BACKCHANNEL AS FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT IN ENGLISH CLASSROOM; THE STUDENTS' PERSPECTIVE

Vara Dika Maharani[1], Entika Fani Prastikawati[2], Wiyaka[3]

[123]*English Education Department/ Universitas PGRI Semarang, Indonesia*

varadika17@gmail.com

Abstract

Dealing with assessment, formative is one way of assessing students' performance during classroom activities. The latest curriculum in Indonesia, curriculum 2013, demands teachers to assess students not just at the end of learning. Formative assessment as an assessment that assesses the students during the learning process must be highlighted. Furthermore, the integration of technology during the assessment process is also needed in this era. One of technology integration in formative assessment is backchannel in which it supports the interaction among students and teachers. In response with the crucial implementation of backchannel, the objectives of the study are to describe the students' responses on the implementation of backchannel as formative assessment implemented in English classroom, to identify areas of students learning activity are influenced by backchannel implemented in English classroom, and to describe the difficulties faced by the students in the implementation of backchannel in their English classroom. The approach of this study was qualitative design. The subjects are the eighth-grade students of SMP N 6 Semarang. The results showed that the backchannel method was applied in eighth D class is success. The backchannel method as a formative assessment gets positive responses from students. The students are mostly affected in the area of backchannel in which they can improve their skills in English with a high understanding of the process. Some students can improve their speaking skills because they receive some new vocabularies and this method makes them more active. The challenges that they faced are about time, understanding and internet signal.

Keywords: *Backchannel, Formative Assessment, Students' Perspective*

INTRODUCTION

One of Curriculum 2013 demands in teaching and learning process is the use of higher-order thinking skills (HOTS)-based authentic assessment (Prastikawati, 2018). Assessment is done to collect information about students' proficiency to be sources for teachers for their teaching (Nurgiyantoro, 2001). Dealing with assessment, formative is one way of assessing students' performance during classroom activities. The latest curriculum in Indonesia, curriculum 2013, demands teachers to assess students not just at the end of learning. Assessment is also part of evaluation because it is concerned with the student and with what the student does. Moreover, Prastikawati (2018) adds that by assessment, learners can get feedback from what they have learned and they are expected to be able to apply knowledge in their real life.

Formative assessment is tightly linked with instructional practices. Teachers need to consider how their classroom activities, assignments, and tests support learning aims and allow students to communicate what they know, then use this information to improve teaching and learning (Boston, 2002). Moreover, Brown (2004) defines that formative assessment evaluates the students' growth progress to form students' competencies and skills.

According to Wiyaka (2019), backchannel is considered as one of formative assessments. It is one of the good forms in assessing since its use of digital social media which is suitable for teenagers' condition now. Students sometimes need innovative classroom activities from the teachers which can encourage them more in the learning activities to get a better improvement of learning. They are willing with an enjoyable activity. Furthermore, those who feel the anxiety of

their English skills need to be facilitated appropriately by the teacher to lose their fear and together can meet the learning goals with the other mates. Hence, backchannel meets the latest condition of students related to technology and the teacher's demand in the term of students' assessment. Moreover, Harunasari and Halim (2019) said that backchannel is a conversational device that is used to show engagement. Students and teachers can have communication through this device to share, comment, or clarify something. Backchannel also is defined as electronic communication between students in an "on-ground" class. Usually, backchannel uses applications like WhatsApp and Facebook. Since students in many classes are likely to engage in back-channel anyway, a teacher should consider using it for their benefit, and perhaps even proactively encourage it. (Cronin, 2011:60). It means that formative assessment is very important to use in the learning process in class.

Based on the class which the writer conducted some time ago, a backchannel is applied in SMP 6 Semarang. This becomes interesting for find out the students' perspectives or responses to the backchannel assessment method. In this study, the writer has done to investigate the responses from the students' perspective when backchannel is applied as formative assessment especially in SMP 6 Semarang. It is because the assessment is not only about teaching and learning product, but it is also about the process of the assessment itself. As teachers, they need to know what their students feel about the assessment method applied to the students.

