

Revealing EFL Teachers' Experiences in the Integration of Web-based Media for Assessment

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ABSTRACT

This study presents the integration of web-based assessment media for assessment in EFL online classrooms from the teachers' points of view. This study aimed at exploring their experiences in online assessment using various web-based media. Additionally, this research shows both excellent and limited characteristics of web-based platforms implemented in online assessment as well as the influences on their teaching praxis. Five high school teachers from two different areas were invited to the online interview. This study found that the selected online media used by the teachers in their assessment are based on personal reasonings such as the features, form of assessment, and forth. The technology adoption to language assessment also explicitly indicates positive impacts on teachers' professional affairs, particularly in the assessment field. The same effects are also reflected in students' learning environments, making them more involved in online learning and getting valuable assessments. The findings of this research have contribution to the development of assessment media for both English instructor and web-developer.

KEYWORDS:

EFL teacher;
online teaching;
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Introduction

In the post-pandemic, several institutional activities have been conducted remotely to prevent the spread of contagious viruses, particularly in learning and teaching. As a consequence, the educational stakeholder addressed this emergency by implementing distance learning (Churiyah et al., 2020; Stifel et al., 2020; 2020; Education in and After Covid-19: Immediate Responses and Long-Term Visions, 2020) since the COVID-19 threatened students and faculties in this sector. Although the number of COVID-19 cases has decreased for months in Indonesia, the new COVID-19 variant, *omicron*, affected the condition back into serious on January 2022 and significantly increased in early February 2022 (WHO Indonesia, 2022). Unexpectedly, this emergency condition forced several school activities to be conducted either online or hybrid learning again.

According to the remote condition, teachers have to adapt their teaching mode from face-to-face to online. All the teaching-learning processes are forced to run through the teachers' and students' devices. Consequently, this situation urges them to master the use of technology for educational purposes. Especially teacher, who plays a crucial adviser, is

sincerely expected to respond to the technology adaptation in a good way; as Sofi-Karim et al. (2023) pointed out, the successful teacher has to be ready for the era of technology and provide effective online teaching inquiries such as teaching materials and media.

Numerous earlier pieces of research have highlighted technology adoption in online education that influences instructors to use technology in the classroom is worthwhile. In general, various tools such as smartphones, digital media, and even online games are claimed as the mostly-used media during the COVID-19 time (Misman et al., 2021), not only for lecturing and discussion session while teaching-learning activities but also for assessment and evaluation. The advantages of applying technology-based media in online teaching activity vary from the ease of its use, time and cost-effectiveness, and the contemporary use in today's digital world (Alsied, 2019; Martin & Betrus, 2019).

On the other side, a lot of studies have also discussed the challenges in online learning and teaching. Drawing on the use of electronic and digital technology in educational interest, (2020; Utami, 2020) stated that the COVID-19 emergency learning forced all teachers to adapt to take electronic and digital media in familiar. Meanwhile, not all teacher is skillful and trained to use Learning Management System (LMS). As a consequence, the students find no actual engaging learning activity that makes them motivated and interested in online learning (*Online Literature Circles During the COVID-19 Pandemic: Engaging Undergraduate Students in Indonesia*, 2020; Ghanbari & Nowroozi, 2021; Lee et al., 2021). Furthermore, the students claimed that lack of internet connectivity and quota also contribute to such a big problem in online learning (Langenfeld, 2022). Ansari and Khan (2020), and Chapelle and Douglas (2006) also found that other challenges in embracing technology for teaching and learning come from lack of equipment, lack of institutional support, skepticism about the benefits of ICT, lack of confidence, and lack of time.

In ELT practice, one of the crucial parts of teaching and learning is the assessment stage which the primary purpose is to help language learners improve their competencies in achieving the learning objectives (Rahman et al., 2021). It also contributes to the progressive planning in classroom development which is necessary to set learning accomplishments. Furthermore, it needs long and difficult processes, including considering what to assess, how the assessment method is, and the tool or media used to conduct an assessment. Many scholars have implied that one of the hardest things to do in assessment is designing or developing a test that depends on several factors. The mode of teaching and learning, for instance, also influences the process of testing as well as assessment in general.

