

Implementation of Assessment for Learning in Online EFL Writing Class: A Case of Novice Undergraduate Teachers

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Received 15/12/2021	Abstract Within the burgeoning literature on online formative assessment mediated by particular ICT tools in writing courses, the scrutiny focusing on the enactment of assessment for learning (AfL) in the similar context has been inadequately addressed. This current study, therefore, is in an attempt to fill this empirical void by exploring how EFL teachers implement the AfL on their writing courses. This narrative case study recruited three Indonesian EFL undergraduate teachers. They were invited in a series of interviews mediated by WhatsApp video call and voice notes. Nested in the AfL framework, proposed by Lee (2007b), the participants' stories were analyzed thematically. The findings indicate that, in line with AfL framework, the teachers were able to enhance planning and pre-assessment instruction,
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<p>share learning goals with students, use feedback forms in feedback delivery, apply self- and peer-assessment, and relate assessment with the pedagogical instruction. Albeit the perceived positive practices, the teachers also experienced some hurdles to engage students in the multiple drafting and sustained reflective process. Some implications and future research direction are also discussed accordingly.</p>
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Introduction

Teachers have such a prominent role in making assessments meaningful to students' learning. To appraise students' abilities appropriately to result in better learning, Green (2018) suggested that teachers conduct an assessment for learning (henceforth, AfL). He termed AfL as an umbrella for a concept that seeks to harness assessment in the service of learning using formative assessment data to guide better teaching and learning processes. Given the importance of assessment for students' learning in today's classrooms, the necessity for AfL is now widely recognized and is becoming the focus of researchers' attention (Alderson et al., 2017; Dann, 2014; Lee, 2007b; Zou et al., 2021). In this respect, teachers are expected to optimize the potential use of assessment while tracking students' learning progress. AfL helps teachers in providing effective teaching and learning and concerns with the development of effective learning, which is something that teachers and students are jointly accountable for. AfL emphasizes the learners' involvement in assessment (Assessment Reform Group, 2002). By engaging students in the assessment process, it is hoped that they would possess better awareness toward better learning either in face-to-face or online learning milieu.

The body of knowledge on AfL in writing studies has been acknowledged by some researchers (e.g. Alshakhi, 2018; R. Lam, 2018; Lee & Coniam, 2013; Wang et al., 2020; Zou et al., 2021). Zou et al. (2021) mainly centred the study on teachers' engagement in online formative writing assessment. Meanwhile, Alshakhi (2018) and Wang et al. (2020) focused on teachers' AfL practice in writing class where they found identical results; teachers believe that the importance of AfL enable students to assume responsibility for writing assessment and AfL was more significant than evaluation of learning procedures; however, the contrary

was discovered in their practice. The other studies mainly discussed AfL special place in portfolio assessment (Alam & Aktar, 2019; R. Lam, 2018) and the impact of AfL enactment on students motivation and writing performance (Lee & Coniam, 2013). While AfL has been promoted for more than a decade, it is unclear how teachers may use it as an assessment tool in online writing courses to enhance student learning (Lee et al., 2019; Ridhwan, 2017).

Recently, the nature of online learning has been shown to have a significant influence on the process of assessing students' work (Fitriyah & Jannah, 2021; Mohamadi, 2018). During online assessment, authentic results reflecting student abilities is still expected to occur (Spivey & McMillan, 2014). Thus, the teacher's strategy to provide the AfL in writing assessment during online learning is compelling to investigate. Likewise, research on the advancement of ICT and online formative assessment has provided new opportunities for writing teachers (Williams & Beam, 2019). Researchers have mainly studied technological elements of ICT tools appropriate for formative assessment and their effect on students' writing, such as Google Docs, automated writing evaluation (Nurhayati, 2020; Zhang & Hyland, 2018), and Microsoft Word tools (Lee, 2017). Those studies have demonstrated the usefulness of online formative assessment in improving writing instruction and learning. However, they have neglected the role of teachers—the essential actors putting online AfL concepts into practice (Mimirinis, 2019). There has not been much research on how L2 writing teachers implement AfL in an online teaching context. This information is critical because assessing writing is a significant but challenging component of L2 instructors' work (Lee, 2020). Moreover, with the occurrence of Covid-19 pandemic forcing the sudden shift to online learning, the concern towards AfL on online writing courses is becoming more prevalent.

Against this backdrop, the teachers' story on online writing assessment employing AfL perspective in practice will be helpful for future teaching and evaluation of English writing classes in online learning milieu. Due to the continuing uncertainty of the pandemic situation, different modes of learning have been proposed, such as hybrid or blended learning, which combines online and offline learning. As a result, it is reasonable to assume that online learning will not be fully phased out, but will instead be used as a preventive measure or even to boost autonomous learning (Fitria, 2020; Hosseinpour et al., 2019; Zou et al., 2021). Ultimately, teachers' experiences have triggered our desire to undertake

this study and confirmed what Clandinin & Connelly (1998) claim that "experience is ... the starting point and key term for all social science inquiry" (p.153). Thus, this study aims to reveal the stories of novice undergraduate writing teachers in assessing writing by answering this research question: How do undergraduate writing teachers implement AfL in writing assessment during the online learning process?

Literature Review

Assessment for Learning in EFL Writing

In general, classroom assessment covers both assessment of learning (AoL) and assessment for learning (AfL), which commonly refer to summative and formative assessment. AoL is largely responsible for reporting and administration, as well as assessing students' performance and development from the intended learning aims and objectives (Green, 2018). As a result, scores play an essential part in AoL. AfL, on the other hand, focuses on improving learning and teaching (Alderson et al., 2017); it serves as a diagnostic tool by providing descriptive feedback (rather than scores) to promote learning (by identifying students' strengths and weaknesses); and the assessment data gathered can also help teachers improve their teaching (Selvaraj & Azman, 2020). The concept of AfL has a plethora of meanings in the literature. Assessment for learning is defined as any assessment whose primary goal is to promote students' learning (Black et al., 2004; Black & Wiliam, 2012). An assessment activity can aid learning if it offers information that can be utilized by the teachers as well as the students as feedback and a means of reflection for better teaching or learning practices. Relatedly, the Assessment Reform Group (2002) emphasizes the importance of learners' participation in the assessment process, which allows learners to build their capacity to control their own learning (e.g., self-assessment) and learn how to learn.

