FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT VS SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT: A CASE STUDY OF ESP LECTURERS IN UNIVERSITY IN INDONESIA AND THAILAND

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ABSTRACT

Providing an assessment and feedbacks are crucial parts for teaching and learning phase as well as for continued growth in the education system. In general, assessing the students’ progress and giving feedbacks as reflections of progress can be done in a variety of ways. The recent research is primarily concerned with how the formative assessment, as the most advantageous and beneficial kind of evaluation can be considered as a sufficient contributor to the instruction process, particularly once followed by genuine constructive feedbacks. This research’s findings claimed that the formative assessment and feedbacks have a significant impact on what the learners perform and how the instructors teach. This research explored how formative assessment is implemented in ESP classes, particularly in Business English classes at universities in Indonesia and Thailand.

Keywords: Formative Assessment, ESP, Business English, University

INTRODUCTION

In higher education in general and study programs in particular, summative assessment is still the dominant evaluation method that is widely used to assess and evaluate how much knowledge students have mastered during learning. Rachmawati, 2021). Most teachers/instructors/lecturers use a type of assessment, such as midterm exams, final semester exams to evaluate students' information retention. This practice seems reasonable because study programs at universities usually include a sufficient number of courses that teach students the factual knowledge they need to acquire in their field of study, and at the same time, prepare students for success in their advanced programs (Sztajn et al., 2012). However, formative assessment can occupy a more important place in higher education because teachers/instructors/lecturers who carry out formative assessment in their subjects not only monitor student progress, but they also monitor the process and development of learning while students are during the learning phase in class.

Given the importance of English as a supporting tool to connect the world since the emergence of global and internationalization trends (Ai et al., 2020), innovation in language
teaching, learning and assessment, especially English for specific purposes (ESP) must be carried out. While summative assessment is still the dominant type of assessment, according to some previous research results, formative assessment has not received sufficient attention (Heritage & Heritage, 2013). Therefore, this study aims to determine teacher perceptions and practices regarding formative assessment in ESP classes. The challenges faced by instructors in applying the formative assessments can also be revealed in this research. The results of this study can help provide meaningful suggestions for teachers/instructors/lecturers, curriculum designers, and policy makers to help successfully implement formative assessments in ESP classes, especially Business English classes. Specifically, there are 2 (two) problem formulations in this study, namely "How is the perception as well as implementation of the formative assessment in ESP class, especially in Business English class at University in Thailand and Indonesia? And what are the obstacles faced by ESP lecturers in incorporating the formative assessments in ESP classes, especially in Business English classes at Universities in Thailand and Indonesia? Based on Article 60 of the Teacher and Lecturer Law, every lecturer is obliged to carry out Education, Research and Community Service. So that every lecturer must be productive in carrying out research in any field, and become input for the development of science.

The objective of the research is to investigate the perceptions as well as implementation of the formative assessment in ESP classes, especially in Business English classes at Universities in Thailand and Indonesia and to find out the challenges of ESP lecturers in implementing formative assessments in ESP classes, especially in Business English classes at university in Thailand and Indonesia. This research will be conducted at 1 university in Thailand, namely Rajamangala University of Technology Krungthep and 1 university in Indonesia, namely Muhammadiyah University Jember. The selection of the two universities was based on the results of the preliminary study conducted by the researchers that the two universities had implemented formative assessments during the instruction phase in the classroom, so that comprehensive and holistic data could be obtained.

Observing the constructivism and constructionism of ESP learning and the practicality of formative assessments, researchers feel it is important to carry out an intensive
understanding through the lecturer's perspective of the combination of these two things. This study will attempt to address the complexities of implementing formative assessments from the lecturer's point of view. This study is considered significant for the following reasons. First, the results will provide an overview of the lecturer's perception of formative assessment in ESP learning. This study will study the formative assessment of participant perceptions to find out the advantages and disadvantages of this kind of assessment method, to adjust the most sufficient teaching and assessment techniques for the future. Second, this study significantly provides practical and theoretical insights from what participants actually use, from their formative assessment selection criteria, and from what hinders their formative assessment implementation, syllabus design and material development can be flexibly adopted and adapted to make it more suitable with the context of instruction process. Third, it can pave the way for government and education policy makers in Indonesia to provide support if needed. Finally, the results of the current research can be utilized as the reference for further investigation in the ESP class.

Second language assessment relates to the design of assessment procedures and techniques for measuring second language knowledge (Chappuis, 2017). As the main instrument used to evaluate language knowledge, foreign language tests are currently seen not only as a necessary tool for measuring language knowledge, but also as instruments that are connected and embedded in political, social and educational contexts (Dann, 2014). Undoubtedly, assessment is one of the most important aspects of foreign language teaching and learning. In educational institutions, assessment in teaching foreign languages has two main purposes: (i) to measure the extent to which students have achieved the goals or results of certain learning programs, namely to make summative evaluations; and (ii) to provide instructional feedback to help students progress (Rahayu & Purnawarman, 2019).

