlighted, such as leveraging the expertise of experienced teachers, utilizing the services of university education departments, conducting training sessions with the support of Regional Institute for Teacher Education (RITEs), adopting a flipped learning approach, and making use of centers for teacher excellence for the professional development of teachers in classroom assessment practices.

Chen, Zhang & Li (2021) conducted interviews with English teachers and deans from eight universities in an underdeveloped region of Mid-western China to investigate the current environment surrounding a formative assessment initiative. The data analysis identified various challenges, including inadequate support, ineffective dissemination, and insufficient training at the meso-level, as well as limited assessment capabilities among instructors, large class sizes, and student resistance at the micro-level. The findings suggest that the overall environment in this region is not conducive to the successful implementation of formative assessment. The study concludes that there is a need for improved strategies to realize assessment innovations in this and other underdeveloped regions of China.

Akyina & Oduro-Okyireh (2019) conducted a study to examine the formative assessment practices of Senior High School (SHS) teachers in the Mampong Municipality of Ghana. The study was guided by three research questions: 1) what is the level of SHS teachers' knowledge regarding formative assessment? 2) What are the formative assessment practices employed by SHS teachers? 3) How does

formative assessment contribute to the enhancement of teaching and learning? The researchers employed stratified and simple random sampling methods to select a total of 80 teachers from the four public SHSs in the Municipality for the study. Data collection was carried out using a questionnaire. The findings of the study revealed that approximately half of the teachers lacked a comprehensive understanding of formative assessment and its sub-concepts. However, the teachers were found to be engaged in certain practices that, unbeknownst to them, aligned with formative assessment principles. These practices were perceived as customary and integral to the teaching and learning process, with the teachers believing that they contributed to improvements in teaching and learning outcomes. Based on these findings, the researchers recommended that pre-service teacher training programs prioritize the theory and practice of formative assessment to enhance SHS teachers' understanding of the concept and its sub-concepts. Additionally, in-service training activities should be organized for teachers already in the field to further develop their knowledge and skills in formative assessment. It is crucial for education stakeholders to provide the necessary support to facilitate the implementation of these recommendations.

Hui, Brown, & Chan (2017) conducted a study focusing on the assessment tasks utilized by primary school curriculum leaders in Hong Kong. The research explored the nature of assessment for learning within the primary school context and how these tasks could contribute to enhancing learning outcomes during the accountability era. The findings revealed that the primary reason for employing the eight assessment tasks, as discussed in interviews, was to drive improvement, aligning with official policy objectives. However, these tasks also served the purpose of ensuring accountability, reflecting the prevalent use of assessment in the Chinese educational setting. The study suggests that assessment for learning in Hong Kong is

still influenced by the emphasis on demonstrating school quality through exam preparation, raising concerns about the effectiveness of current policies. The paper concludes by identifying factors that impede formative learning practices and proposes follow-up strategies to address the tension between improvement and accountability.

Swaran Singh, Muhammad, Mostafa, Noordin, Darmi, Md Yunus, & Masa Singh (2022) conducted a study to explore the challenges and requirements faced by ESL teachers when incorporating portfolio assessment as an alternative assessment method in teaching the English language. The researchers employed qualitative methods, including online classroom observation and interviews, to gather data from five ESL teachers in the Perak district. The findings of the study indicated that these teachers encountered difficulties in effectively implementing alternative assessment in their English language instruction. These challenges encompassed the selection of appropriate content and learning standards for designing assessment activities, the choice of authentic assessment methods, the evaluation of student work based on learning objectives, the provision of feedback, and the instruction of students on utilizing feedback to enhance their learning. Furthermore, the study revealed that ESL teachers expressed a preference for a variety of authentic assessments accompanied by clear instructions and rubrics to assist them in their teaching practice. Additionally, the teachers emphasized the necessity for training to familiarize themselves with the "what" and "how" of implementing alternative assessment strategies in their classrooms.

Rahman, Hasan, Namaziandost, & Ibna Seraj (2021) conducted a study to investigate the challenges associated with the implementation of School-Based Assessment (SBA), a formative assessment model, in secondary schools in

Bangladesh. The researchers employed a qualitative approach, utilizing interviews with English teachers of grade 8, as well as conducting focus group discussions (FGDs) with students from twelve secondary schools. In addition, valuable data were gathered through field notes and document analysis. The findings of the study, obtained through qualitative content analysis, revealed a concerning state of affairs regarding the implementation of SBA in Bangladesh. Several distinct reasons were identified as posing challenges to the successful implementation of SBA. These included teachers' inadequate orientation towards SBA, their negative attitudes towards the assessment model, heavy workloads, large class sizes, extensive syllabi, the lack of inclusion of SBA marks in public examinations, the absence of honesty and fairness among teachers, the lack of validity and reliability of SBA as an assessment tool, the poor socio-economic conditions of teachers, and the absence of monitoring and supervision by relevant authorities. Furthermore, this study provided a comprehensive understanding of how teachers perceive and apply SBA strategies in their classrooms. The researchers also offered recommendations based on their findings, which have implications for policy makers, teacher trainers, and other stakeholders involved in the education system of Bangladesh and beyond.

Do Quyen & Khairani (2017) conducted a review of research that explored the difficulties encountered when implementing formative assessment in Asian classrooms. To gather relevant articles, the researchers utilized multiple electronic databases and ultimately selected twenty-one studies for analysis. The challenges faced during the implementation of formative assessments were carefully examined and categorized into three levels: micro, meso, and macro. This categorization was based on Kozmai's model, which considers contextual factors that influence teachers' instructional practices in the classroom, as well as the inherent disadvantages of

formative assessment, such as its time-consuming nature and the heavy workload it entails. The findings of the review indicated that the majority of challenges were observed at the micro and macro levels, and were primarily related to the fundamental disadvantages of formative assessment. Notably, 80 percent of the reviewed studies reported that teachers at the micro level lacked sufficient knowledge of formative assessment. This finding highlights the importance of addressing this issue in future research on formative assessment in Asian countries, emphasizing the necessity of providing effective professional development programs to train teachers. Furthermore, future studies in this field should focus on practical formative assessment activities that can effectively integrate formative assessment theories within the Asian cultural and contextual conditions.

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research on formative assessment in Asian countries, emphasizing the necessity of providing effective professional development programs to train teachers. Furthermore, future studies in this field should focus on practical formative assessment activities that can effectively integrate formative assessment theories within the Asian cultural and contextual conditions.

Mudin (2019) explored the understandings and assessment practices of three primary ESL teachers. The research methodology involved collecting data through classroom observations, semi-structured interviews, field notes, and documents. The results of the analysis revealed that the primary ESL teachers had a somewhat vague understanding of the concept of 'formative assessment'. Their understanding lacked comprehensiveness and depth regarding the crucial role of formative assessment in facilitating learning. The participants exhibited noticeable gaps, variations, and confusions in their articulated understanding of formative assessment. Despite the disparity between the teachers' understanding and their actual practices, there was evidence to suggest that they made efforts to incorporate elements of formative assessment in their teaching. However, these practices were not consistent with their professed understanding of formative assessment. The study found that the three ESL teachers engaged, to some extent, in formative assessment practices such as oral questioning, observation, and providing oral feedback to promote learning in their classrooms. Nevertheless, the teachers faced various challenges that hindered their effective implementation of formative assessment. These challenges included conceptual constraints, reliance on traditional language assessment methods, lack of professional development opportunities, contextual constraints, teachers' beliefs, and an examination-oriented culture. These factors significantly influenced the teachers' assessment practices. Based on the findings of this study, it is recommended that

appropriate forms of formative assessment strategies be developed to better suit the Malaysian primary ESL context. This research supports the notion that there is a need for the implementation of formative assessment strategies that align with the specific needs and challenges of the Malaysian primary ESL education system.

2.5 Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework provides a structured representation of the key variables and relationships that underpin a study. It serves as a guide for understanding how the researcher conceptualizes the interaction between concepts, processes, and outcomes relevant to the research problem. Kivunja (2018) explains that a conceptual framework reflects the researcher's interpretation of existing literature and illustrates how the study's variables are expected to relate to one another.

In the present study, the conceptual framework was developed based on insights drawn from the theoretical and empirical literature reviewed. It is anchored in Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory and Bloom's theory of curriculum development, both of which emphasize the role of beliefs, cognition, and contextual factors in shaping professional practice. The framework is designed to explain how ESL teachers' beliefs influence their classroom assessment practices, particularly in relation to Assessment for Learning (AfL).

Within the framework, teachers' beliefs are positioned as the central influencing variable. These beliefs are shaped by personal factors such as prior experiences, assessment knowledge, self-efficacy, and professional training. Teachers' beliefs are further influenced by contextual factors, including school culture, curriculum demands, examination pressures, class size, availability of

resources, and institutional policies. These contextual conditions either facilitate or constrain the effective implementation of AfL practices.

The framework also highlights Assessment for Learning practices as the mediating process through which teachers' beliefs are enacted in the classroom. These practices include the use of formative feedback, questioning strategies, peer and self-assessment, clarification of learning objectives, and continuous monitoring of student progress. When teachers hold positive beliefs about AfL and operate within supportive environments, they are more likely to implement these practices effectively.

The outcome of the interaction between teachers' beliefs, contextual factors, and AfL practices is reflected in student learning outcomes. Effective AfL practices are expected to enhance student engagement, motivation, self-regulation, and academic achievement. Conversely, when contextual constraints dominate or when teachers' beliefs favor examination-oriented approaches, AfL practices may be limited, thereby reducing their potential impact on learning.

Figure 2.3 presents the conceptual framework of the study, illustrating the relationships among teachers' beliefs, contextual factors, Assessment for Learning practices, and student learning outcomes. This framework guides the study by informing the formulation of research questions, the selection of research instruments, and the interpretation of findings related to ESL teachers beliefs and practices regarding Assessment for Learning in the Bole District.



Figure 2.3: Conceptual Framework

Source: Author's Construct, 2024

2.6 Summary

Chapter Two of the study synthesized the relevant literature to establish the theoretical and empirical context for the study. The review was grounded in a dual theoretical framework comprising Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory, which posits that teacher beliefs are shaped by personal, behavioral, and environmental interactions, and Bloom's (1976) theory of curriculum development, which provides a structure for aligning assessment with learning objectives. Empirically, the chapter analyzed a substantial body of international research, which consistently revealed a significant gap between ESL teachers generally positive beliefs about Assessment for Learning (AfL) and their actual classroom practices, which often remained summative and examination-driven. Key impediments to effective AfL implementation identified across studies included inadequate assessment literacy, large class sizes, heavy workloads, and the constraining influence of high-stakes testing cultures. This

comprehensive review culminated in a conceptual framework that positioned teacher beliefs as a central mediator between AfL principles and their enactment within specific contextual constraints.



CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Overview

This section provides an overview of the approach employed in conducting the study. The section delves into the research philosophy, research design, the delineation of the study area, the target population and sampling techniques, the instruments utilized, the validation process for these instruments, the procedures for data collection, and the subsequent data analysis.

3.1 Research Philosophy

Research paradigms are frameworks that scientists use to address fundamental questions about the nature of reality, the acquisition of knowledge, and the methods employed in research. One such paradigm is pragmatism, which emphasizes a pluralistic approach focused on practicality and effectiveness (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011,). Other research paradigms include positivism, interpretivism, post-positivism, Critical theory (ideology), Constructivism, and pragmatism. In a particular study, the research paradigms of interest are positivism/post-positivism, interpretivism, constructivism, and pragmatism (Perera, 2018). Therefore, the study draws inspiration from the pragmatic paradigm.

Pragmatism employs a variety of methods, with the caveat that these methods must be informed by research problems. It places importance on both objective and subjective knowledge in order to achieve research goals. Researchers who take a pragmatic stance are afforded the flexibility to select research methods or strategies that are most suitable for addressing their research inquiries. The current study has embraced this paradigm due to its intuitive appeal, allowance for exploration of areas

of interest, and utilization of methods that are well-suited for addressing the specific issue being investigated (Agormedah, 2020).

3.2 Research Approach

Kuranchie (2021) observes that methodological scholarship broadly recognizes three principal research paradigms: quantitative, qualitative, and mixed-methods approaches. In this study, a mixed-methods design was adopted. Mixed-methods research—often referred to as mixed research (MM)—entails the purposeful combination of quantitative and qualitative methodologies, techniques, perspectives, or forms of data within a single investigation. The integration of these approaches is intended to extend the scope of inquiry, deepen interpretive insight, and enhance the credibility of research findings (Creswell et al., 2011). The adoption of this design was considered particularly appropriate for the present study, as it enables a more comprehensive and nuanced exploration of ESL teachers' beliefs.

One of the defining strengths of a mixed-methods approach is its ability to draw on multiple sources of evidence, thereby facilitating the examination of complex research problems (Poth & Munce, 2020). By combining distinct methodological traditions, mixed-methods designs allow researchers to generate insights that may not be attainable through exclusively quantitative or qualitative approaches. Such designs are especially valuable when research questions demand an in-depth understanding of contextual realities, varied stakeholder perspectives, and culturally embedded practices (Venkatesh, Brown, & Bala, 2013; Venkatesh, Brown, & Sullivan, 2016). Nevertheless, despite the methodological advantages associated with integrating qualitative and quantitative components, mixed-methods research is not without

limitations and operational challenges (Creswell, 2011; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003; Venkatesh et al., 2013).

Several scholars have identified practical constraints that may threaten the effective execution of mixed-methods studies. Dawadi et al. (2021) and Fauser (2018), for instance, outline a range of difficulties commonly encountered when integrating qualitative and quantitative strands, which can be summarized into five overarching challenges. First, the processes of data collection and analysis in mixed-methods research are often time-intensive, resulting in increased financial and logistical demands. Researchers frequently encounter difficulties in aligning research activities with predetermined timelines and budgetary constraints (Fauser, 2018). Additionally, the recruitment of participants and the labor involved in collecting multiple forms of data can be particularly demanding, further extending the duration of the research process (Shaffer et al., 2018).

A second major challenge relates to the integration of qualitative and quantitative data, which many researchers find methodologically complex (Wisdom & Creswell, 2013). For example, Dawadi et al. (2021) reported uncertainty in effectively combining survey data with qualitative evidence derived from interviews and oral diaries. Similarly, O’Cathain et al. (2007) acknowledged difficulties in identifying appropriate strategies for merging distinct datasets, noting that the existing methodological literature offers limited practical guidance on data integration. This concern is echoed by Youngs and Piggot-Irvine (2012), who raise a critical question in the analytic phase of mixed-methods research: determining the point at which analysis, comparison, and interpretation of data should reasonably conclude.

3.3 Research Design

The research employed a convergent parallel design. Convergent parallel research design involves the simultaneous use of qualitative and quantitative data to investigate the same subject. This approach offers the advantage of enabling researchers to gather a wide array of information on a particular topic. By utilizing both qualitative and quantitative methodologies, researchers can achieve a more profound comprehension of the subject under investigation (Williams, Davis and Wilson, 2020). Smith, Johnson, & Brown (2021) lament that convergent parallel research design has become increasingly popular across various disciplines as it facilitates a more comprehensive understanding of research subjects. However, one drawback of convergent parallel research design is its potential for being time-consuming and intricate. Researchers must meticulously plan and synchronize both types of data collection, which can present challenges (Thompson, Garcia & Lee, 2019).

3.4 Study Area

This research was conducted at the Bole District in the Savanna region of Ghana. Per the Ghana Statistical Service (2021), the Bole District in the Northern region has a total population of 115,800, with 51.4 percent representing males and 49.6 percent being females. The population density is measured approximately 10 persons per square kilometer, indicating a sparsely distributed population. Geographically, the Bole district is situated between latitudes 8°10.5' and 09° and longitudes 1.50E' and 2.45 W. It shares borders with the Sawla-Tuna-Kalba district to the north, the republic of Cote D'ivoire to the west with the Black Volta as the boundary, the West Gonja district to the east, and the Wenchi municipal in Brong Ahafo region to the south. The district covers an area of 6,169.2 square kilometers out

of the total area of 69,766.2 square kilometers in the Northern Region, representing nine percent of the region's total land area. The 2010 census reported a population of 61,593 in the District, with the same gender distribution as the current population.

The district's vegetation primarily comprises savannah woodland, which is home to economically valuable trees such as sheanut, dawadawa, teak, kapok, and mango. These trees play a crucial role in supporting the socio-economic well-being of the local population when they undergo processing. The district boasts a diverse range of soils that provide a conducive environment for plant growth. Among the main soil types found in the area are savannah ochrosols, tropical brown earth, and terrace soils. Savannah ochrosols, due to the absence of dense vegetation caused by factors like bush burning, overgrazing, and poor farming practices, tend to be deficient in organic matter and nutrients. It is worth noting that the tropical brown earth soil is particularly suitable for mechanized farming. On the other hand, terrace soils, which are found along rivers, are well-suited for cultivating grain crops and tobacco (Ghana Statistical Service, 2021).

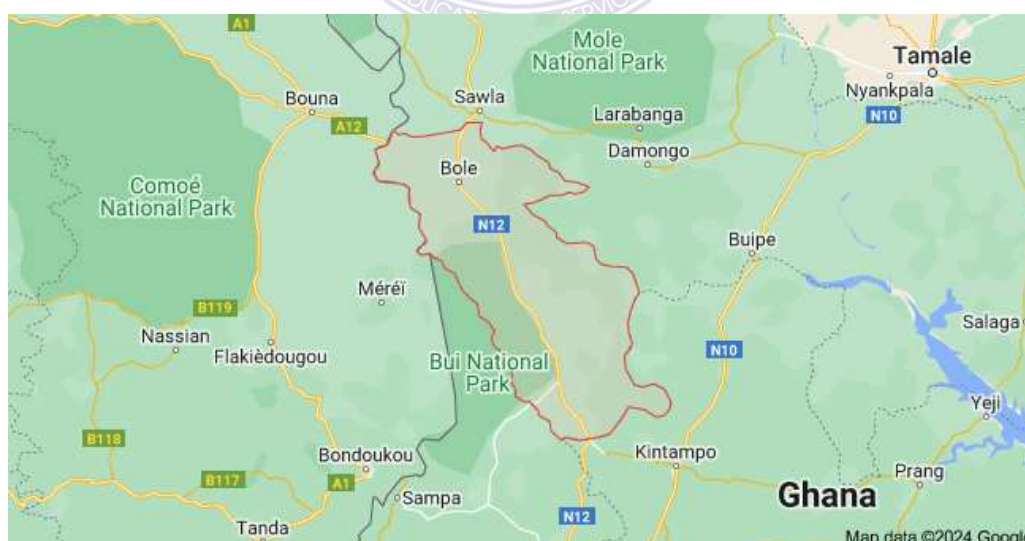


Figure 3.1: Research Study Area

Source: Ghana Statistical Service, 2021

3.5 Population

The total population for the study consisted of all ESL teachers of senior high schools in the Bole District. The population of ESL teachers in the district was eighty-two. The distribution of the population is presented in the table 3.1 below.

Table 3.1: Population Distribution of Teachers

S/N	Senior High Schools	Number of Teachers
1	Bole SHS	23
2	St. Anthony of Padua	17
3	Bamboi Community Day	18
4	Tinga Senior High School	15
5	Bole Technical Institute	9
Total		82

Source: GES, Bole District (2024)

3.6 Sample and Sampling Procedures

The study used census sampling methods to include the entire population targeted in the research. This approach was chosen to guarantee the participation of all ESL teachers in the study area, given their relatively small number. Stratton (2021) posits that a census study is conducted when the population size is very small or when it is justifiable to encompass the entire population. This approach is referred to as a census sample as it involves collecting data from every member of the population. Furthermore, due to the relatively small population size, it was unnecessary to determine the sample size, thus providing a comprehensive representation of the respondents. Consequently, the study encompassed all 82 ESL teachers, accounting for 100% of the total population across various senior high schools in the study area.

In addition to the quantitative analysis, five participants were conveniently interviewed to supplement analysis of research questions one and two respectively.

3.7 Data Collection Instruments

This study relied on primary sources of data to gather information. To collect quantitative views from the participants, the study utilized questionnaires, both close-ended and open-ended, to address research questions one and three. The instruments used in this study were adapted from the works of Pat-El, Tillema, Segers, & Vedder (2013) and Asare (2020), and consisted of three sections. The first section aimed to gather demographic and biological information about the participants. The second section concentrates on investigating ESL teachers' beliefs about assessments for learning. Finally, the third section examines the application of assessment for learning within the study area.

