Online assessment in ELT: Teachers' practices and challenges

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Abstract

It is crucial to understand the challenges faced by English Language Teaching (ELT) teachers while delivering online assessments in order to ensure effective language assessment in online learning environments. This descriptive qualitative case study investigates the online formative assessment practices and the challenges faced by junior high school English teachers in Banyumas Regency. Data were collected using observations, semi-structured interviews, and document analysis with five purposively selected teachers. Findings reveal that teachers actively utilize interactive platforms like Quizizz, Google Forms, and Wordwall, primarily for quick quizzes and immediate feedback, demonstrating a clear alignment with learning objectives. This approach significantly boosts student motivation and engagement, largely owing to the tools' interactive and gamified features. However, the path to seamless integration is marked by several key hurdles. Prominent challenges include limited student access to suitable devices and reliable internet connectivity, persistent technical issues with platforms and signals, students' initial unfamiliarity with online tools, and significant concerns over phone misuse and academic integrity. Additionally, teachers themselves reported perceived gaps in their experience and digital skills. These insights collectively emphasize the crucial need for enhanced technological infrastructure, tailored professional development for educators, and supportive policy frameworks to effectively realize the full potential of online formative assessment in ELT.

Keywords: *Assessment; Challenges; ELT; Online; Practices*

INTRODUCTION

It is crucial to understand the challenges faced by English Language Teaching (ELT) teachers while delivering online assessments in order to ensure effective language assessment in online learning environments. Assessment is a critical component in ELT, enabling teachers to evaluate students' proficiency, monitor their progress, and guide future development. Traditionally, ELT assessments relied on methods such as paper-based tests and teacher observations. However, with the growing integration of technology into education, these conventional approaches have gradually been complemented by digital forms of assessment, signaling the emergence of online and automated evaluation systems.

Online assessments offer flexible and efficient alternatives, improving

accuracy and responsiveness through advancements like deep learning technologies (Yuhua, 2024). In spite of technical and motivational challenges, teachers have used platforms like Google Forms and Zoom to conduct assessments in English language learning (Dicky Meiantoni et al., 2021)Moreover, their assessment practices have been modified and reshaped by contextual and experiential factors (Zhang et al., 2021).

Online assessments are also widely recognized for their capacity to provide immediate and comprehensive feedback, which is crucial for learner-centered education Iahad et al. (2004). In line with the principles of learner-centered pedagogy, (Maier & Klotz, 2022) argue that immediate, specific feedback in digital learning environments promotes student agency and autonomy. The pedagogical significance of timely feedback is further highlighted by (Lu et al., 2023), who found that quick text-based feedback on student performance enhanced learning outcomes in the context of online language learning..

These technologies have become increasingly prevalent in ELT for real-time insights and personalized experiences (Heil & Ifenthaler, 2023). Yet, their successful implementation is often hindered by significant challenges. Research indicates teachers commonly face issues with insufficient infrastructure, limited digital skills, and maintaining student engagement (Saputra et al., 2022). These limitations are compounded in ELT contexts: (Maknun et al., 2023) found that Indonesian EFL teachers faced considerable difficulties implementing technology-based Assessment for Learning and Assessment as Learning due to time constraints, large class sizes, and lack of training in technology-based assessment literacy. Evidence from Cambodia exacerbates these problems, since many teachers there lack confidence in using educational technologies due to inadequate, ineffective training, unreliable internet, and a lack of hardware provided by the school (Pen & Morrell, 2024). Technical problems, limited access to technology, and concerns over assessment reliability are also persistent barriers (Hijazi & Alnatour, 2021). During the pandemic, Indonesian English teachers also cited challenges with slow connections, expensive data plans, a lack of gadgets, and inadequate digital literacy, all of which impacted communication and the validity of assessments(Diah Kurniati et al., 2023).

While these studies highlight general trends, there remains a limited qualitative understanding of the specific online formative assessment practices and the nuanced challenges encountered by junior high school English teachers within the Banyumas Regency context. This study aims to fill this contextual and practical gap.

Therefore, this descriptive qualitative study aims to investigate the online formative assessment practices and the challenges faced by junior high school English teachers in Banyumas Regency. The study, which was based on observations, semi-structured interviews, and document analysis with five teachers who were chosen on purpose, discovered that teachers actively use interactive platforms (like Wordwall, Google Forms, and Quizizz) for quick quizzes and immediate feedback, which significantly boosts student motivation and engagement. In contrast to these benefits, key challenges, include students'

limited access to appropriate devices and dependable internet connectivity, ongoing platform and signal technical problems, students' early inexperience with online resources, worries about academic integrity and phone abuse, and teachers' perceived lack of digital skills. Collectively, these observations highlight how important it is to have improved technology infrastructure, specialized teacher professional development, and supportive legislative frameworks in order to fully utilize online formative evaluation in ELT.

