

Online Assessment of English Competence and Its Washback: Teachers' and Students' Voices

Siti Mariam^{1*}, Sayyidatul Fadlilah², Catur Kepirianto³

^{1,2}Universitas Islam Negeri Walisongo Semarang, Indonesia

³Universitas Diponegoro, Semarang, Indonesia

*e-mail: sitimariam@walisongo.ac.id

ABSTRACT

Online assessments present several challenges for teachers, particularly in EFL (English as a Foreign Language) contexts. These difficulties fall into four categories: contextual, psychological, pedagogical, and technical. This study aims to explain teachers' and students' voices on implementing online assessment of English competence and its washback. It employed a qualitative method and a narrative inquiry research design. Data collection techniques used semi-structured interviews and open-ended questions. Thematic analysis was used as a data analysis technique. The participants were two English teachers and five students of an Islamic secondary school in Semarang city. The results show that the biggest challenge when conducting online English assessment reflects a range of technological, emotional, and instructional challenges, namely poor internet connection, device sharing or lack of equipment, speaking anxiety, unclear instructions, difficulty with listening tests, time pressure, lack of feedback, and technical platform confusion.

Keywords:

English Competence; Online Assessment; Students' Voices; Teachers' Voices; Washback.

ABSTRAK

Guru menghadapi berbagai kesulitan dalam melakukan penilaian online, terutama dalam konteks EFL (Bahasa Inggris sebagai Bahasa Asing). Tantangan-tantangan ini dapat dikelompokkan menjadi masalah teknis, pedagogis, psikologis, dan kontekstual. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menjelaskan pendapat guru dan siswa dalam penerapan penilaian kompetensi bahasa Inggris online beserta washback-nya. Penelitian ini

menggunakan metode kualitatif dan desain penelitian inkuiri naratif. Teknik pengumpulan data menggunakan wawancara terbuka. Analisis tematik digunakan sebagai teknik analisis data. Partisipannya adalah dua guru bahasa Inggris dan lima siswa dari salah satu Madrasah Tsanawiyah di kota Semarang. Hasil wawancara menunjukkan bahwa tantangan terbesar saat melakukan penilaian bahasa Inggris online mencerminkan serangkaian tantangan teknologi, emosional, dan pembelajaran seperti koneksi internet yang buruk, penggunaan perangkat yang tidak tepat atau kurangnya peralatan, kecemasan berbicara, instruksi yang tidak jelas, kesulitan dalam tes menyimak, batasan waktu, kurangnya umpan balik, dan kebingungan platform teknis.

Kata kunci:

Kompetensi Bahasa Inggris; Penilaian Online; Opini Guru; Opini Siswa; Washback.

1. Introduction

The term "online assessment of English competence" describes evaluating students' English language proficiency using digital tools and platforms. This involves evaluating communication ability, grammar, vocabulary, and the four macro skills of listening, reading, speaking, and writing. An online evaluation that aligns with learning objectives and real-world language usage may enhance students' learning autonomy. With online resources, students can have greater control over their education (e.g., practice examinations, self-paced modules). Positive washback of online assessment can create better digital literacy. As students gain experience with digital platforms, their language proficiency in tech-related contexts improves. It emphasizes communicative competence because effective online tests frequently incorporate speaking, listening, reading, and writing abilities, particularly when using multimedia formats. Online assessment also provides formative feedback. Students can learn from their mistakes with the help of some platforms that provide immediate or adaptive feedback. These are statements supported by (Albakri, 2024; Ali & Hamid, 2020; Hill, Tulloh, Mlcek & Lewis, 2018; Rahman, Seraj, Hasan, Namaziandost, & Tilwani, 2021).

When badly constructed, online tests might result in teaching to the exam. It means that teachers could ignore more general communication objectives in favor of concentrating primarily on the questions likely to be asked on the test. An excessive focus on multiple-choice forms may overlook useful abilities like writing and speaking. Digital divide inequality disadvantages students with limited internet access or low-tech proficiency.