Backchannel as Formative Assessment

Backchannel is considered one of the good forms in assessing since its use of digital social media which is suitable for teenagers' condition now. Students sometimes need innovative classroom activities from the teachers which can encourage them more in the learning activities to get a better improvement of learning. They are willing with an enjoyable activity. Furthermore, those who feel the anxiety of their English skills need to be facilitated appropriately by the teacher to lose their fear and together can meet the learning goals with the other mates. Hence, backchannel meets the latest condition of students related to technology and the teacher's demand in the term of students' assessment. (Wiyaka et.al 2018)**.** In manifesting backchannel in the classroom, students and teachers need to be facilitated by technology such as computer and internet connection. To apply, there are some steps to do:

Step 1**:** Teacher creates a social media group, such as Facebook group, Whatsapp group, Line group, etc., which involves students within.

Step 2: Afterward, the teacher will provide a topic that needs to be discussed in the forum. All students should participate to share their ideas. They may form questions, comments, confirmation, clarifications, or others.

Step 3**:** At the end, teacher will come with some feedbacks related to the students' performances in a discussion forum. This feedback will be of benefit to students' performance and classroom activity evaluation.

Previous Studies

Similar research on formative as has been done by other researchers so far, and due to conducted by researchers about students' responses about method of formative assessment, and the writer will only discuss three among many. The first previous study was conducted by Evans, Zeun, and Stanier (2014) entitled "Motivating student learning using a formative assessment journey" which was published in an article from the Journal of Anatomy. First-and second-year

student feedback was collected for formative assessments via questions contained in the formal end-of-module anonymous questionnaires. Any open comments made about anatomy and the assessment, in particular, were noted and categorized into common themes. One-hundred and forty-four first-year students (97% of the student cohort) and 127 second-year students (96% of the student cohort) responded to the questionnaire. All students were allowed to contribute to open-ended comments under two categories: the best aspect of the module; and aspects requiring improvement. A total of 134 (first year) and 102 (second year) separate comments attributed to the anatomy component were made in the 'best aspect' section and included remarks related to the overall teaching quality, the subject area, lecture content, and staff. Of the anatomy comments, 37 (first year) and 17 (second year) individual comments were made specifically about the formative assessments offered and are categorized in Table 3. There were no first-year comments about anatomy in the 'aspects requiring improvement' section of the questionnaire, but nine separate comments were made about the anatomy component from the second-year students, and of these two were attributed to the formative assessments.

The second previous study was done by Fuller and Dawson (2017) entitled "Student Responses Systems for Formative Assessment: Literature-based Strategies and Finding from a Middle School Implementation" which was published by the article is Contemporary Educational Technology 2017. The findings of this study indicate that the teachers learned to use the SRS technology and associated strategies to collect formative data and appropriately adjust instruction to meet learners' needs. This study has implications for SRS in K-12 classrooms, technology integration professional development, and for pre-service teacher education.

The third previous study was conducted by Elmahdi, Fawzi, and Al- Hattami (2018) entitled "Using Technology for Formative Assessment to Improve Students' Learning" which was published by TOJET Journal. This study can support teaching and learning by improving the ability to offer a formative assessment of the learners' skills and knowledge during the teaching and instructional process. This study investigates the effectiveness of using the classroom response system Plickers, which is a technology-based formative assessment tool, in improving students' learning. This study used a descriptive mixed method design that implemented. A questionnaire was used to collect data from 166 students in Bahrain Teachers College, University of Bahrain. The findings revealed that students believe in the importance of formative assessment and receiving immediate feedback which is supported by the use of Plickers. Moreover, the findings showed that using Plickers for formative assessment aid the learning process as it improves students' participation; saves the learning time, guarantees equal participation opportunities, and creates a fun and exciting learning environment. The findings also encourage teachers to integrate technology tools such as Plickers in their classrooms to help them assess the effectiveness of their teaching and their students' learning.

