

EXPLORING EFL TEACHERS' FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT LITERACY: AN IN-DEPTH INVESTIGATION

M. Fadhil Hidayat*¹, Pupung Purnawarman²
¹fadhil13@upi.edu, ²purnawarman@upi.edu

UNIVERSITAS PENDIDIKAN INDONESIA

ABSTRACT

The usefulness of formative assessment in a teaching process is widely recognized, but there hasn't been much attention paid on examining teachers' literacy in formative assessment. Therefore, this study aims to investigate teacher's literacy of formative assessment, namely conceptual, practical, and socio-emotional dimensions. The study employed a qualitative approach, using semi-structured interview that was adapted from Yan & Pastore (2022b) to collect data from two English private primary school teachers. Thematic analysis by Miles & Hubberman (1994) was applied to examine the interview data. The findings indicated that the teachers possess a significant literacy in formative assessment. They provided a comprehensive explanation of their understanding, practices, and beliefs regarding formative assessment. Conceptually, they demonstrate a solid grasp of formative assessment principles. Practically, they effectively implement key strategies associated with formative assessment. Socio-emotionally, they exhibit a positive attitude towards formative assessment, recognizing its impact and highlighting the significance of fostering a mutual understanding between teachers and students. This paper offers valuable insights, enhances understanding, and provides a foundation for assessment courses and professional development.

Keywords: Assessment literacy, Formative assessment, Formative assessment literacy

A. INTRODUCTION

Assessment is an essential part of the learning and teaching process because it provides teachers with valuable information about their students' performance. Through assessment, the areas where students may be struggling can be identified and the instruction can be adjusted accordingly to help students succeed (Lan & Fan, 2019; Sah, 2021; Truckenmiller et. al., 2022) and the students may be motivated to enhance their learning (Andrade & Heritage, 2018). Currently, the importance of assessment is widely recognized in educational discourse as it enables teachers to compose a range of adjustment, ranging from school enhancement to instructional and classroom decision-making (Yan & Pastore, 2022b).

Assessment is distinguished into summative and formative. Summative Assessment (SA) involves high-stakes exams at a course's end, aiming to measure and summarize student learning for final judgments on academic achievement, serving educational selection and accountability purposes (Brown, 2004; Guo & Yan, 2019; Glover et.al., 2017).

Conversely, Formative Assessment (FA) is giving feedback to gauge teaching or learning effectiveness and leading to higher academic achievement and positive class attitudes (Black & William, 1998; Ozan & Kincal, 2018).

In addition, FA is evaluating students in the process of forming their competencies and skill with the goal of helping them to continue that growth process (Brown, 2004; Andrade & Heritage, 2018; Guo & Yan, 2019). Thus, pupils are motivated by the information provided by FA, which teachers may use to make instructional decisions and students can use to improve their performance (Hasim et. al., 2018).

1. Formative Assessment

Unlike SA, FA focuses on the continuous tracking and collecting information about students' progress for real-time insights into their development. Black and William (1998) defined FA as a set of practices by teachers and students that produce feedback, allowing for real-time adjustments to teaching and learning strategies. This clearly illustrates that FA involves providing continuous feedback throughout the learning process (Guo & Yan, 2019) to make adjustments that promote learning (Andrade & Heritage, 2018).

Indeed, FA has increasingly been acknowledged as an effective strategy. By employing FA, pupils can realize of their strengths and weaknesses in certain subjects as well as guide them to the steps needed to meliorate their knowledge (Ahmedi, 2019). Also, it may be contributed to their growth mindset (Yan et. al., 2021), motivation, development of reflective learning and independent learning (Irons, 2008), and reducing the gaps among students (Yan et. al., 2021).