Meanwhile, the benefits of online assessment cover accessibility, flexibility, multimodality, instant feedback, and data tracking. Students can take tests from different time zones and places. If assignments are asynchronous, students can finish them at their own pace. Combining text, audio, and video improves skill evaluation. Numerous services provide instantaneous scores and revisions. Teachers can use digital dashboards to track students' development over time. Students' voices are

complex; although they appreciate current formats and ease of use, they also worry about efficacy, fairness, and dependability, particularly regarding speaking and writing. Improved online evaluation procedures in English language instruction can result from understanding these voices. However, online assessment has several challenges: the digital divide, security issues, limited validity, tech anxiety, and over-reliance on multiple-choice questions. Additionally, speaking and writing tests may not fully reflect real-life skills. Students who are unfamiliar with digital tools may underperform. This is in line with (Coombe, Vafadar, & Mohebbi, 2020; Heil, Ifenthaler, 2023; Luthfiyyah, Cahyono, Ivone, & Suryati, 2022; Pu & Xu, 2021).

Although online English proficiency tests are flexible and innovative, they must be carefully planned to guarantee validity, equity, and pedagogical soundness. Hybrid models that combine the finest features of traditional and online methods are the way of the future for evaluation. It promotes global Englishes, meaning that assessments must consider a range of English dialects and usages. This study aims to explain teachers' and students' voices on implementing online assessment of English competence and its washback during the COVID-19 pandemic. There are not many studies that discuss the effect of washback on online English assessment. This research fills a gap that has not yet been explored: the washback effects in online assessment.

2. Methods

2.1. *Type of Research*

This study used a descriptive, naturalistic research design and a qualitative research approach. This approach, according to (Creswell & Timothy, 2019; Creswell, 2014; Tracy, 2013), was appropriate for examining people's experiences and how they related to larger social phenomena. The study design was naturalistic, emphasizing comprehending and elaborating on subjects in context. This strategy was adopted to investigate the several elements impacting these phenomena thoroughly and to enable a comprehensive knowledge of teachers' and students' voices on online assessment of English competence and its washback.

2.2 *Research Participants*

The research participants were two English teachers and five students of the seventh grade at an Islamic secondary school in Semarang city.

2.3 *Data Collection Technique*

Semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions were employed as the data-gathering method. These interviews allowed students and teachers to freely express their ideas and experiences while maintaining the focus of English learning and assessing. To foster a casual atmosphere conducive to candid and open communication, interviews were arranged at times that worked for the students. The interviews were audio recorded with their permission to guarantee correctness and facilitate transcription and analysis at a later time. Each interview lasted roughly sixty minutes and

was recorded with the participants' permission. It enabled comprehensive analysis. By allowing unexpected but pertinent themes to emerge, using interview guidelines enhances the richness of the data obtained while keeping the interviews focused on the research objectives. Semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions were employed as the data-gathering method. These interviews allowed students and teachers to freely express their ideas and experiences while maintaining the focus of English learning and assessing. To foster a casual atmosphere conducive to candid and open communication, interviews were arranged at times that worked for the students. The interviews were audio recorded with their permission to guarantee correctness and facilitate transcription and analysis at a later time. The statements align with (Creswell, 2014; Miles, Huberman & Saldana, 2014).