During this pandemic time, this also becomes a challenge for EFL teachers to implement the appropriate assessment strategies in remote teaching (Chung & Choi, 2021). Several problems teachers encounter in assessment practice are its administration, strategies, and technique (Fitriyah & Jannah, 2021) that are expected to properly determine how extent the student's progress is related to the learning objective. Moreover, the teacher's professional development in assessment gives impacts students' learning (Ghanbari & Nowroozi, 2021; Güngör & Güngör, 2021; Ma, 2017; Roman et al., 2020; Sonnleitner & Kovacs, 2020). The selection of assessment media then becomes a troublesome concern for EFL teachers (Churiyah et al., 2020). Its selection should relate to criteria such as the assessment form, the clarity of accessing students' performance and competence, and the "user-friendly" system to engage students in learning (Iram et al., 2011). Therefore, teachers should be selective in proposing and applying assessment media for their online teaching.

As aforementioned, the integration of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in English Language Teaching (ELT) has existed for decades, and it has blown up rapidly in

this pandemic time. One example of the integration is the use of Webpage or Website in language learning practices (Smaldino et al., 2019) because various kinds of learning and assessment activities can be found only by inserting a keyword and clicking to find it. This system is created and provides many user-friendly services focusing on student development. Specifically, Luthfiyyah et al. (2021) revealed that web-based assessment can help the teacher to trace students' needs and persuade them to appropriate learning. Several studies (Adelia et al., 2021; Amalia, 2020; Ebadi et al., 2021; Ebadi & Rahimi, 2017; Mahbub, 2020; Permana & Permatawati, 2020; Sari et al., 2020; Sofyana et al., 2020; Zuhriyah & Pratolo, 2020) mentioned numerous platforms that are identified as the most-used web media in online teaching including classroom assessment: (1) Google Workspace, e.g., Classroom, Meet, Forms, Docs, Hangouts, and many more, (2) *Quizizz*, (3) *Kahoot!*, and so forth.

Despite the fact that many studies have discussed the technology integration to language learning from various lenses, the studies focusing on web-based media implemented to assess language learning from teachers' views in the various virtual contexts still need broader discussions. Hence, the researchers will explore the EFL teacher's experiences in using web-based assessment media during post-pandemic online teaching, including the strengths and weaknesses.

Moreover, its impacts on the implementation will also theoretically support the ELT practitioners as the basis data to determine the appropriate instrument of assessment. Practically, the finding will contribute to developing assessment instruments and media by giving insight into two sides of using web-based assessment platforms for educational stakeholders and web developers. Later on, the research questions are formulated as follows; How do the EFL teachers practice web-based assessment during online teaching? What are the strengths and weaknesses of using web-based media for the assessment?, and How does web-based media for assessment practices impact in online learning?

Method

This case study is focused on exploring participants' attitudes and beliefs (Creswell, 2014; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016) in technology-enhanced assessment practice. The researcher designed this study to reveal the teachers' experience in using web-based formative assessment in online learning through one-on-one interviews with five English teachers of secondary-level school (Female: 3, Male: 2; Age: 23-27 years old) who implemented web-based assessment in their pedagogical practices during the online class. They are the researcher's colleagues who are domiciled in different areas and institutions around East Java, Indonesia (2 teachers are domiciled in Surabaya and the remaining are in Jember) for both living and teaching. They have different length of teaching experience in English (Teacher 1, 2 and 5 with more than a year of experience, Teacher 4 with more than 3 years of experience but less than 5 years).

The semi-structured interviews were conducted to obtain in-depth qualitative data strands through WhatsApp due to the distance between the researcher and the participants. The researcher designed an interview protocol that includes 12 items (3 items of demographic data and 9 items of questions regarding web-based assessment practice examining the used media and reason to use the selected media, opinion to the features, how they gain information about the related media, the media integration to their online assessment, also its impacts to their teaching) created on several related studies. To dig up participants' experiences using web-based tools to assess their students during learning English remotely,

the interviews were conducted in Bahasa Indonesia and lasted circa 10 minutes for each individual. The process of data gathering was in a week, depending on the participant's willingness to be interviewed. Relating to the ethical consideration, the participants employed in this study were assigned a pseudonym (Widodo, 2014).