2. Formative Assessment Practice

There are many different ways that FA is used in educational settings (Bennet, 2011; Yan & Pastore, 2022a). It is likely to appear differently in the classrooms of various teachers and in various content areas (Andrade & Heritage, 2018). Likewise, Harrison & Howard (2009) stated that in FA, the consistency of principle is fundamental, not uniformity of practice. Implementing it effectively must follow three vital principles, namely assessment evidence is utilized to advance learning, assessment is incorporated into the teaching and learning process, and it encourages students to practice self-regulation (Andrade & Heritage, 2018). Similarly, William and Thompson (2008) categorizes various FA approaches into five main strategies. These strategies are 1) outlining and disclosing the goals of learning as well as the requirements for success; 2) giving feedback to help students improve; 3) generating effective classroom discussion, questions, and exercise; 4) stimulating students to take charge of their own learning; and 5) triggering students collaborate each other as instructional resources. In line with it, students and teachers must use a number of strategies in order to effectively use the FA process, namely 1) clearly stating learning goals and success standards in relation to more extensive learning progressions; 2) gathering and examining evidence of pupil cognitive; 3) offering actionable feedback; 4) promoting peer feedback and self-assessment; 5) using the proof and feedback to advance learning by adjusting strategies, goal-setting, or determining what to teach next (Wylie & Lyon, 2020).

Furthermore, the effectiveness of FA can be accomplished due to the teachers' practices. Teachers' implementation is one of the most critical issues in the classroom (Black & William, 1998; Schildkamp et. al., 2020; Yan & Pastore, 2022b). Frequently, teachers found that they don't have a firm idea of FA and are unsure of the potential outcomes of

it (Pastore et. al., 2019). Also, teachers are unsure about how to put it into practice and they lack of confidence to employ it (Bahtiar & Purnawarman, 2020; Hanefar et. al., 2022). Also, the practice of FA is found not as optimal or not ideal (Bennet, 2011).

3. Teacher Formative Assessment Literacy

Teachers' knowledge, skill, and belief about FA is commonly known as Formative Assessment Literacy. Teacher formative assessment literacy is described as a combination of knowledge, abilities, as well as attitudes to create and employ appropriate context-based assessments with the goal of fostering learning and enhancing teaching. (Yan & Pastore, 2022b). Thus, teacher assessment literacy is constituted by three dimensions, namely conceptual, practical, and socio-emotional. Firstly, the conceptual dimension involves teachers' proficiency in understanding the fundamental concepts, purposes, and methodologies of FA. Secondly, the practical dimension pertains to the actual enactment of FA within the classroom. Lastly, the socio-emotional dimension encompasses teachers' awareness of the broader social and emotional elements associated with FA. Indeed, the combination of three dimensions takes full advantage of teachers to create a powerful FA in school and classroom level (Yan & Pastore, 2022b)

The previous studies by Arrafi & Sumarni (2018), Hasim et al. (2018), and Akter & Khan (2020) investigated teachers' understanding and practices related to FA. Arrafi and Sumarni (2018) conducted a quantitative study which revealed a lack of understanding, insufficient training, and gender as key factors influencing teachers' comprehension of FA. Hasim et al. (2018) employed interviews which revealed a general confusion exists between the concept of formative and summative, despite employing numerous forms of feedback that might be regarded as formative. In contrast, Akter and Khan (2020) utilized a qualitative study which discovered in their classrooms a high level of understanding and regular implementation of FA.

According to prior studies, most of the studies are not mentioned explicitly about teacher formative assessment literacy which has three dimensions (conceptual, practical, and socio-emotional dimensions). Therefore, to situate this research gap, this study attempted to, by using a semi-structured interview, disclose how English Language teachers at the primary school own formative assessment literacy.

B. METHOD

A qualitative research approach was employed in this study to examine the formative assessment literacy of EFL teachers. It is particularly suitable for investigating and comprehending the sense that groups or individuals attribute to a human or social issue (Cresswell, 2009). In addition, this paper focused to the beginning teachers, those with less than five years of teaching experience (Lacireno-Paquet et.al., 2012). Hence, the study involved two English primary school teachers, both with one year of teaching experience, selected from a private school in Medan, Indonesia.

The study used semi-structured interview, with questions were adapted from the questionnaire from Yan and Pastore (2022b). Firstly, questions focus on participants' perceptions of FA, encompassing its definition, benefits, and diverse methods. Secondly, questions address the practice of FA. Thirdly, four questions address the socio-emotional of FA. Furthermore, the interview transcripts were transcribed and translated from Bahasa

Indonesia to English, and Miles and Huberman's (1994) interactive model was applied for analysis, involving data reduction, data display, and conclusion.

C. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Through three dimensions, conceptual, practical, and socio-emotional, this study sought to examine teachers' formative assessment literacy. The participants were found literate in FA.