2.4 Data Analysis Technique

Thematic analysis was applied as a data analysis technique. This technique assisted in finding, examining, and summarizing recurrent themes or patterns in the data. This approach was widely and adaptively utilized, enabling the creation of complex, yet rich. Subsequently, the investigator employed the widely recognized six-phase framework for theme analysis developed by (Braun & Clarke, 2022). These are specifically: a) Getting to Know the Data; b) Creating the First Codes; c) Looking for Themes; d) Examining Themes; e) Identifying and Labeling Themes; and f) Writing the Report.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Students' voices on the main obstacle to administering online English tests

Students are frequently required to interact with the materials independently during online exams, which can promote self-regulated learning. Students assume greater responsibility for their education as they engage with asynchronous portfolio chores, discussion boards, and quizzes. This change promotes self-reliance and the growth of metacognitive abilities. This can result in more vocabulary being learned and practiced with real things in language learning scenarios. According to the interview results, there are eight challenges in conducting online English assessment, namely.

a. A Bad Internet Connection

Student 1: My voice recording occasionally cuts out or fails to upload due to a poor connection. The possibility that the teacher won't hear me makes me anxious.

Student 4: The exam kept crashing because my internet was slow. I was unable to concentrate since I was so stressed.

A terrible internet connection indicates the network is unstable, slow, or frequently disconnected, making it difficult to access or finish online learning and evaluation activities. The impact of a poor connection, such as difficulty listening, audio or video lags, imprecise sound, or failure to play media.

b. Sharing devices or not having enough equipment

Student 2: I can't finish the test in time since my siblings and I share a phone.

Possessing sufficient digital tools for online learning and evaluation means having enough equipment for teachers and students. This includes having access to: laptops, tablets, or smartphones, mics or headphones (particularly for speaking and listening assessments), dependable internet access, and power or charging stations. Students may find it difficult to participate completely in online examinations if they lack the necessary tools, particularly when it comes to speaking, writing, and listening.

For online assessments to be fair and successful, having adequate equipment is essential. Without it, even the best-crafted assignments could result in stress, unfairness, and an inadequate evaluation of students' English proficiency. Educators and schools must be adaptable, inclusive, and creative to close these gaps.

c. Speaking Anxiety

Student 3: When I record myself speaking in English, it's difficult. I am anxious and lose my words.

Student 1: I like taking speaking examinations online with recordings so I may re-record if I make a mistake.

The fear or uneasiness that students have when they must speak in English, particularly during an assessment, is known as speaking anxiety. The worry of being assessed based on recordings, the new technology, or the absence of instant response can all exacerbate this anxiety in online contexts. Speaking nervously during an online test might seriously impair performance accuracy. It can lead to low confidence and decreased participation and can be brought on by recording pressure, fear of being judged, and a lack of support. Teachers must adopt sympathetic, adaptable, and encouraging methods to assist students' talk confidently even online.

d. Imprecise Instructions

Student 4: I sometimes have trouble understanding Google Form instructions, especially when they are entirely in English.

Student 1: The machine can't evaluate my speech, in my opinion. It ignores meaning and only considers pronunciation.

In an online test or activity, imprecise instructions are defined as guidelines or instructions that are overly complex, unclear, incomplete, or ambiguous (may be construed in multiple ways). Students become confused, misunderstand the work, or fail to finish it correctly because they lack linguistic skills and are unsure of what they are supposed to perform. Students become confused, perform worse, and experience stress when given unclear directions in online assessments. Teachers must ensure students understand what is expected of them and how to succeed, communicate properly, and provide examples to prevent negative washback.

e. Having trouble with listening tests

Student 5: I am unable to play the audio repeatedly. I flunk the entire quiz if I overlook something.

Student 2: It seems less intimate. During in-person evaluations, I miss interacting with my teacher.

Students must listen to audio (or video) recordings and respond to questions on online listening assessments. However, many kids struggle with technical, instructional, or emotional issues rather than listening skills. Students sometimes struggle with online listening assessments because of test anxiety, poor audio, and technological problems. By utilizing accessible formats, providing explicit support, and emphasizing student comfort and comprehension above speed or accuracy, teachers can enhance listening tests.

f. The Pressure of Time

Student 1: Time is too short, especially for writing assignments, and I type slowly.

Student 4: Online assessments are more flexible. I can do them anytime without coming to school.