The ability of teachers as the designers of assessment procedures and the users of assessment information to generate appropriate evidence and to inform their future pedagogical practices is critical to the success of AfL in language classrooms (Green, 2018). In AfL, feedback, in particular, is important. In the context of teaching writing, teachers' effort in providing feedback was evident in improving students' writing quality (Zhang & Hyland, 2018). By employing AfL principles proposed by Lee (2007b) in writing assessment, teachers could reflect how they apply these principles

in their assessing practice. It is expected that all tasks inherent in teaching writing adequately represent the principles of AfL accordingly.

Principles of Assessment for Learning in EFL Writing

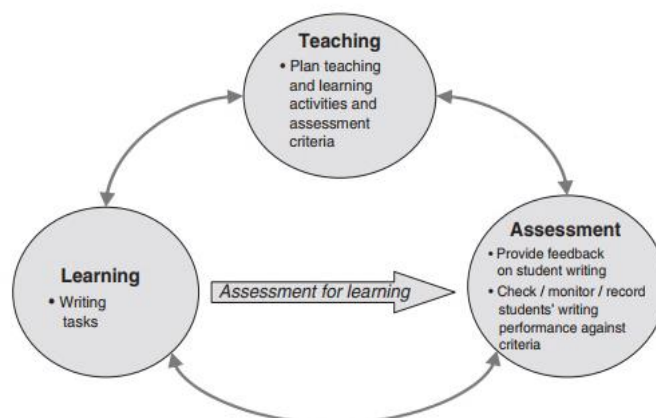
To attract attention to AfL's principles and practices following Black & Wiliam's (1998) research on its beneficial impact, the Assessment Reform Group (ARG) in the United Kingdom developed ten principles for AfL (ARG, 2002). The 10 principles emphasize the importance of assessment in facilitating learning (Berry & Adamson, 2011). By drawing on the ARG's 10 core guiding principles, Lee (2007b) developed five principles for AfL in the EFL writing assessment, namely; 1) sharing learning goals with students, 2) helping students understand the standards they are working towards, 3) involving students in assessment, 4) providing feedback that helps, and 5) creating a classroom culture where mistakes are a natural part of learning and where everyone can improve. Teachers must comprehend and use AfL as a holistic concept and capture the spirit of AfL in increasing students' autonomy, i.e., the ability to take responsibility of their own learning, for AfL to reach its full potential (Chong, 2018; Wang, 2020). In this sense, teachers in L2 writing classes should encourage students to learn how to learn by encouraging metacognition in goal-setting, self-monitoring, and self-regulation. When teachers apply AfL principles in the classroom, they should combine teaching, learning, and assessment. As such, AfL practice neither begins or ends with an assessment-centred approach. Rather, instructors should begin by considering the teaching, learning, and assessment of writing (see Figure 1). Continuous assessments are necessary because teachers should constantly use assessment data to fine-tune their instruction, promote student learning, and support preparation for the next instructional session. Thus, AfL establishes a symbiotic link between teaching, learning, and assessment, with assessment being an intrinsic part of teaching and learning (Lee, 2007b).

Translating Lee (2007b) concepts into reality in the writing classroom necessitates the adoption of various AfL-oriented tactics in each of the three writing phases; i.e., pre-writing, during-writing and post-writing. The practices involve both teachers and students. To begin, teachers should assist students in developing a clear knowledge of the learning objectives and success criteria that will be utilized to evaluate students' progress. Teachers may assist students to acquire metacognitive

awareness and applicable metalanguage by using this strategy with them. Students create reasonable objectives in the pre-writing stage so that they know what they are working toward (i.e., where they are going). Applying the second principle of AfL, helping students understand the standards they are working towards, students may define their own objectives with the use of tools like goal sheets, rubrics, and feedback forms, providing them a sense of direction and a map of where they should be heading in the process. In this phase, the rubrics and feedback forms provide students with a clear understanding of the evaluation criteria, allowing them to progress toward the requisite standards (Mak & Lee, 2014).

Figure 1

Interrelationships Between Teaching, Learning and Assessment in Writing Course (Lee, 2007)



In the during-writing phase, the third and fourth principles are applied. In writing assessment, feedback is the heart playing fundamental role in the praxis (Parr & Timperley, 2010). It is important to offer students with constructive and digestible comments so that they could identify their strengths and shortcomings and utilise the provided input to achieve their goals. Studies (i.e., Lam, 2021; Lee, 2007a; Lee et al., 2019; Selvaraj & Azman, 2020; Zhang & Hyland, 2018) have proven that oral and written feedback play a major role in improving students' writing, so that students' writing outcomes can continue to improve. In this stage, focused corrective feedback (CF), highlighting small number of fault types in a piece of writing, plays a significant role. At the same token, researchers (such as

Sachs & Polio, 2007) asserted that feedback would be ineffective if students are unable to grasp and engage with it. In practice, teachers might include students in self- and peer evaluation to help students understand about their own development.

For both teachers and students, the assessment data may be used to inform their performance in the post writing stage. Teachers can, for example, provide explanations for the most typical mistakes students commonly make when writing. Student error logs can assist them in prioritizing and correcting the faults that they are aware of, affording them opportunity to learn from their mistakes and keep track of their progress (Mak & Lee, 2014). Students can have a better understanding of what they have learned and what they have not by using reflection papers. In conclusion, both students and instructors should be completely aware of what and when they will teach and learn, how their teaching and learning will be evaluated, and how evaluation may have a significant impact on learning. Thus, when this instructional idea is adapted, presented, and developed in L2 writing pedagogical settings, the roles of both students and teachers become apparent, as shown in Figure 2.

