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## **Eclectic Approach: A Search for More Effective Assessment Ways to Meet EFL Assessment Principles**

**Nur Sehang Thamrin**<sup>\*1,2</sup>

**Suwarsih Madya**<sup>3</sup>

**Nur Hidayanto Pancoro Setyo Putro**<sup>3</sup>

**Siti Salina Mustakim**<sup>4</sup>

**Aminuddin Hassan**<sup>4</sup>

**Heri Retnawati**<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Department of Educational Research and Evaluation, Graduate School, Universitas Negeri Yogyakarta, 55281, INDONESIA

<sup>2</sup>Department of English Education, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Universitas Tadulako, 94148, INDONESIA

<sup>3</sup>Department of English Education, Faculty of Language and Art, Universitas Negeri Yogyakarta, 55281, INDONESIA

<sup>4</sup>Department of Foundation Studies, Universiti Putra Malaysia, 43400, MALAYSIA

### **Abstract**

*The current EFL curriculum for high schools in Indonesia demands integrating cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains in assessment. Therefore, teachers must consider these domains in designing assessment instruments and use them, including in a full-online class. In this type of class, they must choose effective methods with principled eclecticism that meet the assessment principles. This study examines the teachers' assessment process, from constructing the assessment devices to implementing the test in virtual classrooms. The qualitative research approach was used to explore the online-based assessments involving 16 English teachers recruited through convenience sampling techniques. Accordingly, the data were collected using virtual semi-structured interviews through a WhatsApp call. The data were analysed descriptively through a thematic analysis integrated with an interactive technique to locate and identify common patterns of meaning in a data set. The findings*

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\* Corresponding author, email: [nursehangthamrin@yahoo.com](mailto:nursehangthamrin@yahoo.com)

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*show that teachers used several methods to design their tests in the planning stage, considering several aspects based on the eclectic approach principles for effective assessment practices. However, teachers need more assessment literacy regarding their knowledge of test quality. This research employed qualitative data from a small number of teachers, so future studies that include more teachers from different locations and consider different viewpoints, including those of students, families, and policymakers, on how to evaluate student achievement virtually are recommended.*

**Keywords:** Covid-19, language assessment, online assessment, principled eclecticism, virtual.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The spread of the Coronaviruses for about three years since 2019 caused the government in all affected countries to restrict physical contact at the beginning of the pandemic. Thus, policymakers enforced a work-from-home (WFH) policy. This condition affected the teaching-learning and assessment process to shift from in-person to full-online modes (Zhang et al., 2021). As a result, the use of ICT became increasingly massive in almost all sectors, including education (Cleland et al., 2020; Orlov et al., 2021). However, conducting the teaching-learning and assessment processes in the full-online condition was challenging for many teachers in some countries, particularly in the EFL context (Adedoyin & Soykan, 2020; UNICEF, 2021; Wahid et al., 2021). Most teachers in Indonesia experienced enormous challenges regarding constructing the assessment instruments and delivering them (Perwitasari et al., 2021), despite the belief that an online assessment is more efficient regarding resources than a paper-and-pencil test (Madya et al., 2019). In short, the Covid-19 pandemic forced all elements of society to adapt to various obstacles and challenges, even though ICT is believed to provide solutions to problems in the teaching and learning process if it is used in blended learning, not in full-online conditions. Therefore, the study on EFL teachers' strategies to conduct the assessment effectively is interesting to investigate.

The assessment aims to collect information on students' learning progress and determine their interest in observing their learning process (Baird et al., 2017; Brown & Abeywickrama, 2018). Moreover, it helps establish a positive learning environment in the classroom. Therefore, the assessment process must comply with the principles of assessment, such as in terms of validity and reliability (Banta & Palomba, 2015; Brown & Abeywickrama, 2018; Cheng & Fox, 2017; McNamara, 2000). The assessment process involves designing and administering instruments. Therefore, teachers need to make a good plan for conducting an assessment. The principles of regular-based learning assessment and those of virtual-based learning assessment share some characteristics, but an online-based assessment must be adjusted to the nature of interactions between teachers and students and the mode of teaching-learning instructions (Asoodar et al., 2014; Dunn et al., 2003; Yang, 2011).