METHOD

This study employed a descriptive qualitative case study design to investigate the online formative assessment practices and challenges faced by junior high school English teachers in Banyumas Regency. The primary data sources for this study were semi-structured interviews, classroom observations, and document analysis. Data were collected from five purposefully chosen English teachers from various junior high schools in Banyumas Regency. The collected data were then analyzed using thematic analysis, following the guidelines by (Creswell, John W. & Poth, 2016). Trustworthiness of the findings was ensured through data triangulation across the multiple sources and member checking. Additionally, ethical considerations, including informed consent and confidentiality, were strictly adhered to throughout the research process.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
RESULTS

The findings of the study are presented and discussed in relation to the research questions: (1) How do junior high school English teachers in Banyumas Regency implement online formative assessment in their ELT classrooms? (2) What challenges do teachers encounter when using online assessments in ELT classrooms?

1. Implementation of online formative assessment in ELT classrooms

Through teacher interviews and direct classroom observations, and document analysis the use of online formative assessment was investigated. Key characteristics included timing, frequency, platform utilization, reasons for platform choice, integration into learning, alignment with learning objectives, and student engagement.

a. Implementation Timing

Teachers implemented online formative assessments at different times during their lesson, and this varied from one teacher to another. The precise timing of the online assessments within the classes was discovered through observations, indicating a mix of practices among the teachers. The following table details when each teacher implemented their online assessment.

Table 1. Observed timing implementation of online assessment by Respondent

No	Respondent	Observed Timing
1	T1	Middle of lesson

2	T2	End of lesson
3	T3	Middle of lesson
4	T4	Middle of lesson
5	T5	End of lesson

Table 1 shows that three teachers (T1, T3, and T4) regularly used online tests in the middle of their lessons, usually after presenting new material. On the other hand, these assessments were given by two teachers (T2 and T5) at end of the class.

Teachers' interviews provide further information about how they chose particular assessment time. For instance, T1 clarified, "*I usually... deliver the material first... then I give... the online assessment, after that, it's in the middle.*" In a similar way, T3 said, *"After I've delivered the material, it's like a formative [assessment]... so, in the middle,"* and T4 said, "*It's usually carried out after the material has been delivered to assess whether students have mastered the material... so, in the middle of the lesson."* In contrast, teachers implementing assessments at the end of the lesson offered different reasoning. T2 noted, "*Usually at the end of the lesson, after I explain, then at the end of the lesson I give questions."* Correspondingly, T5 mentioned, "*I conduct online assessment at the end of the lesson... to measure student achievement, whether they understand or not."*

The statements from the interviews support the patterns that have been observed, showing that the teacher's rationale for the time of their implementation were mostly motivated by their assessment goals. Clearly emphasizing its function as a "formative" check, teachers who administered assessments in the middle of a lesson did so largely to check immediate comprehension of newly presented material. Observations consistently corroborated this, showing teachers pausing instruction to deploy quick quizzes or interactive questions (e.g., via Quizizz or Google Forms) immediately after introducing a new concept, and often providing instant feedback based on student responses. Those who chose end-of-lesson timing, on the other hand, did so as a way to "measure student achievement" or for a "final review," suggesting a more definitive purpose for the daily lesson. All things considered, reasons continuously suggest that the time is determined by either immediate formative input or the final assessment of daily learning.

Lesson plan document analysis provided additional insight into the planned period of assessments online. The lesson plans for each of the five respondents (T1, T2, T3, T4, and T5) consistently stated that online assessments were scheduled for the middle of the class. This is exactly in line with T1, T3, and T4's observed practices. The observed classroom practice of giving assessments at the end of the lesson, however, differed from their original lesson plan for T2 and T5, indicating a dynamic change in real-time teaching. This change is noteworthy.

b. Platform Use and Rationale

Teachers' choices of online tools for formative assessment varied, indicating a preference for platforms that offered interactive and engaging assessment activities. The specific digital platforms that each teacher used for their online assessments were noted by observations. The table below provides a summary of the results.

Table 2. Observed Online Assessment Platforms by Respondent

No	Respondent	Observed Platform
1	T1	Wordwall
2	T2	Wordwall
3	T3	Quizizz
4	T4	Google Form
5	T5	Quizizz

As can be seen from Table 2, Word wall and Quizizz were the most commonly observed online assessment platforms. Two teachers (T1 and T2) used Wordwall, while two others (T3 and T5) used Quizizz. One teacher (T4) used Google form. According to these findings, teachers choose platforms with features that support the objectives of formative assessment, like multiple-choice questions, instant feedback, and interactive elements. The rationale was further elucidated through interviews, which often highlighted familiarity, simplicity of use, and interactive features as important factors in their platform selections.

Regarding their most frequent tools, T1 stated, "*Wordwall and Google Forms are the ones I use most frequently. Wordwall and Google Forms are the most commonly used, however Quizizz is also used occasionally.*" T3 also mentioned that she preferred gamified choices, explaining, "*For me, Quizizz and Wordwall.*" Regarding engagement, T2 shared the same view by stating, "*Wordwall is the most common. There are a lot of games on there.*" Meanwhile, T5 emphasized Quizizz in particular, stating, *"Quizizz is the platform I frequently use for online assessment."* T4 offered another rationalization, stating that she preferred ease of use and comfort: *"Google Form. I find it easier to make [assessments] myself. The inability to develop on other platforms could be the cause. Using Google Forms makes me feel more comfortable.*"

All of these interview insights show that teachers' choices of online assessment platforms are influenced by a number of factors, including the platform's ability to gamify and include interactive elements that increase student engagement, as well as the teacher's perceived ease of use and familiarity with designing and administering assessments.