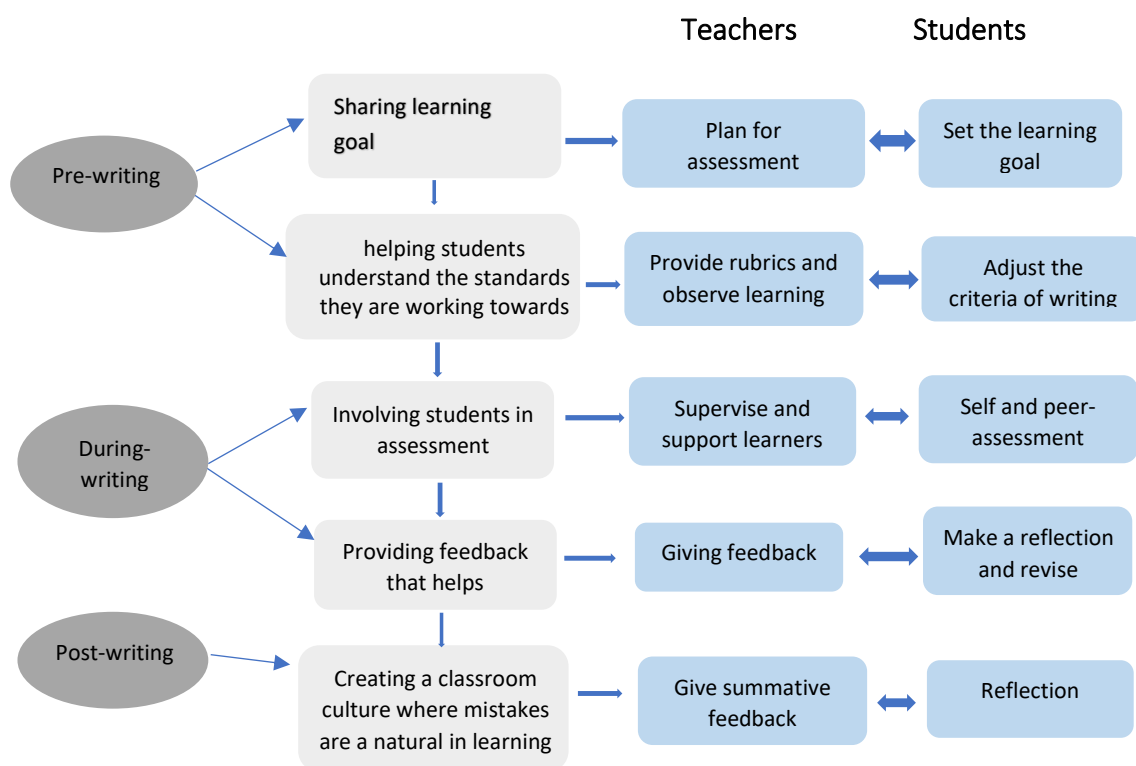
To summarize, AfL argues for a tighter connection between evaluation, instruction, and student learning. Teachers may use the input they get from students to improve their instruction and better meet the needs of their students. Because AfL can help students learn more effectively and "reap the greatest benefits for learners" (Lee, 2007b, p. 200), it should be used in the writing classroom to promote students' learning attainment.

AfL principles have been applied in writing classroom practices in various ways. Teachers sought to incorporate AfL principles into EFL writing teaching by offering instructional scaffolding based on genre to assist students in comprehending assessment criteria and establishing learning objectives for the targeted genres (Lee & Coniam, 2013). This study gathered data from a variety of sources, including questionnaires, interviews, pre- and post-tests, and observation of lessons. It examined the adoption of AfL for EFL writing within a Hong Kong examination-driven AoL system, its potential influence on students' motivation and writing performance, and the elements that may assist or impede its acceptance. The result revealed that while teachers implemented AfL concepts, students' engagement in multiple drafting and peer evaluation on a timely manner was low. Moreover, they still need to adhere to conventional methods that demanded close attention to errors and summative scores.

The findings on students' motivation were varied, implying a conflict between new and traditional assessment approaches. Finally, pre- and post-tests suggested that students' writing skills improved, with teachers feeling that AFL played a contribution. Respectively, Lee and Coniam (2013) added that teachers should be able to offer focused descriptive feedback and regularly involve students in peer/self-assessment, self-monitoring, and reflection. Other research, Lam (2016), reviews the studies to which assessment as learning (AaL), a form of alternative assessment to high-stakes testing, suggests that it can increase teacher competency in teaching writing, student enthusiasm for learning, and text development. AfL followed by AaL refers to students' continual cognitive and metacognitive growth as they self-evaluate their writing abilities in a portfolio-based context. These studies lead to the discussion on what AfL mainly proposes as it is useful for writing course.

Figure 2

Teachers and Students' Activities During the Implementation of AfL



Assessment for Learning in Online EFL Writing Classroom

As a consequence of online learning, online language assessment has had a significant impact on both teachers and students (Fitriyah & Jannah, 2021; Mimirinis, 2019). Moreover, Mohamadi (2018) explained that online formative assessment, by integrating engaging technologies and methods with appropriate assessment tools, was a successful way to enhance student's writing performance. Recently, Zou et al. (2021) revealed three types of engagement that instructors participate in during online learning in the context of formative assessment in the writing class and the elements that impact it. The engagement types were classified as disturbing, auxiliary, and essential in the online EFL writing environment in China. These engagements were reflected by their various emotional, physical-cognitive, and social investments in the formative use of ICT in writing evaluation. In this fashion, teachers' attitudes, digital literacy, and teaching experiences were the primary influences on this customized engagement, mediated by relevant contextual and technical variables.