1. Conceptual Dimension

FA, as understood by both T1 and T2, encompasses several key aspects. T1 describes it as a beneficial tool for evaluating and enhancing teaching and learning processes, assessing learning objectives, and identifying students' needs. T1 explains that FA represents as a source to evaluate the achievement of learning objectives within the classroom. T1 asserted:

“Okay, formative assessment, in general, is known as a way to check and improve teaching and learning processes. It is also utilized to evaluate the achievement of learning objectives in the classroom.” (Excerpt T1_1)

T2 shares a similar perspective, viewing FA as an ongoing evaluation that aims to analyze students' development and mastery of the subject matter in order to achieve desired learning outcomes. T2 stated his opinion as follows:

“So, it means that this assessment is carried out during the ongoing learning process. And because it is done throughout the learning process, its purpose is to assess and analyze students' development and mastery of the topic or subject being discussed in order to achieve learning outcomes.” (Excerpt T2_1)

Regarding the meaning of FA, both T1 and T2 can explain their understanding of FA. T1 explicitly connects FA to the evaluation of learning objectives, aligning with the concept of ongoing student progress monitoring to facilitate necessary instructional adjustments (Black & William, 1998; Andrade & Heritage, 2018). Similarly, T2 emphasizes FA as a continuing process during which students' development and mastery of subject matter are assessed and analyzed, further supporting the idea that FA provides feedback and fosters adjustments to improve learning outcomes (Guo & Yan, 2019; Andrade & Heritage, 2018). Both teachers view FA as essential for achieving desired learning outcomes, echoing the broader understanding that it aids pupils recognize their strengths and weaknesses, thereby guiding them toward improvement (Ahmedi, 2019). This contrasts to Hasim, et. al. (2018) research that teachers are somewhat confused between summative and formative.

Furthermore, T1 defines the aim of FA as determining students' grasp and achievement of the subject matter. T1 emphasizes that FA enables educators to calculate the amount to which students grasp the lesson, identify areas of improvement, and enhance understanding among students. T1 asserted:

“The goal of formative assessment is to determine the students' achievement or grasp of the subject matter. It helps us understand to what extent the students grasp the material. By conducting formative assessment, we automatically identify what the students need in order to help those who don't understand the

material and enhance the understanding of those who already grasp it.” (Excerpt T1_2)

T2 concurs with this view and elaborates on the methods employed in his classroom to identify students' needs through FA. T2 emphasizes the importance of observing students' understanding of ongoing lessons, their level of engagement and interaction, and gathering their thoughts and opinions on the learning process. T2 asserted:

“So, to identify students' needs through formative assessment, I usually start by observing them. I observe their understanding of the ongoing learning. Whether they understand it or not. Then we also look at their interaction. Whether they are enthusiastic about participating in the ongoing learning and whether they pay attention to it. Besides that, after we have observed, we can also ask the students, ask them about their thoughts on the ongoing learning, and we can also ask for their opinions or their understanding of the learning.” (Excerpt T2_2)

Based on the excerpts above, a strong understanding of the aim of FA is exhibited by T1 and T2. T1 emphasizes that it enables educators to calculate students' comprehension of the material, identify those needing additional support, and deepen the understanding of those who already grasp the content. This perspective aligns with the fact that FA is vital for monitoring pupil learning and providing ongoing feedback (Black & William, 1998; Andrade & Heritage, 2018). T2 further elaborates on practical classroom methods, such as observing students' understanding, engagement, and interaction, as well as gathering their opinions. These approaches are consistent with the theoretical framework that highlights the continuous and interactive nature of FA in meeting students' needs (Guo & Yan, 2019).

Additionally, both T1 and T2 underscore the implication of adjusting assessment activities with learning objectives. T1 explains that adjusting assessment activities with learning objectives ensures the attainment of specific targets in the teaching and learning process. T1 offers an instance of teaching descriptive texts, where learning objectives encompass understanding, comprehending the structure, and writing descriptive texts. By aligning assessment activities with these objectives, educators can effectively measure progress and achievement.