From these journals above, the writer conducts a similar study. The first previous study is very different because the writer uses a game application to motivate the students to improve the ability and the instrument used formal end-of-module anonymous questionnaires to collect the data. The second previous study focused on students' responses to using the SRS system for formative assessment. The third previous study focused on improving students learning using technology tools like Plickers for formative assessment. Besides, the writer used some instruments such as interviews, and questionnaires. Meanwhile, in this study, the writer focused on students' responses to the implementation of backchannel as formative assessment in SMP N 6 Semarang.

This study is very different because the writer used social media like WhatsApp and Facebook to support this study. Furthermore, the writer used a qualitative method with questionnaires. In this study, the writer gave questionnaires to identify the problems faced by students eight grade of SMP N 6 Semarang when using the backchannel method as a formative assessment. Also, the writer interviewed the students in English eight class to describe the implementation of the backchannel method as a formative assessment in SMP N 6 Semarang.

METHODOLOGY

Bogdan and Tylor in Tohirin (2012) stated that "There are two types of research design; quantitative and qualitative." In this study, the writer employed descriptive qualitative. In this study, the writers took the data to get the information before analyzing it. The writer contacted the student's English class at SMP N 6 Semarang to set up an appointment. The writers provided the questionnaire to the subject to be filled and also the writer did interview the students. After that, the writers analyzed the data. Last, the writers interpreted the result of the questionnaire and the result of the interview.

The subjects were of the study were students from the 8th grade of SMP N 6 Semarang. The writers took data from the VIII D class consisting of 30 students. The data has been taken about their responses about learning by using a backchannel as a formative assessment.

The writers used the instruments of the study to get the data to need. As the questionnaires, the writers undertook some specific activities to collect the data. So, in this study, the writer used two instruments. According to Cohen (2007), there are 7 kinds of data collection instruments: Questionnaires, Interview, etc. In this study, the writer used a questionnaire and interview to collected the data. The explanation is as follows:

a. Questionnaire

This common type of instrument used by the writer to collected the data, a questionnaire is a set of questions, relates that are to some topic which has to be fulfilled by the subject of the study to get the data. In this study, the writer tends to use a rating scale questionnaire. Rating scales are commonly used in the social sciences and with attitude scores. Such instruments often use a Likert-type scale. A Likert-type scale "requires an individual to respond to a series of statements by indicating whether he or she strongly agrees (SA), agrees (A), is undecided (U), disagrees (D), or strongly disagrees (SD). Each response is assigned a point value, and an individual's score is determined by adding the point values of all of the statements" (Gay, Mills, & Airasian, 2009). In this study, the writers took a graphic rating scale with a 1-5 Likert scale questionnaire. Likert scales provide a range of responses to a statement or series of statements. Usually, there are 5 categories of responses ranging from 5 = strongly agree to 1 = strongly disagree with a 3 = neutral type of response (Jamieson, 2004). To find out students' responses about the online backchannel method as a formative assessment used in learning English, this study asks students to complete closed questions in the questionnaire. This statement is a positive statement divided into three topic differences, based on students' perceptions about the online backchannel method as formative assessment in learning English, namely; student responses to learning English using the backchannel method, areas that affect students in learning using the backchannel method, and what difficulties students face when following learning uses the backchannel method. The description of those three aspects described in the following sections (see table 1)

Table 1 The Item Questions in Questionnaires

No.	Topics	Question
1.	Student's responses	6
2.	The area's that influenced by the students	5
3.	Difficulties faced by students	6

b. Interview

The interview was done to support and clarify the answer to questionnaires. Based on the interview of the actual of the teaching processes under the influence of the backchannel as a formative assessment in a class of eighth grade in SMP 6 Semarang, the writer made sure about the answer to the questionnaire. Cohen (2007) remarks an interview as an interchange of views between two or more people on a topic of mutual interest, sees the centrality of human interaction for knowledge production and emphasizes the social situated ness of research data. In this study, the writers asked some questions related to the use of backchannel as a formative assessment to the students from class eighth grade in SMP 6 Semarang. The writer used structured interviews for the session because of its facilities' data collection for the study. Kothari (2004) stated that structured interviews as a method of gathering information through personal interviews that are usually done in a structured way is usually carried out in a structured way.

