

## Formative Testing Reading Using Socrative A Case Study at SMA IT Al-Hikmah Blitar

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**Abstract:** The development of digital technology plays an important role in education, particularly in formative assessment that enables teachers to monitor students' learning progress effectively. This study aims to analyze the use of the web-based application Socrative in formative reading comprehension tests and to explore students' responses toward its implementation. A qualitative case study was conducted at SMA IT Al-Hikmah Blitar with one English teacher and three tenth-grade students selected through purposive and snowball sampling. Data were obtained through classroom observation, interviews, and documentation, then analyzed using the interactive model of Miles and Huberman through open, axial, and selective coding. The findings show that Socrative simplified the process of preparing and conducting reading tests, provided immediate feedback, and created a competitive atmosphere that motivated students. However, some students reported challenges such as the simple display, limited interactivity, and time pressure, which made them prefer traditional or gamified platforms. In conclusion, Socrative can serve as an effective tool for formative assessment in reading comprehension, but it requires complementary strategies to maintain students' engagement and motivation. The results contribute to the development of digital assessment practices in secondary language learning and provide practical insights for teachers in integrating technology into classroom evaluation.

## INTRODUCTION

In today's globalization era, English has become a global language that influences education, business, and international communication. English proficiency is considered not only an additional skill but also a fundamental requirement for students to compete at the global level (Kusumaningrum et al., 2019). Furthermore, English is crucial for developing critical thinking, creativity, and digital literacy, since much of the world's scientific and digital resources are presented in English (Andayani, 2022). Within English language learning, the four macro skills listening, speaking, reading, and writing are interconnected and

essential (Graham & Santos, 2018). Among them, reading is particularly significant in academic contexts because it allows learners to access knowledge, expand vocabulary, and improve grammatical awareness. However, despite its importance, the teaching and testing of reading in Indonesian high schools often remain conventional, dominated by paper-based methods that fail to fully engage students or adapt to diverse learning needs.

Technology integration in education has emerged as a response to these challenges, offering innovative opportunities to make learning more interactive, student-centered, and adaptive (Wahab & Lestari, 2018). Digital platforms and applications enrich learning by providing access to multimedia resources, collaborative spaces, and personalized activities that enhance student motivation and engagement (Rachmadtullah et al., 2020). Importantly, technology encourages independent learning and allows students to monitor their progress (Selwyn, 2016). This digital shift has also transformed assessment practices, especially formative testing, which plays a vital role in monitoring students' progress and guiding instruction. Traditional assessments often lack immediacy and flexibility, whereas technology-based assessments provide instant feedback, interactivity, and adaptability, making them more aligned with contemporary learning needs (Rachmadtullah et al., 2020).

One widely adopted digital tool in assessment is Socrative, a web-based application that enables teachers to create quizzes, monitor responses in real time, and analyze results. Studies have shown that Socrative enhances student motivation and participation through interactive activities such as quizzes and educational games (Vesselinov & Grego, 2016). It also supports formative assessment by offering instant feedback, thereby helping teachers adapt instruction to students' needs (Awedh et al., 2015). Moreover, Socrative fosters collaboration and student-centered learning environments (Wright, 2020), while providing teachers with the flexibility to design materials that accommodate students' proficiency levels and interests (Smith, 2021). Despite these advantages, the integration of Socrative in Indonesian secondary schools particularly faith-based schools remains

underexplored, and its implementation continues to face challenges such as varying proficiency levels and distractions from mobile devices.

A preliminary study conducted at SMA IT Al-Hikmah Blitar highlighted two major issues in implementing technology in reading instruction. First, there is a significant gap in students' English proficiency levels, making it difficult for teachers to design one-size-fits-all materials. Second, mobile devices, while essential for digital learning, often distract students when they use them for non-academic purposes such as social media. Nonetheless, teachers acknowledged the potential of Socrative in providing instant feedback and streamlining test management. These insights reveal both the opportunities and barriers of applying digital formative assessments in high school reading contexts, underscoring the need for systematic investigation.

State-of-the-art research demonstrates that while numerous studies have confirmed the benefits of Socrative in higher education and general classroom contexts (Kaya & Balta, 2016), limited attention has been given to its application in reading comprehension testing at the high school level, particularly in Islamic educational institutions. The novelty of this study lies in its focus on exploring how Socrative is applied in formative reading assessments in an Indonesian faith-based high school setting and how students respond to its use. By addressing this gap, the study provides updated knowledge about digital assessment in secondary education and contributes to the broader discussion of equitable, engaging, and effective English language assessment practices.

The objectives of this research are twofold first, to examine how Socrative is implemented in testing students' reading comprehension in English classes; and second, to investigate students' responses to its use in classroom reading assessments. The findings are expected to have academic and practical contributions. Academically, they enrich the literature on digital-based formative assessment in reading instruction. Practically, they provide actionable insights for teachers in planning and managing reading assessments and for policymakers in designing digital learning strategies that are contextual and inclusive. Ultimately, this research aims to enhance the quality of reading instruction and to support the

effective integration of technology into language assessment in Indonesian classrooms.