“Aligning assessment activities with learning objectives is crucial because when it is about to the teaching and learning process, there are specific learning objectives in place. To achieve these objectives, we need to have assessment goals that align with the learning goals. In a classroom setting, there are targets that we aim to reach. So, by aligning assessment activities with learning objectives, we can ensure that we achieve the desired targets. For example, if I teach descriptive texts to students, the learning objectives would be for the students to understand descriptive texts, comprehend the structure of descriptive texts, and know how to write descriptive texts. From this Descriptive Text lesson, we can set targets for what needs to be achieved. For instance, students should be able to independently write their own descriptive texts. That's how alignment works.” (Excerpt T1_3)

T2 supports this view and provides an example from his own classroom, highlighting the importance of adjusting FA with learning outcomes to achieve desired results and monitor learning progress effectively. T1 stated:

“The importance of aligning formative assessment with learning outcomes is to achieve the desired results in the learning outcomes. Because if we don't align or match them, it might lead to chaos or failure in measuring the students' abilities. We also hope to see their learning progress...” (Excerpt T2_3)

Both teachers demonstrate a solid grasp of the theoretical importance of aligning assessments with learning objectives, reflecting a mindfulness that this alignment is crucial for accurately measuring student progress and achieving educational targets. They echo with the idea of FA, which stresses that aligning assessments with learning goals is vital for providing meaningful feedback and driving student success (Black & William, 1998; Andrade & Heritage, 2018). In addition, the provided example from T1 in teaching descriptive text is evidence that the teachers follow one core strategy of FA which is defining and communicating learning intentions as well as the success criteria (William & Thompson, 2008; Wylie & Lyon, 2020).

Additionally, T1 has delivered one of example in FA that provide evidence of students' learning (see excerpt T1_3). Then, T2 has provided the other example of doing FA in order to get the students' outcomes. T2 asserted:

“For a simple example, in daily activities, if we are discussing a topic in English, after explaining the learning outcomes and the lesson, I usually give small questions and they provide their opinions. Usually, I give them a quiz or a worksheet, either in the form of questions that I send or questions provided in the textbook. Then we can see if they can answer the provided questions. From there, we can determine if they have a decent understanding of the topic by answering those questions.” (Excerpt T2_4)

Based on the interview above, T1 and T2 provide evidence of their good understanding of implementing FA activity. T2, further, demonstrates how he engineers classroom discussion, question, and learning task which are in line with one core strategy by William and Thompson (2008). This contrasts with Bachtiar & Purnawarman (2020) and Hanefar et. al (2022) research which asserts that teachers don't possess a clear idea of the implement FA and lack the confidence to carry it out.

Besides, it was indicated in both T1 and T2 that the results of FA can be utilized to meet students' learning needs. T1 mentioned adjusting teaching based on assessment outcomes to meet students' specific learning needs. T1 stated:

“After conducting formative assessment, we can identify the students' abilities and understand what they need. Based on the assessment results, we can adjust our teaching to meet the specific learning needs of the students. The formative assessment helps us identify what must be fulfilled in the students' learning process within the classroom.” (Excerpt T1_4)

T2 added that grading in FA helps identify students' understanding of the material and provides opportunities for improvement. T2 said:

“... If, for example, they receive a perfect or very good score, it means they already understand the learning. But if they get a bad score, it means there is room for improvement and we need to provide corrections.” (Excerpt T2_5)

From the data above, T1 and T2 have a comprehensive understanding of how to utilize the evidence from FA. They also can explain the eliciting and analyzing evidence activity from student thinking which is one core strategy by Wylie & Lyon (2020). Also, this is evidence that the teachers follow one of the key principles as stated by (Andrade & Heritage, 2018). This shows their solid grasp of FA.

Moreover, both T1 and T2 stress the significance of involving students in FA. T1 highlights that student involvement enhances collaborative skills, prepares them for engagement with the community, and helps them increase a better understanding of their own progress.

“It is critical to involve students in assessment because it enhances their collaborative skills. Additionally, it prepares them for engaging with the community and society, as we often say. It also helps them understand their own progress. By involving students in assessment, they can reflect on themselves. And, going back to the purpose of formative assessment, which is to check student learning, it is essential to involve students in this assessment process.” (Excerpt T1_5)

T2 agreed, stating that involving students allows analysis of their learning difficulties, helps them overcome challenges, and measures their progress effectively.