Furthermore, the current curriculum of Indonesian high schools requires language assessment to integrate cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects.

However, due to the social distance policy during the pandemic, teachers found it challenging to meet the assessment principles. Therefore, assessment literacy (AL) dealing with practical strategies such as the eclectic approach must be considered a good assessment alternative under this condition. [Abduh \(2021\)](#) reports that teachers face several obstacles in using e-learning platforms despite their positive beliefs about online assessments. However, research on how to cope with the problems the teachers or students face is rare.

Additionally, there is a paucity of discussion regarding the gains of the eclectic approach and AL in assessments in an online class. The researchers argue that further studies regarding e-assessment practices are beneficial due to their potential contributions from practices and research perspectives. In addition, online teaching and assessment will become a common trend in future educational contexts ([Irons & Elkington, 2022](#)). Therefore, this study intends to investigate how English as a foreign language (EFL) teachers in Indonesia conducted formative and summative assessments which integrated language skills (speaking, writing, reading, and listening) and language components (grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation). Delivering assessments for both purposes enhances students learning during virtual learning, and thus it is also significant to explore. Therefore, teachers should follow the assessment principles in planning and conducting the assessment.

Principled eclecticism is a common approach in designing the teaching process in which teachers adapt one or two methods among a number of the existing teaching methods based on several considerations ([Larsen-Freeman, 2000](#); [Mellow, 2002](#)). [Richards \(2017\)](#) defines the term 'eclectic approach' as a teaching approach which is not based on a single method (e.g., task-based teaching or CLIL) but several different methods. [Triastuti et al. \(2021\)](#) claim that this approach accommodates teachers to select the relevant teaching methods and strategies to meet the demands and expectations of the Indonesian EFL curriculum. In addition, [Hanafi and Zulfa \(2017\)](#) and [Sarifa \(2020\)](#) reveal that this approach helps students learn English based on their interests, needs, and lacks. [Autti-Rämö and Mäkelä \(2007\)](#) discover that by implementing this approach, using a structured framework is a beneficial tool in opening ethical discussion in each of their projects. However, the implementation of this method in the context of EFL assessment is scant. According to a study by [Ihuoma \(2019\)](#) involving 66 university students, the eclectic approach reduced students' test anxiety. It is suggested that this method be implemented in assessment processes for formative and summative purposes. Therefore, the researchers are interested in determining how EFL teachers conducted an assessment during the full-online teaching-learning of COVID-19. To address this issue, the researchers formulated the following research questions:

1. How was teachers' preparedness in conducting the EFL assessment using the principles of the eclectic approach?
2. How did teachers apply principled eclecticism when assessing EFL students' performance?

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 EFL Assessment Principles**

Assessing learners' language performances requires teachers' knowledge of the theory of assessment and the theory of language (Brindley, 2001). Many practitioners, such as Greenstein (2012), Coombe et al. (2020), and Juanjuan and Mohd Yusoff (2022), believe that teachers' AL is significant to plan a good assessment process. Poor assessment procedures can negatively affect the washback, such as designing the syllabus, determining learning objectives, selecting teaching materials, and even providing student motivation. The quality of assessment needs to be considered in the two stages of assessment; developing assessment instruments and conducting the assessment in the class. In developing the assessment instruments, teachers should follow a test development process which meets the assessment principles (Brown & Lee, 2015; Cheng & Fox, 2017; Weigle, 2002).

The process starts by determining the purpose of the test, which is pivotal as the teacher's guide to determining the test's construct, an item or task format, scoring or rating. The latter process is to construct the definition of the test, which refers to the question of what it is intended to measure. Several questions regarding the test construction need to be considered: What language components and skills are measured? Should the test integrate language components and skills? Thus, it is necessary to construct the definition based on the theoretical and empirical data regarding the test's construct (Cheng & Fox, 2017; Xie, 2013). This stage is a basis for developing test items and the form of the test. Finally, scoring or rating gives information about the student's learning progress after a measurement (Dunn et al., 2003). This construction of the assessment devices is the first stage of the language assessment process.