The teachers' intended use of certain online assessment platforms was consistently validated by document analysis of lesson plans, which was in good alignment with both observations and interview remarks. The intended usage of Wordwall was specifically mentioned in the lesson materials for T1 and T2. Quizizz was regularly mentioned in the designs for T3 and T5. Finally, the usage of Google Forms for assessments tasks was explicitly mentioned in T4's lesson plan. This high degree of alignment across data sources highlights how teachers carefully select their instruments according to their teaching objectives and practical concerns.

c. Frequency of Use

Teachers' consistent pedagogical techniques can be inferred from how frequently they integrated online formative assessments into their classes. Specific information about the frequency of the use of online assessments was not obtained from observations. Since each teacher was only observed once, direct observation was unable to monitor the frequency of online assessment use over

time. Teachers' interviews gave direct insight into how frequently they self-reported using assessments online and which factors influenced that frequency.

T1 stated, *"Once a month for online assessment,"* which indicates a relatively low frequency. Due to limitations, students are forbidden to bring phones, which is extremely problematic. Therefore, I am unable to implement it every week." T2 stated that although he wished for greater frequency, there were substantial challenges: *"Sometimes. Due to student enthusiasm, I wish I could do it more frequently, but challenges include students' lack of personal devices, the fact that they are not permitted to carry phones (for example, from boarding schools), and worries about device abuse in later sessions restrict the frequency."* T3 reported the lowest frequency among the responders. *"For me personally, because it's a bit complicated when doing online assessment, I therefore only do it once or twice every semester."* T4 mentioned a specific milestone-based frequency: "Usually before mid-semester I have already delivered [assessment] twice." T5 reported a constant moderate frequency: "*At least twice a month."*

According to these statements, teachers' frequency of online assessments ranges from infrequent (T3, T1) to quite frequent (T5). Student access to devices (T1, T2) and the perceived difficulty or effort required to prepare and administer online assessments (T3) are the primary rationales given for frequency limitation. Practical difficulties frequently determine the actual implementation frequency, despite student interest (T2).

Document analysis for assessing the planned frequency of online assessment use was largely limited. The lesson plans that were provided to the majority of respondents usually only addressed the time period that was being taught at the time of observation, thus not offering a comprehensive view of semester-long frequency.

An exception was observed with T5, for whom a semester-long lesson plan was available. This plan consistently showed how T5 regularly used online assessments into his lesson plans. T5 stated in his interview that he performed online assessments "at least twice a month," which is aligned with his stated intention to regularly include these tools into his teaching methodology.

d. Integration into Lessons
Online assessment tools were included into classes in a variety of ways, with the main emphasis being on their use for quizzes and instant feedback, while generally showing a clear fit with learning objectives. During class observations, specific patterns revealed about the integration of online assessment tools into teaching and their alignment with stated learning objectives. The observed integration methods are summarized in the table below.

Table 3. Observed Integration of Online Tools into Lessons by Respondent

Respondent	Integration method
T1	For Quizzes, For Immediate feedback
T2	For Quizzes, For Immediate Feedback
T3	For Quizzes, For Immediate Feedback
T4	For Quizzes, For Immediate Feedback
T5	For Quizzes, For Immediate Feedback

Table 3 demonstrates that all five teachers' observed integration of online assessment tools was very similar. In each case, quizzes and giving students instant feedback were the main uses of the technologies. During the lessons, no further integration techniques were seen, such as for assignments or other particular purposes. It indicates that even while integration strategies may be limited, they are applied with intention and directly assist learning objectives.

Teachers' interviews provide more background information on their intentions and plans for using online assessment tools into their classes. T1 clarified the primary purpose, stating, "*For integrating, it's more for... not for assignments, but for feedback, also to measure how far students understand the material at that time.*" This was echoed by T2, who aimed "to be able to give direct feedback to students,.*"* Similarly, T3 noted, "*Usually, I often use quizzes. For questions, I adjust to the material.*" T5 further elaborated on the feedback mechanism, explaining, "*To integrate the platform into learning, usually after finishing the online assessment, we give immediate feedback to students for explanation related to the material that has been delivered and quizzed.*" According to T4, the technologies were used *"for quizzes, for assignments, [and] for giving direct feedback—for all three."*

This suggests a more comprehensive integration of the tools. This implies that some teachers think about and maybe utilize these tools for a wider range of activities, including formal assignments, even if observations mostly documented their use for assesses and instant feedback. All teachers' emphasis on feedback and material alignment demonstrates how they view online exams as dynamic instruments for assessing comprehension and guiding learning.