“It is important to include students in formative assessment so that we can analyze the difficulties they face in the learning process and address them accordingly. By analyzing the problems and understanding their difficulties, we can help them overcome challenges and advance their skills. The purpose is to measure their progress and determine whether we are effectively delivering the material through formative assessment.” (Excerpt T2_6)

Based on the data above, T1 and T2 depict a well understanding of involving the students in FA. T1 also explains that involving students contributes to the development of reflective learning. This is in line with Irons (2008) that this assessment contributes to developing student's reflective learning. This is in contrast with Pastore et. al. (2019) in which they assert that teachers don't know what they can achieve with FA. Then, T2 describes that the result is used to adjust his teaching which is one of the effective practices of FA as Wylie and Lyon (2004) stated.

Furthermore, regarding assessment methods, T1 mentioned using peer feedback as a common method in his classroom.

“... the most common one is providing peer feedback to students. For example, I give them quizzes, and during the correction process, I allow students to correct their classmates' quizzes.” (Excerpt T1_6)

T2 expanded on this, mentioning discussions, presentations, debates, and oral and written essays as methods he commonly uses. He also mentioned using learning journals and interactive quizzes.

“Based on my teaching experience, there are several methods I commonly use. These include discussions, using presentations, debates, and oral or written essays ... Additionally, we often use learning journals and interactive quizzes during the learning process.” (Excerpt T2_7)

The data indicates that both T1 and T2 employ a variety of FA methods, reflecting a comprehensive approach to evaluating and enhancing student learning. Therefore, both teachers have a significant understanding of various FA. This is in line with Bennet (2011) and Yan & Pastore (2022a) that the employment of FA is a wide variety in the classroom.

Thus, both T1 and T2 have similar comprehension that FA is essential in evaluating and enhancing teaching and learning processes, assessing learning objectives, and identifying students' needs. This result echoes with other studies that FA was acknowledged by the teachers as being essential to the process of teaching and learning. (Hanefar et. al., 2022; Ozan & Kincal, 2018).

Indeed, their statement shows that they understand of FA. This is consistent with Akter & Khan (2020), who asserted that a strong understanding of it was possessed by the teachers. They also provided all conceptual aspects of FA in their statement (Ahmedi, 2019; Andrade & Heritage, 2018; Black & William, 1998; Guo & Yan, 2019). This actively demonstrates they did not confuse in differentiating between FA and SA. This finding differs with the prior studies that stated that teachers are somewhat confused in comprehending these two assessments (Arrafi & Sumarni, 2018; Hasim et. al., 2018; Pastore et. al., 2019).

2. Practical Dimension

In the classroom, indeed, T1 and T2 have applied a variety of assessment methods to support FA. T1 specifically highlighted the use of peer feedback as a common method, while T2 mentioned employing discussions, presentations, debates, and oral and written essays. These diverse approaches offer students multiple opportunities to engage with the material and demonstrate their understanding (see excerpt T1_6 and T2_7).

Both T1 and T2 have implemented various assessment methods in their classrooms to support FA (see excerpt T1_7 & T2_8).

“From the method I use in the classroom, which is peer feedback, I provide opportunities for them to correct each other's quiz answers. To engage them in providing feedback to their peers, for example, Student A corrects Student B's quiz, and if Student B has some incorrect answers, I will ask Student A why it is incorrect so that Student A can provide feedback and explain why it is wrong to Student B. Then they will engage in the same interaction with each other.” (Excerpt T1_7)

“When it comes to feedback, after providing worksheets or assignments, I ask students to work on them individually. Then, I call them up one by one to present their answers based on the given questions. If their answers are correct, we

appreciate and applaud them. However, if there are mistakes, they can provide constructive criticism by pointing out the errors and explaining why they are incorrect. Other students also have the opportunity to share their opinions on the answers given by their peers. After the critique, students can make corrections and provide feedback to the peer who initially answered the question. This way, they learn from each other and give feedback accordingly.” (Excerpt T2_8)

Based on the data above, T1 encouraged peer feedback by allowing students to correct each other's quiz answers. This interactive process promotes critical thinking as students explain the reasons behind the corrections and enhance their self-assessment skills. Similarly, T2 involved students in individual presentations, where they receive feedback from their peers and learn from each other's mistakes. By participating actively in the assessment process, students not only gain a deeper understanding of the subject matter but also cultivate important skills such as collaboration and constructive criticism. These practices were also done by the other teachers' respondents in the previous study (Ozan & Kincal, 2018) and the participants agreed that these were useful.