In this study, the writer used the descriptive method in analyzing the data. Since the main purpose is to understand the student's responses of backchannel as formative assessment in English class of eighth grade in SMP N 6 Semarang, rating scale questionnaire and semi-structured interviews are carried out with the students' who taught by backchannel as a formative assessment. As Cohen (2007) stated that qualitative data analysis involves organizing, accounting for and explaining the data; in short, making sense of data in terms of the participant's definitions of the situation, noting patterns, themes, categories, and regularities. Analyzing data is necessary to find the answer to the questions in the statements of the problem. After getting the data, we conduct some procedures in analyzing the data. They are as follows:

a. Analyzing the result of the observation has been done.

b. Analyzing the results used descriptive statistics in terms of percentage of the questionnaire to determine student responses regarding learning using by backchannel method as a formative assessment in eighth grade English class at SMP N 6 Semarang.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Students' Responses on the Implementation of Backchannel as Formative Assessment

SMP N 6 Semarang has implemented the 2013 curriculum since the 2013/2014 academic year. The writer observed the student's responses in the implementation of formative assessment using the backchannel method. Meanwhile, the writer gives questionnaires for each student. Following is the process to describe students' responses in the implementation of formative assessment using the backchannel method in English classes:

a. Based on questionnaires

The first topic is about existing statements related to the use of backchannel. There are six statements related to backchannel usage. That six questionnaire statements were coded into terms UB (Use of Backchannel). Six items in this category which is about; my teacher uses formative assessment techniques to facilitate English learning classroom (UB3), backchannel method as formative assessment suitable in learning English in the classroom (UB10), learning English using the WhatsApp application (UB11), the backchannel method is used regularly in the English learning classroom (UB12), all the subjects at school use the backchannel method as

formative assessment using applications such as WhatsApp or Facebook, etc. (UB13), I like learning English in classroom using the application (UB24).

Table 2 The students' responses on the use of Backchannel as formative assessment
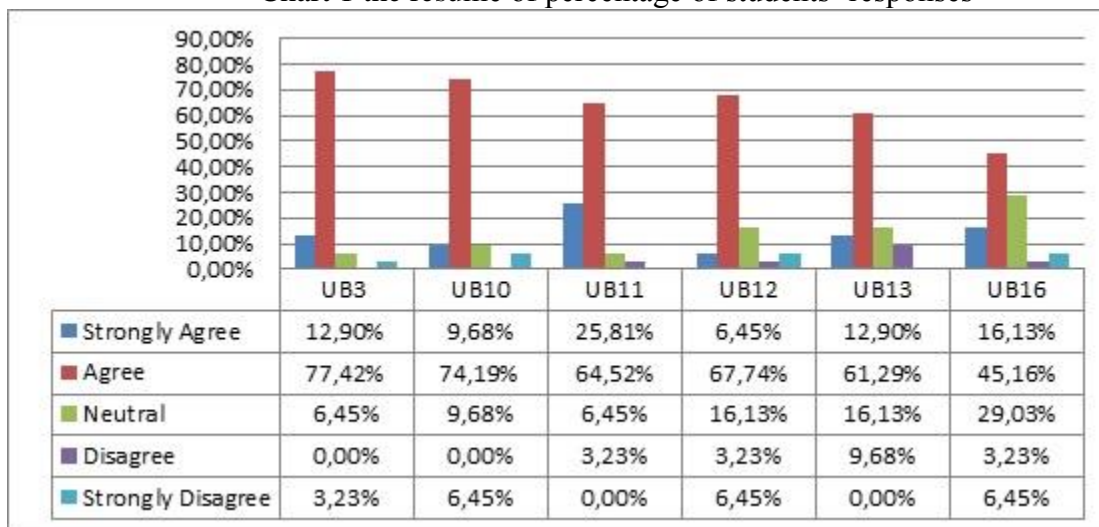
Item	Statement	F	N	P (%)
UB 3	My teacher uses formative assessment techniques to facilitate English learning classroom	SA : 4 A : 24 N : 2 D : 0 SD :1	31	SA:12,90% A : 77,42 % N : 6,45 % D : 0,00% SD: 3,23%
UB 10	Backchannel method as formative assessment suitable in learning English in the classroom.	SA : 3 A :23 N : 3 D : 0 SD : 2	31	SA : 9,68 % A : 74,19 % N : 9,68 % D : 0,00 % SD : 6,45%
UB 11	Learning English using the WhatsApp application.	SA : 8 A :20 N : 2 D : 1 SD : 0	31	SA :25,81% A : 64,52% N : 6,45% D : 3,23% SD: 0,00%
UB 12	The backchannel method is used regularly in the English learning classroom.	SA : 2 A : 21 N : 5 D : 1 SD: 2	31	SA : 6,45% A : 67,74% N :16,13% D : 3,23% SD : 6,43%
UB 13	All the subjects at school use the backchannel method as formative assessment using applications such as WhatsApp or Facebook etc.	SA : 4 A : 19 N : 5 D : 3 SD : 0	31	SA : 12,90% A : 61,29% N : 16,13% D : 9,68% SD: 0,00%
UB 16	I like learning English in classroom using the application	SA :5 A : 14 N : 9 D : 1 SD: 2	31	SA :16,13 % A : 45,16% N : 29,03% D : 3,23 % SD: 6,45%