The fourth section of the instrument consisted of an interview guide designed to collect qualitative insights from participants regarding the challenges they face in implementing assessment for learning. Participants were encouraged to provide their perspectives on the use of formative assessment in their classrooms. An interview guide is a widely used tool for data collection, allowing researchers to gather significant amounts of information in a relatively short period and across a broad geographical area (Pandey & Pandey, 2021).

3.8 Validity of Research Instrument

The validity of the research instruments was assessed through a thorough review and validation process (Kuranchie, 2021). In this study, both the quantitative and qualitative items were presented to the study supervisor for validation. Based on

the feedback received, the questionnaire was adjusted to eliminate any ambiguous or unsuitable items, ensuring that they aligned with the study's objectives and effectively captured the required data. Validity refers to the degree to which the results of a study accurately represent the concepts being investigated and provide meaningful insights (Knekta, Runyon & Eddy, 2019).

3.9 Reliability of Research Instrument

The concept of reliability is associated with the ability to consistently measure the same phenomenon in multiple studies. A reliable measure is one that, when repeated several times, yields consistent results (Harper & Rhodes 2021). To assess the reliability of the questionnaire, a pilot study was conducted. The researcher selected ten primary school teachers from the Wenchi Methodist Senior High in the Bono region, which is a neighboring district to the study area, through random sampling. The study supervisor reviewed the qualitative instruments to ensure the reliability of the items. The reliability of the quantitative instruments are presented in Table 3.2. This is shown in appendix A.

Table 3.2: Reliability of Questionnaire Items Leading to their Construct

Construct	Number of Items	Cronbach's alpha (α)
Teachers' Beliefs	10	.920
AFL Implementation	10	.891

Source: Field Survey (2024)

In a research conducted by Almalki (2016), a reliability test that yielded a value of 0.758 was approved. The reliability scales for the various items in this study,

as presented in Table 3.2, were found to be 0.920 for teacher's beliefs and 0.8245 for causes of stress. These values indicate a strong internal consistency among the measured items, implying that the instruments are likely to produce consistent results when administered repeatedly.

3.10 Data Collection Procedure

The researcher acquired a letter of introduction from the University of Education, Winneba which was then presented to the various heads of senior high schools. Upon meeting with the participants, the researcher provided them with a comprehensive explanation of the study's purpose and assured them of the utmost confidentiality. Participants were given the opportunity to ask any questions they had regarding the study's objectives. The researcher personally administered the instruments within a time frame of 25 to 30 minutes, and subsequently collected them within a maximum of two days from each selected school. This approach ensured that respondents could focus on the items without any external disruptions or distractions. In terms of gathering qualitative perspectives from teachers, they were given the opportunity to express their views through an open-ended questionnaire.

3.11 Data Processing and Analysis

After winnowing, the quantitative data of participants were coded and entered into the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25. With the aid of the software, the data pertaining to the beliefs and challenges of ESL teachers were analyzed using descriptive statistics. Demographic information of respondents was analyzed with percentages. In analyzing teacher implementation strategies of formative assessment, thematic analysis was adopted respectively. Descriptive research is a type of study that aims to describe characteristics or behaviors of a group

without influencing them. Descriptive research aids in comprehending the occurrences within a specific group or circumstance. It offers a glimpse into the present condition of affairs, thereby facilitating informed decision-making and strategic planning for future endeavors (Neuman, 2013). Descriptive research possesses a drawback in that it fails to provide an explanation for the underlying causes of observed phenomena. Its primary focus lies in describing the occurrences without delving into the intricate reasons behind them (Leedy & Ormrod, 2023). Further, five interviews were transcribed to support the findings of research questions one and two.

3.12 Ethical Consideration

The University of Education, Winneba provided authorization for the research to be conducted, ensuring that all ethical considerations were met. The application process involved outlining the study's description, significance, methodology, and procedures involving participants. Before commencing the study, an introductory letter was sent to the respective institutions connected to the participants. To safeguard the confidentiality of respondents and prevent the disclosure of their identities, personal information such as names, telephone numbers, and addresses were not included in the research instruments. Participants were given the freedom to opt out of the study if they chose to do so, making participation entirely voluntary.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.0 Introduction

This section provides an overview of the findings obtained from the investigation and examines them in relation to the research goals that directed the study. This study examined ESL Teachers' beliefs and practices on Assessment for Learning among senior high schools in Bole-Bamboi. Specifically, the study investigated the ESL teachers' beliefs about the purpose and role of assessment for learning in the ESL classroom, examined how assessment for learning is implemented in the ESL classroom and assessed the challenges faced by ESL teachers in aligning their assessment practices with the principles of assessment for learning.

4.1 Biographical Characteristics

This section discusses the biographical data of participants. The variables considered were gender, years of teaching experience, qualification and employment grade. For confidentiality, the biographical information excluded personal information such as individual names, addresses, and names of schools of the respondents involved in this study.

Table 4.1: Biographical Characteristics

Variables	Category	Frequency	Percentages
Gender	Male	45	54.9
	Female	37	45.1
Teaching Experience	0 - 5years	11	13.4
	6-10years	27	32.9
	11years and above	44	53.7
Qualification	1st Degree	65	79.3
	Masters and above	17	20.7
Employment Grade	Professional	70	85.4
	Non-Professional	12	14.6

Source: Field Survey (2024)

As presented in Table 4.1, the study involved 82 English language teachers, comprising 45 males (54.9%) and 37 females (45.1%). The distribution suggests a slightly higher participation rate among male teachers compared to their female counterparts. However, the relatively small margin between the two groups indicates a fairly balanced gender representation, implying that female teachers are actively engaged in the teaching of English language.

With respect to teaching experience, the study examined the length of time respondents had served in the teaching profession. The findings show that 11 teachers (13.4%) had between zero and five years of teaching experience, while 27 teachers (32.9%) had taught for a period ranging from six to ten years. A larger proportion of the participants, 44 teachers (53.7%), reported having eleven years or more of teaching experience. This distribution indicates that the majority of respondents were experienced teachers who had spent a considerable length of time in the profession.

Regarding academic qualifications, the results reveal that 65 teachers (79.3%) possessed a first degree as their highest professional qualification, whereas 17 teachers (20.7%) held a master's degree or higher. This suggests that a bachelor's degree constituted the predominant qualification among the participants. This outcome may be explained by the policy directive of the Ghana Education Service (GES), which stipulates that a minimum of a first degree is required for teaching at the senior high school level.

In relation to employment grade, the study distinguished between teachers who had received formal academic training in education and those who had not. The findings indicate that 70 teachers (85.4%) were professionally trained, while 12 teachers (14.6%) were classified as non-professional teachers. This demonstrates that professionally trained teachers constituted the majority of the respondents, significantly outnumbering those without formal educational training.

RQ1: ESL Teachers' Beliefs

This section focused on exploring the beliefs held by ESL teachers regarding Assessment for Learning (AFL). To gather this information, a teacher belief scale was employed, allowing participants to express their level of agreement or disagreement using a five-point Likert scale: 1=Strongly Disagree, 2= Disagree, 3= Undecided, 4 = Agree, and 5 = Strongly Agree.

For analysis purposes, mean scores ranging from 1 to 2 were interpreted as reflecting negative attitudes towards AFL practices. Scores around 3 indicated uncertainty or neutrality regarding their beliefs about AFL, while mean values between 4 and 5 suggested positive perceptions of AFL implementation within the study context. The

overall average score, or grand mean, served as a summary indicator of the respondents' general stance—whether predominantly negative, uncertain, or positive—towards AFL practices in ESL classrooms in the research area. The descriptive statistics, including means and standard deviations of participant responses, are presented in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2: ESL Teachers' Beliefs

Items	Mean	Std. Dev.
I have adequate time to use assessment for learning in the classroom.	4.02	1.144
I understand that children/students achieve improved learning outcomes when Assessment for Learning (AFL) is applied in the classroom.	3.67	1.197
I believe that senior high school students stand to gain significantly from the implementation of assessment for learning.	4.23	1.034
I utilize evidence gathered from assessment for learning to inform and guide my instructional practices.	3.77	1.092
I hold a favorable perception of assessment for learning.	3.74	1.109
Additional training in the application of assessment for learning techniques would be advantageous for me.	3.65	1.159
Assessment for learning ought to be conducted regularly.	3.61	1.152
Assessment for learning fosters student interaction, which in turn enhances their self-confidence.	3.73	1.248
Assessment for learning creates a supportive environment that encourages students to improve their learning through the process of making mistakes.	4.04	1.222
The primary objective of assessment for learning is to facilitate and enhance the learning process.	3.68	1.143
Total	3.81	1.15

Note: 1 to 2.4 = Disagree, 2.5 to 3.4 = Not Sure, 3.5 to 5 = agree

Source: Field Survey, (2024)

Table 4.2 presents a summary of the means and standard deviations for the variables used to assess ESL teachers' beliefs regarding Assessment for Learning (AFL) practices. The overall grand mean score of 3.81, accompanied by a standard deviation of 1.15, suggests that the participants generally hold positive attitudes towards AFL within the study context.

More specifically, respondents indicated that they have sufficient time to implement AFL in their classrooms, reflected in a mean score of 4.02 and a standard deviation of 1.14. Confidence in administering AFL was also evident, with a mean of 3.67 and a standard deviation of 1.19. Participants agreed that senior high school students stand to benefit from AFL, as shown by a mean of 4.23 and a standard deviation of 1.03. The use of assessment evidence to inform instructional planning received a positive response, with a mean of 3.77 and a standard deviation of 1.09. Teachers generally expressed favorable views of AFL (mean = 3.74, SD = 1.11) and acknowledged the value of additional professional development in AFL techniques (mean = 3.65, SD = 1.15). The frequency of AFL implementation was seen as important, supported by a mean score of 3.61 (SD = 1.15). Respondents also agreed that AFL encourages student interaction, boosting their confidence (mean = 3.73, SD = 1.24), and promotes a supportive learning environment where students feel comfortable learning from mistakes (mean = 4.04, SD = 1.22). Finally, the fundamental goal of AFL to enhance learning was affirmed with a mean score of 3.68 and a standard deviation of 1.14.