The abovementioned studies indicate that AfL in online writing class offers numerous promises for enhancing learning and teaching (Amirian et al., 2016; Zou et al., 2021). AfL, either offline or online, requires a rethinking of assessment design and practice in the writing classroom. Teacher could connect AfL to pedagogy, classroom practices, and processes. AfL in online writing is said to still strengthen the relationship between learning, teaching, and assessment by communicating learning goals with students, actively involving them, and engaging them in self- and peer assessment (Assessment Reform Group, 2002). Given the detrimental impact of traditional writing assessment techniques and the promise of AfL, there is a need to reconsider the role of assessment in the online writing classroom and maximize its potential for improving learning and teaching — an area that has received little attention.

Method

This research attempted to uncover the story behind EFL writing teachers' practices in applying AfL in their online classes to the point that they became the students' favourite lecturers in four types of teachers' competencies. As a result, the case study method was seen to be the most suitable. Because each undergraduate writing teacher has a unique

experience, this case study technique is paired with a narrative strategy to gather data. Case studies can be coupled with narrative inquiry to dig out data (Sunday et al., 2020). The case is that the participants become the students' favourite in a writing course among seven writing lecturers. This research served as an instance in illustrating how the case study recognized the various layers to the environment within which the process of implementing AfL was developed by combining a case study and narrative method. In an online writing course, the embedded narrative inquiry helped to clarify emergent learning from the AfL. It is utilized to go further into these topics without resorting to organized interviews.

To get a better understanding of language education from people who teach and learn it, narrative inquiry has been adopted (Barkhuizen et al., 2013; Pavlenko, 2002). It is a technique for eliciting information on what teachers know, what they do with their knowledge, and the sociocultural contexts in which they teach. Additionally, Clandinin (2013) stated that story enables us to observe the personal and social intersect in teachers' lives and how these experiences are shaped by the larger social and institutional narratives in which they live. The teachers' narratives were analysed using a narrative-thematic analytical technique (Barkhuizen, 2014) to ascertain how it was experienced individually and collectively by instructors within the sociocultural environment. We were searching for instances (both observed and reported) of achievement, disagreement, or tension, the emotions elicited by these settings, and teacher responses. Subsequently, the study also followed the procedure of narrative inquiry proposed by Creswell (2012), namely; determining narrative research to answer the question of the study, accessing and recruiting participants, generating stories from participants, collecting information of the context of the stories, transcribing participants' stories, retelling the stories, and analysing participants stories into theme.

Context and Participants

Three writing instructors from the English Education Department at a state Islamic university in Kediri, East Java, Indonesia were the participants of this case narrative inquiry-based research. They were Fita, Mala, and Dina (Pseudonyms), and their teaching profile is given in Table 1. They received a high rating from students in EDOM (*evaluasi dosen oleh mahasiswa* or evaluation of lecturers by the students). The data from EDOM was obtained from the previous two semesters, during which the

teaching and learning processes were fully online. These three teachers are referred to as millennial instructors due to their familiarity and ease with technology. Millennials are referred to as "Digital Natives"; they are surrounded by digital technologies in their everyday lives, which has altered their way of thinking (Prensky, 2001). The background and setting were online writing classes, semester III's Sentence Paragraph Writing and semester IV's Academic Writing.

Table 1

Participants' Teaching Profile

Name (pseudonyms)	Age	Teaching writing experience	Teaching platform	Educational background
Fita	35 years old	3 years	Google classroom Google meet WhatsApp University LMS Socrative	Master in ELT
Mala	32 years old	2 years	University LMS WhatsApp Google meet Google form	Master of ELT
Dina	36 years old	2 years	Google classroom Google Docs Zoom, WhatsApp University LMS	Master of ELT

Narrative Tool and Data Collection

Narrative data were collected from the interview with the three participants. To obtain the full story, we asked the participants to tell their experience during teaching writing online and their assessment practice. Their story was dug up using a narrative question to make them tell the story freely; 'how to make students understand your feedback on their writing during online lectures?'. However, in the middle of narrating the story, we proposed some questions for narrative data based on principles of AfL in writing (Lee, 2007b). Thus, questions were asked to find out whether they share learning goals with students, help students understand the standards they are working towards, involve students in assessment, provide feedback that helps, and create a classroom culture

where mistakes are a natural part of learning are the theme to group the narrative data.

Each teacher was interviewed twice through WhatsApp video call and voice notes for 30-60 minutes each time. The interview was conducted in the participants' native language (Indonesian) that later on mediated into English. To put it another way, we also gave participants the option of telling their story in English. Finally, to guarantee that the participants' stories were not missed, the interviews were recorded as audio files using a digital voice recorder.

Interpretation, Trustworthiness and Analysis

The data were analysed using narrative analysis, a technique for acquiring a more detailed understanding of participants' experiences in relation to specific events (Barkhuizen et al., 2013). After compiling the data, we began the narrative analysis process by meticulously transcribing the interview tapes and repeatedly reading them. In relaying the stories, we described each event, narrative, and experience by meaningfully linking the practice and time. Furthermore, we also utilized a case analysis approach and narrative inquiry procedure (Creswell, 2012) to break down the complexity of the stories into digestible themes and sub-themes, to identify similarities and contrasts between the stories, and to connect the findings to the existing literature in the relevant fields. Additionally, the data were scrutinized through thematic analysis (Barkhuizen, 2014). The thematic analysis in this study was more concerned with the content experience than with the linguistic qualities of each utterance. To carry out the thematic analysis, the five dimensions of AfL proposed by Lee (2007b) were utilized.

