

# How are media utilized for Productive Skills Instructions amidst online learning? Evidence from Indonesian EFL Lecturers

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**Abstract.** The teaching and learning process has changed from in-person instruction to online learning during the Covid 19 outbreak. EFL lecturers should utilize a variety of media for teaching English, particularly for instruction on productive skills. The paper aims to investigate the Indonesian EFL lecturers' views on utilizing media for English productive skills instructions amidst online learning. This study emphasized the implementation of the media for teaching productive skills, how to assess students' productive skills, how students' motivation during online learning, and students' ability to use clause complexes in English productive skills. This research relied on a qualitative study. A structured questionnaire was employed to collect the data. Eight lecturers from several universities contributed the information as research data. The current study yielded a range of findings. First, various media were employed for synchronous and asynchronous learning in order to discuss the teaching materials, give quizzes, and submit students' assignments. Second, assessments for speaking instruction were conducted through students' performances utilizing video conferencing tools, but assessments for writing instruction were conducted through asynchronous learning using Google Classroom or the university's LMS. Third, during online learning, students have less motivation in productive skills classes and their ability to use clause complexes in productive skills is decreasing.

**Key words:** learning media; productive skills; assessment; students' motivation and abilities

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## INTRODUCTION

Listening, speaking, reading, and writing are the four components of language skills. These fundamental abilities are grouped into two categories: receptive and productive (Nayman & Bavli, 2022, p. 179). Productive skills are those that result in the creation of products or items that are directly related to the application of language skills. Speaking and writing, two of the four language competencies, are critical components of these productive abilities. This competence necessitates students' capacity to explore their ability to articulate grammatically and lexically structured opinions both verbally and in writing. It is critical for teachers to improve their speaking and writing skills in order to make students to be communicatively proficient in English (Zahin & Zannat, 2021, p. 165).

The importance of productive language skills, such as speaking and writing, is that they constitute the visible proof of language acquisition. The more suitable and coherent language the speaker or writer generates, the more evidence we have of growth in the learner's linguistic knowledge. Since written and spoken communication are basic life skills, it is also crucial to teach productive abilities. In order to

inform, convince, or discuss ideas in real life, people must have good speaking skills. They must be able to take notes, fill out forms, and write emails, letters, reports, or essays with appropriate writing abilities. The lecturer should meet the students when delivering the subject so that the skills can be applied (Rahmawati, 2021, p. 11). Hence, more practices such as speaking and writing, should be strongly emphasized in the lessons to ensure that students achieve communicative competence.

The capacity to write appropriate English and speak fluently is an important part of communicative competence at all levels of education. In a traditional classroom, getting students to produce is the most effective way to develop speaking and writing abilities. In face-to-face learning, techniques such as collaborative writing, sentence combining, prewriting, studying writing models, and inquiry activities are widely used to teach writing (Jurianto et al., 2016, p. 52). Role play, discussion, story-telling, problem solving, speech and simulation, guessing game, information gaps, hot seat, and presentation are just a few of the engaging approaches to teach speaking to university students (Wulandari, 2020, p. 128). Moreover, Nurhayati (2016, p. 69) used local dramas to

teach speaking and writing, both of which are done in a face-to-face setting.

The global COVID-19 outbreak, on the other hand, had an impact on the education system and resulted in some adjustments in the educational environment. Recent studies revealed the advantages and disadvantages in online teaching of productive language skills (Nayman & Bavli, 2022, p. 179), difficulties when teaching English skills online (Ermawati et al., 2021, p. 373), and some barriers in teaching productive skills (Zahin & Zannat, 2021, p. 164). Teaching productive skills has always been tough for lecturers, and it will be even more difficult in online classrooms during a pandemic since students would be unable to communicate with their teachers face to face. Thus, lecturers strive to use a variety of technologies to tap into students' capacity to receive material through an online classroom (Rahmawati, 2021, p. 11).

Along with online learning, there is an expanding use of media to teach English, particularly productive skills. The use of media to teach speaking and writing skills has been investigated in a number of earlier research (Hasanah & Purnawan, 2016) (Ismail et al., 2018); (Fitria & Susilawati, 2019); (Malilla & Irwandi, 2022); (Hadi et al., 2021). Other studies also underlined the implementation of online learning in teaching productive skills. The previous studies revealed that the use of online instruction to teach speaking skills is less effective (Habibah & Fajarina, 2021); (Arumsari & Octaviani, 2021); (Anjani & Wachyudi, 2022). Meanwhile, the media utilization and assessment for productive skills instructions during online learning have not been reported. Therefore, in this study, the researcher has attempted to identify the media utilization, assessment for productive skills instructions, students' motivation, and abilities in producing clause complexes during online learning from EFL lecturers' viewpoints of several universities in Indonesia.

