



## English for Academic Purposes (EAP) Lecturers' perceptions of formative assessment integration in the Thai EAP context

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### Abstract

Evaluation processes must be conceived in line with learner-centered emphasis though instruction in English for Academic Purposes (EAP) is grounded on learner-centered approaches, EAP- English for Academic Purpose, which is considered as a major important functional feature of the language. Formative evaluation is major evaluation approach that provides various advantages for EAP students. This study examined (n=50) the perception of lecturers in three Thai universities, including Walailak, of including the inclusion of formative assessments in EAP instruction. The findings showed that, despite several obstacles to its implementation, lecturers have adapted optimistic attitudes to the use of formative evaluation in EAP education through studies and interviews. In addition, the instructors knew the merits of EAP training assessment. However, the expertise and the knowledge required for the formational assessment of EAP instructions were not available to them. The main evaluation in the form of the final examination was summative. This study suggests that formative evaluation should be taken into account in the EAP curriculum.

*Keywords:* EAP; learner-centered approach; formative assessment; obstacles; attitudes learner-centered approach; lecturer; obstacles; attitudes.

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## 1. Introduction

### *1.1 Formative Assessment: Theoretical underpinnings of the research*

The culture and contexts in the educational contexts are, according to Vygotskaya (1986). Interaction and language are two key factors that build people's knowledge. Learning is also a highly cultural and context-based process (Shepard, 2005a). The idea of the proximal zone of development (ZPD) is strongly linked to the formational assessment. Through formative assessment students are able to move from what they know to what they can do for the future (Shepard, 2005a; Vygotsky, 1978). According to Shepard (2005a) clothing and formational assessment are two valuable tools to help trainers to improve the demand for ZPD and improve their skills. Gibbons (2002) notes that

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scaffolding provides educators with support and help to resolve problems for their learners. The assistance, guidance and motivation for students to carry out complete tasks may include support.

The formation assessment proposal, like skinning, is a suitable tool for helping students develop new skills and guiding them on how they can review and modify the direction to meet their students' need and opportunities for learning (Shepard, 2005a). The formative assessment will also improve the cooperation of students and teachers in task handling and improve the quality and amount of negative importance between the teacher and student (Shepard, 2005a). This aspect of formative assessment is consistent with the issues and theoretic of the socio-cultural education theory (Shepard, 2005a).

## **2. Literature Review**

### *2.1 The use of formative assessment in educational settings*

The use of formative evaluations in educational environments has attracted the interest of educational and testing specialists. Formative evaluation identifies the role played by the students in the learning process by negotiating learning objectives and outcomes with the educators and conducting an auto assessment and peer review" (Lee, 2011, p. 99). More specifically, Black and William (1998, p.2), defines the formative assessment as "all the activities tentatively evaluated by the teachers and students that provide feedback on the teaching and learning activities they participate in." In educational contexts, formative evaluation offers a range of opportunities including a focus on the learning process, improved motivation and attitudes, reduced anxiety and stress in testing students, a more comprehensive analysis of student progress, quality feedback, a better student centering, and improved cooperation between educators and students (Baines, Blatchford & Chowne, 2007; Black, 2005; Carreira, 2012; Lee, 2011).

In contrast to formational evaluation procedures, summative assessment is, on the other hand, a process of evaluation which is generally known to compliment and at times. Mainly, Jones (2006) says that while summative evaluation deals with learning assessment, formative evaluation deals with learning assessment. The summative evaluation demonstrates the performance of students at some time. In addition, summative tests are available for grading. "End-of-unit or chapter tests" are examples of summative assessment.

Final projects or portfolios, tests for results and standardized tests are responsible for schools and students" "(Garrison & Ehringhaus, 2007, p. 2). Summative assessment includes evaluating the efficiency, curriculum alignment and placement of students for certain particular purposes (Garrison & Ehringhaus, 2007). Given that summative assessment information is highly sporadic and product-based, it cannot be used for evaluating and evaluating the learning processes and progress of students during a specific class.

There is a distinction between summative and formative assessment, according to Garrison and Ehringhaus (2007). The emphasis on practice is one of the critical issues for formational assessment. Students are responsible to improve their learning process. They must take responsibility for their learning and practice. The other factor that has to do with students' involvement in their learning and with their constant feedback to change or improve learning practices. More restrictive is the use of summative evaluation, since it does not provide students with sufficient feedback and does not allow them to participate in the evaluation process.

Formative evaluation can be used for various purposes and purposes. It can, for example, help to identify the student's weaknesses and powers while studying, divert student thoughtfulness from grades to their quality and learning process, progress student metacognition and improve the quality of

education, by providing educators with information to change or reform their quality of education (Huhta, 2010; Shepard, 2005b).