Assessment can be divided into 2 types, namely summative or formative assessment. Summative assessment aims to record student learning achievement by measuring proficiency at the end of the study period (Amalia, 2020; Spector et al., 2016), thus trying to measure learning achievement related to the whole course. Summative tests can also be administered as interim or benchmark to monitor a student's academic progress and determine whether a student
is on track to master the material to be evaluated in the final test. However, summative assessment is not intended to provide insights about how to improve student achievement in the future; it only provides a record of the success of learners in the past learning process.

Formative assessment occurs during learning “to provide feedback to learners on their progress and alert the instructor to any aspects of learning that may require adjustments” (Chan et al., 2014). Formative assessment is defined as an interactive assessment that is often used to determine the progress and understanding of students to identify learning needs and adjust teaching appropriately (Antoniou & James, 2014). This type of research focuses on ongoing processes involving instructors and students while focusing on learning goals, reviewing where current work is related to goals, and taking action to achieve learning goals (Brookhart, 2010). It is designed to promote student learning. Unlike a summative assessment which is mainly carried out for the purpose of assessing and ranking or competency certification (Brookhart, 2010).

Thus, formative assessment refers to monitoring student learning and evaluating student performance in the learning process. The feedback obtained is used to modify teaching and learning activities carried out by lecturers and students (Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick, 2004). Furthermore, formative assessment can be carried out by teachers as well as by peers, and provides ongoing feedback to teachers and students as well. The main benefit of formative assessment as a joint activity between teachers and students is an increase in student achievement and motivation (Brookhart, 2010). While it may seem easy to distinguish between summative assessment and formative assessment, some summative assessments related to a subject (students pass or fail a subject) can act formatively if students learn from this assessment. Also, some assessments are designed by instructors to be both formative (students must learn from the feedback given) and summative (grades contributed to the overall final grade) (Yin et al., 2014).

The summative assessment is usually implemented at the end of the teaching-learning period; as stated by Spector et al. (2016), "The summative assessment is generally applied at the end of a study program to measure and communicate student performance. The main emphasis is on making judgments about the instruction process. A review of literature
regarding the summative assessment indicated that this type of assessment serves numerous purposes in the educational system. For example, Lee (2011) claimed that the summative assessment “serves to inform assessment of overall achievement, which may be required for reporting and review.”

To provide feedback to the learners, Shepard (2019) states that the summative assessment is “a tool designed to observe student behavior and generate data that can be used to draw reasonable conclusions about what students know”. This is utilized as a means to provide feedbacks to the instructors so they can recognize the purpose of instruction process, just as stated by Prihastuti & Widodo (2019); Shepard (2019) that "summative assessment functions as an information provider to help students, parents, teachers, administrators and policy makers to reach decisions". Finally, summative assessment serves as "input for reviewing learning progress" (Asare, 2020). In other words, it used as the preparation for life as well as the personal interests.

Nevertheless, the summative assessment has been heavily criticized because it does not constantly create positive classroom instruction as well as being negative for learners and the instructional practices as a whole. Johnson et al. (2019) claimed that the summative assessment is not an appropriate tool if it is used to increase the students’ mastery and motivation. The results of previous research can support the findings of Cauley & McMillan (2010) when he stated that in implementing the summative assessment (1 or 1 exams in one semester), learners are delayed studying or working, and the condition reflected their performance negatively. Also, Guo & Xu (2020) argue that the summative assessment has many dilemmas, including the focus on tests, authenticity, not trying to promote a deep learning but trying to encourage a surface learning, as well as making a contribution to learners’ stress. The final issue arises from the fact that learners have only one test, which tends to put them under intense pressure because they may have no other chance to accommodate if they fail the test.
MATERIALS & METHODS

This study is a qualitative case study that aims to gather information about educators' perceptions of formative assessment in ESP classrooms, how they structure formative assessment, and the challenges educators face in developing formative assessment in ESP classrooms. Based on (Yin, 2016), this type of research is suggested when a "how/what" research question is asked. Qualitative case studies are also appropriate when the investigation includes a range of activities that cannot be influenced/controlled/manipulated by the researcher at the research location. Merriam & Tisdell (2016) continued that this type of qualitative research provides a more in-depth analysis and description of bounded systems that involve certain communities at certain points in time and settings. Therefore, a qualitative case study is suitable for this research because, according to Yin (2016), this research design will produce comprehensive data needed to gain an in-depth understanding of formative assessment in Business English classes.