The result from the interview (both verbal and typewritten form) was then transcribed verbatim, coded, thematically analyzed by using the deductive approach, and interpreted in descriptive as suggested by Widodo (2014). After data reduction for the importance of gaining specific data, the final interview transcripts were categorized into 3 major themes as follows: (1) experience in using web-based media for online assessment, (2) strength and weakness of web-based media in assessment practice, and (3) its impact on students' online learning.

Findings and Discussion

In this following part, the researchers generate the result of the interview data, which are categorized into sub-sections and presented below:

The integration of web-based media for assessment

The interview excerpts from item 1 to item 6 reveal the various participants' experiences in using web-based assessment. First and foremost, the researchers confirm the English instructors who integrated technology use into their teaching. They have experience in using web-based assessment media for more than a year (except Teacher 5 because she has started to have an online classroom since early 2022).

According to Table 1, the data showed that all the study participants used more than one web-based media in assessment practice, and Google Form became their most-used platform (Teacher 1, 2, and 5). This finding shows the same voice as the research by (Adelia et al., 2021) that revealed Google Form as one of the Google products provides practical ways for doing online assessments that can be accessed on various devices, even with limited internet connectivity.

Furthermore, the instructor can easily design the forms of assessment in terms of surveys, interviews, and test, as well as feedback, and can obtain real-time responses from the students. Meanwhile, its few features also have opposite impacts on teachers, such as indicating less precise points and confusing appearance, making it time-consuming (Azmina et al., 2017; Sari et al., 2020). Other media they also used in the classroom are *Quizizz* (Teacher 1, 2 and 4), *Kahoot!* (Teacher 4), and *Baamboozle* (Teacher 3). All those platforms used by the participants engage a positive relation to the studies by Ebadi et al. (2021); Mahbub (2020); Permana and Permatawati (2020); Zuhriyah and Pratolo (2020) that represent the integration of gamification into language learning.

The studies also show the advantages of infusing gamification in assessment, for instance, involving student's interests and creativity, friendly using, tracking learning progress which can motivate students, promoting social and interpersonal attitudes, and also quickly sharing the result and feedback to the students' and parents' accounts.

Table 1. Participants' Responses to Used Media or Platforms

Participant	Media or Platforms
Teacher 1	Google form, Quizizz
Teacher 2	Google form, Quizizz
Teacher 3	Bamboozle
Teacher 4	Quizizz, Kahoot!
Teacher 5	Google form

The various media they used are also based on what forms of assessment have been conducted. Table 2 presents the majority of participants who implemented performance assessment in classrooms (Teacher 2, 3, 4, and 5). The second stage goes to self-assessment (Teacher 1 and 2) and then portfolio assessment (Teacher 5) as the following sample:

"I sometimes use web-based tools for self-assessment." (Teacher 1)

"I usually use the web-based platform for self-assessment and check their performances such as in speaking and writing." (Teacher 2)

"I use this tool for performance assessment and portfolio assessment." (Teacher 5)

Table 2. Most-used Forms of Assessment

Participant	Forms of Assessment
Teacher 1	Self-assessment
Teacher 2	Self-assessment, Performance assessment
Teacher 3	Performance assessment
Teacher 4	Traditional assessment, Performance assessment
Teacher 5	Performance assessment, Portfolio

Further, the researchers asked about their acquaintance with the media they used in the assessment. Almost teachers (Teacher 1, 2, 4, 5, 6) indicated that they recognized and learned the media from the course when they had been in university in which the course titles are also varied based on the institution's arrangement (i.e. Instructional Media and Activity in Language Teaching, ICT in Language Teaching, Instructional Media for Education, etc), despite the same background and aim of the course. Besides, Teacher 1 not only has known the media from his formal course but also from YouTube tutorials and colleagues' information, and Teacher 3 claimed that he used and explored the features of the media by himself through the internet.