The positive orientation towards AFL observed among ESL teachers aligns well with Bloom's Curriculum Development model (Bloom, 1976). This model underscores the critical role of formative assessment and feedback within the

educational process, principles which closely resonate with those of AFL. According to Bloom's framework, effective teaching requires establishing clear learning goals, designing assessments that accurately gauge progress towards these goals, and delivering timely feedback that facilitates student advancement.

AFL practices share these foundational concepts by emphasizing ongoing assessment, constructive feedback, and active learner participation. ESL teachers who maintain favorable beliefs about AFL are likely to appreciate continuous assessment approaches that shape instruction and enhance learning outcomes. By integrating AFL strategies such as peer assessment, self-assessment, and goal-setting, teachers can foster a learner-centered environment that reflects the tenets of Bloom's Curriculum Development model, thereby promoting a more interactive and engaging classroom dynamic.

Themes Derived from Quantitative Analysis

4.1.2 Confidence and Perception of Assessment for Learning

This theme encompasses statements that reflect the individual's confidence, perception, and beliefs regarding assessment for learning. It includes feelings about personal capability and the perceived benefits of assessment for students. Table 4.1.2 shows the responses.

Table 4.3: Confidence and Perception of Assessment for Learning

Items	Disagree Frq.(%)	Neutral Frq.(%))	Agree Frq.(%))	Mean	Std. Dev.
I know that children/ students learn better when AFL is implemented in class.	13(15.9)	22(26.8)	47(57.3)	3.67	1.197
I hold a favorable opinion towards assessment for learning.	13(15.9)	15(18.3)	54(65.8)	3.74	1.109
I believe senior high school students stand to gain from assessment for learning.	5(6.1)	15(18.3)	62(75.6)	4.23	1.034
I would appreciate additional training on how to effectively apply assessment for learning techniques.	14(17.1)	23(28.0)	45(54.9)	3.65	1.159
Total				3.82	1.12

Note: 1 to 2.4 = Disagree, 2.5 to 3.4 = Not Sure, 3.5 to 5 = Agree

Source: Field Survey, (2024)

The analysis indicated a mean of 3.82 with a standard deviation of 1.12, suggesting that the respondents generally agree with the statements related to confidence and perception in Assessment for learning beliefs. The mean score indicates a positive or favorable belief towards teacher confidence and perception in Assessment for Learning, leaning closer to “Agree” than “Not Sure.” The standard deviation signifies moderate variability in responses, indicating that some respondents may have significant reservations or differing experiences regarding their confidence and perceptions in Assessment for Learning. Thus, this finding implies that while a majority of the teachers hold favorable views towards AFL, there is not complete consensus, as reflected by the presence of varying opinions. The results are consistent with similar studies, which also report positive attitudes towards AFL, though

challenges in implementation may cause some divergence in beliefs. For instance, Smith and Brown (2023) explored ESL teachers' perceptions of Assessment for Learning in secondary education. The study found that ESL teachers generally have a positive attitude towards AFL, viewing it as a tool that can enhance student learning and engagement. Liu & Wang (2022) examined ESL teachers' beliefs and practices in formative assessment. Analysis of the study revealed mixed beliefs among ESL teachers, with some viewing AFL as beneficial while others were sceptical of its effectiveness. Also, O'Sullivan & Cheng (2024) found that while ESL teachers recognized the potential benefits of AFL, they also expressed caution due to factors such as workload and student readiness. Finally, Lee (2007) examined Assessment for Learning in ESL Classrooms: Teacher Beliefs and Implementation Challenges reported a strong positive belief.

4.1.3 Implementation and Impact of Assessment for Learning

This theme includes statements that focus on the practical application of assessment for learning in the classroom, its frequency, and its impact on student interaction and learning environment. Table 4.1.3 shows the responses.

Table 4.4: Implementation and Impact of Assessment for Learning

Items	Disagree Frq.(%)	NS Frq.(%)	Agree Frq.(%)	Mean	Std. Dev.
I have sufficient time to implement assessment for learning during classroom activities.	8(9.8)	16(19.5)	58(70.7)	4.02	1.144
I utilize evidence gathered from assessment for learning to guide my instructional strategies	14(17.0)	12(14.6)	56(68.2)	3.77	1.092
Assessment for learning out to be conducted regularly.	13(15.9)	25(30.5)	54(53.6)	3.61	1.152
Assessment for learning fosters pupil interaction, which helps build their self-confidence.	21(25.6)	14(17.1)	47(57.4)	3.73	1.248
Assessment for learning creates a supportive environment that encourages pupils to improve their learning through making mistakes.	8(22.0)	5(6.1)	59(72.0)	4.04	1.222
The primary purpose of assessment for learning is to enhance students learning.	11(13.4)	25(30.5)	46(56.1)	3.68	1.143
Total				3.80	1.66

Note: 1 to 2.4 = Disagree, 2.5 to 3.4 = not sure, 3.5 to 5 = Agree

Source: Field Survey, (2024)

The grand mean of 3.80 indicates that on average, ESL teachers tend to lean towards agreeing with the statements regarding the implementation and impact beliefs of Assessment for Learning (AFL). This suggests a generally positive belief among respondents. The standard deviation of 1.66 is relatively high which indicates significant variability in the teachers' responses. Some teachers may have strongly disagreed, while others strongly agreed, suggesting a lack of consensus among the group. The findings imply that while there is a general agreement among ESL teachers about holding favorable or positive beliefs about implementation and impact

of Assessment for Learning, opinions are varied, which could indicate differing interpretations of AFL practices, varying levels of comfort or experience with these practices, or different contextual challenges. Contrary to this finding, Colby (2023) investigated university teachers' perspectives on AFL. The study found that many hold negative beliefs, particularly regarding its practicality and impact on student motivation. Also, Saito and Fujita (2023) explored the beliefs of primary school teachers regarding AFL. The study found that many view AFL as conflicting with traditional assessment practices. The study suggests that these unfavorable beliefs hinder effective implementation. Hui, Brown and Chan (2023) on an investigation into the beliefs of teachers in low-resource settings found that despite recognizing the theoretical benefits of AFL, teachers remain skeptical about its practicality due to a lack of training and resources, leading to unfavorable attitudes. Further, Panadero (2023) examined the attitudes of teachers in a professional development program focused on AFL. Despite initial enthusiasm, many participants expressed doubts about the sustainability and effectiveness of AFL practices, leading to unfavorable beliefs.

RQ1: Interview on ESL Teachers' Beliefs

This section analysed the beliefs of ESL teachers about Assessment for Learning (AFL) through an interview. To do this, the participants were interviewed and their responses were recorded and transcribed. The responses were categorised into two major thematic areas that are discussed below. Table 4.5 shows the distributions of the various variables.

Table 4.5: ESL Teachers' Beliefs

S/N	Thematic Areas	Number of Cases	Percentage Cases
1	Formative Assessment Importance	3	60.00%
2	Feedback as a Learning Tool	2	40.00%

Source: Field Survey (2024)

Formative Assessment Importance

Formative Assessment Importance refers to the benefits associated with the use of Assessment for Learning in the English as a Second Language classroom. ESL teachers often believe that formative assessments are crucial for understanding student progress and tailoring instruction to meet individual needs. Three participants representing 60.00% focused on the importance of AFL. Excerpts of responses are presented.

—The main purpose of using AFL is to measure one, student understanding, knowledge and skills in a specific subject or topic taught. Two, it also informs the teacher the effectiveness of his teaching strategies or methods employed during his teaching and learning process. Em, three, the teacher is also able to identify areas where students may need remediation or clarification” (Respondent 1)

—I believe that number one I assess my students in AFL to be able to inform instruction and adjust teaching and learning strategies. So, what do I mean by this? I do this so that if for example I'm teaching my students and some strategies are used, after conducting my assessment, if I notice that the performance is poor, it means that I have to adjust my teaching strategies..... (Respondent 2)

–With the first part, that is the main purpose of AFL, I think AFL are to inform instruction and also to help the teacher select the best teaching strategy.....”

(Respondent 5)

Feedback as a Learning Tool

Feedback as a learning tool refers to the process through which information regarding performance or understanding is provided to learners, enabling them to reflect on their work and improve their skills and knowledge. Feedback can take various forms, including verbal comments, written evaluations, peer assessments, and self-assessments. Two participants representing 40.0% focused on AFL as providing feedback.

–One can be formative assessment. This is an ongoing assessment that is used throughout the learning process to monitor student progress during teaching and learning to provide feedback appropriately” (Respondent 1)

–Oh yes, we implement AFL one by observation. So, you observe. Observation is when teaching and learning is going on, so you observe your students. Their responses, their answers to your questions and all that.....” (Respondent 2)

–The second one is to inform instruction and adjust your teaching strategies” (Respondent 3)

RQ2: Assessment for Learning Implementation

To investigate the implementation of ASL among ESL teachers. The respondents rated their levels of agreement and disagreement on a five-point scale as 1= Strongly Disagree, 2= Disagree, 3= Not Sure, 4= Agree, 5= Strongly Agree.

In the analysis, the average marks of responses that are between 1 and 2 indicate that the respondents do not implement Assessment for learning practices.

Average marks that are 3 indicate that respondents are not sure about their implementation of AFL practices. Average marks that are between 4 and 5 indicate that respondents implement AFL practices in the study area. However, the grand average mark determines whether respondents generally implement, are not sure of implementation or actually implement AFL practices in ESL classes in the study area. The means and standard deviations of the respondents' responses are summarized in Table 4.6.

Table 4.6: ESL Implementation

Variables	Mean	Std. Dev.
I encourage my students to reflect on how they can improve their assignments.	3.16	1.486
After examining test results of my students, I discuss the answers I gave to the test with them.	2.87	1.131
Whilst working on my assignments, I ask my students about how they think they are doing.	1.67	.876
I ask my students' questions that help them gain understanding of the subject matter.	3.45	1.433
I inquire what went well and what went badly in my work with students after lessons.	2.80	.838
I encourage my students to reflect on their learning process and to think about how to improve next time.	1.65	.908
I consider with my students' ways to improve their weak points.	1.78	.861
After each assessment given to my students, I inform them how to improve the next time.	3.34	1.509
During class, I provide an opportunity for students to show what they have learned.	1.99	.598
There is an opportunity for my students to ask questions during my lesson.	2.76	.794
Total	2.55	1.04

Note: 1 to 2.4 = Disagree, 2.5 to 3.4 = Not Sure, 3.5 to 5 = Agree

Source: Field Survey, (2024)

Results in Table 4.2 summarizes the means and standard deviations of the constructs used in identifying the implementation of AFL practices among ESL teachers. The table indicates that the grand mean of 2.55 with a standard deviation of 1.04 shows that respondents generally do not implement Assessment for learning practices (AFL) practices in their ESL classrooms.