The participants in this study were an educator/lecturer at Rajamangala University of Technology Krungthep and an educator/lecturer at the Muhammadiyah University of Jember. Patton (2015) states, qualitative case studies do not have specific rules regarding the number of participants used; the size of the participants depends on the research objectives, the amount of in-depth data needed, the credibility of the data, the time needed to obtain as well as analyze the data, and resources. In qualitative studies it is very common to investigate only a few people or cases (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Participants can be 1, 2, 10, or 20 people depending on the need to present an in-depth picture and the complexity of each participant or place. Larger portions of participants can be inefficient and lead to shallow viewing angles. In addition, to obtain and analyze qualitative data requires quite a long time, adding participants and locations will only prolong the time.

Moreover, Merriam & Tisdell (2016) p.101 asserts, "in this type of research there is no set rule for the number of participants, and it depends on the 'reasonable size' required to answer the research question." They also recommend that the number of participants depends on how "saturation" is achieved in the interview and observation responses; Therefore, the number of participants must be based on the data obtained during the study. Based on the theories mentioned above, the 2 participants who participated in this study allowed researchers to obtain
more in-depth information through each participant to achieve "data saturation" (Patton, 2015). Saturated data is obtained when participants do not provide additional information to investigators (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). If saturation with data from 2 participants is not reached, the researcher will increase the number of participants to get more information. Arya et al. (2010) referred to this condition as the "flexibility" of this research design. Therefore, the number of participants used in this study is sufficient to obtain the rich information needed because the participants come from 2 different universities and represent public and private universities from 2 different countries so that it is expected to make the data more comprehensive and holistic.

This research will examine the perceptions and implementation of educators in implementing formative assessment in ESP classes and find out their challenges in implementing formative assessment in ESP classes. Therefore, the data from this study were sourced from interview data, classroom observations which were conducted virtually, teacher documents (RPP/syllabus, lecture journals, and examples of formative assessment documents).

Data collection techniques to answer the first research problem, namely how the perceptions and implementation of lecturers at Rajamangala University of Technology Krungthep and Muhammadiyah University Jember, researchers will conduct class observations which are conducted virtually for 2 hours. In addition, researchers will also interview participants and request educator documents such as lesson plans/syllabus, examples of formative assessment documents, and lecture journals that can be used as triangulation data. This data triangulation is used to build credible, accurate, consistent, valid and reliable results. Then, to answer the second problem, namely regarding the challenges faced by lecturers, researchers will interview research participants.

All data were audio recorded, transcribed, and analyzed according to the research questions of this study (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Data coding for this study was processed manually. All verbal data will be analyzed qualitatively. Then, the findings are analyzed, interpreted, linked with previous research, and the final conclusion is drawn. The results of the overall data analysis will then be described qualitatively to find out the perceptions, implementation, and challenges of lecturers in implementing formative assessment.
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. The perceptions and practices of ESP teachers in Indonesia regarding the Application of the formative assessment

In this section of the findings, we will explain the perceptions and practices of ESP teachers in Indonesia about the implementation of the formative assessment. Based on the result of this study, Respondents are conscious of the significance and tangible benefits of the formative assessment. Nevertheless, the result of this study also found that there are a wide range of obstacles in the implementation of the kind of assessment strategies. In particular, the results of this study note how class density, teacher profile, learning topics, and class potential are important determinants. According to respondents, these factors influence the teacher's perception of the application of the formative assessment and willingness to utilize a particular strategy. From the results of interviews, teachers revealed that ESP teachers were too focused on following printed/lesson books. This is also captured in the lesson plan designed by the teacher. Another important challenge is how teachers still implement rote memorization routines in which teachers measure their teaching results based on how many students memorize vocabulary. Even though teachers in Indonesia experience various challenges, they are still interested in implementing formative assessment in class. According to the participants, the application of the formative assessment is crucial in advancing the overarching students’ learning phase. The formative assessment, on the other hand, promotes more comprehensive and integrated student's learning development. The results of this study are supported by Garton & Copland (2019) that teachers need to adopt a research approach that focuses on increasing students' ability to think rationally and creatively. In this case, the formative assessment implementation is pivotal because it promotes a learner-centered learning phase where learners' capabilities are measured through the learning process. Many experts claimed that the formative assessment is crucial part of the classroom instruction phase because it can influence the learners learning progress at a different educational level. In particular, Alsamadani (2017) explains that formative assessment is an important way to increase the students’ learning development. According to Bolden et al. (2017), the formative assessment involves making teacher decisions about which elements work as well as what need to be modified to increase the students’ learning progress. In this case, Rachmawati (2021)
emphasizes the urgent need to use the formative assessment as a tool in the instruction process and learning tools are not just tools for assessing student learning outcomes. Moreover, Krishnan et al., (2020) added that the participants of the research have a good perception of the implementation of the formative assessment in the UK. It means that teachers are aware about the effective impact of the kind of the assessment.