"I have known it since in the university, also got deep into them from discussion and YouTube." (Teacher 1)

"... not given in lectures session, I get the experience by exploring (it) myself." (Teacher 3)

Interestingly, the reasons for using the particular platforms are also at variance, aside from the pandemic outbreak that requires them to set this remotely. These four teachers (Teacher 1, 2, 3, 4) expressed that they used the platforms by reasons of their interactive function and flexibility. The teachers' recognizances are as the following excerpts:

"... it is very accessible anywhere and anytime which makes my responsibility easier in this condition. Moreover, the features are catchy" (Teacher 1)

"The implementation of these media is the easiest one for both teacher and students." (Teacher 2)

"I think these media have attractive features and engage students' participation in the online class." (Teacher 3)

"..., the use of these apps is the most effective way in this pandemic and flexible to be implemented in the classroom." (Teacher 4)

The teachers' preferences on using platforms are mainly by the ease of use, the compatibility for both student' and teacher's device, and so forth as earlier mentioned in several studies. Moreover, the supporting features of web-based media can be the background of its selection for certain assessments. The further feature will be discussed in the next sub-section as the advantages and disadvantages of the platforms.

The other reason underlies the use of a particular platform is based on school agreements. Surprisingly, Teacher 5 added that she uses certain media because of the instruction from the school. She also has not been well experienced in another platform yet. The excerpt represents below:

"... besides the school regulation, the use of this web-based media is easy for me and my students. So, I used the platforms that my students were interested in and I mastered." Teacher 5

Answering the first research question, the participants' excerpts in the interview reported that the form of assessment, the student's behavior, and the features of the platform highly influence the selection of assessment media in EFL classrooms. Initially, the participants have to explore and investigate the features and characteristics of the assessment media they used in their classrooms. The media then can be demonstrated as well as the assessment procedures in order to reach the accurate result of the assessment, including giving the appropriate feedback. Additionally, the participants in this study claimed slightly different statements from Carrillo and Flores (2020) that the limited experience and recognition of the assessment media of English instructors still become the crucial attention to assessment literacy that can affect the less accurate result of student's assessment. Despite the majority of participants having the platform's acquaintances during their course, they still need exploration and experience.

Strengths and weaknesses of using web-based media for assessment

It is undeniable that ICT has a big contribution to supporting the language assessment process (Pourdana, 2022), particularly in online mode. One of the reasons is that the media and platforms provide advanced features for students' learning development. According to the interview items 7 and 8, the participants stated the advantages of using the particular media as representatively described below:

"The media I used in online teaching offer the efficient process of assessment. Specifically, I consider it (Google Form) is the easiest media for student and teacher." (Teacher 1)

"They (web-based media) make the assessment phase becomes time- and cost-efficient because the data can be archived easily. Moreover, they encourage me and my students to be more creative in using technology." (Teacher 2)

"I used it because it can reach more students in my online class. Furthermore, it (Baamboozle) provides various types of quizzes and forms of assessment which makes them enjoy." (Teacher 3)

"The platforms I used are curated by the ease of use, motivating student's learning and beginner friendly." (Teacher 4)

"It is accessible anywhere and anytime. Moreover, I can design the form of assessment effortless" (Teacher 5)

As a result, the increase of using web-based media for language assessment is due to its advantages, such as efficiency in time and cost, the supporting features to assess students' understanding and competence, and being user-friendly. This corroborates with the previous studies that indicate the integration of technology in assessment satisfies both teachers and students living in this digital era (Luthfiyyah et al., 2021; Sari et al., 2020; Smaldino et al., 2019; Sofi-Karim et al., 2023; Tenau et al., 2019; Zhang et al., 2021). Additionally, Alimyar and Lakshmi (2021) claimed that technology used in online learning is the best choice to engage learners in English classes.

