

The Implementation of Online Formative Assessment in English Learning

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Abstract

The pandemic of COVID-19 is one of the major disasters in 2020 that have occurred throughout the world, including Indonesia. In the present situation and condition, in which most schools are currently implementing an online learning process, it is necessary to make sure that every students gain the information or knowledge that they must get as the result of the learning process. Hence, the formative assessment is in accordance with everyone's expectations that student must continue to gain information as their online learning outcomes. This study aimed to review other studies conducted by some previous researchers regarding the implementation of formative assessment in online learning environment. Since this kind of assessment was only recently applied in the COVID-19 pandemic situation, it is important to investigate the effect, as well as the perception of students and teacher in implementing formative assessment in online learning environment. A library research was conducted to collect the data. From this review study, it can be concluded that this assessment technique has the potential to be very useful to be implemented in English learning, both for teachers and students. There are correlation between motivation, self-efficacy, and strategic regulation of learning. The students and teacher also showed positive perception towards online formative assessment. Both the students and the teacher gained many beneficial things after the implementation of online formative assessment in English learning.

Keywords: Assessment, Online Formative Assessment

Introduction

According to a World Health Organization report, the Covid-19 pandemic is one of the biggest disasters that have happened around the world, including Indonesia, with two instances surfacing on March 2, 2020. There are several consequences of this massive pandemic, such as working, worshipping, and learning from home. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, which has caused school closures, the learning system must be conducted online. The advent of this situation has resulted in a very fast evolution that necessitates modifications by all parties concerned. One of these advancements is the use of technology in the teaching and learning process. According to

Kuama and Intharaksa (2016), the use of technology and the internet represents a shift away from conventional learning techniques, particularly face-to-face instruction into online instruction. Moreover, Clarke and Hermens (in Kuama & Intharaksa, 2016) argues that by employing an online system, the classroom learning process becomes student-centered learning since its use is flexible, allowing them to conform to their own learning style. As a result, the rise of media in the form of technology and the internet utilized in online learning has significant implications for the continuation of a more effective teaching and learning process.

The usage of technology and the internet may be used as a learning resource all the way through the evaluation or assessment process in many instructional subjects, one of which is English. Students and instructors may obtain a variety of learning-related material on the internet from a variety of sources. Furthermore, even in the teaching and learning process, the use of technology and the internet has become commonplace. This is due to the fact that the learning process necessitates a willingness to delve further into knowledge on a certain subject. The usage of online platforms in the learning process is not limited to that. The evaluation or assessment procedure can also be completed online. According to Widiastuti, Mukminatien, Prayogo, and Irawati (2020), Assessment is a method in the learning process that teachers use to gather students' report about their ability levels, learning outcomes, and discover students' shortcomings and strengths so that teachers may take appropriate actions to inspire students to continue to attain greater levels of learning. The assessment is classified into two categories based on its function: formative and summative assessment. Black and Wiliam (1998) argues that formative assessment is a continuous process of assessing students that requires input from both the instructor and the students in order to enhance students' learning accomplishments. As a result, the use of formative assessment in its implementation is more focused on the improvement achieved by pupils from each assessment done by the instructor. Meanwhile, summative assessment is an accumulative kind of evaluation of a student's achievement that is used to determine the overall worth of what has been learnt in a certain time period (Dixson & Worrell, 2017). In addition, Glazer (2014) also states summative assessment is a type of evaluation that is generally done via written examinations at the conclusion of chapters, semesters, and for certification purposes. As a result, summative assessment is also critical in providing a final assessment of students' skills in the series of learning processes that have been completed.