Lesson plan document analysis offered a consistent perspective on the proposed integration of online assessment tools. Online resources for quizzes and instant feedback were specifically included in the lesson plans of all five respondents. A purposeful and consistent teaching strategy where online assessments serve primarily for quick checks for understanding and immediate informational feedback is highlighted by the strong alignment between the document analysis, observations, and the majority of interview statements (with the exception of T4's broader conceptualization of "assignments").

e. Alignment with Learning Objectives
In order to gauge student comprehension and clear guidance, online assessments must be strategically aligned with specific objectives for learning. Below is a summary of how online assessments were found to be in line with learning objectives:

Table 4. Observed Alignment of Online Tools with
Learning Objectives by Respondent

No	Respondent	Alignment with Learning Objectives
1	T1	Clearly Aligned
2	T2	Clearly Aligned
3	T3	Clearly Aligned
4	T4	Clearly Aligned
5	T5	Clearly Aligned

All of the teachers that were observed showed a noteworthy consistency, as shown in Table 4, in that their online assessments were obviously in line with the learning objectives of the class. This supports the assessments' function as essential indicators of learning since it shows that teachers intentionally created or chose assessment materials that directly matched the particular knowledge and abilities that students were supposed to learn throughout the lesson.

Interviews with the teachers also validated their deliberate attempts of ensuring strong alignment between their online assessments and their lesson plans. T1 made it clear that "*I obviously modify the questions to fit the material that I teach. I create the questions based on the content I have provided or what was just presented that day, for instance, or what I have already taught or what I wish to teach that day.*" "*Already aligned,*" T2 concisely confirmed, and T3 concurred, saying, "*Yes, aligned, I adjust to the material."* According to T4, "*automatically, we make Google Form for assessment also refer to the material that will be delivered.*" The teaching method was finally explained by T5, who said, "*True, because we provide the material first before we conduct the online assessment."*

These teachers' consistent responses provide good support for the observational data, indicating a deliberate and transparent practice of developing online assessments that accurately represent the learning objectives and the content taught in the classroom. This demonstrates a fundamental teaching idea in which taught content is directly measured by assessment.

The lesson plans' document analysis offered additional convincing evidence of this intentional alignment. According to the analysis, each of the five respondents' lesson plans clearly demonstrated a connection between the material of the upcoming online assessments and the learning resources that were offered. It is clear from this combination of observations, interviews, and document analysis that teachers regularly create and administer online tests that gauge students' achievement of their stated objectives for learning.

f. Assessment Strategies and Student Engagement

The methods used for online assessments showed a consistent approach to task types and a strong focus on formative feedback, both of and contributed to increase student engagement, which was frequently made possible by interactive features. Observations during the lessons provided detailed insights into the specific assessment strategies employed by teachers and the resulting levels of student engagement. The table below provides specifics on the observed assessment methods and levels of student engagement:

Table 5. Observed Assessment Strategies and Student Engagement by Respondent

Respondent	Observed Task Types	Formative Focus	Level of Student Interaction	Use of Interactive Features
T1	Multiple-choice, completion, arrangement	Immediate feedback, student participation, adjustments	High (active participation)	Yes
T2	Completion	Immediate feedback, student participation, adjustments	High (active participation)	Yes
T3	Multiple choice	Immediate feedback, student participation, adjustments	High (active participation)	Yes

| T4 | Multiple choice | Immediate feedback, student participation, adjustments | High (active participation) | No |
| T5 | Multiple choice | Immediate feedback, student participation, adjustments | High (active participation) | Yes |

As shown in Table 5, all teachers consistently observed multiple-choice questions as a task type in online assessments. Furthermore, T1 featured "Completion" and "Arrangement" tasks, whereas T2 included "Completion" tasks, suggesting that question formats varied somewhat. One of the main conclusions drawn from the assessment strategies is that all teachers consistently place a formative emphasis on their lessons. Each assessment platform offers instant feedback, promotes student participation, and allows teachers to modify their methods in considering the outcomes.

Additionally, Table 5 shows that in every classroom that was observed, there were consistently high levels of student interaction and active participation. The introduction of interactive elements (such games and polls) in the online platforms by T1, T2, T3, and T5 significantly aided in this engagement. It's interesting to note that T4 attained high levels of student participation without using these particular interactive elements, indicating that other teaching strategies or the characteristics of their platform of choice may also promote engagement. All things considered, the findings suggest that online assessments are being deliberately used for immediate formative purposes, which seems to greatly encourage active student participation.

Teacher interviews provided overwhelming evidence supporting the observational findings regarding the positive impacts of online assessments on student motivation and engagement. Interviews consistently revealed that the use of online assessments significantly improved student motivation, happiness, and active engagement in the learning process. For example, T1 stated, *'I really see. the children are more motivated, then they are more actively participating in learning, and they seem happy, because they can play games.*" T2 said, "*Yes, there is a noticeable increase in motivation. I notice the majority of them engaged in class thus far.*" The favorable change was further highlighted by T3: "*They are happier and more motivated when I use applications and platforms." Indeed, their mentality has changed. Those who use platforms are more engaged than those who learn on paper. since it's more captivating.*"

Lesson plans for T1, T3, T4, and T5 continually included multiple-choice questions as part of their intended online assessment tasks. In contrast, T2's lesson plan made clear that fill-in-the-blanks will be used as a planned online assessment task. This indicates that objective, readily graded question formats are used most often, however some simpler constructed-response question formats are included.