Note: F (Frequency of the data); N (Total Respondent); P (Percentage of the data; UB (Stands for Use of Backchannel)

From the six statements, the writer has obtained the study results. According to table 4.1, we have obtained the frequency and percentage of each statement in the questionnaire. Based on the statement (UB3) "My teacher uses formative assessment techniques to facilitate English learning

classroom." it shows that 4 students (12.90%) who stated strongly agreed with the statement, 24 students (77.42%) who stated agreed that the teacher used formative assessment. on the other hand, 2 students (6.45%) stated neutral about the teacher using formative assessment and 1 student (3.32%) who stated strongly agreed on the statement. Furthermore, a statement from (UB10) "Backchannel method as formative assessment suitable in learning English in the classroom.", It shows that 3 students (9.68%) stated that they liked the learning method used, 23 students (74, 19 %) said they liked the backchannel method used in learning English. On the other hand, and there were 3 students (9.68%) who stated neutral for the backchannel method and 2 students (6.45%) who stated they strongly disagreed with the statement (UB10). In the statement (UB11) "Learning English using the WhatsApp application." There are 8 students (25.81%) answered strongly agree, 20 students (64.52%) answered agreed with UB11's statement, 2 students (6.45%) stated that learning to use the WhatsApp application was sufficient, and there was only 1 student (3.23%) who answered did not agree with the statement above. Then there was a statement from the questionnaire (UB12) "The backchannel method is used regularly in the English learning classroom". There are 2 students (6.45%) who strongly agree with the backchannel method if used regularly, there are also 21 students (67.74%) who agree with the above statement, that 5 students who answer neutral if the method is used in English class, on the other hand, there is 1 student (3.23%) who stated disagree and 2 students (6.45%) who answer strongly disagree with the statement above. The next statement (UB13) "All the subjects at school use the backchannel method as formative assessment using applications such as WhatsApp or Facebook etc "there are 4 students (12.40%) who state that strongly agree with the statement if all subjects use this method, there are also 19 students (61.29%) who agree with the statement above. on the other hand, there were 5 students (16.13%) who stated neutral about the use of the backchannel method in all subjects. But there were 3 students (9.68%) who stated that they did not agree if this method was used by all subjects. the last statement that will be discussed by the author is (UB16) "I like learning English in class using the application" it can be seen that there are 5 students (16.13%) choosing strongly agree with the above statement, there are 14 students (45.16%) choosing to agree because they liked learning English, there were 9 students (29.03%) choosing neutral, but there was 1 student (3.23%) choosing to disagree and 2 students (6.45%) choosing strongly disagree (see Chart 1).

