

# Understanding on Online Assessments for EFL Learning During Covid-19 Pandemic

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**Abstract**—Covid-19 as the global pandemic with social and physical distancing consequence has affected educational practices. Amidst the Covid-19 Pandemic, Schools are temporally closed therefore, students study at home, teacher adapts the situation. They have online class and online assessment as well. In this case, technology supports teaching learning process. The purpose of the study is to understand some types of Online English Assessments for during Covid-19 Pandemic. Data were collected from books, journals, news, social media and other relevant sources. Literature study is carried out to obtain the necessary data by reading the literature sources. The data collected was then analyzed qualitatively. The result of the study is Teacher can assess the EFL learning by using formative assessment, the assessment can assess reading, speaking, writing and grammar by give task activities. Beside that synchronous method is the most proper one. Teacher can use some applications that can meet the students virtually like Google meets, Zoom Meeting and other synchronous application.

**Keywords**—Covid-19, Online assessment, synchronous, asynchronous, E-Learning

## I. INTRODUCTION

Hadianti and Arisandi [1] explained that responding the issue of Covid-19 pandemic, the Minister of Education and Culture of Republic of Indonesia has given instructions to schools to carry out online learning since 17 March 2020 for Covid-19 affected areas. Soon after that, all education units have been ordered to run online learning form due to the increasing spread of Covid-19. These policies lead students to learn from home with various online learning platforms.

Teaching and learning activities is replaced by the method of online learning. Because of the pandemic, every practical activities, seminars, guest lectures and extracurricular activities of students rescheduled and adapted to the conditions of the development of the Covid-19.

The changes of learning methods do not make both of the students and teacher/lecturers happy and satisfied. Alchamdani et al [2] explained that the differences method of learning is perceived between online learning and face-to-face in the classroom. Amounted to 97.1% of the respondents consider learning face-to-face is better than online learning. Only 2.9% of respondents who think online learning are better than lecture face-to-face.

Besides the perception that learning face-to-face is more interesting, E-learning method has many kinds of obstacles as well. Either teacher or student needs facilities for supporting the teaching learning process, they need internet that is adequate. Most of the student uses internet connection from their phone with the internet package purchased. It is not cheap and if they live in remote place, they sometimes miss to submit the assignment. They spend much internet package

purchased to join video conference, Zoom meeting or Google meets.

E-Learning class is not only students' problems but also teachers' problems. Teacher must adapt harder, they must think about the material, proper media and methods that can minimize the usage of internet access and proper assignments for the students. Some subjects can be done using Google class room or other media but for English as Foreign Language (EFL) learning need video conference such as Zoom or Google meets to have direct interaction.

Hadianti and Arisandi [1] explained that teaching through online mode is not ideal for English language learning. To acquire English language, learners are demanded to have a lot of exposure and practices which lack to be provided by the schools' e-learning system. Students need to experience real communication and practice their English with lecturer or their peer which is now difficult to do.

In Indonesia, English is taught and learnt as a foreign language therefore learning foreign language is not easy for students. Before the pandemic, students got many problems for mastering the language and in the pandemic this online distribution system creates several difficulties and problems.

A study conducted by Ahmad (2016) in Efriana [3] found a phenomenon that EFL learning which requires a lot of practice for its application also experiences obstacles when the learning system is applied. In listening session, for instance, the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) equipment used by teachers to train students who are in separate and distant places is often ineffective. Teachers also cannot maximally supervise students when giving listening exams. In speaking course with the distance or online learning, students also find problems in imitating the way of speaking exemplified by their teacher, and the teacher also cannot optimally train the students to speak.

Based on the background above, the writers are interested in understanding the online English assessment for students during the pandemic.

## II. THEORITICAL FRAMEWORK

### 1. E-Learning

#### a. Definition of E-Learning

Alongside the term online learning, there are similar terms such as e-learning (electronic learning), m-learning (mobile learning) and d-learning (digital learning) Nartiningrum & Nugroho [4].

A study conducted by Chun, Kern, and Smith (2016), (Allen & Seaman, 2007) in Efriana [3] summarizes that distance learning is an education system in which learners are separated from the educator and the learning process uses various resources through Information and Communication

Technology (ICT). Online learning is a learning system without directly face to face between teacher and students.