Besides, both T1 and T2 recognized that these assessment practices indirectly help students develop self-assessment skills. T1 explained that when students explain why their peers' answers are incorrect, they improve their own self-assessment skills. T1 conveyed:

“Actually, through the peer feedback method, it already has a comprehensive impact on learning in the classroom. For example, when Student A explains why Student B's answer is incorrect, it indirectly enhances the students' self-assessment skills. By explaining their knowledge and why Student B's answer is wrong, Student A automatically improves their self-assessment skills to explain the correct answer to Student B.” (Excerpt T1_8)

Based on the interview above, T1 recognizes the benefit of FA, especially peer feedback. It shows that T1 integrates one of the effective practices in FA as Wylie & Lyon (2020) stated which is activating in self-assessment and peer feedback in the classroom.

T2, also, emphasized the practice of individual presentations (see excerpt T2_8) indirectly developed their self-assessment skill. They can reflect their ability or understanding about that materials. T2 conveyed:

“By providing feedback through individual presentations, students indirectly develop their self-assessment skills. They assess their own abilities to answer questions and understand the topic. If they are unable to take feedback from their peers, they realize the significance of improving their skills. Seeing their classmates' performances motivates them to strive for better results and provide constructive feedback to peers who may have made mistakes. This approach helps them enhance their self-assessment abilities.” (Excerpt T2_9)

This process of reflection and self-assessment helps students take possession of their learning and turn into active participants in their educational journey. This in line with the work of Ozan and Kincal (2018) who asserted that these practices can be useful such as discussion with students, group works, quizzes, self and peer assessment, etc.

Moreover, in terms of providing feedback, both T1 and T2 emphasized the importance of oral feedback in their classrooms. T1 acknowledged the significance of offering feedback to students, whether it was acknowledging correct answers with appreciation or providing constructive criticism for incorrect answers T1 said:

"I provide feedback to my students, especially regarding their work. For example, when I ask a question and a student answers it, I give appreciation like "good job" or "improve it further," something like that." (Excerpt T1_9)

T2 also embraces this practice by applauding students for correct responses and offering guidance for incorrect ones. Furthermore, T2 encourages students to offer feedback to their peers, creating a collaborative learning environment. T2 stated:

"Yes, I do provide feedback. If students are able to answer correctly, I applaud them by saying "excellent" or "good job." However, if they are unable to answer correctly, I let them know it is incorrect and provide the correct answer. But most of the time, I encourage other students to give feedback to those who are still struggling to understand the lesson. So, I may also give negative feedback when necessary, and other students can provide feedback as well." (Excerpt T2_10)

Based on the data above, T1 and T2 show that they implement feedback in their classroom whether the feedback is from themselves or from students to students. This aligns with one of the key strategies outlined by William and Thompson (2008), which emphasizes providing feedback that drives student progress. Also, T1 and T2 follow the practices as stated by Wylie and Lyon (2020) which are accommodating actionable feedback and utilizing feedback as well as evidence to advance learning. Indeed, this ongoing feedback activity is the core of FA (Black & William, 1998; Guo & Yan, 2019).

T1 and T2 explained how they elucidate the purpose and criteria of assessment to pupils. T1 explained the purpose of giving quizzes or questions during the learning process, while T2 introduced the topic or unit being studied and the specific aspects assessed. Both emphasized the importance of clear communication about assessment objectives and criteria. T1 asserted his opinion about communicating the purpose of assessment as follow.

"Alright, generally most teachers will explain the learning aims at the beginning of the learning process. Then, after studying, when the learning process has reached the halfway point, when I want to assess their understanding or test them, depending on the amount of material given, I will explain to them the purpose of giving them the quiz or question directly, why I am doing it." (Excerpt T1_10)

Then, T2 conveyed his practice:

"When explaining the objectives of formative assessment, I first introduce the topic or unit we are studying, such as composition or text creation. For example, if the topic is news reports, I explain what aspects will be assessed in their text creation. It could be evaluating their ability to write ideas, their vocabulary usage, grammar features, or generic structure. I make it clear that all these

standards need to be met to achieve the learning goals set in the formative assessment.” (Excerpt T2_11)

The data indicate that both of them implement the principle of applying FA. They follow William & Thompson's (2008) strategies by defining and disclosing learning objectives and success criteria. Indeed, they recognize the value of this practice, as they eagerly involve students in the assessment process by clearly communicating its purpose and criteria. This not only helps students focus their efforts on key learning goals but also promotes a more transparent and helpful learning environment where pupils can better understand and engage with their own learning journey.

