Short Video as An Alternative Assessment Media Covering Major Obstacle in Assessing English Competency during Distance Learning in Indonesia

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Abstract. This study aims to examine short videos as an alternative medium for assessing students' English presentation skills during distance lectures, and how other platforms can be synergized in supporting the assessment. This study uses a Design-Based Research approach conducted by assigning English presentations presented in short videos to 105 art students in English subject. The assessment was guided by the IELTS Speaking Band Descriptor and Student Assessment Rubric. The research results reveal that short videos presented potential opportunity to be used as an assessment medium. All competency indicators contained in the guidelines can be observed through the video as long as it contains no audio-visual noises and the presenter shows himself clearly in front of the camera when presenting. In addition, the synergyzing Google Classroom can facilitate the delivery, organization, and repository of assignment material, while Zoom Video Conference can be used by lecturers as a practical alternative medium for recording lecture presentations and assignments. The assignments have also allowed students to hone their confidence in doing public speaking, increase technological literacy, and stimulate their creativity in presenting videos as a work worthy of appreciation rather than just a task.

Keywords: Short Video; Assessment; Alternative Media and Information Literacy; Distance Learning

1 Introduction

During the Covid-19 pandemic, homeschooling and emergency distance teaching have affected all levels of the education system [1]. Indonesia has also experienced serious problems in conducting remote lectures in higher education, mainly due to internet quality and network problems [2] and in-class learning culture that hinders the process of adapting to new technologies [3]. This makes lecturers at universities need to understand and analyze the specific context of problems in the implementation of lectures at their respective universities to formulate learning strategies and alternative methods or appropriate media.

To suppress the Covid-19 outbreak in Indonesia, online teaching and learning from home have been implemented since March 2020 forcing students and teachers to go through a period of crisis, especially in education [4] [5]. In online teaching of English to students of the Faculty of Arts and Design Education (FPSD) of Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia (UPI), lecturers find it difficult to assess students' oral English skills due to some obstacles experienced by lecturers and students during lecture. A lecturer might convey learning materials or comprehensively review the collected assignments, but students who participate in lectures might not necessarily be able to listen to it well – or vice versa [6]. These obstacles occur due to the lack of internet quota owned by students, unstable internet network, inappropriate selection of cellular cards, and unstable device performance. In addition, there are other things that also aggravate student online learning activities such as: students have to share devices with other family who are both currently working or studying online – due to the inability to buy additional devices [7], the stuttering of some students or lecturers towards technology [8], the unequal distribution of internet quota compensation from the government to students [9], to the problem of gadget radiation that can damage student health [10][11].

In in-class lecture assignment, students' progress of understanding English material and practical skills is assessed through several indicators according to the criteria listed in the Speaking IELTS Band Descriptor [12] and the Student Assessment Rubric [13] which has been modified as a lecturer's assessment. This assessment is important for lecturers as a basis for making decisions in dealing with learning obstacles (if found), achieving learning targets and objectives, and accelerating learning. Some indicators should actually be visible through online lectures held via Zoom Video Conference, but the assessment process is destroyed since lecturers could not interact optimally with students due to internet and device constraints. Through several studies, various efforts have been made to restore effective learning and assessment to obtain the same quality of learning outcomes as in 'offline' classes, such as optimizing the use of Google Classroom which is considered effective and in great demand [14] [15] [16] [17], as well as synergizing other online platforms in learning such as Zoom and Whatsapp Group [18] [19]. However, researchers still assume that the effectiveness of offline classes is still irreplaceable. Appropriate features and sophistication of the facility platform cannot guarantee objectivity and convenience in assessing students, but qualified method should be applied to take advantage of the existing platform [15].

The solution criteria that can cover obstacles in assessing students must be simple and must be in the form of audio-visual audio, with consideration, lecturers can see their students when making presentations. In addition, the media must also be able to serve as a mean for practice in summarizing the learned material and practicing English presentation, become a solution to the material and immaterial conditions of students as well as to learning communication problems. The media must also be instant, no additional applications or programs requirement that are difficult to obtain, difficult to install, or take a long time to learn; can be used offline; its output is readable on multiple devices; can be made quickly; evaluative, can be edited or reviewed (when needed); mobile and paperless. The right to have a learning comfort is the main point that lecturers must fulfill, so that learning objectives can be achieved according to the plans and the online learning process can take place fairly [19].

So, based on those demands, the author took the initiative to examine short videos as a potential medium to assess students' spoken English skills. The media is determined based on keywords summarized from the problem description above which demand 'audio-visual' and 'simple' or not complicated and troublesome – including a short duration which plays an important role in influencing student learning performance and practice. Also, the consideration that foreign language courses require the personal skills of each learner in

mastering the foreign language being taught which must be seen directly by the lecturer as a basis for assessment [19]. From these trials, the authors intend to study whether short videos can be an alternative for lecturers in assessing students' abilities using existing assessment guidelines, as well as how other platforms such as classroom and zoom can be empowered to support the assessments.