## METHODS

The objective of this study is to examine the standpoints of Indonesian EFL lecturers on the media utilization for productive skills instructions through online learning. To address the problem, a qualitative approach was employed. "Descriptive qualitative research is the study of research problems addressing the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem" (Creswell, 2012, p. 44). The data were gathered by using short written reflection and structured interviews through Google Form and WhatsApp.

The experiences of Indonesian EFL lecturers who teach productive skills are highlighted in this study. Eight Indonesian lecturers (2 males, 6 females) from various universities in the provinces of Central Java, West Java, and South Sumatera took part in the study. They come from Universitas PGRI Semarang, Universitas Muhammadiyah Semarang, STIE BPD Semarang, Universitas Tidar Magelang, Universitas Siliwangi, Universitas Baturaja, and IAIN Kudus. Four of the eight lecturers teach speaking skills, while the remaining four specialize in writing. They agreed to take part in the study after being invited and were chosen based on two key criteria: (1) distance teaching during the Covid 19 outbreak and (2) experience teaching English productive skills.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Amidst the distance teaching, the lecturers employed several media to teach productive skills. They utilized the media for doing both synchronous and asynchronous learning. The lecturers used video conferencing applications (Zoom or Google meet), WhatsApp, YouTube, Google Classroom, and the university's Learning Management System (LSM). Those media were implemented for several reasons for teaching productive skills during online learning. Below are the lecturers' purposes of using media for teaching productive skills during online learning.

**Table 1.** Media Utilization for Productive Skills Instructions in Online Learning

Speaking Skills	Writing Skills
Synchronous learning: practicing students' speaking skills	Synchronous learning: giving quiz, formative assessment, as icebreaker Asynchronous learning: submitting students' assignments
Synchronous learning: asking students to communicate together by topic	Synchronous learning: discussing the learning materials Asynchronous learning: submitting students' assignments
Asynchronous learning: practicing students' speaking skills	Synchronous learning: sharing and discussing the learning materials, reviewing students' assignments Asynchronous learning: submitting students' assignments
Synchronous learning: practicing students' speaking skills	Synchronous learning: sharing and discussing the learning materials Asynchronous learning: submitting students' assignments

From the data in Table 1, mostly the lecturers who taught speaking skills carried out synchronous learning by using video conferencing applications. There was only one lecturer who applied asynchronous learning. However, all the lecturers had the same purposes in using media for practicing students' speaking skills. In synchronous learning, lecturers could directly give some feedback and suggestions to students at the same time. Meanwhile, in asynchronous learning, lecturers couldn't directly give feedback to the students at that time. On the contrary, in writing instructions, the lecturers

applied both synchronous and asynchronous learning. The synchronous learning was applied to having sharing and discussing sessions related to the materials between lecturers and students. The asynchronous learning was used to submit students' assignments.

The lecturers employed the media not only for teaching but also for assessing students' productive skills. Those eight lecturers had shared their ways to assess students' skills during online learning. The detailed information is shown as follows.

**Table 2.** Assessment for Productive Skills Instructions in Online Learning

Speaking Skills	Writing Skills
Asking the students to practice speaking and observing their performances through video conferencing app	Asking the students to do the writing assignment and submit it in university's LMS
Assessing students' performances through video conferencing app and students' social media	Assessing students' writing through Google Classroom
Asking the students to upload their speaking performances through their social media	Assessing students' writing through university's LMS
Assessing students' performances through video conferencing app	Assessing students' writing through university's LMS

The data in Table 2 showed that the assessment of speaking instructions was done by assessing students' performances through video conferencing apps and social media. Two lecturers only used video conferencing apps while the others employed video conferencing apps and social media to assess students' speaking skills. Meanwhile, the assessment of writing

instructions was carried out by submitting students' work through various media used by each lecturer. One of the lecturers used Google classroom as the media to assess students' writing. The other three lecturers used their own universities' LMS namely ELITA, SPADA, and Vclass.

**Table 3.** Students' Motivation in English Productive Skills during Online Learning

Speaking Skills	Writing Skills
Sometimes they are interesting and attractive	Some of the students feel tired due to the online learning
(huruf kapital)Only 30% of the students who are truly motivated to join the class enthusiastically	Students' motivation is a bit decreasing
The students are less motivated	Some of them are being unaware with their responsibilities and not engaging with the classroom discussion.
They have less motivation in speaking	They enjoy online learning more than the on-site one

**Table 4.** Students' Abilities in Producing Clause Complexes through Productive Skills

Speaking Skills	Writing Skills
Some students' abilities are increasing, and some are decreasing	They have a good ability because they have target to pass the course
Only some students who can perform better	Their abilities aren't so bad however since it's online learning, they could do some cheating
Their ability is not optimally developed	Some of them would have problems in understanding the writing feedback and review
Their abilities are decrease because they think they do not have to make some efforts in online class	The students produce better writing compositions.