To guarantee the trustworthiness and verification of the narrative interview data and to minimize subjective interpretation in the final report, we incorporated the participants (collaboration) in this process by returning both the story transcriptions and the analysis for their validation. This method is a component of the narrative inquiry's relational obligation to negotiate limits, anonymity, and ethical dilemmas with the participants (Clandinin, 2013). In addition, Creswell and Miller (2000) mentioned three elements to elaborate the validity of research in the critical paradigm to which this narrative follows, i.e. researcher reflexivity, collaboration, and peer debriefing. In this study, two peer debriefers had been asked to read the manuscript of the participants' narration. Finally, the data were

arranged chronologically from the first-time teachers started to teach writing to the time when students gained the final score.

Research Findings

In this section, the participants' narration about their AfL experiences in online writing class is presented. Each participant's story is given independently, including their teaching and assessing experiences during online class.

Narrative Account of Fita: “My feedback should be as detailed as possible”

Fita started teaching writing in Sentence-paragraph Writing course followed by an Essay Writing course, and eventually Academic Writing. The last course provided the most extensive practice in her writing instruction. Her AfL practices started with her story on how she feels fairly burdened during the online writing lesson since it requires correction, and it must be done consistently in front of the screen, which she used to do exclusively with pencils. However, this does not deter her; she has standards in assessing writing and grading students' work. Writing and assessment have taken on new meanings due to her efforts to adopt AfL in the classrooms. Fita implemented the first step of AfL in order to improve the connection between teaching and assessment by increasing pre-writing input and sharing task-specific assessment criteria with students prior to writing:

I've spent quite a bit of time on pre-writing tasks. I mean, questions, notes, mind-mapping, timelines. and I believe that prewriting is quite crucial. Before giving them a writing assignment, I explained the criteria. So, I prepared a type of evaluation form for them.

In AfL, sharing learning goals is principle. Fita preferred virtual meetings over asynchronous one because it was more suitable for students to share the goal. Learning objectives may be turned into standards for student writing. Learners must understand the expectations established by teachers and the curriculum. This was done by giving the students sample texts, mini-text analysis tasks, and text augmentation exercises to evaluate the texts' quality. Students can familiarize themselves with Fita's evaluation standards while preparing for the self-

assessment process. Here, she could apply the first and the second AfL principles sustainably:

I discussed the goals via virtual sessions. First, I explained the activity concept and the lecture's outcome. This course focused on scientific and research writing models.

Each subject culminates with a written assignment for students to apply the ideas learned. For example, students should comprehend the standards for composing quotes. I gave them a checklist and explained the criteria during our first meeting.

AfL helps students self-assess so they may become self-directed and reflective learners. Allowing students to self- or peer-evaluate overall writing quality and self- or peer-edit is critical. The teacher's role is to guide and train students and to adjust the requirements for self- and peer assessment according to their capacities. Students were assisted in self and peer assessment by offering them checklists (for example, a self-evaluation checklist on narrative writing) that reflect the learning goals defined for individual writing projects. Writing evaluation should focus on both students' faults and strengths. Applying the third principle of AfL where teacher involves students in assessment, she believes that utilizing peer feedback was beneficial, but only if the student's writing and English skills were advanced. Therefore, she only utilized peer feedback three times, in Citing, Paraphrasing, and Summarizing topics. In the rest of the times, only students' self-assessment and teacher's assessment were used:

I believe giving them task criteria was a means to encourage students' self-evaluation. This technique promoted students' autonomy so that they don't have to rely on their peers. That's why, I seldom ask them to have peer-correction since their writing abilities aren't at the same level.

Concomitantly, at the during-writing stage, teachers need to provide meaningful feedback so students may identify their writing skills and flaws, as well as create objectives for improvement. This is a challenging responsibility for teachers. She admitted giving rigorous feedback in her assessment. The students' comments on EDOM showed that she was a

detailed teacher in providing comments and input to students, and the students were grateful for that:

It undoubtedly benefits them to see their writing in as much detail as possible. I would not say I like being offered too much general advice. I may spoil learners, but I know their abilities....

In the during-writing stage, following the second draft submitted by the students, Fita used both direct comprehensive and focused corrective feedback to the students' writing. Her objective was to render fewer discouraging comments and to assist students to engage more actively in the evaluation process. Feedback forms, combined with focused feedback, described the strengths as well as the flaws of the students. Students might make use of the assessment information to enhance their writing. Nonetheless, in giving feedback, she confessed that she found difficulty in communicating its significance clearly because she commented that *'what I propose to students is sometimes not implemented well since they do not grasp my feedback on their draft'*. Thus, she strived to be as thorough as possible with her comments.

In relation on how teachers give feedback, teachers can use technology in the writing classroom in addition to the traditional pen-and-paper method of AfL. Using Google Drive (Docs) as an example, collaborative writing and peer review may be greatly simplified. Fita already tried to utilize it:

In online setting, I utilized Google Docs to highlight incorrect words and phrases and modify sentence structure. So, their writing contained my notes. If I discovered weird writings, I ran their writings through Turnitin to verify my suspicion.

For her, highlights and suggestions for better writing were effective in making students improve their writing. Here, she has implicitly applied the last principle of AfL where students learn from their mistakes. Unfortunately, when she asked the students to rewrite and revise, some of them were reluctant to do exactly like the suggestions she gave. Finally, other than AfL principles in her writing course, she considered students' engagement and autonomous learning separately. Although the students' independent learning was, on average, good, their engagement level was not that high. She concluded this because there were students who did not

finish the course at the end of the semester. She wondered why they did not submit the assignment. This is one thing that she was regretful of in online class. Here, she has reflected on how her assessment practice could affect the students:

I noticed dedicated students could perform good job.... But those negligent ones... they still did not submit their work. It was terrible that two students from each class were unable to pass the course. This problem is the drawbacks of online lectures.