Assessment devices reveal whether or not students' learning achievements have met the instructional objectives. Therefore, the devices are urgently needed to achieve validity and reliability (Earl & Katz, 2006; Retnawati, 2016; Retnawati et al., 2016). Regarding validity, assessment compares what it measures with what teachers intend to measure. Meanwhile, reliability is related to the consistency of test results across multiple occasions, raters, and test takers. In addition, Brown and Abeywicakrama (2018) include the aspect of practicality and authenticity. While practicality refers to the ease of designing assessment devices, administering, scoring, and interpreting the result, authenticity covers the function of the test to measure students' ability during the learning process.

In the Indonesian curriculum, language learning assessment must integrate language components and skills, soft skills, and high-order thinking skills (Triastuti et al., 2021), which is challenging for many teachers (Retnawati et al., 2016). From the researchers' perspectives, teachers must use effective methods by considering the student's characteristics and the situation under which the assessment is conducted. Principled eclecticism can be adapted to investigate how teachers conduct the assessment process. In conclusion, principled eclecticism allows teachers to construct and administer assessment devices in their classes.

## 2.2 Principled Eclecticism

The eclectic approach derives from two words, ‘approach’ and ‘eclectic’. The former refers to ways to approach or achieve something, while the latter refers to being selective from various sources. In short, the eclectic approach takes the advantage of the merits of various existing EFL teaching methods, especially in assessing English in schools. Many practitioners have defined the eclectic approach and its benefits in different disciplines (e.g. Kumar, 2013; Richards, 2017; Triastuti et al., 2021).

In a language assessment, teachers need to look at various ways of making assessment tools that meet assessment elements such as validity, reliability, practicality, and authenticity by considering student characteristics and contexts, for example, the learning mode during the Covid-19, which causes the learning process to be carried out remotely. Assessment that provides information on student learning outcomes must have high validity. Al-Khasawneh (2022) underlines several aspects that need to be considered in determining learning strategies, i.e., choosing teaching materials that suit the learning context and enhance and motivate students to learn. Therefore, several points need to be considered in implementing principled eclecticism: 1) instructional objectives should include more than one method that is effectively applied, 2) the methods should stimulate student learning, 3) students should be actively involved in the teaching and learning process, 4) teaching time must be adequate, and 5) assessment should be included as a part of the teaching and learning process (Parupalli, 2018; Wali, 2009). In summary, principled eclecticism recommends considering language teaching and assessment goals, learners’ needs and characteristics, time allocation, and learning resources available to meet the principles of effective assessment.

## 3. METHODS

This study was conducted through a qualitative survey to examine the current condition regarding online assessment procedures in the EFL context. The data were collected from 16 non-native English teachers from 14 senior high schools and two vocational schools in Eastern Indonesia. The authors solely focused on assessment techniques in high schools because, during the Covid-19 pandemic, high school students lost more learning than university students (UNICEF, 2021). Convenient sampling was used to recruit research participants, which means that their participation was based on their willingness to be involved in the research (Creswell, 2009). The researchers sent an invitation regarding the involvement of the teachers to the head of the English Teacher Forum by enclosing the first author’s WhatsApp contact number. Confirmation of the teachers’ willingness to participate was made through WhatsApp messages, and 37 teachers agreed to participate in the research. The participants’ demographic characteristics are described in Table 1.

**Table 1.** Characteristics of respondents.

Respondent	Teaching experience (in years)	Sex	Certified as a professional teacher	Educational background	School
R1	16	M	Yes	Master’s degree	Private school
R2	4	F	No	Undergraduate degree	Private School

Table 1 continued...

R3	17	M	Yes	Undergraduate degree	Public School
R4	2	M	No	Undergraduate degree	Private School
R5	5	M	No	Undergraduate degree	Public School
R6	10	F	Yes	Undergraduate degree	Public School
R7	20	F	Yes	Undergraduate degree	Public School
R8	16	F	Yes	Undergraduate degree	Public School
R9	16	F	Yes	Undergraduate degree	Vocational school
R10	4	F	No	Undergraduate degree	Private School
R11	11	F	Yes	Undergraduate degree	Vocational school
R12	17	F	Yes	Master's degree	Public School
R13	33	M	Yes	Undergraduate degree	Public School
R14	8	M	Yes	Master's degree	Public School
R15	3	M	No	Undergraduate degree	Public School
R16	22	F	Yes	Master's degree	Public School

Note. R stands for Respondent.