"Time pressure" describes the tension or worry students experience when they have a tight deadline to finish an online test. This frequently happens in online English assessments when there are timers or deadlines for reading, writing, speaking, and listening assignments. Students' performance, motivation, and confidence can all be negatively impacted by time constraints during online assessments. Time constraints might impede students from reaching their full potential, particularly those learning English. Educators should provide online tests with reasonable time constraints, flexibility, and encouraging guidance to avoid needless stress.

g. Insufficient Input

Student 2: I'm unsure if my responses are accurate after turning in the test. I want more than simply scores; I want comments.

Student 3: I had no idea if my responses had been sent in. No confirmation was found.

When students don't have enough knowledge, resources, or exposure to English before or during an online test, it's referred to as "insufficient input." This could indicate in absence of task models. Insufficient exposure to language, for example, reading and listening, before testing instructions and preparation materials that are confusing or lacking. Meanwhile, teachers in conventional classrooms typically: provide guided practice, engage in modeling, and provide clarification immediately. These resources might be diminished or absent in online assessments, meaning that students are evaluated before being prepared.

h. Perplexity with technical platforms

Student 3: An excessive number of platforms, including Google Forms, WhatsApp, and other links. It's unclear.

Student 1: I like online quizzes because I get the results immediately. It helps let me know what I need to review.

Student 2: The videos and pictures in the listening test made it easier to understand. I think online assessments are more interesting.

Student 4: Taking an exam on my phone makes me feel less anxious than taking it in front of an instructor in a real classroom.

When students or teachers attempt to use digital tools or online platforms for assessment assignments, they may experience perplexity, which is defined as bewilderment, difficulty, or doubt. Platforms like Google Forms, Moodle, Edmodo, Google Classroom, Zoom, and others, used for quizzes, speaking exams, or assignment submissions, are frequently included in the context of online English study. Technical platform confusion can severely hinder students' ability to complete online English examinations, particularly in settings with limited resources. Confusion can be decreased and assessment success increased with clear instructions, streamlined technology use, and practice chances.

3.2 Teachers' voices on the positive washback of online English assessment

"Washback" describes how assessment and testing affect instruction and learning. There is mounting evidence that, when properly designed, online assessments can result in positive washback by encouraging learner autonomy, digital literacy, and more formative, feedback-oriented learning processes, even though most of the literature focuses on the negative washback of online assessments, such as elevated anxiety, cheating, and surface learning. Based on the interview results, the teachers' voices are as follows:

a. Emphasis on Language Use in Real Life

Teacher 1: Using online assessment platforms, I can design assignments that mimic actual communication, such as writing emails or taking voice notes. Instead of only practicing grammar, my students are more interested in using English in real-world situations.

Tasks that mimic how English is used outside of the classroom are known as real-life language use tasks. Students believe that using English in daily situations is beneficial. They prioritize significance over accuracy. They also use English to solve difficulties and voice their thoughts. Positive washback results from online assessments that prioritize real-world language use because they make language acquisition interesting, relevant, and useful. Students gain self-assurance, motivation, and readiness to utilize English outside the classroom.

b. Increased Learner Independence

Teacher 2: My students developed greater independence through self-paced grammar exercises and online tests. They monitor their progress rather than only waiting for my input.

c. Improved Reflection and Feedback

Teacher 1: Students frequently return to check their mistakes when I utilize Google Forms with automatic feedback. They now genuinely learn from their mistakes, which has altered the way they study.

d. Transition to Communication Skills

Teacher 2: I had to reconsider my objectives after taking the Flipgrid speaking test. I began focusing less on textbook grammar and more on pronunciation and fluency.

e. Using Technology to Engage

Teacher 1: Students are more involved when I incorporate interactive tests or movies into the evaluation process. They view it as more than just testing; it is a learning component.

f. Instruction Based on Data

Teacher 2: Real-time analytics are provided by online assessments. I now assign students to groups according to their real areas of weakness and provide more focused assistance. One of the main advantages of online assessment platforms is the ability to use data to inform instruction.

g. Encouragement of Differentiated Education

Teacher 1: I can provide more differentiated resources because students can complete online assignments independently. It's a major step in the direction of inclusive education.