With respect to the authority of the formative assessment, Bennet (2011) maintains that the formative evaluation is an inferential procedure. When teachers observe student performance via several sources, contexts and conditions, the validity of the formative assessment will be applied. Therefore, carrying out the formative evaluation allows instructors to make tougher conclusions about the performance of students during a longer period of time. As Bennet (2011, p. 17) claims, "every interaction between educators and students is an opportunity to pose and refine our conjectures or beliefs concerning what a student knows and can do and how he or she can improve and achieve this change." Consequently this lengthy educator-student communication, assessment effectiveness will increase when the formative evaluation is carried out in educational contexts.

As far as reliability is concerned, Way, Dolan and Nichols (2010) point out that reliability is defined in formative evaluation in terms of the "assessment of the reliability of every element and how the component are merged in an information-producing way" (p. 308). The reliability of the formative assessment components can be adjusted with both quantitative (such as coefficient alpha) and qualitative methods. Contrary to their validity, the trustworthiness of a formative evaluation is an open question which requires further exploration (Way, Dolan, and Nichols, 2010).

Concerning the instructional features of formative evaluation, Bennet (2011) is of the opinion that educators should have substantive knowledge when carrying out formative evaluation. Educators ought to be encouraged to have admittance to the resources needed for the formative evaluation. Furthermore, educators who are eager to undertake formative assessments should encourage their evaluation information and the various tools and measures adaptable to evaluate the performance of students in the course. Therefore, it is necessary to both evaluate knowledge and pedagogical knowledge if educators have to carry out a formative evaluation.

## 2. 2 *Assessment in EAP/ESP*

Assessment refers to the way information on the language capacity or learner performance is evaluated, as stated by Hyland (2006). It is integral to the learning procedure and is vital to students' improvement in aggregating their control over their abilities and comprehension. (See the report's page 99). Hyland further outlines the underlying justification for evaluating students (2006). First, the reason for the "diagnosis." The diagnostic aspect of assessment concerns the detection of the strengths and flaws of students and is often used for needs analysis projects. "Pluster achievements" are the additional purpose for student evaluation and monitoring of the advancement of students. The other reason for assessing the students' skills before performing their academic duties or function is "performance." The "competence" argument relates to the assessment of student university skills and is used for education. The final cause for assessing students is 'accountability.' The assessment will inform the authorities of the results achieved in this context. Douglas (2000) differentiates EAP valuation from other language evaluation types, noting that the EAP evaluation takes into consideration the variation in linguistic performance and the accuracy of the EAP evaluation. The EAP review argued that an optimum interaction between the test technician, specific content and the test task should be established. This increased interaction improves the authenticity of the test. The fact that the EAP assessment is meticulously connected to specific terminology, structures and phonological characteristics in the field refers to the precision. Thus, two basic principles for evaluating academic contexts in English are the different contexts and interactive authenticity (Douglas, 2000).

Douglas (2000) also points out that language is fundamental evaluation (LSP) is that it can be referenced by criterion or normally used. He also suggested that tests referred to by criterion can

provide more advantages and merits for specific language testing purposes. It is also essential that the specific language capabilities and domain of content are defined in this respect in an extensive and precise way. Therefore the specific details of the target language situations and standards in assessing the performance in the LSP frameworks should be taken into account in the LSP testing and evaluation.

### *2.3. Formative assessment in EFL/EAP contexts*

Formal and informal processes can be adapted for the collection of data for formative evaluation in context of language teaching (Griffin, 2007). The informal way of collecting data might comprise perceiving the behavior of students, analyzing interactions between educators, students and students, and analyzing written study work. Nevertheless, formal procedures comprise the organization of various evaluation tools, including tests and questionnaires. Devine (2009) proposes that evaluations should assist foreign language learning and support EFL students.

In relation to the EAP, instruction plays an essential part in the learning and teaching approaches focused on learners. (Saint-Martin, 2006). In order to ease the learning process, the EAP valuation and testing should depend on a learner's active role in the evaluation process and the provision of appropriate feedback. The use of ESP/EAP training for formative evaluation can thus bring a host of advantages, both for EAP instructors and for EAP students.

In addition, Hyland (2006) trusts that EAP students should receive various kinds of feedback. Feedback from peers, peer interactions and educator's conferences are examples of evaluation tools designed to increase evaluation efficiency in EAP instruction. It would not be feasible to provide continuous feedback and interaction in the EAP assessment if the formative evaluation was carried out.