Table 1 describes that the participants comprised seven males and nine females, most of whom taught English at public schools. In fulfilling the ethical requirements, pseudonyms were assigned to disguise the participants' identities. The 16 teachers (coded R1 – R16) had a different length of teaching experiences. Eleven teachers have received professional teacher certification, but the others still need to be certified because they have less than five years of teaching experience, as required by the Indonesian government regulation. However, all participants have earned a university degree in EFL teaching, an undergraduate degree, or a master's degree.

The data for the research were collected through online semi-structured interviews because of their effectiveness in collecting in-depth information (Cohen et al., 2005) during the lockdown condition resulting from Covid-19. The participants were interviewed in Bahasa Indonesia to make them more comfortable expressing their opinions. The interview sessions involved 1) an introduction about the objectives and method of the study, 2) the participant's self-introduction, and 3) a dialogue session for about 45 – 60 minutes for each participant and recorded using a digital recorder.

Descriptive analysis was used to summarise the information using thematic analysis in an integrative technique proposed by Miles et al. (2014) because it allows analysing of the data interactively and continuously through data condensation, data display, and verification—the processes started by transcribing the audio files. The data condensation stage aimed to simplify the data that has been collected by selecting information related to the research questions. Thus, in selecting the data, the authors read iteratively to get familiar with the data and to predict common themes across the dataset. In this stage, the transcripts were coded by highlighting texts. For example, the authors coded “textbook and the internet” as “sources” for developing the test' construct. Then, since a thematic analysis is sufficient to determine the data pattern, the authors continued to seek themes using this method. The information irrelevant to the study was discarded. Furthermore, data were displayed and summarised according to themes. The final stage was verification, in which conclusions were drawn based on the previously reduced and presented data. This analysis was intended to measure the EFL teachers' overall online assessment practices.

## 4. RESULTS

This section reports the research findings regarding online assessment practices during the pandemic of Covid-19 based on the research questions. The analysis reveals the common themes, namely the importance of the assessment, assessment plan, test development, quality of the test, and strategies in assessing students' learning progress, and they are divided into two primary themes.

### 4.1 Teachers' Preparedness in Conducting the EFL Assessment Based on the Principled Eclecticism

Before exploring teachers' readiness to conduct EFL assessments during online learning, the researchers explored whether the teachers recognised the significance of assessment regardless of the limitations. The findings discovered that, in general, all teachers recognised the importance of conducting the assessment during online teaching practices during the pandemic. R13, who has the longest tenure as an EFL teacher, and R4, with the shortest teaching experience, described how the assessment result gave information about the student's performance after the teaching-learning process.

- (1) "I want to know how well students understand and retain the materials I gave them ..... I taught them. I want to know whether students can explain the material that I have taught by answering the questions I prepared". R13
- (2) "To record students' progress". R4

Their responses indicate that they shared the same opinion regarding the importance of assessments, although they had different teaching experiences and communication platforms. In short, the teachers understand the need to measure students' learning achievement despite the force majeure condition. In developing the quality of the assessment devices, the teachers set the purpose of the assessment by discussing it with their colleagues through Zoom meetings. In addition, they also discuss the assessments through WhatsApp calls, voice notes, and Messenger.

- (3) "I prefer to use WhatsApp to discuss the purpose of my test with other English teachers". R1

In addition, they utilised several sources to construct the test items, such as materials on the internet and textbooks, by considering the characteristics of their students.