Narrative Account of Mala: “If you want your work properly corrected, just do same way to your friend’s work”

As a first step of AfL, teachers must assist students in developing a clear grasp of the learning objectives and success criteria that will be used to measure student progress. Mala told us that online assessment requires extra work. She did not do many virtual meetings since she was more concerned with her students’ work and their ability to improve. As a result, rather than being discussed directly on virtual meetings, the learning goals were communicated through the course outline. She acknowledged that this model was her weakness, yet it was also done for her students’ sake since inviting them to virtual meetings would be difficult if their internet signal was unreliable:

I did not use virtual meetings frequently; I posted students’ assignments in Writing course. Therefore, I made good use of WhatsApp groups and LMS from university. I conveyed the learning objectives through the course outline shared with students. This technique will promote their responsibility in doing the tasks.

In helping students understand the writing standards, providing students with support to accomplish more than would have been feasible without assistance is critical. Learning would occur with support pitched at the learners' level, activities and tasks according to their skills, and with active student participation and gradual withdrawal of teacher support (Lee, 2016). Teachers can collaborate with students to develop criteria by starting with brainstorming and directing students' attention to what success looks like in the chosen genre. Additionally, strong and weak

examples can be utilized to initiate student debate and elicit success criteria. In so doing, Mala asked students to write based on writing indicators, including micro-skills such as content, coherence, and punctuation, as well as macro-skills. Her writing requirements include coherence, organization, and substance. Furthermore, she used a checklist in the form of questions to verify the writing standard. *'Is there, for example, any irrelevant sentence in the paragraph? If so, which sentence is it and how may it be fixed?'*

Giving writing criteria is also a means for students-teachers collaboration. This activity is included in the third principle of AfL, where she involved students in assessment. All students were given this checklist to use for self and peer assessment. However, she expressed her dissatisfaction with some of her students' failure to meet the standard: *'I had explained it many times, yet there were still many errors. ... making corrections takes a lot of effort...I need to be extremely patient. What matters is that they should submit their work to the standards.'* In this principle, she made more use of peer feedback than her own feedback. *'Because the level of writing is still confined to a sentence rather than a paragraph, I was daring to utilize peer feedback'*. However, the seriousness of the learners was a key factor. Regardless of the means of delivering peer feedback employed, students must be aware that they are expected to take an active role in the learning process. Thus, training is required. Rather than sitting back and waiting passively for comments, the teacher should encourage students to seek feedback from their peers on the issues they believe are most crucial for their development. She insisted on repeating: *'If you trusted a peer to provide feedback; ... you must likewise take your peers' feedback seriously.'*

At the paragraph writing stage, Mala used the same assessment criteria as the peer feedback form. After collecting the first draft, she responded to student writing in respect to the assessment criteria shared with the students in the pre-writing stage, using the teacher feedback form:

For paragraphs, I used peer input once I have accepted the students' topic sentences.... In online setting, it's tough to ask their friends to respond well. But, in the end, it is me who made the remarks.

In offering feedback, she was firm and straightforward. Students have the option of revising their work multiple times. For example, after receiving peer feedback, the students revised it and returned it to her. Following her input, the writing mentorship process was done on an individual basis via WhatsApp. One thing that frustrated her is that some students failed to submit their work on the due date, which has thrown her plans off. However, she had something to be proud of that some of the students could produce exceptional results. This achievement may occur if students were committed to following the instructions and revising their work appropriately. She would also utilize their excellent work as an example for their junior the following year. This was how the fifth principle of AfL worked well in her class, although she did not mention it explicitly. She explained that the improvement could be seen from writing a good topic sentence, developing a good paragraph from the topic sentence, and the conclusion. The principle of learning from mistakes in AfL works in her case.

I was proud that there were three to four students applying my suggestions on their writing. The works looked natural, so they improved their writing skills. I saved their files; I am going to show the files to next-year students.

In addition to AfL, the way she utilizes technologies influences how she provides feedback. She employed Google Docs and Microsoft Word to grade students' work. She replied to the writings over WhatsApp. From this platform, aside from remarks, she seldom gives crosses or highlights the text. Indirect feedback was implemented. The indirect feedback approach instead of supplying learners with the correct answers was used to encourage students to think and acquire more independence in the repair of their own mistakes. Students might update their drafts after receiving peer and teacher's comments. Fortunately, most students were near to the expected standard. Her narrative ended with her admitting she had not expressly adopted self-assessment as the third principle of AfL in writing. And she pledged to do it next academic year. She acknowledged that learners were implicitly encouraged to self-assess. She reminded learners to examine their work before submission.

Narrative Account of Dina: “Meeting the writing criteria is my concern “

The experience of applying AfL in online writing class conveyed through Dina’s story started with how she felt unhappy with some students who did not pass the Academic writing course. This is simply because she could not directly supervise her students efficiently and effectively. Students might form stronger relationships with their teachers if they are able to meet with them face-to-face. Dina had to cope with the challenge of students’ engagement. On one side, Dina had struggled to manage online writing teaching and assessment successfully:

If we met face-to-face and come to the class, I could force them a little and accompany them. However, since the communication was only via WhatsApp and virtual meetings, there is not much I could do with their sense of responsibility.

In employing AfL, Dina stressed the learning objectives and the requirements for Academic Writing at the start of the course so that students have a clear image of the course. This strategy would also help them in setting their learning goals. Students are encouraged to develop their own personal learning goals as part of the assessment strategy:

...I utilized virtual meetings. This way was critical for increasing students’ participation in lectures. The sorts of assignments they will do and the one-semester lecture approach were described.