### *2.4 Research on perspectives of formative assessment*

In general, several studies were carried out to study teachers' observations of formative assessment in scholastic and EFL/ESP settings. Overall, the consequences of such observations demonstrate that the practice of formative evaluations is considered useful and constructive, while their real use of formative evaluation in their classrooms differs from their perceptions of formative evaluation. Further, teachers' attitudes differ towards educational assessment and their use in their lessons and teaching of formative assessment tools. Moreover, there are several tasks to the use of formative assessment in education frameworks. Positive positions have been taken by teachers in the training evaluation while there are challenges and challenges for their implementation in the educational context (Aitken, 2000; Al-kindy, 2009; Berry, 2004; Çimer & Timucin, 2008; Chevalier, 2011; Sach, 2012; Thembayen, 2009). Founded on the results of former studies, the formative evaluation provides a wealth of advantages and benefits to both education and training. These aids include improving learning, increasing student responsibility for learning, opportunities for self-assessment and facilitating learning among students Thembayen, 2009). Song & Koh, 2010. Mohammed, 2013; Sach, 2012. Berry, 2004.

The other section of research into the conduct of formative evaluation examined the views of students. The results of these studies show that the mainstream of students have a constructive attitude towards formational assessment use and implementation. Students realized that formative evaluation would help to learn and reduce fretfulness and improve performance and results in summative testing (Chetchumlong, 2010; Gijbels & Dochy, 2006; Hurst, 2011; McKenna, 2011; Perera & Morgan, 2011; Ruland, 2011). Certain students showed attention in combining summative and formative evaluation approaches (Gijbels & Dochy, 2006; McKenna, 2011).

Although research has found that carrying out educational assessments would be helpful and promising in educational contexts, several challenges and barriers are listed accordingly. Challenges for the delivery of formative evaluation involve the failure for educators to trust and knowledge formational evaluation, the lack of insight for educators of tests and evaluation approaches, the non-use of formational evaluation by educators in their classrooms and the lack of education for educating evaluators (Aitken, 2000; Al-Kindy, 2009; Berry, 2004; Çimer & Timucin, 2008; The dearth of educators' knowledge of testing and formative evaluation processes can easily be linked to the concern previously expressed by Bennet (2011). In particular, an important obstacle to the conduct of formative assessment is that educators are not sufficiently primed or capable to carry out formative evaluations. An educator 'observes behavior,' formulates hypotheses on the causes of the wrong answer, samples further and revises the initial assumptions' for formative evaluations (Bennet, 2011, p. 17). Training in the way educators can therefore provide the required confidence and knowledge to conduct formative assessment.

While summative and formative evaluation approaches are the same as (tests, quizzes), at the level of implementation, the two approaches differ. Implementing formative evaluations could, in particular, place new requirements on language instructors, because educators should devote additional period and vigor monitoring students' progress for some time and give students timely and good feedback. In general, there appears to be a discrepancy between the affirmative attitudes of educators towards the realization of formative assessment and their authentic training assessment practice. This difference between the observations of instructors and their actual utilizations can be linked to the encounters and obstacles which prevent instructors from carrying out the formative evaluation.

The literature review indicates the general approval of the application of formative evaluation in scholastic perspectives by both lecturers and students. The most significant challenges in carrying out the formative evaluation are linked closely to the lack of preparation and knowledge among the instructors. The removal of these impairing factors could help integrate formative evaluation in didactic educational backgrounds and empower instructors with more vigorous and helpful evaluation implements.

Mohammed (2016) proposes to give instructors special workshops, seminars, and in-service training courses to gain knowledge of the implementation of formative evaluation in their courses in order to speed up the integration of formative evaluation into educational contexts. He also argues that policymakers should prepare the way for formative assessments by recognizing the true value of formative evaluation and its integration into the educational activities of university instructors and students.

#### *2.4.1. EAP assessment in Thailand*

In Thailand, both general and academic English courses are scheduled to attend undergraduates. "The level of competence of the students in their related EAP field is also an important section of the postgraduate examination" (Eslami, 2010, p.15). EAP instruction is mainly based on traditional linguistic teaching approaches, despite the importance of EAP instruction in Thailand. The main aims of Thai EAD courses are to enable students to translate texts from the target language into their mother tongue (Thai), as well as to learn academic vocabulary through vocabulary content (Eslami, 2010). Depending on the final tests and summative tests is also common in Thailand's EAP context (Mazdayasna & Tahririan, 2008). EAP courses include only speech and listening understanding, although all teaching skills can be considered in EAP classes at the University of Walailak (Mazdayasna & Tahririan, 2008). In particular, the EAP Instruction is being implemented in Thailand in a number of challenges. The EAP courses of certain Thai universities have denounced their lack of research foundation and their design in relation to the needs of students (Eslami, Eslami-Rasekh, &



Quiroz, 2007; Eslami, 2010). More prominently, EAP educator programs are not sufficiently effective to formulate EAP teachers at the university level for the teaching EAP. EAP schoolbooks are established on the basis of EAP decision-making by experts in some universities, whereas the needs of the students are not adequately and appropriately taken into account.