Chart 1 the resume of percentage of students' responses

	UB3	UB10	UB11	UB12	UB13	UB16
■ Strongly Agree	12,90%	9,68%	25,81%	6,45%	12,90%	16,13%
■ Agree	77,42%	74,19%	64,52%	67,74%	61,29%	45,16%
■ Neutral	6,45%	9,68%	6,45%	16,13%	16,13%	29,03%
■ Disagree	0,00%	0,00%	3,23%	3,23%	9,68%	3,23%
■ Strongly Disagree	3,23%	6,45%	0,00%	6,45%	0,00%	6,45%

b. Based on Interview

The writer has conducted interviews after giving questionnaires regarding the application of the backchannel method to English students in class 8 D. Therefore data retrieval using interviews can also support data from the questionnaire to solve problems that arise when using this backchannel method, considering the online-based backchannel method rarely used in other schools and still rarely used by teachers who teach. Therefore the writer also needs a direct response from students regarding this backchannel method. The writer explained about responses of the students about Q5 that "Is the backchannel method using WhatsApp application it feels like boring or interesting? Please explain. **Responding to this R1 said that** "*Interesting because I like the method.* **Another student R2 explained that** *He Interesting, because it can discuss with friends through group chat, or can be followed while being anywhere.* **R3 also stated that** "*Interesting. Because in my opinion, the backchannel method can simply replace the learning activities in schools that are temporarily closed. So that students will continue to get learning through the backchannel method at home ".* **Next, R4 answered** *that* "Interesting. Because this is the first time using the WhatsApp method.*".* **Another student R5 said that**" *In my opinion, learning to use the backchannel method is interesting because we can use technology as a learning method.* **The next response from R6 explained that** *"Interesting, we are more training in typing skills but bored because they cannot interact with teachers and friends.*

According to the answers to questions, number 5 that R1 through R6 stated in the answers during the interview that they are interested in learning to use the backchannel method or using the WhatsApp application. they mostly answered because of the new method, it can access lessons not only in class, making it easier for students to understand the material but R5 expressed bored although this method was interesting because when using the backchannel method because they could not interact directly with other students and teachers because of their focus on WhatsApp groups.

The areas of students learning activity are influenced by backchannel implemented in English classroom

a. Based on Questionnaires

As we know backchannel is a method that is rarely used by teachers as formative assessment, so the writer needs to know the extent to which this method can affect student interest in learning and student skills in learning English in class. The next category is about areas of the students influenced by the backchannel method. Five statements from the questionnaire were coded into AS terms (Areas of students). In this category, five statements about the areas of the students are influenced by the backchannel method namely about; I believe that I can change my basic level of ability considerably when my teacher uses formative assessment techniques(AS4), Backchannel as a formative assessment method improves my English skills in the English learning classroom (AS15), Backchannel affect my English improvement (AS19), My teacher discuss the achievement of learning outcomes together (AS20), The comments that I get when learning English classroom help me understand how to improve my abilities (AS21).