Moreover, based on the result of this study, the participants have a positive attitude regarding the implementation of the formative assessment. Nevertheless, Prastikawati et al. (2020) indicated that instructors faced a lack confidence in incorporating the formative assessment. In particular, teachers' experiences were positively correlated with their perceptions of formative assessment. Similarly, a study focusing on the context of Turkish language learning Guo & Xu (2020) reveals the importance of teachers' experiences to their perceptions of formative assessment. According to Roskos & Neuman (2012), several issues influence teachers' perceptions of formative assessment. The main factors include class conditions, class density, and teacher profiles. Magno & Lizada (2015) also investigated the importance of teacher experience and perceptions of formative assessment, as the dependent variable. An instructor is essential in enabling the formative assessment. They highlighted the necessity of educators in making pivotal decisions regarding classroom management, determining learners' weaknesses and strengths; and making rational judgements of the students' development. In summary, research from all over the world demonstrates the value of the formative assessment application in enhancing the students' outcomes. Nevertheless, the results of this research universality necessitate additional research to prove the degree to which specific countries use the formative assessment and the obstacles that they face in doing so.

B. Perceptions and Practices of ESP Teachers in Thailand regarding the Application of Formative Assessment

In this section of the findings, we will explain the importance of perceptions and beliefs of teachers in Thailand regarding formative assessment in English for Special Purposes (ESP). The findings in this study reveal how the implementation of formative assessment in Thailand is problematic mainly because of the teacher's limited knowledge and understanding. As a
result, the teacher ends up focusing on the content of students' knowledge and memorization because the expected learning is not achieved adequately. Importantly, the results of this study note how a lack of training in formative assessment contributes to teachers' negative perceptions of their student evaluation methods. In a case study conducted in Ghana, Asare (2020) demonstrated a positive correlation between teachers' perceptions and their willingness to apply formative assessment practices. According to the research findings, the teacher's lack of knowledge makes it difficult for teachers to integrate formative assessment strategies to enhance student learning during the learning process. In line with that, Chan et al. (2014) recommends training, seminars, workshops, and other training activities on formative assessment. Thus, this evidence points to the universally researched result that teachers' knowledge and understanding of formative assessment will invariably influence their perception of the same.

Another challenge teachers face when using formative assessment is feelings of resistance to change. This was explained by respondents that lecturers at universities in Thailand were doubtful about the application of formative assessment with the increasing amount of workload and demands for professional development. For the old type of assessment, tests are used for the midterm and end of semester tests. While instructors usually impart knowledge and assess their performance through tests, they have more workload by providing scaffolding techniques to support student learning through project-based learning. In addition, teachers must renew their use of technology, innovate teaching styles, and integrate skills into their teaching. In addition, teaching salaries appear to be a matter of great concern. While project-based learning and formative assessment require teachers to provide timely and instant feedback and support to follow students' progress, teachers cannot fully devote themselves to learning outside of their students' classrooms. Therefore, support from various stakeholders is needed (Hattie, 2012). Support can come from universities where leaders listen sympathetically to teachers' problems and constraints and sit together to find the most feasible solutions.

CONCLUSION

The current study provides important evidence on the need to apply evidence-based strategies in implementing formative assessment strategies in the education systems of
Indonesia and Thailand. The results of the current study justify the idea to focus more on
formative assessment rather than summative assessment as part of achieving learning
objectives. Research shows the importance of improving student learning outcomes through
monitoring student learning processes in class. The results of the current study present
formative assessment as a universally applicable approach that aims to focus on student
learning outcomes. In other words, teachers must adjust their perceptions in such a way that
they can focus on students' learning goals rather than fulfilling their teaching goals.
Importantly, the current review shows a high degree of agreement among respondents and
supported by experts on the importance of formative assessment in the education systems of
Thailand and Indonesia.

As a consequence, educators can be more properly plan the learning materials,
curriculum design, and practices to fulfill the students' requirements. The present study
emphasizes the value of the formative assessment implementation and the requirement to
implement the required steps to enhance the learning objectives. The significance of educators' conceptions of the formative assessment application is demonstrated by scientific evidence. The research results indicate that educators play a crucial role but unavoidable role in beginning and enabling the formative assessment. Consequently, the best place to begin in order to achieve instructional objectives is to confirm that educators' conceptions are positive since educators will adopt the formative assessment techniques and implement them into the classroom instruction as a result of the positive attitudes. For example, prior studies from around the world has discovered that educators' conceptions of the formative assessment implementation motivate them to use it in the classroom instruction.

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