In the context of the Thai EAP, traditional approaches, final reviews and summative evaluations for evaluation and evaluation shall be used and practiced. Mainly EAP tests are carried out by EAP instructors or departments. Tests are used as final examinations or mid-term examinations and students use their academic vocabulary, their listening, their speech and translation. The EAP testing in EAP contexts in several respects has to be criticized by Alibakhshi, Ali, and Padiz (2011). The first criticism was that the EAP tests are based on cut-off points and criteria tests, while there are no apparent criteria to specify these cut-offs and scores. The following issue is that the majority of EAP tests design without serious and thorough analyzes of the needs, interests and preferences of Thai students. There are also concerns about the content and validity of these EAP tests. Most of the tests were based on structural linguistics. The usage of new and useful testing and evaluation procedures within the EAP context in Thailand would also be highly emphasized. Generally, some research into the implementation of formative evaluations in the EFL environment in Thailand shows that formative evaluations are a useful tool for students and learning (Fahim & Fahim, 2011; Ghoorchaei, Tavakoli & Nejad Ansari, 2010). Fahim and Fahim (2011) have explored student learning with multiple choices versus real-life questions, for example. The students were two groups of students of the first and second years and they had multi-choice questions and false questions in five sessions. The two formative testing methods did not show any significant difference between learning, whilst the reports revealed that formative evaluations could be a useful tool to evaluate student grammar. The result of formative portfolio evaluation on EFL writing skills of students was examined by Ghoorchaei et al. (2010). The students reported the improvement of student writing skills, e.g. organization, development and vocabulary, with the implementation of formative assessment. EFL authorities and lecturers have been proposed to work towards developing assessment approaches in EFL contexts in Thailand.

Although the majority of formative evaluation studies are related to EFL instruction, there has been a dearth in the research into evaluation and testing in general and formative evaluation in EAP and ESP contexts, and it has exposed that practice of formative assessment is regarded as both beneficial and helpful for EAP training and education. In addition, the major part of the studies carried out on formative evaluation in Thailand investigated the perceptions of students about formative evaluation, while the perception of lecturers remained uninvestigated and overlooked. This study was therefore intended to examine the insights of Thailand EAP instructors on the utilization of formative evaluation in the instructions of the EAP; to study the knowledge of lecturers about executing formative evaluations and their present use of formative evaluation procedures. The following research questions concerning the purposes of this study were therefore raised:

- 1) What are Thai EAP instructors' attitudes towards the inclusion of formative evaluation into EAP instruction?
- 2) What are Thai EAP instructors' perceptions of barriers and challenges to incorporating formative evaluation into EAP instruction?
- 3) What are the Thai EAP instructors' insights about their knowledge of formative evaluation implementation?
- 4) What is the current formal evaluation practices of Thai EAP instructor?

### 3. The Study Design

This research aims to discuss Thailand's instructors' perceptions on the implementation of formative evaluations in the EAP guidance. A mixed-method design was employed for the specific purposes of this study, including questionnaires and semistructured interviews by Likert-item. In order to conduct a methodological triangulation, follow-up interviews continued. In order to triangulate the results, the interviews and the questionnaires were both focused.

#### 3.1. Participants

50 EAP lecturers were present in this study for a convenience sample. The average age of the participants was 29.5. Various nationalities, including British, American, and Iranian, Philippines, Indonesians, Vietnamese, Indians, Ghana and Thai citizens were chosen for the lecturers involved. Although the lecturers have to be aware of the formative evaluation before administering the questionnaires, they have been interacted with their knowledge of the formative evaluation. In order to improve the validity of the response of participants, the sample was produced only by EAP lecturers who knew the concept of formative evaluation. The sample consisted of 35 male EAP lecturers and 15 female EAP lecturers, who taught for over three years. In the interview phase, the same 50 participants participated.

#### 3.2. Instruments and Analysis

A questionnaire of Likert items on four-point was developed in order to observe the perception of English for Academic Purposes (EAP) teachers in Thailand-Southeast Asia. Since the researcher did not have a well-designed questionnaire to use in this study, he developed a self-constructed questionnaire for this study. The articles have been developed using a critical and detailed analysis of literature and application for EAP/EFL instructions on formative assessment (e.g., Baines, Blatchford & Chowne, 2007; Black, 2005; Carreira, 2012; Garrison & Ehringhaus, 2007; Huhta, 2010; Lee, 2011; Shepard, 2005a; Shepard, 2005b). The questionnaire consisted of four sections including 1) EAP attitudes towards EAP formational evaluation instructors (9 items), Cronbach alpha = 0.92, 2) EAP instruction training barriers (8 items, Alpha 0.88 Cronbach), 3) EAP instructor knowledge (6 points, Cronbach alpha = 0.80), 4) current use of for training (6 items, Alpha 0.80 Cronbach, 4) (11 items). Five senior professors of applied linguistics, who are specialists in the field of improvement and recommendations, have been examined in the questionnaire.