Horton, (2006), Basuki and Hidayati, (2019) in Mukti and Basuki [5] that E-learning is the use of information and communication technologies (ICT) to create learning experience Further, e-learning is the use of information and communication technologies (ICT) that provides facilities for daily teaching-learning process.

Dabbagh and Bannan-Ritland (2005) cited by Efriana [3] proposed the characteristics of online learning as follows: - Constructivism, - Social interaction, - Inclusive community of learners, - Computer-based Learning, - Digital classroom, - Interactivity, - Independence, - Accessibility and - Enrichment

b. Types of E Learning

According to Singh & Thurman in Dhawan, (2020) in Hadianti and Arisandi (2020), and (Asmuni, 2020) cited by Fahmi [6] online learning is defined as: “learning experiences in synchronous or asynchronous environments using different devices (e.g., mobile phones, laptops, etc.) with internet access. In these environments, students can be anywhere (independent) to learn and interact with instructors and other students”

Prestiadi [7] implementation of e-learning is online learning that can be implemented in two ways, synchronous and asynchronous. Synchronous is the learning process happening at the same time when the teacher is teaching and students are learning. This allows direct interaction between teacher and student, both via the internet and intranet. Synchronous e-learning training is mostly used for seminars or conferences which are often called web conferences or webinars and are often used in online university classes or lectures. Asynchronous is a learning activity carried out at different times between teacher and student. This activity is more popular in the world of e-learning because it provides more benefits for trainees that are able to access training anytime and anywhere. In line with Prestiadi [7], Nugraha et al [8] mentioned that there are two types of theory. Those are synchronous and asynchronous. Synchronous learning is any type of learning that takes place in real-time, where a group of people is engaged in learning simultaneously.

Atmojo and Nugroho [9], Atmojo (2020) in Hadianti and Arisandi [1] there are teachers who carry out their online learning in synchronous mode and asynchronous mode. The synchronous mode means that the teachers carry out online learning at certain time in a week. In the other hand, the asynchronous mode means that the teachers carry out online learning in a range of longer period, one week for instance. So, the asynchronous mode is more flexible than the synchronous mode. However, majority of the teachers carry out their online learning in synchronous mode since it is their schools' policy. In line with them, Nartiningrum & Nugroho [4] explain about Online learning can also be synchronous or asynchronous and the courses can have high quality if they are prepared well.

#### c. Application For E-learning

Atmojo and Nugroho [9] stated that the teachers use several applications and platforms which can be categorized into eight types. They are as follows: (1) learning management system; (2) chat and message; (3) video conference; (4) content maker; (5) assessment; (6) video streaming and sharing; (7) online learning provider; and (8) additional resource. The teachers do not employ game, artificial

intelligence, virtual reality, and augmented reality. Atmojo and Nugroho [9] added that teachers employ a) Google Classroom and Schology, WhatsApp for managing their online learning in general to post and share materials, give information about task or project, have discussion, provide question and answer session, and give personal feedback to students. b) Zoom to explain materials orally like in face-to-face meeting, have oral discussion with students, and provide question and answer session. c) Autodesk SketchBook. It is used to replace the function of whiteboard to present materials. Teacher can create materials in written and drawing forms. d) FastStone Capture to create a screen-casting video and to explain the materials orally by showing PowerPoint slides. e) TEDEd is used to create a lesson video by editing available online videos.

In line with Atmojo and Nugroho [9], Dhull (2017) in Hadianti and Arisandi [1] online learning encompasses a range of technologies such as the worldwide web, Email, chat, new groups and texts, audio and video conference. It means in application all learning process in form of internet based can be called as online.

#### d. Assessment

Erwin and Muhsin [10] explain definition of assessment 1) Assessment is an evaluation tool in learning adjusted to the times. The criteria that must be included in the assessment are indicators in the cognitive domain and critical thinking. 2) Assessment is a tool used to measure students' cognitive abilities that are developed based on the progress of the times. 3) Assessments developed to meet the needs of the education unit, including the curriculum. This study aimed to determine the implementation of learning assessments based on critical thinking. 4) Assessment is the process of gathering information about objects (students) using appropriate tools and techniques to make judgments or decisions about the object. It is necessary to have a tool or instrument and method to gather information and evaluate reports about objects to conduct an assessment.