## RESEARCH METHODS

This study used a qualitative case study design to examine the implementation of Socrative in assessing students' reading skills. The case study approach was chosen because it allows the researcher to investigate a phenomenon in its natural classroom setting and to gain a deeper understanding of both the process and the participants' experiences.

The research took place at SMA IT Al-Hikmah Blitar, East Java, Indonesia, over one month 18 April–May 2025 with one English teacher and several grade X IIS students as the subjects. The participants were selected purposively, considering their direct involvement in reading classes that integrated Socrative. The teacher was chosen because of her experience in applying the platform for reading assessments, while the students were included due to their active participation in the tests.

Data were collected through classroom observation, semi-structured interviews, and documentation. Observations were carried out during reading tests to capture how Socrative was used in practice and how students engaged in the activity. Interviews with the teacher and selected students provided additional insights into their perspectives, including the perceived benefits and challenges. Documentation, such as lesson plans, test items, and students' results, served as supporting evidence to strengthen the findings.

The data were analyzed using Miles and Huberman's interactive model, which involves three stages, data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. Data reduction was applied to focus and simplify raw information from observations, interviews, and documents. The reduced data were then organized and displayed to identify emerging patterns and themes. Finally, conclusions were drawn and verified to ensure consistency with the evidence.

To maintain the validity and trustworthiness of the research, data triangulation was applied by comparing information from multiple sources and

techniques. Member checking with participants was also used to confirm the accuracy of the interpretations. Through these methods, the study systematically explored how Socrative was implemented in reading assessments and how students responded to its use.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The implementation of reading tests through Socrative was structured into three stages: preparation, administration, and evaluation. In the preparation stage, the teacher designed multiple-choice and true/false items at the A1 proficiency level, adapting several from reliable online sources to ensure alignment with classroom materials. During administration, students worked in pairs using a single device to access the platform. This approach accommodated limited device availability while encouraging collaborative learning. In the evaluation stage, results appeared instantly on the teacher's dashboard, allowing immediate feedback and class discussion. This feature reduced the teacher's workload and increased students' awareness of their performance. However, students also noted challenges related to the platform's limited visual appeal and the possibility of cheating by switching applications.

Table 1. Implementation of Reading Test Using Socrative

| No | Phenomenon   |
|----|--|
| 1  | Teacher selected A1-level items based on student proficiency |
| 2  | Items adapted from online sources                            |
| 3  | Test conducted in pairs using one device                     |
| 4  | Results instantly displayed and discussed                    |
| 5  | Some students enjoyed the point system                       |
| 6  | Students considered the interface monotonous                 |
| 7  | Potential cheating through access to other apps              |

Overall, these findings show that Socrative supported efficient test delivery and timely feedback, consistent with Brown (2004) and Hughes (2003) on the importance of feedback in language assessment. At the same time, interface limitations and integrity concerns highlight areas for further improvement. Students' responses reflected both enthusiasm and criticism. Many students appreciated the point system and instant score display, which fostered motivation

and a sense of achievement. With brief teacher guidance, most were able to operate the platform effectively, minimizing technical difficulties. Nevertheless, several students perceived the reading passages as demanding, indicating that test difficulty arose more from text complexity than from the platform itself. Others compared Socrative unfavorably with game-based applications, citing its monotonous interface, while a portion still preferred the familiarity of paper-based tests.

Table 2. Student Responses to Socrative Reading Test

| No | Response  |
|----|---|
| 1  | Students could operate Socrative after teacher guidance   |
| 2  | Some perceived the items as too difficult                 |
| 3  | Most difficulties came from texts rather than the app     |
| 4  | Interface considered monotonous and less interactive      |
| 5  | Students preferred game-based apps                        |
| 6  | Some felt more comfortable with paper-based tests         |
| 7  | Motivation increased when scores were displayed instantly |

These responses resonate with El Shaban's (2017) view that learners' perceptions shape the effectiveness of technology integration. While Socrative's scoring and feedback encouraged motivation, the lack of interactive design limited engagement, suggesting that both functionality and user experience are crucial in digital assessments.

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study concluded that the implementation of reading assessments using Socrative at SMA IT Al-Hikmah Blitar followed three main stages: preparation, administration, and evaluation. Socrative facilitated efficiency in testing, provided instant feedback, and supported formative assessment practices. Student responses showed both positive outcomes, such as increased motivation through instant scoring, and challenges, such as limited interface appeal and potential misuse. These findings answer the research objectives by confirming that Socrative can be effectively used in reading assessments and that student perceptions significantly influence its success. The study contributes to the development of digital-based assessment in EFL contexts, particularly in Indonesian Islamic schools, by showing how technology can both enhance learning and present new pedagogical challenges.

Future research is recommended to expand the study context by involving larger and more diverse student populations to increase generalizability. Comparative studies across different school settings or with alternative digital platforms could also provide deeper insights into the effectiveness of technology-assisted reading assessments. Additionally, further research may focus on exploring design improvements or integrating gamification features to address student preferences and engagement.

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