The interview was the second tool. The EAP instructor was invited to partake in the interview study after ensuring that the questions in the interviews remain content-valid. In order to triangulate information collected, the interview questions were similar to the questionnaire sections. The interviews used the succeeding questions:

1. What do you ponder about using the EAP instruction formative evaluation?
2. What are the potential barriers or challenges to EAP instructions with the use of the formative evaluation?
3. What do you think in your EAP instruction about your level of understanding to use or to conduct formative valuation?
4. What kind of testing or evaluation methods do you use in your EAP assessment?

The effects of questionnaires are in percentages: in the examination of each item, the mean and standard difference are included. In order to analyze all data on the questionnaire, SPSS version 22

was used. The results of the interview were analyzed by analysis of content. The often identified and reported themes support the findings from the survey.

## 4. Findings

### 4.1. Attitudes of EAP instructors toward formative assessment of EAP

Centered on the finding of Table 1, the positions of the EAP instructors towards the conduct of formative evaluations on EAP courses (total mean=2,98) seem to be adapted. In particular, for several reasons, the EAP instructors saw the introduction of formative evaluation as beneficial. Explicitly, the teachers agreed or strongly agreed with some advantages of formative evaluation, such as "EAP Evaluation Improves Student Education," "implementing formative evaluation enhances student motivation to learn."

"Informational assessment helps EAP instructors improve their instructions," means "implementing the formative assessment of student-centered approach to EAP teachings." It offers quality feedback to EAP student through the formal assessment, formative evaluation helps to improve EAP prospectus, formative evaluation in EAP changes the focus to learning rather than its focus on its learning process.

The findings of Table 1 show that the lecturers consider it beneficial and useful to implement a formative evaluation within Thailand's EFL context. The majority of reasons why formative evaluation should be carried out in the EFL directive were positively perceived.

**Table 1.** Attitudes of EAP instructors toward formative assessment of EAP

	1. Strongly disagree	2 Disagree	3. Agree	4. Strongly agree	Mean	SD
Formative assessment in EAP						
Instruction improves EAP Students' learning	0	3.6	62.5	33.9	3.30	0.54
The implementation of formative Assessment improves students' Motivation to learn academic English	1.8	8.9	46.4	42.8	3.3	0.72
The implementation of formative Assessment creates a student-centered Approach to EAP teaching	1.8	5.4	69.6	23.2	3.14	0.59
Formative assessment would Help EAP instructors improve their Instruction	3.6	14.3	50	32.1	3.1	0.78
Quality feedback can be Provided for EAP students Through formative assessment	5.4	14.3	48.2	32.1	3.08	0.82
Formative assessment can inform	1.8	8.9	73.2	16.1	3.03	0.57



The EAP curriculum						
Formative assessment in EAP						
Shifts the focus on learning	3.6	23.2	57.1	16.1	2.85	0.73
Process rather than its product						
The implementation of						
Formative assessment for	14.3	17.9	42.8	25	2.79	0.98
EAP instruction is easy						
The implementation of formative						
Assessment is time-saving	21.4	44.6	26.8	7.1	2.2	0.85

EAP (85.8%) instructors maintained a positive attitude in interviewing for integrating formative assessment into EAP instruction. They were persuaded to improve education and learning in their formative assessment of EAP. The EAP instructors believe it will afford more information on the wisdom and the flaws and powers of students by including a formative assessment. Some teachers (55.5%) have also said that by carrying out a formative evaluation, they can adjust their instructions and that there are no EAP students. The teachers also say that they can offer timely, ongoing opinion to students, thereby improving the knowledge of EAP students. The report indicates that students would have fewer stresses and fears because they did not simply use formative assessment to determine their overall score in the final test.

I believe that students should be evaluated regularly in EAP courses. This is necessary because it improves the teaching and learning of teachers. (Lecturer 15)

I believe it is not a practical approach to evaluate students through final exams. I often see that the final exam mark and the level of their class contribution do not match, whereas we (EAP instructors) typically see the final examination score as indicator of the overall student participation.

Performance. Performance. This allows us to make fair judgments on their performance by evaluating students on a regular basis. (Lecturer 25)

By analyzing the results of questionnaires and interviews the outcomes of the discussions can be declared, as the information attained from both instruments indicates that the EFL instructors take an affirmative approach to conducting a formative evaluation. The findings echoed in both questionnaires and interviews included improved learning, opportunities to provide quality and timely feedback, reduced student anxiety and increased motivation.