However, there is always two-sides-of-coin reflected in every circumstance as well as integrating technology in language assessment. From the data-gathering process, the participants also indicated the weaknesses in using web-based tools in assessment. Here are the brief claims:

"The disadvantage of using online media is related to the network because we are very dependent on the signal in sharing material, involving in a discussion, as well as saving and submitting the task." (Teacher 1)

"... struggle with the signal sometimes, and operational recognition of the apps." (Teacher 2)

"At the first time, I am still confused about using the platform because I learned by myself. From my students, they were stuck, sometimes, because of the network error." (Teacher 3)

"I got the problem in operating and exploring the features at the beginning (of use web-based assessment media). But it's been done for now." (Teacher 4)

"I think the disadvantage of integrating web-based media in my learning is internet quota because the resolution of students' works is frequently large enough. The reliability of the test is low, sometimes." (Teacher 5)

The collected data above indicate another side of technology used in the online assessment process that is mostly related to the internet network and quota. This result is in harmony with the findings by (*Online Literature Circles During the COVID-19 Pandemic: Engaging Undergraduate Students in Indonesia*, 2020; Lee et al., 2021; 2020) that signal connectivity becomes the vital attention to conduct online learning. Another obstacle is related to the knowledge about the assessment media or sites that not all teachers had wide experience with various media for assessment and evaluation. Therefore, they have to explore and comprehend the assessment literacy as well as the appropriate technology adoption in language learning (Ding et al., 2019). As a result, Topuz et al. (2022) state that online sites or platforms for online assessment should have important features such as providing various

types of assessment, complementary integration to the internet, webcam, as well as microphone, and sustaining the secure online environment that supports the good online assessment system.

Web-based assessment's impact in online learning

The web-based assessment media have been widely used since the development of technology integration in language learning. It indicates that implementing technology in language learning is the best way to support online teaching (Alimyar & Lakshmi, 2021). Several participants of this study also confirmed the same voice, as responses mentioned for interview item 9, that integrating digital media (in this case, web-based platforms) has a great impact on learning activities, for instance, motivating students, involving them in distance learning activities enthusiastically, and stimulating student's digital and creative skill.

"I think that my students were into the learning activities as the methods are varied and interactive." (Teacher 1)

"Realizing the online atmosphere, the integration of technology in the classroom is very helpful. It enhances students' digital skills and builds their competitive character." (Teacher 2)

"... they are motivated to learn English more." (Teacher 3)

"My students showed a positive impression in using the *apps*. They were enthusiastic while in assessment." (Teacher 4)

"The students were enjoying and enthusiastic in the assessment process which makes them motivated to learn English." (Teacher 5)

These responses are revealed in harmony with the studies by Luthfiyyah et al. (2021) that the use of technology in language classrooms, including assessment, plays a big role in teachers developing students' skills. Furthermore, the students are motivated and more interested in the learning, which such a situation can create a meaningful learning process and evaluate the learning goals, significantly measuring the students' comprehension.

Conclusion

Through the aforementioned discussion, the researchers point out that technology adoption into ELT assessment, specifically web-based media, indicated great impacts on language learning, not only for students' personal development but also for teachers' professional affairs. Numerous reasons for the participants' selection of various web-based media in the language assessment come from the features of media, the student's interests, and the assessment types they will conduct. Certain regulations or agreements also become one of its factors. They said that the implementation of web-based media in their EFL classroom effectively worked and impacted online learning engagement. The students are more interested and involved in the valuable assessment. Both the students and instructor obtain new exploration in the use of digital technology for educational purposes. The limitations of integrating web-based media in online classrooms also arise during their assessment practices. The practical obstacle is related to the device connectivity, which can obstruct clear instruction and consume more time. The online assessment literacy grasped by the participants should be elevated in teacher professional development.

In spite of the strengths and weaknesses of the web-based assessment in online assessment, this study cannot dispute that the participants' integration of web-based media into their online assessment positively affected their online teaching atmosphere. Both personal and interpersonal developments like digital, competitive, and supportive skills become the progressive transformation in EFL online teaching and assessment. Nevertheless, the findings of this study are limited to a minor sample of participants from diverse regions. The more variance of cases of the participants will generate insightful results for further research. The researchers are drawn to this study to give an incisive contribution to the EFL online assessment practice and web-based learning and teaching media development.

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