The table further details that the encouraging students to reflect on how they could improve their assignments was implemented or agreed with mean 3.16 and standard deviation 1.49. After examining test results of students, discussing the answers with them was disagreed or not implemented with mean 2.87 and standard deviation 1.13. Whilst working on assignments, students are asked about how they think they are doing was not implemented or disagreed with mean 1.67 and standard deviation 0.876. Asking students questions that help them gain understanding of the subject matter was agreed or implemented with mean 3.45 and standard deviation 1.43. Inquiring what went well and what went badly after lessons was disagreed or not implemented with mean 2.80 and standard deviation 0.84. Encouraging students to reflect on their learning process and to think about how to improve next time was disagreed or not implemented with mean 1.65 and standard deviation 0.91. Considering with students' ways to improve their weak points was disagreed or not implemented with mean 1.78 and standard deviation 0.87. After each assessment given, informing students how to improve the next time was agreed or implemented with mean 3.34 and standard deviation 1.51. During class, providing an opportunity for students to show what they have learned was disagreed or not implemented with mean 1.99 and standard deviation 0.19. There is an opportunity for students to ask questions during lesson was disagreed or not implemented with mean 2.76 and standard deviation 0.79.

Relation to theory: In identifying the implementation of AFL in ESL classrooms. The study revealed that respondents generally do not implement Assessment for Learning practices (AFL) in their ESL classrooms. This findings regarding the lack of implementation of AFL practices in ESL classrooms can be linked to Albert Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory through concepts such as observational learning, self-efficacy, and beliefs about one's capabilities to enact change. The theory suggests that individuals learn not only through direct instruction but also by observing others and by reflecting on their own experiences. When it comes to implementing AFL practices in ESL classrooms, teachers play a crucial role as models for students. If teachers do not actively engage in AFL practices themselves, students may not see the value or importance of such strategies. In the case of the study where respondents were found not to implement AFL practices in ESL classrooms, it could be inferred that these teachers may lack self-efficacy in implementing new assessment strategies or may not have observed effective implementation of AFL in their professional development or peer networks. Additionally, if teachers do not believe in the effectiveness of AFL or do not see its impact on student learning outcomes, they may be less likely to adopt these practices in their classrooms.

Themes Derived from Quantitative Analysis

4.2.2 Student Reflection and Improvement

This theme encompasses statements that focus on encouraging students to reflect on their learning processes, understand their performance, and identify areas for improvement.

Table 4.7: Student Reflection and Improvement

Items	Disagree Frq.(%)	NS Frq.(%)	Agree Frq.(%)	Mean	Std. Dev.
I encourage my students to reflect on how they can improve their assignments.	64(78.1)	15(18.3)	18(22.0)	3.16	1.486
I ask my students' questions that help them gain understanding of the subject matter.	24(29.2)	10(12.2)	48(58.5)	3.45	1.433
I encourage my students to reflect on their learning process and to think about how to improve next time.	64((78.1)	15(18.3)	18(22.0)	1.65	.908
I consider with my students ways to improve their weak points.	58(72.0)	23(28.0)		1.78	.861
After each assessment given to my students, I inform them how to improve the next time.	35(42.7)	8(9.8)	39(47.5)	3.34	1.509
Total				2.68	1.24

Note: 1 to 2.4 = Disagree, 2.5 to 3.4 = Not Sure, 3.5 to 5 = Agree

Source: Field Survey, (2024)

The grand mean of 2.68 suggests that on average, the respondents tend to lean slightly toward disagreement with the statements related to student reflection and improvement in Assessment for Learning Implementation. This indicates that there might be some concerns or lack of confidence among the respondents regarding student reflection and improvement in the implementation of AFL. A standard deviation of 1.24 indicates a relatively wide spread of responses. Generally, teachers do not ensure student reflection and improvement in the implementation of Assessment for Learning, but there is considerable variation in how respondents feel about it. Similar to this finding, Jones and Smith (2023) examined the barriers that teachers face in implementing AFL, including insufficient professional development,

lack of time, and a focus on summative assessments. Findings suggest that while teachers recognize the value of AFL, practical challenges prevent them from fully embedding these practices in their classrooms. Green and Miller (2022) explored the gap between teachers' theoretical understanding of assessment for learning (AFL) and their actual classroom practices. The research highlights that while teachers are aware of AFL strategies, they often revert to traditional assessment methods due to external pressures such as standardized testing and administrative expectations. The findings emphasize the need for targeted professional development and systemic support to encourage the consistent application of AFL in teaching practices. Also, Khan and White (2024) investigated the extent to which teachers in primary and secondary schools employ AFL strategies. The results show that while some teachers incorporate elements of AFL, the majority rely on summative assessments. The study concludes that a stronger focus on professional development and school-wide policies is necessary to support AFL practices. Finally, Liu and Chen (2024) examined the challenges faced by teachers in implementing assessment for learning (AFL) practices in diverse classroom settings. Through qualitative interviews with teachers, the study identifies key obstacles, including a lack of clear guidelines, limited resources, and the tension between formative and summative assessment demands. The findings underscore the need for clearer policies and better support systems to enable teachers to effectively use AFL in their teaching.

4.2.3 Feedback and Communication

This theme includes statements that emphasize the importance of communication between the teacher and students regarding performance, assessments, and classroom engagement.

Table 4.8: Feedback and Communication

Variables	Disagree Frq.(%)	NS Frq.(%)	Agree Frq.(%)	Mean	Std. Dev.
After examining test results of my students, I discuss the answers I gave to the test with them.	31(37.8)	28(34.1)	23(28.0)	2.87	1.131
Whilst working on my assignments, I ask my students about how they think they are doing.	64(78.0)	16(19.5)	18(21.9)	1.67	.876
I inquire what went well and what went badly in my work with students after lessons.	24(29.2)	10(12.2)	48(58.5)	2.80	.838
During class, I provide an opportunity for students to show what they have learned.	70(85.4)	11(13.4)	1(1.2)	1.99	.598
There is an opportunity for my students to ask questions during my lesson.	29(35.4)	41(50.0)	12(14.6)	2.76	.794
Total				2.41	1.84

Note: 1 to 2.4 = Disagree, 2.5 to 3.4 = Not Sure, 3.5 to 5 = Agree

Source: Field Survey, (2024)

A grand mean of 2.41 indicates that the general response from ESL teachers overall did not strongly agree with the statements related to feedback and communication in the implementation of Assessment for Learning. Standard Deviation of 1.84 indicates a wide range of responses, meaning that there was a lot of variation in how different teachers perceived feedback and communication. Teachers do not implement feedback and communication related to Assessment for Learning. There is significant variability in teachers' opinions, with some feeling strongly negative and others potentially more neutral or positive. Aligning this finding, Rashid and Kaur (2023) explored the barriers teachers face in implementing effective feedback within Assessment for Learning (AFL) practices. Despite the acknowledged

importance of feedback, the study finds that many educators struggle to integrate it effectively due to factors such as inadequate training, heavy workloads, and a lack of time. The review highlights the need for targeted professional development and support systems to enhance the use of feedback in AFL. Martin and Scott (2023) also investigated the challenges associated with feedback and communication in Assessment for Learning (AFL) practices among secondary school teachers. The findings reveal that while teachers acknowledge the value of feedback, they often fail to implement it effectively due to time constraints, insufficient resources, and unclear guidelines. The study underscores the necessity for clearer policies and more robust support structures to facilitate effective AFL practices. Nguyen and Liu (2024) analyzed the implementation gaps in feedback practices within Assessment for Learning (AFL) frameworks. Through a survey of educators, the study identifies significant discrepancies between the theoretical benefits of feedback and its practical application in classrooms. Factors such as lack of professional development, inconsistent feedback practices, and resistance to change are cited as major obstacles to effective AFL. Finally, Williams and Jones (2024) explored teachers' perspectives on the implementation of feedback and communication in Assessment for Learning (AFL) practices within higher education. The results indicate that although teachers recognize the importance of feedback, practical implementation is often hindered by factors such as large class sizes, administrative demands, and insufficient training. The study calls for more comprehensive strategies to address these challenges and improve AFL practices.

RQ2: Interview on Assessment for Learning Implementation

The study further conducted an interview using five participants to supplement the quantitative views of the participants. The responses were categorized into one major thematic area that is discussed below. Table 4.2.4 shows the distributions of the various variables.

Table 4.9: Assessment for Learning Implementation

S/N	Thematic Area	Number of Cases	Percentage Cases
2	Non Implementation of AFL	5	100%

Source: Field Survey (2024)

Implementation Difficulties

The term “Non-Implementation of Assessment for Learning among ESL (English as a Second Language) teachers” refers to the failure or reluctance of educators who teach English to non-native speakers to integrate formative assessment practices into their instructional strategies. Formative assessment is characterized by ongoing feedback mechanisms that inform both teaching and learning processes, enabling educators to adjust their methods based on students’ needs and progress. All the five participants representing 100% claimed that summative assessments were implemented in place of AFL. Excerpts of responses are below.

–Oh yes, we implement AFL one by observation. So, you observe. Observation is when teaching and learning is going on, so you observe your students. Their responses, their answers to your questions and all that. Number two is quizzes. I think over here, we don’t have quizzes. I’m a teacher at the senior high school, we say class test; we say end of term exams. So, I conduct termly exams.....” (Respondent 2)

–So, with this, you can use quizzes as a way of assessment. When this is done, you monitor the progress of the students” (Respondent 5)

Educational Level of Parent

The effect of Educational Level of single Parent on their children has to do with the impact that a single parent's level of education has on the academic achievement, cognitive development, and overall well-being of their children. Magnuson and Votruba-Drzal (2009) suggest that higher levels of parental education are associated with better outcomes for children in terms of educational attainment, socio-emotional development, and future success. Four participants representing 26.67% indicated that they were affected by parental level of education. Below are excerpts of some responses.