3.3 Teachers' voices on the negative washback of online English assessment

Negative washback refers to online assessments' harmful or unintended effects on teaching methods, learning behaviors, and language development. Below are the results of the teachers' voices.

a. Assessment-Based Education

Teacher 1: Only the online test is studied by my students. Although they learn patterns by heart, they lack a thorough understanding of language usage.

Negative washback: Online tests promote memorization over purposeful language use. In assessment-based education, negative washback happens when testing takes over instruction in ways that impede genuine competence, creativity, and communication. Assessments must be thoughtfully created, balanced, and aligned with more general linguistic objectives than test scores to foster meaningful learning.

b. Educating for Examination

Teacher 2: I feel under pressure to adapt my courses to the online tests' format rather than what the curriculum calls for.

Negative washback: Instead of emphasizing holistic skill development, instruction narrowly focuses on preparing pupils for online assessments. The term "education for examination" describes a method of instruction where the primary objective is to prepare students for examinations rather than to develop critical thinking, communication skills, or true comprehension. This is typical in systems where standardized testing, national exams, or school assessments determine academic achievement. Exam-only instruction results in negative washback, reducing education's value and intent. It keeps students from gaining the self-assurance, fluency, and practical communication skills they require when learning English. We must balance evaluation and real, purposeful learning to foster true learning.

c. The Use of Technology Instead of Language

Teacher 1: Teaching students how to use the platform sometimes takes longer than teaching English.

Negative washback: Less time is spent on language training as technology takes center stage.

d. Anxiety among Students Has Increased

Teacher 2: Students are anxious when taking speaking exams online. Some avoid the task out of fear of being caught on camera.

Negative washback: Speaking assignments, in particular, cause anxiety due to online evaluation styles.

e. How Equity Concerns Impact Education

Teacher 1: Students with inadequate internet access frequently miss assignments or turn in work late, which demotivates them and causes them to lag.

Negative Washback: Students who experience technological inequality become less motivated, and the achievement inequalities widen.

f. Reduced Possibility of Formative Feedback

Teacher 2: I used to comment on class activities, but these days I only see the completed responses on Google Forms.

Negative Washback: The format constrains teachers' capacity to offer formative or real-time feedback.

g. Less Communication

Teacher 1: Online tests seem one-sided. Pupils turn in assignments but don't engage with one another or pose questions as they would in class.

Reduced dialogic learning and classroom engagement are examples of negative washback.

h. Inconsistency with Communication Objectives

Teacher 2: Online tests frequently measure grammar or vocabulary only, but I want to concentrate on real communication.

Negative washback: Evaluation is not in line with curricular or communication objectives.

3.4 Discussion

The results of the interviews indicated that most of the students had prepared themselves fairly well for their online assessment. They became more self-sufficient and had more freedom to learn. These align with the findings (Ali & Hamid, 2020; Cahyadi, Hendryadi, & Widyastuti, 2021; Hu & Huang, 2022). Learning is the objective of the assessment of the learning process, and assessment is a means of achieving that goal (Furwana, Muin, Zainuddin, & Mulyani, 2024; Heil & Ifenthaler, 2023; Prasetya, 2022; Widiastuti, Mantra, & Sukoco, 2021). Last but not least, this result differs from that of (Coombe, Vafadar, & Mohebbi, 2020; Guangul, Suhail, Khalit, & Khidhir, 2020; Luthfiyyah, Cahyono, Ivone, & Suryati, 2022; Savitri, 2024). Exam-related behaviors, including students' participation, exam confidence, and anxiety, are examined by comparing online formative and summative assessments. According to the results, these are the translated and topologically analyzed interview results on the teachers' and students' responses to the online assessment, how it was interpreted, and how online evaluation was used for teaching and learning. During the epidemic, fresh insights were gained from the real outcomes of online assessments in EFL lessons. The initial study inquiry yielded two findings: virtual assessments' advantageous and unfavorable effects on English instruction and acquisition. Positive outcomes will occur if teachers and students embrace a positive mentality and collaborate successfully to fulfill assessment and learning objectives, as asserted (Alshaye, 2024; Jumiatty, 2021; Li, 2018). The study found several advantages to online assessment, including increased awareness of the development of online language assessments, improved