According to the document analysis, each of the five teachers intended to include interactive elements in their assessments, such as games or multimedia. Even while the observed implementation (as seen with T4 in the observation data) may occasionally deviate from the plan, this implies that teachers generally intend to take advantage of the engaging qualities of online platforms. The interviews revealed a significant emphasis on student interaction, which is consistent with the anticipated integration of interactive components.

2. Challenges of online formative assessment in ELT classrooms

English teachers found a number of important challenges to the successful use of online formative assessment, based exclusively on the information gathered from the interviews. These challenges mostly centered on learning challenges as well as logistical and technical problems pertaining to infrastructure and student access. The following are the primary challenges noted:

a. Limited Student Access to Devices and Internet

According to the interviewees, one of the main concerns was the challenge of limited student access. For instance, T1 explicitly detailed, "*The first technical obstacle is clearly the network, then sometimes children don't have internet data, maybe just WhatsApp data.*"

Issues with device preparedness were further brought to light by T2: *"Tomorrow, 8D students will bring cell phones." However, it isn't charged at night. Thus, the battery is low during class. Furthermore, the data is undesirable. The RAM on the phone is slow."* T3 also mentioned, "*not all of them are able to carry phones.*" T4 explained,' *Technically, there were students who didn't have data, and sometimes some didn't bring cell phones. So some had to take turns, and some shared their signal."* *"Regarding gadgets, they have them at home. But indeed, in our MTs (Madrasah Tsanawiyah), there is a rule that they are not allowed to bring gadgets because the consideration is that there are more harms than benefits if they are brought directly,"* said T5

b. Technical Issues with Platforms and Connectivity

Teachers also reported getting into a number of technical issues with platform functionality and broader connectivity, in addition to personal devices and internet access. Specific issues included inconsistent login troubles with specific platforms, including Quizizz, and unpredictable internet service provider signals in the school area.

These connectivity issues were directly verified by T1, who said that *"sometimes that's also difficult because the network is bad." T2 added, "sometimes it's slow, , the Wi-Fi or signal is not friendly".* T3 stated, *"there is the signal issue"* T4 said, *"There is Wi-Fi, but it doesn't reach all classes; it's still around the teachers' room. The back classrooms and those upstairs don't get the signal."* "The most frequent technical issues are related to, first, signal, and second, internet data. I believe those are the most common technical obstacles encountered when conducting online assessments," said T5

c. Students' Limited Experience with Online Platforms

Some students were unfamiliar with online learning tools and had little experience using them. This was acknowledged openly by T1, who said, *"There are, still are [students who struggle]. They need more practice because they are not tech-savvy and not yet familiar with online assessment models. T2 also stated, "it's new to them, thus the difficulty is little. For instance, when I introduce new games for the first time, occasionally... Madam, how do I do this? "Indeed, a lot of students aren't accustomed to it,"* T3 stated. "*For instance, several of them may click incorrectly. since they're unfamiliar with to it."* T4 said," *At the beginning, some were still nervous and made mistakes, but by the second and third time, it was fine."*

d. Concerns over Phone Misuse:

Teachers implemented regulations like phone collection or limited use to certain

class periods because they were concerned about students abusing their phones after assessments. T2 expressed this worry by saying, *"I collected them after conducting learning using mobile phones. I'm worried that students might use their phones during lessons other than mine later." "Indeed, and children may only be focused on the game if they frequently carry cell phones,"* T3 continued.

e. Teachers' Perceived Lack of Experience/Skills

Another challenge was teachers' perceived inexperience or lack of skills; some were reluctant to embrace online assessment more broadly because they thought it was "complicated" or because they believed they lacked the skills needed to use a greater range of online platforms. T1 emphasized the need for continual professional development. *"More training is still very important and necessary for me and other teachers,"* she said. *"For good, more varied online assessment,"* emphasizing the acknowledged need for improved abilities to vary assessment methods. T2 made it clear that continuous improvement was necessary, saying, *"I truly need training." How to formulate intriguing inquiries. Even though it appears simple... However, when we become involved, we desire to do something that isn't yet possible. That's the problem. It's enjoyable if there is training."* T3 said,*"What I mean is, I haven't mastered it yet. For me, it's important. Training is important. Needed."* T5 stated,*"... upgrading skills to continue developing using those platforms. There really needs to be more advanced training, and maybe not just searching on search engines, but perhaps someday being able to create their own [content] or something."*

DISCUSSION

The results of this study provide a clear picture of how English teachers in junior high schools in Banyumas Regency integrate online formative assessment into their ELT lessons. The observed strategies, self-reported practices, and lesson plans consistently demonstrate a purposeful use of technology to improve the learning process. However, this implementation is not without significant hurdles. This discussion will elaborate on the key findings regarding teachers' practices and the challenges they encounter, comparing these insights with existing literature and highlighting their implications for ELT.