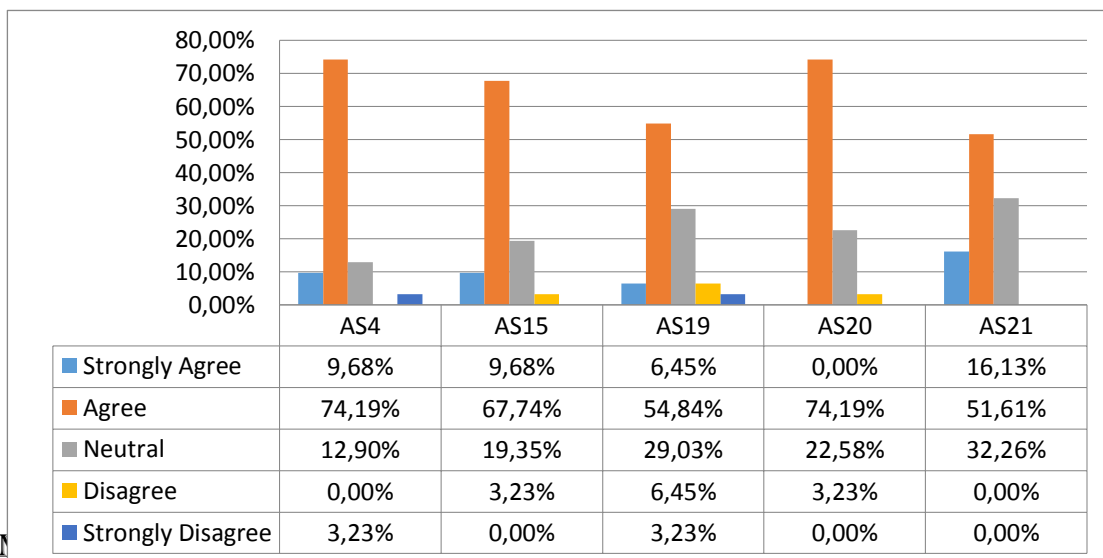Table 2 The areas of students influenced by backchannel as formative assessment

Item	Statement	F	N	P (%)

AS4	I believe that I can change my basic level of ability considerably when my teacher uses formative assessment techniques.	SA : 3	31	SA : 9,68 %
		A : 23		A : 74,19 %
		N : 4		N : 12,90 %
		D : 0		D : 0,00 %
		SD :1		SD : 3,23%
AS15	Backchannel as a formative assessment method improves my English skills in the English learning classroom.	SA : 3	31	SA : 9,68 %
		A : 21		A : 67,74 %
		N : 6		N : 19,35 %
		D : 1		D : 3,23 %
		SD :0		SD : 0,00%
AS19	Backchannel affect my English improvement.	SA : 2	31	SA : 6,45 %
		A : 17		A : 54,84 %
		N : 9		N : 29,03 %
		D : 2		D : 6,45 % SD : 3,23%
		SD :1		
AS20	My teacher discusses the achievement of learning outcomes together.	SA : 0	31	SA : 0,00 %
		A : 23		A : 74,19 %
		N : 7		N : 22,58 %
		D : 1		D : 3,23 %
		SD :0		SD : 0,00%
AS21	The comments that I get when English learning classroom help me understand how to improve my ability	SA : 5	31	SA :16,13 %
		A : 16		A : 51,61 %
		N : 10		N : 32,26 %
		D : 0		D : 0,00 %
		SD :0		SD : 0,00%

From the five statements, the writer has obtained the study results. According to table 4.2, the writer has obtained the frequency and percentage of each statement in the questionnaire. It can be concluded (AS4) "I believe that I can change my basic level of ability considerably when my teacher uses formative assessment techniques" in this statement, 3 students (9.68%) strongly agree with the above statement, there are also 23 students (74.19%) who agreed that if teachers used formative assessment could change their basic skills for the better, even though there were 4 students (12.90%) stated neutral answers regarding the statement above. but there was 1 student (3.32%) who stated that they did not agree if they could change basic skills in learning English. Based on the statement (AS15) "Backchannel as a formative assessment method improves my English skills in the English learning classroom" it was stated that 3 students (9.68%) who experienced many improvements in English language skills in all fields, 21 students (67.74%) could improve their English language skills after learning using the backchannel method. On the other hand, there were 6 students (19.35%) who stated that it was sufficient to improve their skills in English. But, there is 1 student (3.32%) who has difficulty in improving their English skills. The next statement on item (AS19) with the statement "Backchannel affect my English improvement", this statement also obtained 2 students (6.45%) chose strongly agree, 17 students (54.84%) chose to agree, 9 students (29.03 %) chose neutral, but there were 2 students (6.45%) choosing to disagree and 1 student (3.32%) choosing strongly disagreeing. This next statement about the achievement of learning outcomes in the item (AS20) "My teacher discusses the achievement of learning outcomes together". The writer has obtained 23 students (74.19%) who agreed if the teacher discussed the learning outcomes, on the other hand, there were 7 students (22.58%) who chose neutral maybe the teacher had discussions but not periodically, and there were 1 student (3,23%) who chose disagree with the discussion of achieving learning together. The last statement was (AS21) about "The comments that I get when learning English classroom help me understand how to improve my ability" obtained the results of 5 students (16.13%) chose strongly agree, 16 students (51.61%) who chose to agree with the statement above, on the other hand, there are 10 students (32.26%) choosing neutral. (see table 4.2 and chart 4.2)