—Among the socio-economic factors, the one that influences me most is parental educational level. Concerning the parent education level, the low educational background affects my self-esteem” (Respondent 6)

—Socio-economic factors being affected by me is the parental educational level. I live with only my father and his educational background is low so it affects my status” (Respondent 7)

—The educational level of my mother. My mother couldn't go to school. My mother is not educated and this doesn't motivate me as a student” (Respondent 7)

RQ3: Challenges ESL Teachers Face

In examining the challenges ESL teachers face in implementing AFL practices, the study collected data on the views of teachers using interviews and open-ended questions. Five teachers were interviewed while other participants were asked write down their views on an open ended questionnaire. Based on the data analysis, six (6) themes were delved into. These are: (1) Inadequate time on timetables (2) Large class Sizes (3) Resource constraints (4) Limited training and professional

development (5) Limited access to technology (6) Overloaded English curriculum creating pressure on teachers to rush through content. The result is presented in the Table 4.10.

Table 4.10: Challenges ESL Teachers Face

S/N	Thematic Areas on Challenges	Number of Cases	% Cases
1	Inadequate time on timetables	24	29.27%
2	Large class sizes and inadequate student input	20	24.39%
3	Resource constraints	13	15.85%
4	Limited training and professional development	11	13.42%
5	Limited access to technology	8	9.76%
6	Overloaded English curriculum creating pressure on teachers to rush through content.	6	7.31%

Source: Field Survey, (2024)

Inadequate time on timetables

Inadequate time on timetables refers to a situation where the allocated time for teaching and learning activities within a school schedule is insufficient to cover the required curriculum comprehensively. This can lead to rushed lessons, limited opportunities for student engagement, and challenges in addressing individual student needs. 24 (29.27%) respondents asserted that disruptive behaviours of students affects student learning and academic performance.

–The regular timetable is occupied with many subjects making it difficult to practice anything apart from the normal lesson” (Respondent 31)

–Teachers may find it challenging to incorporate formative assessment practices effectively within the limited time available for instruction due to various curriculum requirements and constraints” (Respondent 12)

–One of the challenges faced in practicing Assessment for Learning in ESL classes is the lack of sufficient time allocated on timetables for assessment activities” (Respondent 45)

–I think that we need to have an organized timetable for assessment for learning to effectively take place” (Respondent 50)

–You will either have to spend the whole of your time for assessment or use the whole time for teaching. Having a balance is always a problem for both” (Respondent 63)

–The time allocated for English language would not allow any teacher to effectively observe assessment for learning” (Respondent 19).

I mostly prefer giving assignments in order to make the scanty allocated time meaningful. This means that we don't have enough time (Respondent 14).

Large class sizes and inadequate student input

Large class sizes indicate a scenario where the number of students in a classroom exceeds the ideal capacity for effective teaching and learning. This can result in reduced individual attention from teachers, difficulty in managing student behavior, and limited opportunities for personalized instruction. Inadequate student input indicates that the attitude of student in AFL is not encouraging. Students remain silent when assessment questions are posed to them. One indication that could be associated with this was their language and cultural differences in the English language class. 20

(24.39%) respondents claimed that student disruptive behaviours undermine authority of the school.

–The free senior high school policy has increased the enrolment of students in almost every English language class. As a result, following assessment for learning practices become limited” (Respondent 33)

–Assessment for learning cannot fully be observed due to the large class sizes. I am unable to attend to individual needs in class” (Respondent 74)

–The classrooms are well occupied and I mostly teach my lessons and ask few questions” (Respondent 4)

–Large class sizes pose a significant challenge to implementing AFL in ESL classrooms” (Respondent 16)

–Most students do not respond to assessment questions and allow a lot of time to get wasted from the already limited time” (Respondent 62)

–I see the differences in language and or culture among students as being a barrier to their participation in AFL” (Respondent 18)

–With a high number of students, teachers may struggle to provide individualized feedback and support necessary for effective formative assessment practices. This can hinder the ability to accurately assess student progress and tailor instruction to meet their diverse needs” (Respondent 81)

–Attending to the needs of all students to reflect AFL is highly impossible because a class with minimum number of students is around thirty-eight to forty-six” (Respondent 13).

Resource Constraints

Resource constraints refer to limitations in the availability of essential educational resources such as textbooks, laboratory equipment, and other materials necessary for

delivering quality education. These constraints can hinder effective teaching and learning processes and impact student outcomes. 13 (15.85%) respondents asserted that disruptive behaviour of students lead to destruction of school properties.

–The proper teaching and learning materials are not available for students to be engaged in effective assessment for learning practices” (Respondent 22)

–I think that if the school had assessment for learning textbooks for students, carrying out assessment would be smoother” (Respondent 1)

–Students are not able to buy the needed books that could easily facilitate assessment for learning” (Respondent 16)

–Limited resources, such as textbooks and teaching materials impedes the implementation of AFL in ESL classes” (Respondent 58)

–If students have access to textbooks, learning and conducting assessment would be easy” (Respondent 69)

–Marking the work of students is difficult. You will write everything on the board for them to copy and mark them later. This makes their assessment difficult” (Respondent 11).

Limited Training and Professional Development

Limited training and professional development signify a lack of opportunities for educators to enhance their skills, knowledge, and instructional practices. This can impede teacher effectiveness, hinder innovation in teaching methods, and ultimately affect student achievement. 11 (13.42%) respondents affirmed that disruptive behaviour of students create safety concerns in the school.

–I have not had time to go into the details for organizing assessment for learning” (Respondent 54)

–We don't receive any training on assessment for learning on the job”

(Respondent 2)

–We hardly attend workshops on AFL” (Respondent 10)

–When they organize training programmes, teachers are asked to pay from their pocket and this prevents me from attending most of training programmes that may address AFL issues” (Respondent 38)

–Without proper guidance and support, we struggle to effectively integrate formative assessment techniques into our teaching practices, impacting the quality of feedback provided to students” (Respondent 61)

–Recently, we observe professional leaning communities but we hardly focus on assessment for learning practices. I have to make time to reflect on the practices myself” (Respondent 14).

Limited Access to Technology

Limited access to technology denotes a situation where schools lack sufficient technological resources such as computers, internet connectivity, software applications, and digital tools. This can restrict opportunities for digital learning, research, collaboration, and skill development among students and educators. 8 (9.76%) respondents indicated that disruptive behaviour of students could lead to premature parenthood.

–If an entire class could have access to computers all the time with AFL questioning after each lesson, I think we are good to go” (Respondent 54)

–In today's digital age, limited access to technology hinders the implementation of AFL in ESL classrooms in many ways” (Respondent 2)

–Technology tools play a crucial role in facilitating formative assessment practices, such as providing immediate feedback or creating interactive learning experiences. I particularly have a challenge with the absence of adequate computers in my school” (Respondent 10)

–The huge number of students make it difficult for students to access the computer laboratory. The laboratory is always occupied and this makes the use of orthodox means of assessing students difficult” (Respondent 7)

–If government could provide tablets matching the number of students and that could be readily used anytime, students could easily be accessed and receive their feedback but this is not so” (Respondent 11)

–Without adequate access to technology resources, I often face challenges in incorporating innovative assessment strategies into my teaching. The use of traditional means is difficult” (Respondent 45).

Overloaded English Curriculum Creating Pressure on Teachers

An overloaded English curriculum creates pressure on teachers to rush through content when there is an excessive amount of material or topics to cover within a limited timeframe. This can lead to superficial understanding of concepts, reduced focus on critical thinking skills, and challenges in catering to diverse learning needs. 6 (7.31%) respondents claimed that disruptive behaviour of students could lead to the cancellation of final examinations.

–I have lots to complete in English as a language. The various aspects limits me in organizing AFL in my class” (Respondent 9)

–I think that the various aspects of English language and also being a core subject makes carrying out AFL difficult” (Respondent 38)

–If the Ghana Education Service could assign each aspect of the English language to different English teachers, that would afford me the time to organize assessment for learning with my students. There would be no need to rush to complete the curriculum” (Respondent 10)

–The overloaded English curriculum creates pressure on me to rush through content, leaving limited time for meaningful formative assessment practices” (Respondent 67)

–I do sometimes engage my students in assessment for learning practices but the nature of load in the curriculum does not allow me always observe the practice” (Respondent 11)

–Frankly, I feel compelled to prioritize covering curriculum objectives over engaging in ongoing assessment activities that promote student learning and growth” (Respondent 4).

In looking at the challenges ESL teachers face in implementing AFL practices, the study identified six themes as underlying challenges. These challenges were inadequate time on timetables, large class sizes and inadequate student input, resource constraints, limited training and professional development, limited access to technology and finally, overloaded English curriculum creating pressure on teachers to rush through content. In spite of these challenges, respondents were hopeful that challenges could be resolved.

In Bloom’s Curriculum Development Theory, the identified challenges faced by ESL teachers in implementing Assessment for Learning (AFL) practices can be related to various components of the theory. Bloom’s theory emphasizes the importance of considering the learning environment and resources available for effective curriculum development. The inadequate time allocated on timetables for

AFL practices aligns with Bloom's emphasis on the need for sufficient time and resources to support effective teaching and learning. Large class sizes and inadequate student input also resonate with Bloom's focus on individualized instruction and student-centered learning, highlighting the importance of addressing diverse student needs within the curriculum development process.

Furthermore, resource constraints, limited training and professional development opportunities, as well as limited access to technology, all underscore the significance of providing educators with adequate support and resources to enhance curriculum implementation, which is a key aspect of Bloom's theory. Finally, the pressure on ESL teachers to rush through content due to an overloaded English curriculum reflects a disconnect between curriculum goals and actual classroom practices, emphasizing the need for alignment between curriculum design and implementation strategies as advocated by Bloom.