Implementation of Online Formative Assessment in ELT Classrooms

Teachers used online formative assessments at various times during their lessons, some at the middle and others at the end, according to the study. Teachers who selected the middle section of the lesson (T1, T3, T4) usually did so after introducing new material as they interpreted the assessment as an immediate comprehending check.

This method is in line with the fundamental idea of formative assessment, which is defined by (Paul & and Michael, 2018) as assessing students' development as their knowledge grows and giving prompt feedback to encourage ongoing improvement. By giving assessments in the middle of a lesson, teachers may swiftly spot areas where students are becoming down and, as (Wilson, 2017)recommends, adjust their teaching strategies accordingly to make sure students understand new material before moving on. Such dynamic assessments and real-time feedback are made possible by the incorporation of digital technology, and they are essential components of successful language learning (Language, n.d.). Furthermore, mid-lesson online checks are extremely

appropriate since formative assessment often uses strategies like quizzes, which are regularly used in online assessments, to increase student performance ((Thị & Giang, 2024)

On the other hand, teachers who administered assessments at end of the class (T2, T5) saw them as a way to gauge students' daily performance or as a last check. T5 specifically stated, *"I conduct online assessment at the end of the lesson... to measure student achievement, whether they understand or not."* Brown (2004) highlights how quizzes and midterms, which are usually seen as summative assessments, may be effective teaching tools when they are combined with positive feedback.(Ridwan, 2017)shares this opinion, contending that summative EFL assessments significantly enhance student learning when paired with formative processes and insightful feedback.

Even end-of-lesson tests can have a formative purpose in this situation if teachers utilize the results to guide future instruction or offer focused comments for development rather than just assigning grades., as immediate feedback enables students to identify their areas of weakness and modify their learning methods appropriately (Sembiring & Sembiring, 2024).

Therefore, the observed time flexibility demonstrates how teachers use adaptive pedagogical approaches to integrate assessment for various current learning purposes, such as reviewing daily learning outcomes or assessing comprehension. It's also significant that their lesson plans (middle-of-lesson for all) differ from the actual practice (end-of-lesson for T2 and T5). This implies that even though teachers may schedule a session according to a set schedule, execution may need to be modified due to changing assessment objectives and classroom dynamics.

Platform Use and Rationale

The results of the study show that Wordwall, Quizizz, and Google Forms are the most often used online formative assessment platforms by teachers in Banyumas Regency. This choice was not made at random; interviews revealed that teachers strongly like tools with gamified aspects, interactive features, and a familiar, easy-to-use appearance. For example, both T3 and T2 indicated that they preferred gamified choices such as Wordwall and Quizizz, with T2 stating, *"Wordwall is the most common."* There are numerous games available. The documented benefits of online assessment tools, which are known to boost student motivation and engagement and enhance the quality and effectiveness of learning, are in line with this emphasis on interactive and game-like features (Sembiring & Sembiring, 2024); Fahada & Asrul, 2024) These platforms' use of interactive and multimedia information further boosts student motivation and engagement, making the assessment process more engaging (Saha et al., 2023).

Furthermore, familiarity and comfort of use were also included in the teachers' rationale. Using Google Forms, for instance, T4 said, *"I find it easier to make [assessments] myself.... I feel more at ease when I use Google Forms."* This demonstrates a practical strategy in which teachers choose resources that simplify the process of developing and administering assessments. Google Forms is well known for its versatility and easy-to-use interface, and some research indicates that students believe using it improves their learning results (Rabbasa et al., 2023);

(Yakkop & Basri, 2021)). The automatic grading features of these platforms, especially for objective question types like multiple-choice, which were commonly seen in the results of this study, further increase the appeal by accelerating the process of assessment and freeing up teachers to focus more on offering constructive feedback ((Saha et al., 2023)).

Teachers' intentional platform selections are validated by the consistent alignment found in observations, interviews, and document analysis. This deliberate integration addresses practical issues like ease of creation and optimizing student involvement through interactive and flexible formats, while simultaneously meeting pedagogical goals like giving fast feedback (Nehe&Rohman,2024.)In the end, this highlights how teachers are strategically aware of how digital tools improve ELT assessment.

Frequency of Use
Teachers' observed utilization of online formative assessment varied, ranging from moderate (e.g., twice a month by T5) to infrequent (e.g., once or twice a semester by T3, or monthly by T1). Direct observation was limited to capture long-term frequency, but interviews revealed the practical determinants.

Students' access to smartphones and internet connectivity were consistently the main problems preventing more widespread implementation, as T1 and T2 highlighted. These factors were frequently made worse by school policies that prohibited students from using phones. Effective online assessment is known to be hampered by these access and infrastructure issues, especially in educational contexts with limited resources (Saputra et al., 2022); (Hijazi & Alnatour, 2021); (Noviasmy et al., 2023)).