Chart 2 The resume of percentage of students' areas influenced by backchannel implementation

	AS4	AS15	AS19	AS20	AS21
Strongly Agree	9,68%	9,68%	6,45%	0,00%	16,13%
Agree	74,19%	67,74%	54,84%	74,19%	51,61%
Neutral	12,90%	19,35%	29,03%	22,58%	32,26%
Disagree	0,00%	3,23%	6,45%	3,23%	0,00%
Strongly Disagree	3,23%	0,00%	3,23%	0,00%	0,00%

b. Based on Interview

The writer also wants to know more clearly how this backchannel method if used regularly whether there is an increase in learning or not. The writer conducted to find out the extent to which this backchannel method affected all aspects of learning English and to find out whether there is an increase in student skills when participating in learning by using the backchannel method taught by the teacher. The writer will explain the answer to an interview with a student about Q3 that "What skills can you improve in an English learning classroom using the backchannel method? Please explain". **Responding to this R1 answered that** "*Skill in interpreting and understanding English". **Another student R2 explained that** "What I can improve through the backchannel method is that I learn to listen to words that I haven't been able to say smoothly". **R3 said that** "What I can improve in learning English using the backchannel method, I can increase my confidence to ask the moderator/teacher if there is material I don't understand when learning takes place, practicing English pronunciation". Next,* **R4 also stated that** "*English speaking skills, because through backchannel method my English language skills have improved". **The same thing in R5 said that** "More able to say English words clearly and fluently". **R6 explains that"** If given a question and I understand the material I will immediately answer it".*

According to the answers to questions, number 3 that R1 through R6 stated in the answers during the interview that they experienced an increase during learning using the backchannel method. They were more confident in showing their English learning skills such as frequently asking the teacher, their reading skills improved and their understanding of words in English also improves, but some students do not know what skills have improved after learning English using the backchannel method because previously they did not know their skills.

CONCLUSION

The backchannel method as a formative assessment gets positive responses from students. Because this method is interesting and has never been taught, they also use the WhatsApp application as a support tool used in the learning process. Although there are many obstacles encountered. there are also negative responses where the backchannel method makes them bored because of the lack of interaction with students and other teachers. The students are most affected in the area of students affected by the backchannel methods that they can improve their skills in English with a high understanding of the process. Although every student has increased that is different but it also makes it a very efficient backchannel method for learning English.

The students are mostly affected in the area of backchannel methods that they can improve their skills in English with a high understanding of the process. Some students can improve their speaking skills because they receive a lot of new vocabulary and this method makes them more active. Although every student has increased that is different but it also makes it a very efficient backchannel method for learning English. Meanwhile**, t**he problems faced by students of SMP N 6 Semarang were even though they have positive perceptions toward the use backchannel method as a formative assessment, there are still some difficulties they faced when learning the process used backchannel method. Based on the result of the study, the challenges they faced are about time, understanding and internet signals. They feel difficulties in doing tests because they have to be quick in answering questions that are limited by time. When the teacher explains the

material is not clear so the students were more confused and difficult to understand what the material delivered. The last of the difficulties, they are most upset about is bad signal and make them annoyed because they could be left behind one or two questions. Hence, the writer concluded that the main problem in implementing backchannel as a formative assessment was good preparation before taught.

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