#### 4.2. Obstacles to Formative Assessment Implementation in EAP Instructions

The EAP teachers have pointed out several challenges to the use of formative valuation in EAP courses, as shown in Table 2. The lecturer has agreed to or strongly agreed on some of the challenges, such as the lack of support by the EAP authorities for the training instructors on EAP courses, "lack of time to carry out formative evaluation in EAP courses," "lack of time to implement formative assessment in EAP courses"

The EFL lecturer did not, however, agree with certain challenges in carrying out formative evaluations such as "the energy consumption for the implementation of formative evaluations in EAP courses," "the student's disinterest with the use of formative evaluation in EAP courses," "the inefficiency of the use of formative evaluations for the EAP instruction."

The results display that, while the lecturers are conscious of certain restrictions in formational evaluation, they do not agree with all the constraints mentioned in preceding literature.

**Table 2.** Hindrances to Formative Assessment Application in EAP Instructions

	1. Strongly disagree	2. Disagree	3. Agree	4. Strongly agree	Mean	SD
Impossibility of implementing Formative assessment because of The rigid EAP curriculum	3.6	9.9	32.9	53.6	3.39	0.78
Lack of support from the EAP authorities for EAP instructors to use formative assessment in EAP course	6.4	10.7	34.7	48.2	3.27	0.85
Lack of time to implement Formative assessment in EAP courses	1.8	15.1	43.8	39.3	3.19	0.74
EAP instructors' lack of knowledge About the implementation of Formative assessment	7.2	12.4	55.4	25	2.98	0.82
Department's lack of support To use formative assessment in EAP courses	14.3	21.4	37.5	26.8	2.78	1
The consumption of much energy To implement formative assessment In EAP course	28.7	30.3	23.2	17.8	2.30	1.08
Students' disinterest in the use Of formative assessment in EAP courses	33.1	40.1	21.4	5.4	2.04	1
Ineffectiveness of the use of Formative assessment for EAP instruction	39.4	26.7	30.4	3.5	1.99	0.93

In interviews, the demands of the EAP curriculum in Thailand are not matched with the practice of formative evaluation in EAP courses. The lecturers (83.1%) also stated that they know very little roughly about formative evaluation concepts and practices. As shown by the survey (76.9%) there was little time for lecturers to engage in the continuous evaluation of the EAP students and there are very intense EAP courses. Some EAP instructors (50.1%) too claimed that EAP students may not be

prepared to conduct formative evaluation, and require some training as to how they can be involved in the use of formative evaluation.

Changes to the EAP evaluation depend on changes to the curriculum of the EAP. Currently, I do not believe that the Thailand EAP program has the flexibility necessary to conduct the formation evaluation. I therefore think that, first, we should evaluate our EAP program and then attempt to alter our approach to valuation. (Lecturer 45)

In fact, in EAP classes, EAP instructors often face a time strain. Then I think it's a bit difficult to continuously evaluate the effort of the students. (Lecturer 8)

It can be maintained that the lectures trust that the execution of the formative assessment is not deprived of challenges, based on the triangulated facts from the questionnaires and interviews. The findings reported both in the questionnaires and interviews showed the lecturers lacking understanding of formative evaluation and deficiency of time to conduct a formative evaluation.

#### 4.3. EAP instructors' understanding of how to use formative assessment in EAP instruction

It seems that the teachers have inadequate information of how to apply and apply formative evaluations based on the figures in Table 3 (total mean = 2.28). In particular, teachers were not "able to prepare EAP students on training evaluations;" "capability to adapt your teaching techniques and procedures to the formative evaluation requirements;" "knowledge of EAP Testing Principles and theories;" "knowledge of design of EAP tests;"

**Table 3.** EAP instructors' understanding of how to use formative assessment

	Not Proficient	A little Proficient	Fairly Proficient	Mean	SD
The ability to prepare EAP students For the implementation of formative	5.4	37.5	42.8	14.3	2.66 0.78
The ability to adapt your teaching Techniques and procedures to the Requirements of formative assessment	12.5	41.1	28.7	17.7	2.51 0.91
Knowledge of EAP testing principles and theories	21.4	33.8	30.5	14.3	2.37 0.97
Knowledge of designing EAP test	14.3	51.8	25	8.9	2.29 0.82
Knowledge of theoretical principles and issues of formative assessment	35.7	32.1	28.6	3.6	2 0.89
Knowledge of designing test for The purpose of formative assessment	46.3	26.7	19.7	7.3	1.88 0.93

The results of the interviews confirmed the results of the surveys concerning the knowledge of formational evaluations used by EAP lecturers. Most lecturers (94.5%) said they did not know how to plan formative EAP tests. They (91,2%) said they have inadequate familiarity of formative evaluation and how to plan tests and instruments to carry out formative evaluations.