2   Methodology

This research employs Design-based Research (DBR) approach since this research is oriented to improve the practice of assessment of learning outcomes [20]. The study was conducted for 1 semester (3 months) on 105 students of the Faculty of Art and Design Education in English course that focus on developing Oral English Presentation or Public Speaking skills. The English course consists of 16 meetings where there are 4 essential meetings that must be assessed for learning outcomes through presentations. The assessment was guided by: (1) Speaking IELTS Band Descriptor [12] for fluency and coherence, lexical resource, grammatical range and accuracy, and pronunciation; and (2) Student Assessment Rubric [13] for eye contact, volume, clarity and expression, body language, confidence, and audience. The assessment was focused on the appearance of assessment indicators through video, not to give a score to the parctipants for their English proficiency.

The research began with the identification and analysis of problems in remote assessment in the English class the author handle. As a collaboration of opinion with other practitioners, the author also observed and accommodated the complaints of other English lecturers of the same faculty about the effectiveness and efficiency of assessments in online class as well as illustrations of the solutions they expect. Secondly, the researcher formulated alternative media that can cover the needs of the assessment which includes audio-visual form and how other platforms such as Zoom and Google Classroom can be used to organize and facilitate the assessment. Thirdly, the author practiced the formulation while noting and studying the limitations of its implementation as a basis for improvement for the application of the formulation at the next meeting. The same treatment was also applied to the next trial until the authors found an efficient format for conducting the assessment via video. And finally, the author standardized the short video assignment format that most met the requirements based on a series of trials that had been carried out and reflected back on the relevance of lecturers' needs in assessing students' spoken English skills. This standard is not final and still has the opportunity to be developed according to class conditions, but standardization is carried out after the formulation and improvement results are close to the needs of the lecturers' assessment in class.

3   Result and Discussion

The short video assignment initiative was born from the demand for alternative media assessment in the form of audio-visual which is considered to be a solution to network and device constraints, can be a learning material and vehicle for students, and the consideration that videos can be made in almost all devices that students have, whether they have simple and advanced features. Based on the author's data collection, all students have gadgets, either laptops or smartphones, which they usually use to participate in lectures. All the specifications

of the devices they have were listed as capable of producing videos with standard formats such as '.mp4'. In addition, students also wouldn't be bothered to learn its production process.

Short videos were then instructed as a task to practice spoken English skills from the material the students had learned. There were 4 samples of material that was assessed through video assignments taken from the English Semester Lesson Plan, including (1) Introduction, which is needed as a pre-test as the basis for determining the material level to be delivered during lectures (2) English Sources, which is used to explore the language potential that each student has independently and to grow their self-awareness and optimism in learning foreign languages, (3) Basic Mind Mapping, a basic skills in public speaking that students must master in order to organize structured and understandable ideas when expressing opinions, and the last material is (4) Film review, where students are asked to analyze the film's story, then make a film synopsis and retell the film using dramatic structure theory. The terms of the assignment were summarized as follows: (1) Video resolution 480p-720p, 25fps-30fps; (2) Duration: 1-3 minutes; (3) Submission: Google Classroom; and (4) Dresscode/speech style/video style: Free.

The assessment process was carried out through video observations of each individual to see the appearance of the assessment points, then record any potential problems that prevent the assessment points from appearing so that the video assignment format must be corrected immediately. The following table is a summary of notes from observations of video assignments collected from 4 assessment trials.

Table 1. Testing chronology and its recorded flaws or potential presentation disturbance

	Test 1
Recorded Flaws	Sorts of audio and visual noises found in a part/ along video found in 55 (of 105 videos) such as vehicle noise, in-house activity noise, wind, television sound, room's inherent noise, low light intensity, no lighting support, or placing the camera far from the presenter
Flaws Impact	The lecturer/ assessor could not catch essential points of presentation such as fluency and coherence, lexical resource, grammatical range and accuracy, pronunciation, volume, clarity, eye contact, expression, body language, confidence, and audience engagement
	Test 2
Additional rule	Students should place themselves in their camera properly to avoid any audio-visual noises
Recorded Flaws	Some students hide themselves behind the video, found in 10 videos
Flaws Impact	The assessor could not observe the eye contact, expression, body language, confidence, dan audience engagement the students might perform. Besides, students could potentially read the text completely and made the miss the learning process, material mastery, and improvement in their presentation. Badly, the video assignment might have been done by other people since the assessor could not see who actually performed the presentation behind the slide
	Test 3	Test 4
Additional rule	Students must show themselves clearly in front of camera	(no additional rule/ clear)

In the third and fourth trials, no flaws were recorded. However, the authors noted new findings including: there found some videos with instrumental background music inserted. The music was set at a lower volume and does not dominate the presenter's voice, and was used as an aesthetic element of the video that made it comfortable to listen to. Then, some videos also included text captions, image, or video to illustrate or reinforce what they were

talking about or what they meant without blocking them in the frame. The video also used bumper animation for opening and closing which made it easier for author to capture the title of the presentation. Some students also found to deliver the presentations in a distinctive style, imitating the presenters in talk shows on Indonesian TV channel. There found those who treated the video as if it was their chatting friends, as indicated by their flexibility in presenting and tagging questions or follow-up questions (without requiring an answer) as well as their invitation to see certain stories in other places and times outside of the presentation. More than 90% of students also collected videos in 480p, the lowest recommended resolution, to save their internet quota. Meanwhile, regarding the use of Zoom for delivering material livestream, 94% of students admitted that they were more comfortable listening to lectures from videos sent via Classroom rather than live streaming. Because students could download it anytime and anywhere so they could be more flexible in managing their quota and study time. In addition, lecture videos could also be played back if they still did not understand the material or part of the material presented allowing them to understand the material and task instructions more comprehensively.