Furthermore, T1 provided the concrete action of sharing the criteria of assessment to students. T1 asserted:

“As I mentioned earlier, to assess their understanding of the material I teach, I give them quizzes. Before giving the quizzes, I explain the assessment criteria to test their understanding. For example, if a student answers 8 out of 10 questions correctly, they can be considered to have understood the material. On the other hand, if they answer 5 out of 10 questions correctly, they may have a limited understanding. And if they answer 5 or fewer questions correctly, they may not understand the material. Another example is when I ask them oral questions, which also serve to assess their participation in the class. This indirectly tests their understanding as well. However, I inform them that answering oral questions can earn them additional points if they are able to respond.” (Excerpt T1_11)

Then, T2 shared the criteria assessment by using stickers on the board. T2 stated:

“Well, usually for each class, I will create, maybe I have already created my own assessment criteria that can be seen by all students. I will provide it on a board where I write down the criteria they need to achieve in that particular learning. So, when they can reach the target or the set assessment, we will give them stickers, like star stickers. For example, if Student A achieves a certain point in the assessment, let's say in analyzing texts or other aspects, then we will give them a sticker. If a student doesn't meet the criteria, they won't receive such a sticker. So, the assessment will be transparent. Students can also evaluate whether they are able to follow the lessons based on the formative assessment.” (Excerpt T2_12)

Indeed, these practices are consistent with Hasim's (2018) study, which found that most teachers gave both written and oral feedback. Clear communication of assessment objectives and criteria is also emphasized by both educators. T1 explains the purpose of quizzes and questions as a means to assess understanding, while T2 introduces specific aspects that will be evaluated in their assessments. By communicating assessment goals and criteria, educators ensure transparency and enable students to evaluate their progress based on the FA standards established. The reported practice from these teachers is in line with Stiggins (1991a; 1991b) that outlined the key activities that teachers must take to create a reliable assessment.

3. Socio-Emotional Dimension

Indeed, T1 and T2 acknowledged the effect of feedback on students' learning motivation. T1 emphasized that feedback makes students feel valued and acknowledged, influencing their motivation throughout the learning process. T1 said:

“By giving feedback on their work, students feel valued and acknowledged. They feel that what we give them is not just tasks to be done, but they are being cared for and their efforts are being noticed. This, indirectly, significantly influences their learning motivation throughout the process.” (Excerpt T1_12)

T2 mentioned that feedback motivates students to achieve grades and strive for improvement, as they see their peers' successes. T2 asserted:

“Because I understand that feedback is intended to offer feedback to pupils, I use this method to motivate them during the learning process. Additionally, since this feedback also applies to me, I also receive feedback from students. This motivates them to achieve the grades I have given them. When they see their peers doing well, they are motivated to strive for similar grades. This motivation is achieved through the feedback process.” (Excerpt T2_13)

Based on the excerpts above, the teachers believe that feedback plays a key role in motivating students throughout the learning process. In line with it, Akter and Khan (2019) also suggested in their study that the teachers agreed FA increases students' motivation. Indeed, it confirms the claim from the study of Irons (2008).

Furthermore, both T1 and T2 acknowledged their responsibility in attending to students' needs during the FA process. T1 stated:

“By providing feedback on students' work and throughout the learning process in the classroom, we are aware that we have a responsibility to value and care to the students. Feedback is a significant aspect of this responsibility in the classroom.” (Excerpt T1_13)

T2 also recognized the responsibility of teachers in FA:

“To fulfill my responsibility in formative assessment towards students, after conducting the formative assessment, I can evaluate it. In the formative assessment, we can identify the areas where our teaching may have been lacking. After reviewing the assessment, we can analyze the students' performance. If they are not performing well, it becomes our responsibility to modify or change our teaching methods to help them accomplish the intended learning results. That's where our responsibility lies.” (Excerpt T2_14)

Based on the data that their perspectives align with the idea of FA, which posits that it is an ongoing process where teachers must continually assess and respond to student learning needs. According to Black and Wiliam (1998), FA involves the use of evidence about student learning to inform instruction, and part of this process is the teacher's responsibility to provide feedback and adjust teaching strategies as necessary. The data suggests that both T1 and T2 are committed to this reflective practice, recognizing that their role extends beyond merely assessing students to actively supporting and guiding them toward achieving the desired learning outcomes. This indicates a deep

understanding of the FA's purpose as an instrument for continuous improvement in both teaching and learning.