*I know very little about formative evaluation, unfortunately. I know a little about its theories and rationales, of course, but I can't use it under real-world conditions of instruction and testing. (Lecturer 30)*

Based on the survey results and the interviews, the readers had little knowledge of the execution of the formative evaluation. In particular, lecturers did not know how to plan and carry out formative assessments.

#### 4.4. Current use of formative assessment in EAP courses

Table 4 shows that the final exam is the key tool for the EAP evaluation. It is clear that EAP teachers are not often used in other formative assessment tools for evaluating their students. Most of the readers correctly did not make use of "comments" or "checklists," "oral presentation," "triples/tests periodically," "classroom tasks." In contrast, most EFL lecturers used their only tool for evaluating EFL courses to use their "final exams."

**Table 4.** Current use of formative assessment in EAP courses

	Use	Non-use
Observations	37.7	64.3
Checklists	0	100
Oral presentations	5.6	94.4
Essays/Written tasks	25.2	74.8
Final exams	97.2	2.8
Periodic quizzes/tests	7.4	92.6
Portfolios	0	100
Student self-assessment	13.7	86.3
Classroom tasks	38.5	61.5
Peer-assessment	6.6	93.4
Homework assignments	14.5	85.5

The interviews exposed that only summative assessment is applied by giving the last assessment, as shown in the survey study. Most of lecturers said they only use the final exam to assess their students.

## 5. Discussion and conclusion

Overall, the results demonstrate that the use of formative evaluation for EAP teaching is considered as constructive and useful by the EAP lecturers. In the employment of the formative evaluation in the EAP Instruction, the EAP instructors may perform a significant role. The optimistic attitude of EFL teachers could display great trust in the real use of formative evaluation in the EAP instruction. The results from the previous study are consistent with EAP teachers' positive attitudes towards formative evaluation (for example, Chevalier, 2011; Çimer and Timucin, 2008; Lee, 2011; Sach, 2012).). The results of this study are consistent with the positive attitudes of teachers towards formational evaluation. The advantages of the formational assessment for EAP and EAP learners were accurately perceived by the EAP lecturers. The results could lead to the EAP instructors being aware of the merits and benefits of formational evaluation and facilitating the inclusion of formative evaluation in EAP evaluation. However, after its actual implementation in the EAP instruction, the analysis of EAP instructors' attitudes to formative evaluation have remained a research area until now. The result leads us to conclude that formative evaluation in the EAP Directive would be useful since it was regarded by the EAP lecturers as useful and efficient. Using formative evaluation, EAP teachers can create positive attitudes among their students with regard to the use of different formative evaluation formats. The EFL teacher is obviously the most influential person to inspire and promote the use of formational evaluation by EAP students. I suggest that additional examination can also emphasis on EAP students' insights of the use of formative evaluation.

Even if the EAP instructors have adapted their positives to the implementation of the formative evaluation in EAP instructions, some impediments could prevent EAP instructors from incorporating formative evaluation into EAP instructions. There are also impediments. The limiting EAP curriculum, which limits EAP instructors, was one of the major barriers. In order for teaching and other teaching and testing methods to be implemented, the curriculum should be resilient, subsequently EAP is primarily based upon learner-oriented views of teaching. The inclusion of formative evaluation in EAP training will definitely encourage curriculum flexibility. Like that, the lack of support from EAP authorities and departments for the implementation of the formative assessment by EAP instructors or motivated them to do so. EAP instructors should be encouraged by EAP authorities and department heads, including formative evaluation, to use learners-centered approaches. Time deficiency is another key impediment to the use of formative assessments by the EAP instructors. More time and effort must be used for successful and efficient implementation because of continuous implementation of formative evaluation. EAP providers can reform the EAP curriculum to allow EAP students and trainers to include in their learning and teaching experiences the development of assessment approaches. EAP instructors themselves would not be able, if not supported by the other EAP stakeholders, to implement changes to the curriculum. Moreover, EAP students should be ready to admit formative evaluation as a fragment of their learning and to conjoin effectively with their teachers to carry out formative evaluations. Formative evaluation certainly cannot be used unless the lecturers and students cooperate actively (Bennett, 2011; Lee, 2011).

The findings show that the mainstream of the lecturers had inadequate familiarity about the use and progress of formative tests in the EAP instruction as regards their knowledge and capacity to carry out the formative evaluation. The lecturers also said that they lacked the necessary understanding about the evolution of EAP tests and evaluations. This dearth of knowledge and expertise is linked, both theoretically and practically, to how formal evaluation is used and developed. Bennett (2011) believes that a thorough and thorough knowledge by lecturers is needed to carry out the formative evaluation. Adequate time and support for educators should be provided in order to prepare them for the requests for formative evaluation. In addition, the instructors should have adequate testing and evaluation



materials available to enable them to carry out the formative evaluation. Specific workshops and conferences can be held in EAP contexts where lecturers are able to acquire the knowledge and expertise required to carry out formative evaluations. The training of teaching education/training programs can also include the use of formative assessment. Both the quality of teaching and learning in EAP instruction can be proved by these training measures.