After a few sessions, she became concerned on the during-writing stage since the students’ writing ability was beginning to show. Dina created stringent and thorough writing guidelines. This was only to ensure that learners were not perplexed by the writing model. Her commitment to giving writing guidelines met the second AfL principle. The assessment criteria may promote students’ self-assessment. They can use the rubrics supplied by or co-created with the teacher to evaluate their drafts in terms of content, language, structure, style, and genre. They are able to determine for themselves how well their own writing meets the standards specified by the teacher. Because students have a portfolio of all their writing, they can then rank each item from best to worst and use this information to improve. As a result, students will be able to engage in self-

reflection on their writing, as well as identify their own writing strengths and limitations, and create new writing objectives. This situation is the heart of AfL:

Based on the guidelines for evaluating writing, I created my score system on the content, vocabulary, organization, structure, cohesiveness, and so on. The criteria were presented in the form of a question list, followed by the scoring rate and room for comments.

In connection with involving learners in assessment, students who gave feedback to their peers were aware of what needs to be discussed and addressed. Dina, on the other hand, did not depend heavily on peer assessment. Most students could deal with some superficial writing abilities, such as organization, grammar, and vocabulary. However, they are unable to detect inconsistencies in cohesiveness and content errors. This part was her job, and she had to provide feedback for the appropriateness of the content.

I use peer feedback only to assist me in reducing the correction load. I still checked the peer-feedback outcomes, but I was acquainted with the students' capabilities. They may still fail to notice their friends' errors in writing, such as in the grammar section, let alone in the substance.

Unfortunately, according to Dina, some students were hesitant to provide proper comments to their peers. It was necessary that the students receive training on how to make acceptable comments in order to maximize the use of peer-feedback. She constantly advised the students *'What you give to your friends will come back to you, so please provide a little seriousness in delivering comments to peers'*. In some part, Dina did not have a rigid evaluation policy for some types of writing; for example, students do not have to resubmit a draft that has received comments from their peers and her in terms of writing a Summary or Paraphrasing topic. Yet, the regulations she devised for the final project are quite rigorous as she mentioned, "I returned the draft many times for a final project task. I gave them feedback and the opportunity to improve".

As part of AfL principles, Dina had no trouble offering feedback because her Google Docs sharing was more than adequate to provide written comments. Nevertheless, she was disappointed that some students still sought an instant explanation and contacted her over

WhatsApp. She determined that the rubric was sufficient. She said, “They should truly grasp how to write based on writing standards. They should know the structure of academic writing, the vocab, and how to place the references, etc”. And she added:

I wanted them to fulfil the goals I set, but they didn't seem to care even when I gave them a rubric. Then, in my opinion, setting an example was the finest effort; at the very least, they must follow the path of the example.

In reality, she would explain again for those who wanted direct input, such as via WhatsApp conversation, but her feedback on Google Docs sufficed for those who did not. She thought that by providing feedback, students would be able to enhance their writing skills. She had attempted to make the most of technology to improve the effectiveness of the feedback. Therefore, it appears that Dina has applied the principles of AfL in writing well.

Discussion

The goal of this study was to see how three Indonesian undergraduate writing teachers applied AfL in their online assessment. Its goal was to determine the consequences of their assessment practices that aided students' learning. The participants' stories to the demands of students learning were influenced, to a greater or lesser degree, by their particular interpretations of AfL. Their interpretation has disclosed some different concerns among them represented in how they methodologically appraised students' writing and how they addressed the AfL's five principles. It is no wonder that they received a good rating on EDOM. They were able to present AfL components well even though there were still some rooms for improvement.

Applying Lee's five principles of AfL in writing

After analysing the narration thematically, general pattern was found representing the study. The pattern is in accordance with Lee's (2007b) five AfL principles in writing, five of which were positively performed, although the fifth principle needs some improvement. Sharing learning goals with students, assisting students in understanding the standards

they are working toward, including students in assessment, and offering helpful feedback are the four most narrated strategies employed by teachers. Despite the narrated positive implementation of the fifth AfL principle (creating a classroom culture where mistakes are a natural part of learning and where everyone can improve), all of the teachers admitted that they did not discuss this fifth principle with their students explicitly. Aside from the trends, an additional theme emerged concerning on how teachers battled to keep the students engaged and survived in the semester.

AfL begins with teachers' planning of assessment and communicating learning objectives. As in the case of evaluating Academic Writing, the participants began by articulating the aims of the course and then assisting students in grasping the goals by immersing them in learning activities that meet the goals (e.g., help students understand the scientific writing structure and apply it to their own writing). In line with Baird et al. (2017) and Lee et. al (2019) study, they accentuated that if assessments are to serve the goals of education, they need to communicate the goal of learning to the students appropriately. Lee and Coniam (2013) also found that in teachers' issues, the implementation of a curriculum that is aligned with the goals of AfL in writing is a background component, but it is critical to the success of such an innovation.

Applying second principles, the participants used criteria for the writing assessment. Despite the challenges of online writing course, the participants did not modify the standards of their writing assessment, but rather made them plainer and more understandable. The findings is in line with Muhammad and Ockey (2021), that during the COVID-19 pandemic, higher education institutions adapted and provided tests in a safe environment without reducing the quality of assessment standard. In addition, the findings reflect what Lee (2016) already explained about transforming learning objectives. Learning objectives can be transformed into a set of grading standards for students' writing. It is critical to assist students in comprehending the expectations that teachers and curriculum have set for them. Students can get familiar with the evaluation criteria to evaluate their work while simultaneously preparing for self- and peer assessment.