In present situation, where most schools, particularly in Indonesia, are currently implementing an online learning process, it is critical to guarantee that every student receives the information or knowledge that they should get as a consequence of their learning process. As a consequence, the formative evaluation/assessment method is in line with everyone's expectations that every student must continue to gain information from their outcomes studying online, rather than merely following lectures, but there is no knowledge that students can absorb. This is consistent with the notion of formative assessment, in which the instructor may observe students'

learning progress and offer comments aimed at improving the students' learning progress (Bayat, Jamshidipour, & Hashemi, 2017). As a result, it is critical to pay attention to formative assessment during the online learning process to review and ensure that students know and understand their progress in learning, their strengths and weaknesses, and after that, the teacher will make decisions about what strategies and instructions to provide in the future based on the needs of the students.

The purpose of this study was to examine past studies done by various researchers on the application of formative assessment in an online learning environment. Because this type of evaluation was just recently used when the COVID-19 epidemic hit the world, particularly in Indonesia, it is critical to study the impact as well as the perception of students and teacher in implementing formative assessment in online learning environment.

- REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

1. Assessment

According to Yarahmadzahi & Goodarzi (2020), assessment is a method used by educators in the learning process to acquire information on what students know, are capable of doing, and are learning to do. Assessment plays an important part in the learning process since it influences changes in students' knowledge. After completing the assessment process, the teacher will have a report of the results of student abilities that can be used as a guideline or as a consideration of the teacher's teaching methods, whether a significant change is required, or whether teaching methods that have influenced effective student learning outcomes must be established. This pertains to delivering feedback following the assessment and evaluation process, which must be completed in order to offer unambiguous information about a topic or activity that must be learned. A successful evaluation process's key goals are "reflexivity, continual learning, and progress." (Baranovskaya & Shaforostova, 2017)

2. Formative assessment

Formative assessment is a type of evaluation for students in a learning activity that attempts to identify students' strengths and shortcomings while comprehending learning content. Formative assessment is a type of evaluation that is done on a regular basis with the goal of improving students' learning abilities. According to Hargreaves (2005) the purpose of formative assessment or can be said as assessment for learning are:

- a. To develop teaching and learning methods for pupils.
- b. To encourage, stimulate, and develop self-esteem.
- c. To stimulate the learner's thinking.
- d. To promote greater understanding and learning.

Learning growth is done in a transparent way using formative assessment, which means students may openly see and experience the learning process they are engaged in (Voinea, 2018). As a result, in order to give formative evaluation, the teacher must provide students with detailed qualitative feedback that they can link to learning progress / decrease of the gap between their present level and the learning target.

3. Online-based assessment

The use of an online system in the learning process has become rather popular. According to Kong (2019), when an online system is used in the learning process, various changes happen, including “changing of teaching ideas, changing of teaching modalities, and changing of teaching evaluation.” Kong (2019) argues that online learning leads the teaching idea to shift to be more focused on the shifting roles that occur between teachers and students. There will be greater engagement, investigation, and observation in the online learning activities. As a result, students will be more engaged in the learning process, while the instructor will guide the students in their learning activities. This is connected to the idea of student-centered learning. Then, online learning creates a shift in teaching modes, since instructors used to exclusively utilize conventional methods in the learning process, such as explaining content, completing work, and so on, but now, teachers do the teaching process in two forms, namely offline and on line. Finally, the use of online learning has created a shift in teacher assessment, as all kinds of student work, such as collecting assignments in video format, taking quizzes, and so on, will be recorded by the online system throughout the evaluation process (Kong, 2019).

In addition, using online technology in the evaluation process is a nice new advancement to employ. The usage of online platforms is inextricably linked to the use of technology. As a result, throughout the assessment process, teachers will employ a range of technologies and apps that can aid in the effectiveness of the online assessment process. One advantage of adopting an online system in the assessment process, particularly in formative assessment, is that teachers can offer students with feedback quickly. When assessing the students, the instructor can use technology to expedite the process. So, feedback will be provided more quickly, as opposed to paper-based evaluation, which takes a long time to deliver an assessment as well as comments from the teacher (Yarahmadzahi & Goodarzi, 2020). Pallof and Pratt (2009) proposed seven principles in an online assessment, namely:

- a. Plan a student-centered assessment that corresponds to the student-centered activities and assignments.
- b. Create courses that incorporate a variety of learning experiences and evaluation processes that take advantage of diverse learning styles while reducing the possibility of plagiarism and cheating.