The lower frequency was also influenced by teachers' perceptions of the work or complexity involved in creating and delivering online assessments, as T3 described it as "a bit complicated." This impression may result from a lack of digital literacy or technological proficiency, which is essential for the effective use of online assessments((Hartono & Murniati, 2024); (Abidah & Hartono, 2023)). These practical challenges frequently determine the actual frequency despite acknowledged student engagement, highlighting the need of infrastructure, legislation, and teacher readiness as key facilitators of continuous online assessment procedures.

Integration into Lessons
Most observations and teacher interviews revealed that online assessments were mostly used into ELT courses for quizzes and immediate feedback. Teachers' intention to use these tools for quick assessment of comprehension and to guide prompt learning changes is highlighted by this targeted integration. One important benefit of digital platforms is their ability to provide real-time feedback, which greatly improves students' ability to pinpoint areas for growth and modify their learning approaches ((Sembiring & Sembiring, 2024)).

Although the majority of teachers limited the use of online resources to quizzing and immediate response, T4 presented a more comprehensive idea, utilizing them "for quizzes, for assignments, [and] for giving direct feedback." This implies an understanding of the possibility of more varied assessment

formats, like projects and different assessment techniques outside of straightforward quizzes, that online platforms can support (Haque & Md. Mozaffor Hossain, 2022); (Khan et al., 2022)). The observed integration in the majority of classrooms, despite this wider potential, stayed concentrated on immediate feedback loops, suggesting a purposeful, although occasionally constrained, educational use of online resources for formative reasons.

Alignment with Learning Objectives

One significant finding, supported by interviews and lesson plan analysis, was that all observed teachers' online formative assessments consistently and clearly aligned with their stated learning objectives. This high degree of alignment suggests that educators deliberately created or chose assessment items that closely matched the particular knowledge and abilities that students were supposed to learn.

As assessments systematically measures learning outcomes and directs teaching methods, this approach is essential for effective assessment (Hartono & Murniati, 2024)). This deliberate alignment guarantees that online assessments fulfill their function as essential learning indicators, offering precise insights into students' understanding and development and demonstrating a strong educational approach in which assessment closely reflects the material being taught.

Assessment Strategies and Student Engagement

In addition to a significant formative focus on providing rapid feedback and encouraging student interaction, the online assessment methodologies used consistently included objective task types, primarily multiple-choice. Importantly, the ELT classrooms saw consistently high levels of student interaction and active involvement as a result of these tactics. The interactive and "game-like" features of Wordwall and Quizizz are frequently cited by teachers as the reason for the huge rise in student enthusiasm and satisfaction. According to T1, *"the children are more motivated... and they seem happy, because they can play games."* According to research, interactive tools and multimedia components in online assessments greatly increase student motivation and engagement, which improves the learning process ((Sembiring & Sembiring, 2024); (Saha et al., 2023)). This finding is in close alignment with that literature.

Even though the majority of teachers made use of these overt interactive elements, one teacher (T4) managed to attain high levels of engagement without them, suggesting that other teaching strategies or inherent platform features can also encourage active engagement. Overall, the results highlight how effective online evaluation is in boosting student enthusiasm and active participation in the learning process, especially given its digital and interactive aspects.

Challenges of Online Formative Assessment in ELT Classrooms

Despite the numerous benefits of online formative assessment, teachers in Banyumas Regency faced a number of significant challenges, primary among them being logistical and technological problems pertaining to infrastructure and student access, as well as pedagogical and individual readiness.

a. Limited Student Access to Devices and Internet

Teachers cited limited and irregular student access to appropriate gadgets and dependable internet connectivity as a major concern. Students' lack of personal devices, inadequate mobile data, or data for only certain apps (such as WhatsApp data only, T1, T4) were among the problems. Other issues included devices that were not ready for usage (such as low battery, T2) or those had insufficient characteristics (such as poor RAM, T2).

Additionally, the access barrier increased by school restrictions, such as the prohibition on taking gadgets to MTs (T5), even if students had devices at home. These results are in line with previous research that shows that poor infrastructure, limited access to technology, and unreliable internet are the main barriers to the use of online assessments, especially in resource-constrained regions like Indonesia ((Saputra et al., 2022); (Hijazi & Alnatour, 2021); (Hartono & Murniati, 2024); (Haque & Md. Mozaffor Hossain, 2022). The viability and equity of online formative assessment are directly compromised by such pervasive access problems, which frequently force students to share devices or rely on sporadic signals, so impeding consistent performance and engagement.

b. Technical Issues with Platforms and Connectivity

Teachers commonly encountered into technical problems with platform use and wider school connectivity in addition to individual student access. In addition, there were widespread issues with erratic internet signals (T1, T3, T5), inconsistent Wi-Fi coverage in some classes (T4), and generally slow or unfriendly connections (T2).

The successful implementation of online assessments can be hindered by these direct technical barriers, such as erratic internet and poor infrastructure, particularly in settings with limited funding ((Saputra et al., 2022); (Hijazi & Alnatour, 2021); (Hartono & Murniati, 2024); (El Hassan & Ahmed, 2023); (Haque & Md. Mozaffor Hossain, 2022). Such technical issues may compromise the integrity and flow of online formative assessments in addition to causing delays and frustration.

c. Students' Limited Experience with Online Platforms

Students' lack of prior experience and familiarity with online assessment platforms presented another major obstacle. Instructors noted early difficulties, such as students being "not tech-savvy" (T1), requiring specific instructions for new tools (T2), or making "incorrect" clicks because they were unfamiliar (T3).