Moreover, both T1 and T2 emphasized the importance of raising awareness about FA among teachers and pupils. T1 explained:

“It is indeed important since formative assessment is for learning. It aims to improve students' learning outcomes and help them become more autonomous learners... Formative assessment monitors students' learning progress, allowing teachers and students to offer continuous feedback. Teachers can utilize the feedback to improve their teaching, while students can employ it to enhance their learning.” (Excerpt T1_14)

T2 shared a similar belief and stated:

“Yes, I do believe it is vital to raise awareness about formative assessment among teachers and students. By doing so, we can involve students in motivating and being motivated during the learning process. We can also create appropriate feedback that aligns with the learning objectives. So, I believe it is vital to raise awareness of formative assessment.” (Excerpt T2_15)

T1 emphasizes that providing feedback is not only an academic obligation but as well as a reflection of the teacher's responsibility to value and pay attention to the students. Feedback serves as a way to nurture and support students' growth, ensuring that their individual needs are addressed. Similarly, T2 recognizes the responsibility of teachers in FA, particularly in identifying areas where teaching may have fallen short. It becomes their duty to modify or adapt their teaching methods to aid students accomplish the desired learning outcomes. This acknowledgment of responsibility highlights the teacher's commitment to fostering a supportive and conducive learning environment. This finding confirms the study of Ozan and Kincal (2018) that suggested that teachers have a positive view of FA.

Besides, both T1 and T2 emphasized among teachers and students need to create a shared comprehension about FA. T1 explained:

“It usually depends on the school environment, where teachers distribute their experiences, engage in discussions, and care for each other. For example, we discuss how we implement formative assessment in our classes and the challenges we face during the assessment process... As for students, by explaining the purpose of formative assessment, students can actively participate in class discussions and interactions with their peers and teachers.” (Excerpt T1_15)

T2 also highlighted the importance of communication in creating a shared understanding:

“With teachers, we can have discussions about the assessment methods we should use to achieve learning goals in a particular unit or chapter. And sometimes, we provide students with the objectives and advantages of formative assessment.” (Excerpt T2_16)

Another area of attention for both T1 and T2 is increasing awareness and creating a shared grasp of FA among teachers and students. T1 emphasizes that FA is designed to improve student's learning outcomes and foster their autonomy as learners. By raising awareness, teachers and students can eagerly participate in the learning process and engage in continuous feedback. This collaboration allows teachers to enhance their teaching methods based on feedback, while students can utilize it to enhance their learning experience. T2 shares this belief and highlights the importance of involving students in the FA process, aligning feedback with learning objectives, and communicating the goal of FA to create a shared understanding. Through discussions and explanations, teachers ensure that students comprehend the implication of FA and actively contribute to class interactions and discussions. Thus, it is contrary to the previous study (Bahtiar & Purnawarman, 2020) that asserted FA appears to receive little attention from teachers.

D. CONCLUSION

This qualitative study investigates two English teacher's formative assessment literacy at a private international primary school in Medan, North Sumatra. The findings reveal that these teachers demonstrate a strong literacy in FA, recognizing its crucial role in evaluating and strengthening teaching and learning processes, aligning assessment activities with learning outcomes, and identifying students' needs. Emphasizing the importance of pupil participation and feedback, the teachers aim to foster self-assessment skills, motivation, and a sense of value among students. In practical implementation, they employ diverse assessment methods, including peer feedback, discussions, presentations, debates, and oral and written essays, providing students with multiple opportunities for engagement and collaborative skill development. The teachers prioritize oral feedback, transparent communication of assessment objectives, and criteria to facilitate effective self-evaluation by students. Overall, their commitment extends to nurturing students' growth and promoting a shared grasp of FA in the learning process for active participation and continuous feedback.

While this study provides meaningful insights, recognizing its limitations remains essential, such as the small number of participants and the inability to generalize the findings to different contexts. Future research could include a larger sample size and incorporate both qualitative and quantitative data to offer a more complete understanding of formative assessment literacy among teachers in diverse schools and regions. Richer data may be gathered with this study, and more crucially, the findings could be generalized.

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