Table 3 showed that mostly the students have less motivation in speaking instructions. The data showed the same result in writing instruction. Only one lecturer stated that the students enjoyed online learning while other lecturers stated that the students were less motivated. Meanwhile, Table 4 showed the data of students' abilities in productive skills particularly in producing clause complexes. In speaking instructions, mostly the students' abilities were decreasing so that clause complexes were not produced in their speaking. In writing instructions, some lecturers stated that their students have a good ability and they could produce some clause complexes in their writing. However, they were afraid that the students did some cheating by using some applications to compose their writing. Furthermore, one of the lecturers stated that the students had problems in understanding the lecturer's writing feedback and review.

In teaching English productive skills (speaking and writing), the lecturers used several media to support their teaching and learning process. Those media were applied for some reasons or purposes since they have to conduct an online learning. Most of the lecturers used a video conferencing app for speaking instructions which needed lively interaction between lecturers and students. Thus, the instructions were done in synchronous learning. On the other hand, in

writing instructions, the lecturers combined synchronous learning and asynchronous learning. Synchronous learning was carried out by the lecturer to share and discuss the materials, give quizzes, and review the students' assignments. To submit the students' writing assignments, an asynchronous learning was performed.

The use of various kinds of media has been applied by lecturers in teaching productive skills. This shows that the role of technology is very important in the world of education, especially when online learning takes place. Technology can indeed replace face-to-face learning in class, but the abilities or skills acquired by students may be different. Thus, teaching English and practical skills together could be done through hybrid education (Nayman & Bavlı, 2022, p. 179).

The media utilized in productive skills instructions are not merely applied for teaching and learning process but also for assessing students' skills. In speaking instructions, the lecturers combined video conferencing apps and social media to assess students' speaking skills. Those media were chosen since the students should practice their speaking performances. They have to practice their speaking skill through video conferencing apps and/or upload their speaking video into their social media. Meanwhile, in writing instructions, the students should submit their writing assignments through

the media employed by the lecturers. Since it is writing instructions, the assignments are in a written form. Hence, the lecturers implemented asynchronous learning by utilizing Google Classroom and universities' LMS for submitting students' work. However, there are some drawbacks in conducting online assessment for writing skills namely time management when carrying out writing tests and some aspects which couldn't be assessed by the lecturer (the organization of the writing, discourse, and mechanics) (Dwiyanti & Suwastini, 2021).

Amidst the online learning, the lecturers have utilized various media not only for teaching but also assessing students' productive skills. However, the implementation of online learning does not only deal with the way the lecturers conduct teaching and learning process. Online learning is also closely related to students as learning objects. Online learning could directly influence students' motivation and ability. In this study, students' motivation and ability particularly to use clause complexes in productive skills instruction during online learning were also examined. Students' ability in combining clauses into clause complexes is beneficial for them to write an abstract for their final projects which should be no longer than one page.

When speaking instruction was done through online learning, some students found that it was an interesting activity. Without needing to interact in person, they can practice communicating remotely. However, most of the lecturers found that the students are less motivated to join speaking class. Some students would just keep quiet and even unknown what they were doing behind the screen. In writing instructions, most of the lecturers agreed that the students have less motivation joining writing class. They felt tired because they must see the screen every day to join online classrooms or to do the online assignments. The students were also irresponsible by being not involved in the class discussion. Those findings are in accordance with the previous research that students had low motivation in English online learning due to the supporting facilities (Gustiani, 2020); (Sunardi, 2021).

Online learning also gave essential impacts to students' abilities. Face-to-face learning provides a great chance for students to practice and improve their skills or abilities in productive skills. However, online learning should be done during the covid-19 outbreak. Based on the data mentioned earlier, students' abilities were

decreasing in speaking. Clause complex usage has decreased as a result of students' poor speaking skills. They frequently employ short, straightforward sentences when speaking. They tend to use simple clauses and communicate in snatches. They thought that they shouldn't push themselves in online learning. Thus, their ability was not optimally developed. The results are in line with the previous studies that speaking instruction is less effective conducted through online learning (Habibah & Fajarina, 2021); (Arumsari & Octaviani, 2021); (Anjani & Wachyudi, 2022).

In writing instructions, students' abilities were not too bad. They could produce better writing compositions. The students were able to use some clause complexes as well. However, the lecturers were afraid that the students did some cheating by using some applications to compose their writing and equipped by certain applications to check their grammatical errors. The findings support earlier research showing that the lecturer had challenges when assessing the originality and plagiarism of students' papers (Dwiyanti & Suwastini, 2021). Furthermore, there were still some students who had problems understanding the writing feedback and review from the lecturer.

## CONCLUSION

Numerous conclusions were drawn from the current study. First, various media were employed for synchronous and asynchronous learning in order to discuss the teaching materials, give quizzes, and submit students' assignments. Second, assessments for speaking instruction were conducted through student performances utilizing video conferencing tools, but assessments for writing instruction were conducted through asynchronous learning using Google Classroom or the university's LMS. Third, during online learning, students have less motivation in productive skills classes and their ability in productive skills is decreasing.

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