Moreover there are some researchers who studied about assessment have been summarized by Erwin and Muhsin [10], they are 1) Akib and Arief (2019) in Erwin and Muhsin [10] stated that assessment is a data collection process in teaching focused on making decisions of students' ability in a subject. 2) Sibbald (2011) stated that Good assessment is an assessment that emphasizes the ability of logic and reasoning students. 3) Putri and Istiyono (2017) explained that Good assessment must fulfill cognitive elements which synchronized with critical thinking aspects. 4) Oakleaf (2009) stated Assessment is the process of gathering information about students and classes for instructional decision-making purposes. Assessment means the process of gathering information. For teachers, the assessment carried out as a goal of deciding teaching skills. 5) Nieto (2000) said that Assessment is the process of gathering information by using appropriate tools and techniques, to make educated decisions regarding the placement and educational programs for certain students.

Al-Ahdal and Alqasham [11] assessing student progress is essential, as it is a resource to help teachers appreciate what students are thinking and what they are achieving in the classroom. Teachers have a critical function to play in assessing student success.

Robiasih & Lestari [12] assessment is an integral part in learning and teaching process. Effective formative assessment

is intended to improve students' achievement and raise teacher's quality. As Brown (2003) in Robiasih & Lestari [12] proposes that a good test is designed by employing the principles of language assessment namely practicality (deals with appropriateness of time and efficiency), validity (the task measures what is to be measured), reliability, authenticity, and wash-back or feedback which is rarely done in many assessment processes.

### III. METHOD

The current study is a library research or literature study related to the changes of face-to-face class into online class and its effects. Data were collected from books, journals, news, social media and other relevant sources. Literature study is carried out to obtain the necessary data by reading the literature sources. The data collected was then analyzed qualitatively.

### IV. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

#### A. Result

***E-learning or online class needs English teachers' creativity to deliver the materials, give assignment and test them because*** English as Foreign Language (EFL) learning requires a lot of practice.

The data are taken from some research articles in the form of articles from various journal sources related to the English as Foreign ***Language*** (EFL) learning using e-learning. ***The writers are going to*** analyze on online English Assessments during Covid-19 Pandemic.

Efriana [3] studied about problems of online Learning during Covid-19 Pandemic in EFL ***Classroom*** and the Solution. In her study, she explained that teacher can test the students by giving assignments and quizzes to students.... This online system is only effective for giving assignments and quizzes to students. Efriana [3] added that there are some problems on English online Learning, one of them is the understanding on the subject materials. For example, the content of reading material delivered online may not be understood by all students. ...Students may be able to understand these materials, but it is not comprehensive. Students understand the material based on their own interpretation or their point of view. Beside that this online system is only effective for giving assignments and quizzes to students.

Maru et al [13] explained that using video showed a significant result to develop students' achievement in writing descriptive text despite the emergence of COVID-19 pandemic. The online learning can be a solution for EFL learning during or post pandemic but it has to be comprehensively designed and prepared to ensure the obtaining of the learning outcome.

Nugraha et al [8] studies about online literature language learning from the viewpoint of students in the EFL sense. Online EFL learning for same high school students is something new, especially for the first grade at that level. The students felt that online EFL learning was considered ineffective because learning English requires frequent practice, not only that, online learning also requires supporting signals, adequate internet quota, and other supporting media that function properly such as handphone or laptop/computer.

Tukan [14] studied about Challenges and Strategies Using Application in Teaching Online Classroom During Pandemic Covid-19. Based on Tukan's studies [14] designing the

material, assessment, and evaluation during teaching online classrooms, it still becomes a challenge for each teacher. Teaching in an online classroom, the teachers are pushed to find out more the best way to how can design their materials in teaching, and how to design a good assessment and evaluation for their students.

In line with Tukan [14], Mahyoob [15] studied about Challenges of e-Learning during the Covid-19 Pandemic Experienced by EFL Learners. The study results show that most EFL learners are not satisfied with continuing online learning, as they could not fulfill the expected progress in language learning performance. The writer explained about the advantage and disadvantage on online class. There are some difficulties that are found on online class in English language skills and other English courses, such as writing challenges, speaking challenges, and reading challenges. The class needs face-to-face interaction.