Furthermore, the outcomes show that the foremost evaluation approach in Thailand is a summative evaluation. The use of final assessments and Summative tests would not help EAP learners and learners, as Dudley-Evans and St. John (1998) claim. The application of the summative evaluation can be constructive; it is united with the formative types of evaluation. The nonexistence of formal evaluation in the EAP instruction could be linked to the previously mentioned impairment factors. This removal of these obstacles could facilitate the integration in Thailand and other countries of formative assessment in the EAP curriculum. Future research would help developers of EAP curricula detect other significant obstacles in other EAP contexts to formal evaluation. Evaluation is apparently a non-researched area in EAP, and this issue should be addressed more closely both in Thailand *and elsewhere*.

## 6. Implications and Recommendations

The effects of this study on various EAP stakeholders in Thailand are several. For the successful development of EAP, it is important that facts from various EAP stakeholders, comprising teachers, learners, materials developers, curriculum designers etc. is collected. The EAP Instructors must constantly pay attention to the students, but throughout the classroom they are directly linked to the students and may well be aware of the needs, needs and interest of the students. Based on the results of this study, I want to make several suggestions:

(1) The testing and evaluation should be more concerned with EAP/EFL teacher education/training programs. In Thailand the testing and evaluation of EAPs are not, it seems, a serious problem and traditional and ineffective evaluation practices. EAP training/training instructor programs can comprise EAP testing and evaluation in their instructive fields, so that EAP instructors obtain critical skilled skills, including formative evaluation, to progress and apply various kinds of testing in addition to evaluation procedures.

2) I propose that EAP instructors under the supervision of experts participate in systematic and continuous test projects. In order for the formative evaluation to be successful, EAP instructors must be capable to progress different types of tests and evaluation tools to evaluate their students. At present, there appears to be a lack of acquaintance on how to progress and use various challenging testing and evaluation instruments in Walailak University School of Languages and General Education.

3) Instead I propose that EAP experts provide EAP instructors with various kinds of test components to carry out the formative evaluation. EAP testing experts can be invited and implement wants assessment projects grounded on which various tests with different formats can be developed and designed and used by EAP instructors for formative assessment.

4) Given that EAP students must be autonomous in carrying out the formative evaluation, I put forward that EAP instructors try to establish sovereignty and responsibility for EAP students. If EAP instructors craft an atmosphere for students in your EAP courses, it will become much more feasible and plausible to carry out the formative assessment.

5) In order to carry out the formative evaluation, the English Department and EAP instructors need more cooperation. Certainly, it takes time and energy to perform formative evaluation and this can be extremely challenging for EAP instructors. In future, students and lecturers will welcome formative assessment if EAP Instructors and the English Department support one another in conducting formative assessments.

#### Proposals for further investigation

Although current research has examined Thailand's EAP instructors' perceptions of the use of formative assessment in EAP guidance, more research is needed to provide insights into the challenges and barriers to the implementation of formative evaluation in EAP guidelines. Because EAP students' role is significant in conducting formative evaluations, it is critical to investigate their perceptions and attitudes toward formative evaluation as well as problems associated with its implementation in EAP instruction. Furthermore, the attitudes and insights of EAP experts and operators may afford valued information on how to pave the way for the EAP instruction to implement a formative assessment.

Furthermore, forthcoming examination should concentrate on instructors' and students' real practices, as well as the usage of formative evaluation in EAP instructions. Certainly, what doctors and students observe may differ from their genuine practices and applications. Furthermore, during the actual implementation of the formative assessments in the EAP course, more critical obstacles and challenges may be identified. These barriers are not noticed when educators and students report their insights of a formative evaluation preceding to their actual behavior.

Forthcoming research should look into the use of additional assessment methods, such as another assessment and vibrant evaluation, in EAP instructions. Each evaluation procedure would provide advantages and aids to a fair and comprehensive assessment of EAP students.

## 7. Limitation

The research was conducted in a limited number of ways. Initially, the researcher was unavailable to EAP authorities and providers. The integration of EAP authorities' and course designers' perceptions and beliefs about formative evaluation implementation could provide valuable insights into challenges and barriers. Moreover, because EAP students may not have had the necessary information and consciousness to conduct formal evaluations, they were not included in the study. The sample size was reduced because the researcher wanted to embrace people who were aware with the concept of formative evaluation. The participant's responsiveness is encouraged by decreasing the sample size. Larger samples, on the other hand, would provide more detailed information on the formative assessment's implementation in the EAP instructions.

## 8. Declaration

The author declares there is no conflict of interest associated with this research.

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