language assessment proficiency, and enhanced assessment flexibility. Since the test is not proctored and may be taken anywhere, students can access their texts and notes anytime.

However, there are also some disadvantages, such as difficulty administering assessments, decreased teacher-student interaction and engagement, tech discomfort, test anxiety, and heightened student incentive. The following are the specifics around each effect: There is more assessment flexibility regarding online testing because teachers and students agreed that it is more versatile than offline or in-class testing. In this case, flexibility meant negotiating both space and time. According to (Furwana, Muin, Zainuddin, & Mulyani, 2024; Heil & Ifenthaler, 2023; Widiastuti, Mantra, & Sukoco, 2021), online assessments should offer flexible testing hours and dates. These findings were in line with their findings. The instructor's and students' opinions regarding the flexibility of online tests are expressed in the following quotes from the interview:

Teacher 1: "It is adaptable, direct data storage, simple grading, and students can immediately see which answers are correct and incorrect..."

Student 1: "The advantage is that I can still do homework because it is online, I have a lot of time to finish my work".

Teachers think they have much more time to evaluate students when using online exams. They could view the students' work anywhere, at any time. It was easier for teachers to go back and assess student work if they felt it needed to be evaluated again. Teachers stated that online assessment has grown in popularity because of its flexibility. This aligns with the findings of (Hill, Tulloh, Mlcek, & Lewis, 2018; Prasetya, 2022; Savitri, 2024). They noted that, depending on the teacher's preferred delivery method, offering course exams online has several advantages, such as speedy scoring and a range of student test styles. When taking tests online, students are not intrinsically limited by traditional, artificial academic schedule limits. The researchers saw firsthand that English teachers had gathered several times to discuss how to prepare for the online test, and the review confirms this. The major goal of preparing is to increase one's English language ability. Two teachers found it challenging to create assessments that were suitable because the administration is very different from the seventh class that was taught previously. On the other hand, students also knew how to prepare for online exams. The student thinks adding the assessment results to the teaching and learning process could be advantageous. Conversely, students also understood how to prepare tests for online assessment. They think adding assessment results to the teaching and learning process could be advantageous. The result is in line with (Burgos, Tili, & Tabacco, 2021; Byrne, Hogan, Dhingra, Anthony, & Gannon, 2021; Cahyadi, Hendryadi, Widyastuti, & Mufidah, 2021; Li, 2018) investigation. They emphasized how evaluation comments positively impacted students' writing when utilized as a teaching tool. Learner autonomy is intended to assist students in maximizing their learning outcomes by fostering their capacity for self-directed learning and providing them with a better awareness of their unique learning paths. While some students do not disclose their learning style, three of the participants said that language assessment and online learning are two things that significantly improve their self-directed learning. The propensity of students to take charge of their education is referred to as "learner autonomy". This approach enables language learners to acquire

languages more successfully and actively. Students learn to become better learners when they know their flaws and inadequacies. According to (Rahman, Seraj, Hasan, Namaziandost, & Tilwani, 2021), "giving learners specific goals and assisting them in evaluating those goals will help them develop autonomy." This is consistent with that claim. Furthermore, it is evident from (Dong, Fan, & Xu, 2021; Luthfiyyah, Cahyono, Ivone, & Suryati, 2022; Prasetya, 2022) that the influence of an exam is felt more on an individual basis than on the level of the group. Furthermore, the information obtained from the interview revealed that one teacher asserted that the online test did not cause all her students to lose motivation. High learning motivation can lead to autonomous learning. Nonetheless, motivation decreased as a result of outside technological forces. This finding is in line with research by the workload, the assessment's equality and fairness for all students, and the assignments' capacity to accommodate a variety of learning styles and skill levels were all factors that the teachers had to consider while developing language exams (Heil, Ifenthaler, 2023; Huang, & Jiang, 2021; Kusuma, 2022).