Rajab, Mohammad, Gazal, & Alkattan (2020) in Mahyoob [15] the study's reported that the challenges were communications, assessment, online education experience, technology use tools, time management, anxiety, and coronavirus disease stress. Regarding language communication issues, learners could not effectively interact with teachers during virtual classes of English language skills, as revealed in learners' responses to open-ended questions.

Erwin, & Muhsin [9] studied about Critical thinking in cognitive domain: Exploring assessment of English teaching at pandemic period of covid-19. Nilson (2016) in Erwin, & Muhsin [9] stated that Implementing assessment of teaching in a pandemic situation compels all educators did through a virtual system. Lecturers constructed their assessment base on their department program. They made in the last semester by applying the cognitive approach combined with teaching materials. Assessment of teaching based on critical thinking skills, the lecturers have used the indicators of critical thinking criteria. The assessment is compiled process, examines the material and provides criticism. In designing learning assessments during the pandemic, lecturers required to adjust the conditions and according to the times. The results of data analysis showed that the lecturer had made an assessment with Bloom (1959) scale in the cognitive domain.

Atmojo and Nugroho [9] emphasize that for assessment, teachers apply Google Forms, Quizzes, and Kahoot. The assessment applications are employed to create online quiz for students in the forms of multiple choices, essay, and true or false alternatives. Kahoot is to create quizzes in multiple choices of four options and Google Forms also provides ease in score processing.

In terms of digital assessment, the findings indicate the preparedness of the teachers in using digital tools to give feedback and return the feedback on time. The respondents found the teachers to be able to organize the assessment, although they cannot monitor the students physically.

Situmorang et al [16] many aspects could be evaluated in the implementation of online learning .... *Third*, digital assessment assessed the students' perspective on teachers giving feedback. Feedback is one of the most vital components in teaching and learning as it improves and affirms the students about the progress they make, and thus it is compulsory (Hirsch, 2016). In online learning, the traditional assessment will not be used as it misses the higher-level of cognitive and affective skill found in online learning (Crisp, Guardia, and Hillier, 2016)..... Based on the essential

components this study looked into three aspects of the material delivery in teachers including (1) digital literacy; (2) digital class organization, and (3) digital assessment from the students' voice. It scrutinized how the English teachers had evolved in using the technological resources to create and support the favorable situation for students to learn remotely during the pandemic.

According to Robiasih & Lestari [12] in this pandemic, formative assessment should be taken as the ideal one as it provides opportunity for students to get more engaged with its implementation, so that the learning process becomes student-centered. Besides, a wide range of activities such as self-evaluation, peer-evaluation, interviews, essays and group projects increase the enhancement of cooperation, enthusiasm and stress-free environment. Why formative test is better in this pandemic because Davidson & Mandalios (2009) in Robiasih & Lestari [12] in state that teachers can apply formative assessment to monitor the students' progress. Formative assessment supports student-centeredness and authenticity of the tasks although it somehow needs extra time and energy from the teacher to design such assessment.

In their research, Robiasih & Lestari [12] explained how to set formative test for reading, speaking, writing and grammar using task activity.

Amin & Sundari [17] the major finding shows that the student-participants at each group of three digital platforms on the survey, Cisco WebEx Meeting video conferencing, Google Classroom learning management system, and WhatsApp mobile messenger application perceives positive agreement and feel much learning and improvement though it was in an unprecedented situation. Approximately 44%-61% of the student-participant at each group agreed that the platform they used was beneficial and potential for language learning.

Lee (2019) in Nartiningrum and Nugroho [4] examined the influence of informal digital learning of English (IDLE) activities beyond classroom toward a group of EFL students' vocabulary outcomes. This study found that the quality of IDLE activities was significantly and positively associated with the students' vocabulary outcomes. This result leads to the conclusion that engagement with varied types of IDLE activities is essential for language vocabulary acquisition... Lam, Hew, and Chiu (2018) in Nartiningrum and Nugroho [4] revealed that online Edmodo discussion could enhance EFL students' writing on argumentative essay... Nugroho and Rahmawati (2020) in Nartiningrum and Nugroho [4] proved that social networking site (e.g. mobile application Instagram) was recognized as an efficient tool to enhance students' writing skills.