- c. Encourage, use, and assess learner contributions to the discussion board.
- d. Using rubrics to establish success criteria and provide a firm platform for self-assessment.
- e. Give instant feedback on performance and tasks..
- f. Consider the online examinations and quizzes to be "open book," and design them with this in mind.
- g. Include several forms of assessment, such as performance assessment, portfolio projects, self-assessments, peer reviews, and occasionally tasks that include a discussion part, in order to build successful (effective) online evaluations.

4. Online-based Formative Assessment

Incorporating an online system into the formative assessment process gives a fantastic chance to evaluate student achievement in a non-traditional manner. Zakrzewski and Bull (in Ogange, Agak, Okelo, & Kiprotich, 2018) cite three major advantages of using online formative evaluation for pupils. The first advantage is that students have a fairly flexible period to complete exams as long as they are still inside the deadline. Second, the evaluation performed by students can be repeated until the students achieve the standard assessment set. Finally, feedback is given as soon as possible so that students may swiftly correct their deficiencies during the learning process. To accomplish a successful formative assessment process in an online context, teachers must plan ahead of time and be supported by strong technological access from both teachers and students. Online formative assessment may be implemented in a variety of ways and on a variety of platforms. Online formative evaluation may be used in a variety of ways and across a range of platforms. There is no significant difference between traditional formative assessment and online learning, and there are several instances of formative assessment application in online learning, such as multiple choice questions, true and false questions, and matching questions are used to assess low order thinking skills, whereas short or lengthy essays are used to assess higher order thinking skills (Zakaria & Zainualdin, 2014). In addition, the use of particular platforms as the media to conduct the online formative assessment is also another difference between traditional and online formative assessment. There are several platforms used by previous study as technological support to conduct the online formative assessment, such as QuizStar (Kılıçkaya, 2010), Socrative (Sprague, 2016) and GradeCam Go! (Kılıçkaya, 2017). These apps are used for formative assessment (online quizzes) with multiple-choice test instruments.

Method

This study used library research as the methodology in collecting the data. According to Sarwono (in Sari & Asmendri, 2020), Library research is a study that studies various reference books and the results of similar previous research which are useful for obtaining a theoretical basis

for the problem to be studied. This study focuses on reviewing previous studies related to the implementation of formative assessment in an online learning environment. Thus, the research library method is in accordance with the research objectives. The object of this research is the implementation of formative assessment in learning English which is done online.

Findings

The previous researchers have done several studies to explore the use of formative assessment in a distant or online learning setting. The researcher evaluated three relevant papers on the use of formative assessment in an online learning environment in this study. The studies listed below are some of those that focus on the use of formative assessment in online learning via various methodologies, platforms, or media. The studies that follow are concerned with three distinct issues: the effect, the students' perception, and the teacher's view of the application of online formative assessment in English learning.

Liang and Yang (2017) performed the first study, which looked at the impact of formative assessment in online learning. This study included 358 non-English major students, including business, accounting, and finance majors, who were enrolled in an English course at Cantonese University. The formative assessment was performed using a game-based method, and the researchers investigated the relationship between students' self-efficacy, strategic management of learning, intrinsic motivation, and extrinsic motivation. The findings revealed a somewhat favorable association between self-efficacy, inner motivation, and strategic learning regulation in the setting of game-based online learning and formative evaluation. By boosting inner motivation and strategic learning control, the students' self-efficacy increased. Meanwhile, the findings revealed that students' extrinsic motivation had little influence on their self-efficacy and strategic learning control. Since the role of students and teachers is very essential in assessment activity, the opinions or perception of both parties are also very important to be investigated. Therefore, the following two studies concerned in how students and teacher perceive the formative assessment in online learning environment.