This early lack of digital literacy limited a seamless deployment, even though teachers observed that students generally adjusted and improved with repeated exposure (T4). This result supports studies showing that students' lack of digital literacy can hinder their ability to use online assessment tools effectively and efficiently and make the switch from traditional techniques more difficult (Abidah & Hartono, 2023); (El Hassan & Ahmed, 2023)). Teachers frequently need to set out class time for platform training and provide encouraged support for technology use in order to address this issue.

d. Concerns over Phone Misuse

The possibility of phone abuse during online assessments, which often results in academic dishonesty and student distraction, was a big worry for educators. Concerns about students using other apps, looking up answers, taking pictures of questions, or playing games instead of paying attention to the test were frequently expressed by teachers (T1, T2, T3, T4, T5).

These results clearly highlight a well-known challenge in online assessment: maintaining academic integrity and test security. Because of concerns about academic dishonesty, educators frequently question the authenticity and reliability of online test results, believing that students' performance may not fairly represent their actual abilities (Hartono & Murniati, 2024); (El Hassan & Ahmed, 2023)). Strong proctoring techniques or the creation of assessments that naturally reduce the possibility of abuse are required to meet this problem.

e. Teachers' Perceived Lack of Experience/Skills
Teachers' apparent lack of expertise and technical abilities with regard to online assessment tools was another issue that was noted. While some teachers found the process of creating online assessments "a bit complicated" (T3), others said they were "not really good at adapting" to new apps or were not aware of the capabilities that were offered (T1). Confidence and effectiveness in embracing and optimizing the potential of online assessments are directly impacted by this self-reported uneasiness or incomplete understanding of digital instruments.

These results are consistent with a larger body of research showing that teacher technological proficiency and digital literacy are critical to the successful use of online assessments ((Hartono & Murniati, 2024)(Abidah & Hartono, 2023)). Professional development and continuous technical assistance are frequently required to address this issue in order to boost instructors' confidence and broaden their toolkit of online assessment techniques ((El Hassan & Ahmed, 2023)

CONCLUSION
This study investigated the implementation practices and challenges of online formative assessment among junior high school English teachers in Banyumas Regency. The results show that technology integration in ELT takes several forms. Teachers strategically use Wordwall, Quizizz, and Google Forms for implementation, mostly for quizzes and instant feedback, showing a clear correlation with learning objectives. Although the frequency of use varies among classrooms, this method greatly increases student enthusiasm and engagement because of the interactive and gamified nature of these technologies. Teachers' variable pedagogical methods to using online resources for formative purposes are further highlighted by the flexibility of assessment time, whether it be at the end of the class or in the middle of it.

However, a number of common issues significantly obstruct the effective use of online formative assessment. These include technological and technical barriers such students' limited access to suitable devices, erratic internet connectivity that is frequently made worse by stringent school regulations, and ongoing platform and signal problems. Pedagogical issues also surface,

including teachers' self-perceived deficiencies in their own digital expertise and experience, students' early inexperience with internet resources, and serious concerns regarding phone abuse and academic integrity during assessments.

The results of this study provide unique qualitative insights into the distinctive practices and challenges encountered by junior high school ELT teachers in the distinct socio-technical setting of Banyumas Regency, adding to the expanding field of literature on online assessment. Although the advantages and challenges of online assessments have been extensively studied in previous research, this study offers a detailed understanding of how these elements appear and interact in a local Indonesian context, highlighting the subtle practicalities from the viewpoint of the teachers. For example, discussions on the implementation of formative assessments get perspective from the observed flexibility in assessment timing.

Several implications and suggestions arise from these findings. It is imperative that teachers receive ongoing professional development focused on improving their digital literacy and useful online assessment techniques. In contexts like Banyumas Regency, educational authorities and schools must place a high priority on investing in dependable technology infrastructure and making sure that every student has fair access to devices and internet connectivity. In order to balance control with pedagogical innovation, policy frameworks should be created to address concerns about academic integrity and responsible device use during online assessments.

Future studies ought to investigate how particular online assessment platforms affect ELT students' learning outcomes over the long run. The relationship between teacher digital literacy, infrastructure support, and the frequency and efficacy of implementing online assessments might be further examined through longitudinal studies or quantitative research. Furthermore, comparative research conducted in several Indonesian areas or comparable developing contexts may offer a more comprehensive understanding of contextual differences in practices and challenges.

AUTHOR STATEMENTS
Ermayati collected the data, conducted the data analysis, wrote the discussion section, ensured the manuscript followed the journal's template, and proofread multiple drafts prior to submission. She also contributed to writing the findings. **Saefurrohman** participated in analyzing the data, co-wrote the findings, and served as the corresponding author for the journal

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