This outcome aligns DeLuca, Luu, Sun and Klinger (2012) which examined assessment for learning in the classroom: barriers to implementation and possibilities for teacher professional learning that there have been notable barriers impeding teachers' use of AFL in their classrooms. Time and class sizes; conceptual confusions related to AfL; perceived misalignment between system priorities and classroom assessment practices; and a lack of effective models for professional development on assessment have all been cited as critical challenges in promoting the implementation. Similarly, is the work of Asare and Afriyie (2023) which investigated the potential resource-related factors that affect basic teachers' adoption of formative assessment in their classrooms? A descriptive survey design with a multistage sampling procedure was employed to select 300 teachers from the six circuits in the Cape Coast Metropolis of Ghana. Time, workload, overcrowded curriculum, class size, and the

number of lessons were reported as barriers to the effective implementation of formative assessment. Findings also revealed no statistically significant interaction effect of gender and grade level on the resource-related barriers. Also, Smith and Brown (2023) highlighted six critical barriers: insufficient time allocated within timetables, large class sizes that limit individual student engagement, scarcity of resources, inadequate professional development and training opportunities, restricted access to modern technology, and an overloaded English curriculum that pressures teachers to expedite content delivery. These factors collectively impede the integration of AFL strategies, underscoring the need for systemic changes to support ESL educators. Finally, Jones and Lee, (2024) explored the challenges in AFL adoption within ESL classrooms and found that the implementation of Assessment for Learning (AFL) practices in ESL settings is fraught with challenges that can undermine its effectiveness. Key issues identified include limited time on timetables, large class sizes that constrain personalized feedback, insufficient resources, inadequate training for educators, lack of access to technological tools, and an overburdened curriculum that compels teachers to rush through material. Addressing these barriers is essential for enhancing AFL practices and supporting ESL teachers in their instructional efforts.

Comparative Analysis

Beliefs vs. Practice: There is a clear disconnect between the positive beliefs of ESL teachers regarding AFL and the actual implementation of these practices. While teachers understand and value AFL, the reality of their teaching environment prevents them from applying it effectively.

Barriers to Implementation: The challenges identified in Finding 3 offer a detailed explanation for the gap observed in Finding 2. These barriers are systemic and multifaceted, ranging from structural issues like timetabling and class sizes to resource-related challenges such as lack of training and technology.

Interrelation of Findings: The three findings are interconnected; teachers' positive beliefs (Finding 1) are not enough to ensure the implementation of AFL practices (Finding 2) due to the substantial challenges they face (Finding 3). To improve the situation, it is necessary to address these challenges through policy changes, increased resources, and enhanced support for teachers.



CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter summarizes the main findings of the study with respect to research objectives, conclusions, recommendations and suggestion for further studies.

5.1 Summary of the Findings

This study examined ESL Teachers' Beliefs and Practices about Assessment for Learning practices under the following specific objectives: examine ESL teachers' beliefs about the purpose and role of assessment for learning in the ESL classroom, examine how assessment for learning is implemented in the ESL classroom and finally to examine the challenges ESL teachers face in aligning their assessment practices with the principles of assessment for learning.

Being a mixed study, the study adopted convergent parallel design. The study took inspiration from the pragmatist's paradigm. The total population for the study was made up of all ESL teachers of senior high schools in the Bole District. The entire population of teachers were eighty-two (82). The study utilized census sampling techniques in covering the entire population identified in the study. Data were collected using open and close ended questionnaire with structured interviews. Data were analyzed using statistics package for social science version 25 (SPSS) by employing descriptive statistics, percentages and using thematic analysis to assess qualitative views of teachers.

On demographic characteristics of the respondents, the study revealed that most of the respondents were male English teachers. For teaching experience, a greater number of teachers who took part in the study had taught longer years in terms

of teaching experience. With regards to teacher qualification, first degree teachers dominated among the teachers who took part in the study and teachers who were professionals were more than teachers who were non-professionals.

In examining the beliefs of ESL teachers about AFL practices, it was generally revealed that ESL teachers have positive beliefs about Assessment for learning practices in the study area. Qualitative data revealed that participants shared opinion on formative assessment importance and feedback from AFL as a learning tool. In identifying the implementation of AFL practices in ESL classrooms. The study indicated that respondents generally do not implement Assessment for Learning practices (AFL) in their ESL classrooms. This was supported by qualitative analysis.

Finally, in looking at the challenges ESL teachers face in implementing AFL, the study identified six themes as underlying challenges. These challenges were inadequate time on timetables, large class sizes and inadequate student input, resource constraints, limited training and professional development, limited access to technology and finally, overloaded English curriculum creating pressure on teachers to rush through content. Respondents were also hopeful that the challenges could be resolved.

5.2 Conclusion

Based on the finding from the study, the following conclusions could be made. In the first place, a lot of male English teachers took part in the study. For teaching experience. Most of the teachers were in their youthful age and most of them held first degree as their qualification. They were mostly professional teachers.

English as Second Language teachers had favorable beliefs about Assessment for learning practices. Despite having favorable beliefs, the ESL teachers did not implement Assessment for learning practices in their classrooms as required. The teachers identified inadequate time on timetables, large class sizes and inadequate student input, resource constraints, limited training and professional development, limited access to technology and finally, overloaded English curriculum creating pressure on teachers to rush through content as challenges they encounter in the attempt to implement ADL in the study area.

5.3 Recommendations

The following policy implementation and recommendations have been proposed based on the study's results and conclusions.

The study revealed that all the respondents believed that the challenges of AFL in ESL classrooms could be resolved. It is therefore recommended that short-term courses, workshops, seminars and, other necessary in-service training activities should be organized by the Ghana Education Service (GES), the Bole Municipal Directorate of Education and by the various headmasters for the ESL teachers. At such courses, teachers could be exposed to other forms of assessment for learning practices, which they could adopt to enhance students learning.

School heads, school improvement and support officers (SISOs) and head of departments being immediate supervisors should ensure frequent supervision of assessment processes of teachers to make sure that they align with AFL practices. During Professional Learning Communities (PLC) in the schools, the curriculum leads should be encouraged to infuse PLC education and practices.

Finally, school heads should work to provide adequate time on timetables, they should provide needed AFL resources, and they should organize training and professional development programs. Further, they should collaborate with other stakeholders and government to put up adequate classrooms, provide sufficient access to technology and finally to reconsider examining the English curriculum so as to add enough teachers to handle the various aspects of the subject to reduce the pressure on teachers. Various motivation strategies should be adopted by English language teachers to enable students active take part in AFL practices.

5.4 Pedagogical Implications

The research finding that ESL teachers have positive beliefs about Assessment for Learning practices suggests the need to capitalize on this positive attitude, it is crucial for teacher training programs and professional development workshops to focus on translating these beliefs into action. Educators should be provided with specific training on how to effectively integrate AFL practices into their teaching methodologies. Additionally, school administrators should create a supportive environment that encourages and rewards the implementation of AFL strategies.

The research finding that participants generally do not implement Assessment for learning practices highlights the need for targeted interventions to bridge the gap between belief and practice. Professional development programs should offer hands-on training, mentoring, and resources to help educators successfully integrate AFL practices into their teaching routines. School leadership plays a crucial role in creating a conducive environment where teachers feel empowered to experiment with new assessment methods and receive constructive feedback.

Another pedagogical implication of the identified challenges in Assessment for Learning in the Senior High Schools is the importance of addressing these obstacles to enhance the effectiveness of teaching and learning processes. Headmasters, Heads of Departments and Form masters should consider implementing strategies to overcome these challenges, such as restructuring timetables to allow for adequate assessment time, reducing class sizes to facilitate more personalized student feedback, securing additional resources to support diverse assessment methods, providing ongoing training and professional development opportunities for teachers, integrating technology into assessment practices, and revising the English curriculum to ensure a balanced approach that promotes deep learning rather than rushing through content.

5.5 Suggestion for Further Research

This study focused on ESL teachers' beliefs and practices about Assessment for Learning among senior high schools in Bole-Bamboi. Therefore, it is suggested that a replica of the study should be conducted in other districts in Ghana to give more national outlook for generalization.

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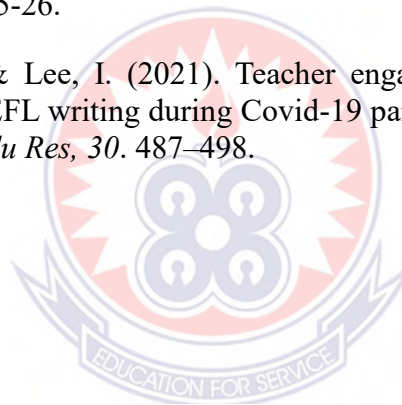
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APPENDIX A: SPSS OUTPUTS

Reliability Tests

RQ1

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's	
Alpha	N of Items
.920	10

RQ2

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's	
Alpha	N of Items
.891	10



Demographic Data**Gender**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	45	54.9	54.9	54.9
	Female	37	45.1	45.1	100.0
	Total	82	100.0	100.0	

Teaching Experience Years

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	0 - 5years	11	13.4	13.4	13.4
	6 - 10years	27	32.9	32.9	46.3
	11years and above	44	53.7	53.7	100.0
	Total	82	100.0	100.0	

Qualification

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1st Degree	65	79.3	79.3	79.3
	Masters and above	17	20.7	20.7	100.0
	Total	82	100.0	100.0	

Employment Grade

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Professional	70	85.4	85.4	85.4
	Non- Professional	12	14.6	14.6	100.0
	Total	82	100.0	100.0	

RQ1

	Descriptive Statistics				
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
I have adequate time to use assessment for learning in the classroom.	82	1	5	4.02	1.144
I feel confident in carrying out assessment for learning of my students.	82	1	5	3.67	1.197
I feel senior high school students will benefit from assessment for learnings.	82	1	5	4.23	1.034
I use evidence from assessment for learning to develop my teaching.	82	1	5	3.77	1.092
I have a positive view of assessment for learning.	82	1	5	3.74	1.109
I would benefit from more training in the use of assessment for learning techniques.	82	1	5	3.65	1.159
Assessment for learning should be carried out frequently.	82	1	5	3.61	1.152
Assessment for learning encourages interaction among pupils which boosts their self-confidence.	82	2	5	3.73	1.248
Assessment for learning promotes a conducive environment which encourages pupils to enhance their learning as they make mistakes.	82	2	5	4.04	1.222
The aim of assessment for learning is to promote learning.	82	1	5	3.68	1.143
Valid N (listwise)	82				

RQ2

	Descriptive Statistics				
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
I encourage my students to reflect on how they can improve their assignments.	82	1	5	3.16	1.486
After examining test results of my students, I discuss the answers I gave to the test with them.	82	1	5	2.87	1.131
Whilst working on my assignments, I ask my students about how they think they are doing.	82	1	4	1.67	.876
I ask my students questions that help them gain understanding of the subject matter.	82	1	5	3.45	1.433
I inquire what went well and what went badly in my work with students after lessons.	82	1	4	2.80	.838
I encourage my students to reflect on their learning process and to think about how to improve next time.	82	1	4	1.65	.908
I consider with my students' ways to improve their weak points.	82	1	3	1.78	.861
After each assessment given to my students, I inform them how to improve the next time.	82	1	5	3.34	1.509
During class, I provide an opportunity for students to show what they have learned.	82	1	4	1.99	.598
There is an opportunity for my students to ask questions during my lesson.	82	1	5	2.76	.794
Valid N (listwise)	82				