Jacob & Issac (2005) performed the second research to evaluate students' perceptions of the application of formative assessment using an e-learning platform called Black Board Learning System. The researcher collected data from Swinburne University of Technology via survey utilizing close-ended and open-ended questionnaires, which contained 16 questions divided into three parts. The findings of this study revealed that using the Black Board Learning System is quite beneficial, and students support this type of evaluation technique. Furthermore, paired with rapid response/feedback from the teacher, which is quite useful to the students. Furthermore, the top reasons why students appreciated this online formative assessment using Black Board Learning System were because learning happens in phases rather than final examinations, it checks on learning, and it gives continual feedback on the process.

Kılıçkaya (2017) performed another study that looked into teachers' attitudes regarding online formative assessment in English learning. The findings revealed that instructors' perceptions of the usage of GradeCam Go! for formatively grading pupils demonstrate that the app is user-friendly, with a very basic menu, and that teachers had no difficulty using the program. The instructor acknowledged that utilizing GradeCam Go! greatly aided her in gathering information about her pupils' performance. The teacher also said that GradeCam Go! is simple to use for item analysis and creating a summary of pupils' performance.

Discussions

Based on the findings above, it can be seen that in general, formative assessments conducted in an online-based English learning environment are very useful when implemented. Of the three studies reviewed, namely the study conducted by Jacob and Issac (2005); Kılıçkaya (2017) and; Liang and Yang (2017), one of the strengths of implementing online formative assessment is the use of applications, platforms, or an online-based learning method (ex: game-based learning in online context) which can provide a new refresher in the learning process, especially in terms of assessment. The use of certain applications or platforms has an appeal that can motivate students to study harder and get good results in their lessons. Thus, one of the advantages arising from using online formative assessment when compared to traditional formative assessment is the use of applications or platforms that can attract students' attention.

In a study conducted by Liang and Yang (2017), the results stated that there was a moderate positive correlation between self-efficacy, inner motivation, and strategic regulation of learning after implementing formative assessment in an online learning environment. So, if we promote students' inner motivation and strategic regulation of learning, then we can improve the students' self-efficacy level. The higher the students' inner motivation and strategic regulation of learning are, the higher their self-efficacy will be. Meanwhile, the correlation between extrinsic motivation, self-efficacy, and strategic regulation of learning tends to have a weak positive correlation. This means that variations in extrinsic motivation do not cause significant changes in self-efficacy and strategic regulation of learning.

Then, from a study conducted by Jacob and Issac (2005), it was found that after carrying out an online formative assessment, students received feedback immediately given by the teacher, which could then help students correct their mistakes without waiting a long time. In addition, by using the online method in the formative assessment process, students can better learn individual topics and can help them towards the summative assessment they will face. So, in general students have a positive perception of the use of online formative assessments using the help of online learning applications. Finally, the study conducted by Kılıçkaya (2017) on teacher perceptions of the use of online formative assessments, stated that online platform engagement really helps teachers do this kind of assessment task more easily. Teachers can provide immediate feedback which will help students to learn more and learn from the mistakes they make. In addition, using this online platform provides time-efficient benefits, because teachers can collect data related to

student assessments more quickly and teachers can early determine the necessary strategies according to student needs. Therefore, in general, teachers also have a positive perception of the implementation of formative assessments for learning English in an online context.

Conclusions and Suggestions

Based on the data collection and the discussion above related to the review of several previous studies, this can provide evidence related to the practice and useful values generated through the formative assessment process in learning English in an online context. From this review study, it can be concluded that this assessment technique has the potential to be very useful to be implemented in English learning, both for teachers and students. It offers a pedagogical strategy that forms a foundation for shifting the assessment culture in ways that support diverse learning needs and foster equitable education. In particular, it offers online learners opportunities for enhanced interactivity and formative feedback, which in turn, engage them with valuable learning experiences including active, contextual, interactive, collaborative, multidimensional, reflective and self-regulated aspects of meaningful learning. In these ways, online formative assessment can support higher education to meet the needs of the 21st century learners.

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