From a total of 4 trials, the author only made 2 improvements to the assignment rules. The mistakes that underlied the improvement did not actually come from all students but just a few. However, the potential for mistakes could be repeated by other students. To anticipate it, the video assignment regulations should be immediately changed or corrected to make the submitted video uniform and easy to access. This was an application of an iterative cycle of process and refinement of solutions in practice in this study. Thus, the video assignment format applied in the third and fourth trials has become an assignment format that so far met the needs of the students' oral English proficiency assessment, because, in the assignment format the lecturer could clearly see the indicators of achievement of presentation practice in accordance with the guidelines used. Ultimately, to simplify the assessment process and obtain good assessment results, the final format of the video assignments given to students remain the same as the early format, but was extended with two specific rules including (1) Avoid any form of noises both audio and visual, and (2) Presenter must show him/herself clearly and close-up in front of camera and is forbidden to hide behind the screen or covering his/her face during the presentation.

This provision must be applied since the assessment process cannot be disturbed by various forms of noise, both audio and visual. The assessment process requires clear sound and visualization to allow lecturer listen and capture indicators of student abilities well and ultimately can provide an objective evaluation (Sabiq and Suparno, 2016), while video that is full of noise cannot be used as an assessment benchmark. Synergy with other platforms in short video assignments also eased lecturer to prepare, organize assessments, and distribute assessment results in the form of values, criticisms, or suggestions. Utilization of Classroom eased lecturers to deliver announcements, asynchronous learning materials – which were delivered via video which was then uploaded to classes in the classroom, set class schedules and task deadlines, provided feedback and grades from the short videos they submitted, become a repository of student learning evidence where lecturers could arrange the material neatly in sequence or thematicly and see student progress from the beginning to the end of learning. Meanwhile, Zoom, which was considered less effective for live streaming, could be used as a cheap and fast recording tool. Lecturers could deliver lectures while displaying screen sharing such as videos, slideshows, pictures, whiteboards, pause parts that do not need to be in-frame, without having to go through the editing process first and without wasting internet data. The output from the recording is relatively much smaller than that from

professional camera, readable by various types of devices and easing the uploading and downloading process, yet can still be read and heard clearly.

In addition, short video assignments can also foster creativity while increasing students' digital literacy. Some students treated their assignments like creating Youtube content where students beautified their videos by adding backsound, sound effects, bumper animation, pop-up text, or image overlays to strengthen the emphasis of the presentation message, thicken the theme, or just to give an aesthetic feel to make the presentation interesting. and not boring to look at and hear. This process certainly required students to do a little research to be able to determine the proper extra audio-visual elements in the video, and it took extra time since they had to process it first in the editing stage. However, the students who made the video admitted that they got their own satisfaction from their video work, because, apart from trying to deliver the best possible English presentation, the short video was also a place to show their videography skills to the lecturers. And of course students responded positively to this assignment, because it did not burden them in terms of internet quota, process, and could be a mean for practice and summarize without having to write long, and that it could be done independently anytime and anywhere.

4   Conclusion

Short videos are proven to be able to provide the minimum assessment indicators needed by lecturers to evaluate the development of students' understanding and practice of spoken English as in offline classes. The minimum requirement must not contain any form of noise, both audio and visual, and students are required to be on-cam clearly to allow lecturer analyze student body language as part of the public speaking skills that will be assessed, and to get sound quality fine and clear. Other platforms can also be integrated to simplify the assessment process, such as using Classroom as a storage medium, delivering materials, and organizing classes. Meanwhile, Zoom is a cheap and practical recording medium for delivering materials and assignments.The short video assignments can also become a mean for practice and summarizing the learnt material. In addition, short videos can be a medium to build their confidence through the intensity of English public speaking practice in front of the camera. Short video project is also able to stimulate student creativity. These indications can be observed from videos that are aesthetically treated with the insertion of backsound, sound effects, bumper animation, pop-up text, or image overlays to match the video theme. This implies that students have an aesthetic sense in presenting videos for other people's consumption, meaning that students do not always treat the short videos they make as mere assignments, but rather a work that deserves appreciation by the audience. Thus, short videos can be recommended as a feasible solution for other developing countries that have the same problems as in Indonesia in implementing distance learning and assessments during the COVID-19 pandemic.

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