RQ1: Percentages of Responses**I have adequate time to use assessment for learning in the classroom.**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Strongly Disagree	4	4.9	4.9	4.9
Disagree	4	4.9	4.9	9.8
Not Sure	16	19.5	19.5	29.3
Agree	20	24.4	24.4	53.7
Strongly Agree	38	46.3	46.3	100.0
Total	82	100.0	100.0	

I feel confident in carrying out assessment for learning of my students.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Strongly Disagree	5	6.1	6.1	6.1
Disagree	8	9.8	9.8	15.9
Not Sure	22	26.8	26.8	42.7
Agree	21	25.6	25.6	68.3
Strongly Agree	26	31.7	31.7	100.0
Total	82	100.0	100.0	

I feel senior high school students will benefit from assessment for learnings.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Strongly Disagree	2	2.4	2.4	2.4
Disagree	3	3.7	3.7	6.1
Not Sure	15	18.3	18.3	24.4
Agree	16	19.5	19.5	43.9
Strongly Agree	46	56.1	56.1	100.0
Total	82	100.0	100.0	



I use evidence from assessment for learning to develop my teaching.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Strongly Disagree	2	2.4	2.4	2.4
Disagree	12	14.6	14.6	17.1
Not Sure	12	14.6	14.6	31.7
Agree	33	40.2	40.2	72.0
Strongly Agree	23	28.0	28.0	100.0
Total	82	100.0	100.0	

I have a positive view of assessment for learning.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	3	3.7	3.7	3.7
	Disagree	10	12.2	12.2	15.9
	Not Sure	15	18.3	18.3	34.1
	Agree	31	37.8	37.8	72.0
	Strongly Agree	23	28.0	28.0	100.0
	Total	82	100.0	100.0	

**I would benefit from more training in the use of assessment for learning techniques.**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	3	3.7	3.7	3.7
	Disagree	11	13.4	13.4	17.1
	Not Sure	23	28.0	28.0	45.1
	Agree	20	24.4	24.4	69.5
	Strongly Agree	25	30.5	30.5	100.0
	Total	82	100.0	100.0	

Assessment for learning should be carried out frequently.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Strongly Disagree	4	4.9	4.9	4.9
Disagree	9	11.0	11.0	15.9
Not Sure	25	30.5	30.5	46.3
Agree	21	25.6	25.6	72.0
Strongly Agree	23	28.0	28.0	100.0
Total	82	100.0	100.0	

**Assessment for learning encourages interaction among pupils which boosts their self-confidence.**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Disagree	21	25.6	25.6	25.6
Not Sure	14	17.1	17.1	42.7
Agree	13	15.9	15.9	58.5
Strongly Agree	34	41.5	41.5	100.0
Total	82	100.0	100.0	

Assessment for learning promotes a conducive environment which encourages pupils to enhance their learning as they make mistakes.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Disagree	18	22.0	22.0	22.0
Not Sure	5	6.1	6.1	28.0
Agree	15	18.3	18.3	46.3
Strongly Agree	44	53.7	53.7	100.0
Total	82	100.0	100.0	



The aim of assessment for learning is to promote learning.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Strongly Disagree	4	4.9	4.9	4.9
Disagree	7	8.5	8.5	13.4
Not Sure	25	30.5	30.5	43.9
Agree	21	25.6	25.6	69.5
Strongly Agree	25	30.5	30.5	100.0
Total	82	100.0	100.0	

RQ2 Percentages of Responses

I encourage my students to reflect on how they can improve their assignments.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	14	17.1	17.1	17.1
	Disagree	19	23.2	23.2	40.2
	Not Sure	12	14.6	14.6	54.9
	Agree	14	17.1	17.1	72.0
	Strongly Agree	23	28.0	28.0	100.0
	Total	82	100.0	100.0	



After examining test results of my students, I discuss the answers I gave to the test with them.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	10	12.2	12.2	12.2
	Disagree	21	25.6	25.6	37.8
	Not Sure	28	34.1	34.1	72.0
	Agree	16	19.5	19.5	91.5
	Strongly Agree	7	8.5	8.5	100.0
	Total	82	100.0	100.0	

Whilst working on my assignments, I ask my students about how they think they are doing.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	47	57.3	57.3	57.3
	Disagree	17	20.7	20.7	78.0
	Not Sure	16	19.5	19.5	97.6
	Agree	2	2.4	2.4	100.0
	Total	82	100.0	100.0	

I ask my students questions that help them gain understanding of the subject matter.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	12	14.6	14.6	14.6
	Disagree	12	14.6	14.6	29.3
	Not Sure	10	12.2	12.2	41.5
	Agree	23	28.0	28.0	69.5
	Strongly Agree	25	30.5	30.5	100.0
	Total	82	100.0	100.0	

I inquire what went well and what went badly in my work with students after lessons.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	9	11.0	11.0	11.0
	Disagree	11	13.4	13.4	24.4
	Not Sure	49	59.8	59.8	84.1
	Agree	13	15.9	15.9	100.0
	Total	82	100.0	100.0	

I encourage my students to reflect on their learning process and to think about how to improve next time.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	50	61.0	61.0	61.0
	Disagree	14	17.1	17.1	78.0
	Not Sure	15	18.3	18.3	96.3
	Agree	3	3.7	3.7	100.0
	Total	82	100.0	100.0	

I consider with my students' ways to improve their weak points.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	41	50.0	50.0	50.0
	Disagree	18	22.0	22.0	72.0
	Not Sure	23	28.0	28.0	100.0
	Total	82	100.0	100.0	

After each assessment given to my students, I inform them how to improve the next time.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Strongly Disagree	8	9.8	9.8	9.8
Disagree	27	32.9	32.9	42.7
Not Sure	8	9.8	9.8	52.4
Agree	7	8.5	8.5	61.0
Strongly Agree	32	39.0	39.0	100.0
Total	82	100.0	100.0	



During class, I provide an opportunity for students to show what they have learned.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Strongly Disagree	14	17.1	17.1	17.1
Disagree	56	68.3	68.3	85.4
Not Sure	11	13.4	13.4	98.8
Agree	1	1.2	1.2	100.0
Total	82	100.0	100.0	

There is an opportunity for my students to ask questions during my lesson.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	4	4.9	4.9	4.9
	Disagree	25	30.5	30.5	35.4
	Not Sure	41	50.0	50.0	85.4
	Agree	11	13.4	13.4	98.8
	Strongly Agree	1	1.2	1.2	100.0
	Total	82	100.0	100.0	



APPENDIX B

INSTRUMENT

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am a graduate student at the University of Education, Winneba. As part of my programme, I am conducting a research study titled: *ESL TEACHERS' BELIEFS AND PRACTICES ABOUT ASSESSMENT FOR LEARNING*

By copy of this questionnaire, you have been selected to participate in the study. You are therefore, kindly requested to answer the questions below displaying utmost good faith. The study is purely for academic purpose and all answers provided will be processed together with responses from other respondents on a computer and will be dealt with confidentially. Although I want you to answer each and every question, you have the right to refrain from answering any one particular question, a group of questions without any consequence. Your prompt response will be highly appreciated. Thank you for your time.

SECTION A

Background of Respondent (Please tick \surd as Appropriate)

1. Gender: Male Female
2. Teaching Experience Years 0 - 5 years 6 - 10years 11years and above
3. Qualification: Diploma 1st Degree Masters and above
4. Employment Grade: Professional Non-Professional

SECTION B**ESL Teachers' Beliefs**

Please indicate your belief about Assessment for Learning in your School by ticking

{√}.

(1= Strongly Disagree, 2= Disagree, 3= Not Sure, 4= Agree, 5= Strongly Agree)

S/N	ESL Teachers' Beliefs	1	2	3	4	5
1	I have adequate time to use assessment for learning in the classroom.					
2	I possess confidence in conducting assessment for learning with my students					
3	I feel senior high school students will benefit from assessment for learnings.					
4	I use evidence from assessment for learning to develop my teaching.					
5	I maintain a favorable perspective regarding assessment for learning					
6	Additional training in the application of assessment for learning techniques would be advantageous for me					
7	Assessment for learning out to be implemented on a frequent basis					
8	Assessment for learning facilitates interaction among pupils, thereby enhancing their self-confidence					
9	Assessment for learning fosters a supportive environment that encourages pupils to improve their learning through the process of making mistakes.					
10	The primary objective of assessment for learning is to facilitate and promote student learning.					

SECTION C

How Assessment for Learning is Implemented

Please indicate the items that best expresses your opinion about how you implement Assessment for Learning by ticking $\{\surd\}$ the appropriate responses.

(1= Strongly Disagree, 2= Disagree, 3= Not Sure, 4= Agree, 5= Strongly Agree)

S/N	How Assessment for Learning is Implemented	SD	D	N	A	SA
11	I encourage my students to reflect on how they can improve their assignments.					
12	After examining test results of my students, I discuss the answers I gave to the test with them.					
13	While students are engaged in their assignments, I solicit their reflections on their perceived performance.					
14	I ask my students questions that help them gain understanding of the subject matter.					
15	After lesson, I seek feedback from students regarding the aspects of the work that were successful and those that were less effective.					
16	I encourage my students to reflect on their learning process and to think about how to improve next time.					
17	I consider with my students' ways to improve their weak points.					
18	After each assessment given to my students, I inform them how to improve the next time.					
19	During class sessions, I create opportunities for students to demonstrate their learning outcome.					
20	There is an opportunity for my students to ask questions during my lesson.					

APPENDIX C

INTERVIEW GUIDE

This section is to find out your views on the challenges faced by ESL teachers in linking assessment for learning practices with the principles of assessment for learning.

1. At the moment, what are some of the challenges faced by ESL teachers face in linking assessment for learning practices with the principles of assessment for learning?
2. Do you think that the challenges could be resolved to pave way for effective Assessment for Learning Practices?

Adapted: Pat-El, Tillema, Segers and Vedder (2013), Asare (2020)