Performing the third principles, students' ability to self-assess is enhanced during the AfL practice. Self-assessment allows them to become more autonomous and reflective in their learning. As a result, it is critical to enable students to participate in assessments with various objectives,

such as self- or peer evaluation of overall writing quality. The participants have provided guidance, as well as vary the demands of self-and peer assessment according to students' abilities, such as by giving students checklists that reflect the learning goals established for specific writing tasks (I. Chong, 2017). In line with Mujtaba et al. (2021), students' writing has been evaluated not just on their flaws but also on their strengths. The findings also reveal students' self-assessment activities (Shahgoli & Farrokhi, 2016): to reflect on their writing strengths and weaknesses, take steps to improve their writing, and to create mistake logs. However, Fita seldom uses peer-assessment. She estimated that the majority of the students were at a low intermediate level. Students are not yet prepared to evaluate all topics; it takes time for them to develop the necessary skills for peer assessment training. Peer assessment and comments should be made a regular part of the writing lesson so students get used to evaluating their peers' work. Consequently, training is necessary to encourage students to take their learning seriously, and students should be encouraged to seek peer's input and provide criticism as their most pressing concerns (Lee, 2016).

Related to the fourth principle, the findings are parallel with definition of effective feedback (Lee, 2020). Effective feedback is focused, encourages thinking, consists of comments (rather than grades), directly refers to success criteria, and gives concrete suggestions on how to improve (rather than giving complete solutions). Green (2020) asserted that specific and task-referenced feedback is more effective than general and learner-referenced feedback. Precise recommendations to help students edit their work, such as "Give one or two instances to demonstrate why it is important" would be more helpful. The story of Dina is parallel with the idea that feedback would also be more helpful than providing right responses for students' grammatical faults if the errors are self-correctable (Lee, 2007a). Single-draft task that do not require students to respond to criticism is not conducive to learning because it is vital to provide students opportunity to act on instructor comments. Furthermore, Fita's practice in providing feedback in the form of teacher-student conferences is in line with Mak and Lee's (2014) research.

Last but not least, feedback encourages improved learning. Chong (2018) and Lam (2021) explained how students learned from their mistakes. The fifth principles, although the participants acknowledged that it was not expressly stated, were certainly adopted by optimizing the use of feedback from both peer and teachers. Therefore, the importance of

feedback must be balanced against the risk of negative consequences for the students. According to Fitriyah and Jannah (2021), a negative impact may result in students being uninterested in writing. This occurred when Fita and Dina stated that some of the learners were unable to complete the writing owing to a lack of ability to revise the writing. According to Selvaraj and Azman (2020), it could happen if feedback could give negative implications. Consequently, to have helpful feedback, teachers must provide correct information about each student's challenges, skills, and personality in a given circumstance. Teachers are fully aware of the challenges they face when writing individual feedback for each student. Feedback may be a powerful tool in enhancing and speeding up the learning process if correctly accepted by the learners.

Issues of Implementing AfL in Online Writing

In addition to AfL practices, the participants had typical experiences in term of using various assessment platforms and getting students engaged in an online writing assessment.

The participants had their own ways of utilizing the advancement of technology. Fita preferred to use Google Docs and similar checker much more than any other writing evaluation tools. On the other hand, Mala employed WhatsApp chat to give feedback and explanation. She believed her intense dialogue with the students helped them well. Dina relied on Google Docs, in which the students could directly revise the draft after she gave comments to the drafts. Concomitantly, they tried to provide quality feedback so that students may learn about their writing strengths and limitations, as well as how to have improvement. As Mala mentioned that providing personalized feedback increases learning but takes time; however, educators could use techniques to speed up the process (Fitria, 2020). The fact that they use many platforms' attests to this. Individual feedback can also be accelerated using technology. Better still, technology can aid in improving the quality of comments. When it comes to providing detailed feedback, technology and choosing the correct assessment tool are two options for making it easier (Spivey & McMillan, 2014).

In terms of getting students engaged in an online writing assessment, the participants tried to make students engaged by using AfL principles. The findings are in line with Wang and Lee (2021). The students exhibited various levels of agentic engagement, as shown by their participation in assessment context. Individual variations in English writing

skill, motivation to write, and views about the responsibilities of instructors and students in evaluation may influence their agentic participation. The finding is also parallel with Lee and Coniam's (2013) study; while teachers implemented AfL principles, students' engagement in multiple drafting and peer evaluation was low. Wang and Lee (2021) mentioned how learners get involved proactively and reciprocally from the activities of AfL and assessment as learning. They also argued that teachers should strive to understand what and how classroom assessment activities can foster students' agentic engagement. Drawn from the stories of the three teachers, students' engagement tends to be the crucial issues they raise. The engagement could be categorized into two types; students' engagement in completing the writing tasks and students' engagement in providing qualified peer-feedback. Finally, Lee's principle of AfL in writing, which totalled to five, might be added with students' engagement principle since this issue becomes essential in the assessment. The results of teachers' comments on students' writing could have an influence on how students wish to continue writing.

Conclusion

The study's findings are expected to shed light on the possibilities of AfL in EFL writing, particularly at higher education levels and online assessment contexts. With implications for writing teachers in comparable EFL situations, this study emphasizes on the practices of EFL writing teachers when attempting to integrate AfL into online writing assessment.

It is inferred that by discussing assessment criteria and familiarizing students with the requirements of writing activities through explicit teaching, teachers in the research were able to explain learning goals for students. Students and teachers in tandem, on the other hand, played active role in the learning and AfL-based assessment process by their active participation in giving feedback, as well as doing peer and self-evaluation. The findings on the lack of students' engagement suggested that teachers' attempts to apply AfL in the online-writing assessment were not totally effective. This study proposed that engagement of students in AfL writing could be included as an additional principle into Lee's five principles of AfL. Furthermore, it might be useful to other teachers to learn from these three teachers in implementing AfL well. Further study needs to provide more evidence on the documentation rather than narration on how students learn from the assessment and apply teachers' comment on

their writing. Moreover, the students and teachers' engagement during the writing assessment is also the crucial aspect worth further investigation.

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Appendix

Interview (narrative) questions

1. How knowledgeable are you about teaching and assessing writing?
2. Did you have any struggle while developing your writing assessment? Why?
3. How do you promote learning in writing assessment during the online learning process?
4. How to make students really understand your feedback on their writing during online lectures?