The current study's findings indicate that teachers thought online testing improved their comprehension of language assessment. (Rahiem, 2020; Zhang, Yan, & Wang, 2021; Zou, Kong, & Lee, 2021) state that assessment of illiteracy has negative effects on educators and students. It raised instructors' awareness of creative approaches to language assessment while maintaining equity for students' use of technology and the internet. Teachers discovered that it was easier to arrange the evaluation due to the intricate characteristics of the online platforms. The internet makes contextualizing and contrasting evaluation methodologies possible (Coombe, Vafadar, & Mohebbi, 2020; Guangul, Suhail, Khalit, & Khidhir, 2020; Kartal, 2022). I had a greater chance of getting an unbiased assessment as a result. Genuine, real-world examples of the kinds of activities that students will be required to do in the future can make an exam more effective. It provided me with a greater chance to get an unbiased assessment. According to (Aslanoglu, 2022; Dong, 2020; Kanik, 2024), tests that include authentic, real-world examples of the kinds of tasks that students will have to do in the future will be more effective. Given that the evaluator may examine both the process and the result, and the environment provides real resources and tools for completing tasks, it is especially pertinent to online assessments (Danar, Herdyastuti, & Lutfi, 2023; Dong, Fan, & Xu, 2021; Jumiatiy, 2021). There are drawbacks to online testing for the English program in addition to its benefits. According to (Furwana, Muin, Zainuddin, Mulyani, 2024; Heil & Ifenthaler, 2023; Widiastuti, Mantra, & Sukoco, 2021), it is defined as unintentional impacts on learning and education, like the application of evaluation techniques instead of instructional strategies, excessive exam anxiety, and a failure to advance general knowledge. The negative results of the online English program examinations are listed below. The findings show that students' and teachers' confidence in technical topics is equal. They all agree that their biggest concern is maintaining an internet connection during the test. Teachers worry that students' abilities and test scores will be misunderstood because of a lack of rich information, which would negatively affect them.

Based on the interview information, they faced several difficulties completing the online assessment. Its drawbacks include requiring teachers and students to have a dependable internet connection to use technology. Furthermore, students can misunderstand because they cannot clarify

anything. Students had trouble managing their time, which caused them to lose focus during the online exam. Because of the COVID-19 epidemic, every teacher was still used to the entire online assessment. Teachers have devoted much effort to learning how to use a range of online testing technologies in addition to the school's primary and official e-learning platform to make teaching and testing more interesting and varied. Students in the English program agree with the teachers. When taking online tests, individuals are concerned about the instructions they don't understand. In summary, precision and accuracy are important when taking an online assessment, especially if it's a short-answer question where the answer must match the current answer key. When asking questions, teachers find it difficult to answer them, and students need to understand this. Almost all participants—teachers and students alike—comment on this topic. As previously mentioned, the effectiveness of an online exam is greatly influenced by connections (Alshaye, 2024; De Silva, 2021; Dong, 2020; Kartal, 2022). Selecting the appropriate program to use also became essential. Teachers become frustrated when they are unable to master instructional technology. Teachers must become proficient with it before utilizing the technology to create an online evaluation. Teachers' and students' participation in online assessments declined. It might happen because there was no quick interaction. Instructors who exhibit supportive behaviors themselves will inspire the highest levels of engagement from their students. In contrast, in classes with the lowest levels of students' engagement, teachers demonstrated greater degrees of chaotic teaching techniques. During classroom interactions, one of the teachers made it apparent that she could see her students and give them direct instructions. Avoiding misunderstandings may also be aided by direct communication. A teacher encouraged the students to take part in the online assessment by giving them a quick rundown of the evaluation criteria for the material. For most students, taking tests online is a unique experience. Therefore, it makes sense that its operation hasn't been successful. Online learning minimizes the purportedly intense engagement between teachers and students. Seeing teachers in action promotes a sense of learning and community, as demonstrated by (Pu & Xu, 2021; Rahiem, 2020; Senel & Senel, 2021; Zhang, 2021). The next difficulty for language learners and teachers is being able to participate in the teaching-learning process while online. Various circumstances might cause anxiety related to tests. Students are forced to take the test whenever they can, due to the flexibility of online assessments. Students feel less nervous during tests because there isn't any direct supervision. In theory, it is best to provide an exam to a patient when they are not very nervous (Burgos, Tlili, & Tabacco, 2021; Guangul, Suhail, Khalit, & Khidhir, 2020; Huang & Jiang, 2021; Kusuma, 2022; Zou, Kong, & Lee, 2021). However, pressure over their work could be felt by teachers. The information gleaned from the interview indicates that they were worried about their students' exams, especially given the possibility of cheating associated with online learning and assessment:

Teacher 2: "I was also anxious when I instructed the students, I tried to make good rules to avoid cheating, yet I still worried about that".

The results, however, are not in line with the students' level of anxiety throughout the exam. It was interesting to note that students who fared well on the midterm exam had similar anxiety when taking it in person. This worry is brought on by technical problems, which encourages students to pay close attention during the test.

Student 4: "I think taking an exam online is more relaxed because we can take breaks to eat or drink."

Even though they were worried about their internet connection, students who performed poorly on the test reported not being concerned about making many mistakes. They felt they had great time flexibility when taking an online test and could check notes or references as needed. This claim is consistent with the results of the semi-structured interview.

Student 2: "Due to my internet connection and the time constraint, I don't feel confident taking the test. I need to finish it as soon as possible so that the test will have been completed even if there is an internet issue."

Test anxiety leads to physical and psychological issues, impairs confidence, focus, and success, increases learning process errors, hinders the ability of actual output to be successfully translated to test results, training, and lowers interest in language learning, according to (Byrne, Hogan, Dhingra, Anthony, & Gannon, 2021; Cahyadi, Hendryadi, & Widyastuti, 2021; Daniar, Herdyastuti, & Lutfi, 2023). This is not the same as how it is stated here. Students did not experience anxiety from the online test because they did not influence it. First-year students say they were not nervous about the online test because they were not being watched over by the teacher directly. He stated, *"I don't feel anxious taking the test online without direct teacher supervision."*

4. Conclusion

Integrating real-world projects that foster communication skills is encouraged by online assessments. Online assessment technologies offer instant, formative feedback, which promotes metacognitive awareness. Online resources make concentrating on pronunciation and oral fluency easier, which supports balanced language instruction. Differentiated education and inclusive practices are also supported by online assessment. Meanwhile, positive washback via self-regulated, formative learning, heightened student involvement, and motivation. To evaluate their students' proficiency in English, Indonesian educators employ a variety of digital resources, frequently integrating free platforms such as YouTube, WhatsApp, and Google Forms. Although they thought internet resources were useful for monitoring student progress, they questioned whether online assessments of productive abilities like writing and speaking were fair.

It is recommended to prepare an online assessment with appropriate platforms. Now, tasks of teaching, learning, and assessing are more genuine. Online assessment also promotes language use in everyday situations. However, students develop greater independence. To evaluate their students' proficiency in English, Indonesian educators employ a variety of digital resources, frequently integrating free platforms such as YouTube, WhatsApp, and Google Forms. Although they thought internet resources were useful for monitoring student progress, they questioned whether online assessments of productive abilities like writing and speaking were fair.

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