Although some teachers have tried to add the experience of direct interaction by utilizing video conferences in their online classes, it still cannot substitute for the real-life communication since many problems such as unstable internet connection may hinder students from conveying their ideas effectively during language learning Nartiningrum and Nugroho (2020)... Amin and Sundari (2020) in Nartiningrum and Nugroho [4] found that student-participant agreed that WebEx Meeting video conferencing platform was beneficial for language learning. Some free video conferencing platforms such as WebEx Meeting, Zoom, Google Meet and Jitsi Meet can become solutions for the lack of direct interactions during the online learning. Al-Munawwarah (2015) and (Apriani, 2019) in Nartiningrum and Nugroho [4]

discussed teacher's perception on the use of ICT (information and communication technologies) in Indonesian EFL class. She found out three benefits of using ICT in EFL class; namely, helping teachers to conduct interesting and fun learning activities, promoting autonomy learning, and motivating students to learn. ICT can makes students active in the classroom.

## B. Discussion

English still becomes the most renowned foreign language in Indonesian schools. It remains as the first foreign language. It has been officially taught in Indonesian secondary schools since a long time ago (Jayanti & Norahmi, 2014; Kam, 2002; Lie, 2007; Yusny, 2013) cited by Atmojo and Nugroho [9].

The students' English language proficiency becomes another problem in this online learning. It is because the students do not use English in daily communication both inside and outside classroom. Communication and interaction between the teacher and the students are quite important in learning process. However, online learning still cannot facilitate communication and interaction as well as face-to-face class. It happens since the teacher and the students are limited by far distance. So, the communication and interaction between them are not optimized.

The writers groups the results of the study into 3 categories in this library research related to the data. The first categories is study on the survey of problems and solution using E Learning during the COVID-19 Pandemic for EFL learning, the second is about types and function of applications on E-learning class during the COVID-19 Pandemic for EFL learning, the third is about the challenges of e-Learning during the COVID-19 Pandemic for EFL learning and the forth is assessment on E learning.

According to some writers E-learning brings many problems for teacher and students especially for EFL learning that needs much practice. Efriana [3] stated that there are some problems on English online Learning, one of them is the understanding on the subject materials. Efriana [3] explained that teacher can test the students by giving assignments and quizzes to students. E learning online system is only effective for giving assignments and quizzes to students.

In line with Efriana [3], Maru et al [13] the online learning can be a solution for EFL learning during or post pandemic but it has to be comprehensively designed and prepared to ensure the obtaining of the learning outcome. While Nugraha et al [8] explained about some problem using online application supporting signals, adequate internet quota, and other supporting media that function properly such as handphone or laptop/computer.

The second category is types and function of applications on E-learning class during the COVID-19 Pandemic for EFL learning. There are two types of E learning namely synchronous and asynchronous learning methods. As in research conducted by Novantara and Herwanto (2017) in Prestiadi [7] the implementation and effectiveness of mobile learning by using synchronous and asynchronous learning methods in learning concluded that media learning applications for synchronous and asynchronous activities can help students understand English learning.

Beside the two types, there are some applications that can be used maximally to get the purposes of EFL learning. Amin & Sundari [17] study about some applications and their functions for E-learning class. the major finding shows that the student-participants at each group of three digital

platforms on the survey, Cisco WebEx Meeting video conferencing, Google Classroom learning management system, and WhatsApp mobile messenger application perceives positive agreement and feel much learning and improvement though it was in an unprecedented situation

For improving vocabularies, Lee (2019) in Nartiningrum and Nugroho [4] examined the influence of informal digital learning of English (IDLE) activities beyond classroom toward a group of EFL students' vocabulary outcomes. Nugroho and Rahmawati (2020) in Nartiningrum and Nugroho [4] proved that social networking site (e.g. mobile application Instagram) was recognized as an efficient tool to enhance students' writing skills. Amin and Sundari (2020) in Nartiningrum and Nugroho [4] found that student-participant agreed that WebEx Meeting video conferencing platform was beneficial for language learning. Some free video conferencing platforms such as WebEx Meeting, Zoom, Google Meet and Jitsi Meet can become solutions for the lack of direct interactions during the online learning. Al-Munawwarah (2015) and (Apriani, 2019) in Nartiningrum and Nugroho [4] discussed teacher's perception on the use of ICT (information and communication technologies) in Indonesian EFL class.

The third category is the challenges of e-Learning during the COVID-19 Pandemic for EFL learning. Tukan's studies [14] designing the material, assessment, and evaluation during teaching online classrooms, it still becomes a challenge for each teacher.

Mahyoob [15] studied about Challenges of e-Learning during the COVID-19 Pandemic Experienced by EFL Learners. The study results show that most EFL learners are not satisfied with continuing online learning, as they could not fulfill the expected progress in language learning performance. Rajab, Mohammad, Gazal, & Alkattan, (2020) in Mahyoob [15] the study's reported that the challenges were communications, assessment, online education experience, technology use tools, time management, anxiety, and coronavirus disease stress.

The fourth is assessment on E learning during the Covid-19 Pandemic for EFL learning. In this pandemic, adapting e-learning is not only difficult but also complicated. The difficulties are 1) how to use some application, 2) how to prefer either the application is proper for teaching EFL learning or the application is proper for the students related to the internet quota, 3) how to prepare the material, the assignments and 4) how to assess the students.

According to Gazal, & Alkattan, (2020) in Mahyoob (2020) the challenges were communications, assessment, online education experience, technology use tools, time management, anxiety, and coronavirus disease stress.

From those journals, the writers do not find significant result how to assess EFL learning on this E-learning. The significant finding in this study is from Erwin, & Muhsin [10] study. In the study Erwin, & Muhsin [10] explained that assessment must be done virtually as well. Lecturers constructed their assessment base on their department program. They made in the last semester by applying the cognitive approach combined with teaching materials. Assessment of teaching based on critical thinking skills, the lecturers have used the indicators of critical thinking criteria. The assessment is compiled process, examines the material and provides criticism. In designing learning assessments during the pandemic, lecturers required to adjust the

conditions and according to the times. The results of data analysis showed that the lecturer had made an assessment with Bloom (1959) scale in the cognitive domain.

Moreover, Situmorang et al [16] explained that digital assessment assessed the students' perspective on teachers giving feedback. ). In online learning, the traditional assessment will not be used as it misses the higher-level of cognitive and affective skill found in online learning. Situmorang et al [16] added that the essential components this study looked into three aspects of the material delivery in teachers including (1) digital literacy; (2) digital class organization, and (3) digital assessment from the students' voice.

Based the study above, how to assess students is digital assessment from the students' voice, it means that the teacher uses an oral test using some proper synchronous application such as video conference (Zoom Meeting or Google meets)

Different from Erwin, & Muhsin [10], Atmojo and Nugroho [9] emphasized that for assessment, teachers apply Google Forms, Quizzes, and Kahoot. The assessment applications are employed to create online quiz for students in the forms of multiple choices, essay, and true or false alternatives. Kahoot is to create quizzes in multiple choices of four options and Google Forms also provides ease in score processing.

Robiasih & Lestari [12] stated that in this pandemic, formative assessment should be taken as the ideal one because through formative assessment the learning process becomes studentcentered. It can be done by providing some activities for the students such as self-evaluation, peerevaluation, interviews, essays and group projects increase the enhancement of cooperation, enthusiasm and stress-free environment. Robiasih & Lestari [12] explained that the formative assessment can be used to assess reading, speaking, writing and grammar by give them task activities.

## V. CONCLUSION

There are many articles related to EFL learning in this pandemic but almost all of the articles explain about the satisfying or problems using applications. Teaching language indicates the teaching of the kinds of language skills. The mastery of language can be recognized by the skill to use it. To understand the target on teaching have been achieved or not is by assess them. In this pandemic, when the offline class is shifted into online class, the assessment is kind of challenges. In this pandemic, Formative assessment is better than summative assessment because through the assessment, students are still the center and in EFL learning, it can be used to assess reading, speaking, writing and grammar. Teacher can provide some task activities. Beside that some researchers suggested that teacher can assess the EFL learning by listening to their voice. Therefore synchronous method is the most proper one. Teacher can use some applications that can meet the students virtually like Google meets, zoom and other synchronous application. Teacher/ lecturer can make an assessment with Bloom (1959) scale in the cognitive domain.

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