- (4) "I often developed my assessment instruments to suit the characteristics of my students. Because I taught in a vocational school where the emphasis of teaching English differs from the general high schools, I adapted the test content by considering this context. For example, the computer department uses more procedure text. I also used sources from books and the internet, but I modified it according to the student's characteristics". R11

The lesson plan was simplified during the online learning, consisting of only one page. However, all teachers described the assessment plan briefly in that document. It indicates that all teachers planned to conduct an assessment during the Covid-19 pandemic. However, most teachers reported that they never measured the validity and

reliability of the assessment instrument before administering it to students. For instance, R2, R14, and R15 said that they did not know how to validate the assessment instrument to meet the standard quality. When they discussed the instrument with their fellow teachers or the school principal, it was only for summative assessment instruments. In addition, some teachers reported that they discussed it with their fellow teachers (R3, R7, R8, and R10) to confirm whether the instrument meets the curriculum's standard competencies and instructional objectives. Then, the instrument was submitted to the vice-principal, who is responsible for curriculum administration management, approval, and documentation.

- (5) "Before designing the instrument for the assessment, we need approval from the supervisor or the principal; that is why we discuss it with them". R10

These findings show that the teachers lack AL in developing suitable assessment devices. The teachers' reflections suggest structured training regarding how to ensure the quality of an instrument before it is used as a measuring tool for the learning process. In addition, teachers do not have access to standardised assessment devices developed through research, and thus the results of assessments based on teacher-made tests can cause misperceptions of the student's learning achievement.

In conclusion, the teachers lacked knowledge of assessment principles despite their knowledge of establishing the assessment objectives before creating a test and using various sources to develop the test constructs.

#### **4.2 The Application of Principled Eclecticism When Assessing EFL Students' Performance**

Most teachers integrated non-cognitive tests during the online assessment as suggested by the curriculum. However, they implied different ways to assess students' soft skills. For example, they used a project to assess students' honesty and cooperative skills.

- (6) "It is easy for me to include the affective domain in my assessment through project-based tasks. I can identify if they cheat and do not contribute to the group work". R14

Furthermore, all teachers considered integrating language skills and components in their assessment.

- (7) "Based on the core and basic competencies of the curriculum, they need to integrate them. The reason is that students need language components to support and improve their language skills". R1
- (8) "Understanding language components helps students achieve good language skills... so they can complete the assessment well". R3
- (9) "It is not impossible for not integrating language skills in the language assessment....because when I asked them to draft a dialogue, which is in writing, I also asked them to perform .. speaking ...the dialogue that they video-recorded. During the online assessment, I always give a project-based assessment as a task". R14

The language components included in the assessment followed the characteristics of the language skills.



- (10) “I usually combined the language components and skills in assessing students’ work. Particularly in the narrative text lesson, I asked students to write their personal experience, and then I assessed their writing, grammar, and vocabulary”. R5
- (11) “The language components I tested were based on the language skills...for example, if I tested students speaking through video, I also assessed their grammar”. R12

During the full-time online learning during the Covid-19, teachers used online learning and communication tools to assess student’s learning progress. They selected an effective online tool that enables distributing the instrument and giving feedback to students. The popular platforms used by teachers were WhatsApp, Google Forms, and Google Classroom, as both the teachers and the students knew how to use them conveniently. For example, R16 reported that Google Classroom was easy to use and could record her teaching.

- (12) “I preferred Google Classroom as it was easy to use, and it recorded my teaching activities. I used Google Forms for reading tests as the students could access their score as soon as they submitted their task”. R16

However, students find submitting their tasks on time challenging for several reasons. Most teachers reported that the major problems are a lack of internet-accessing devices and internet connection problems. Some students did not have a smartphone. Consequently, the internet data provided by the government did not benefit the students in online classes.

- (13) “Yes, they did. Mostly, they had problems with unstable internet connection”. R10
- (14) “Yeah, my students sometimes had difficulty submitting video assignments since it took time and internet data to upload it in Google Classroom, especially students living in rural areas”. R5
- (15) “Yes, they did, especially students who did not have a stable internet connection or a smartphone”. R3
- (16) “The students did not have a smartphone, so they could not use the free internet data given by the government”. R16

Furthermore, during the early Covid-19 pandemic, some teachers (R11, R14, R15, and R16) noted that ICT literacy was low among students and teachers. They were unfamiliar with online learning platforms, which gave the students difficulties submitting their assignments and the teachers managing their teaching process. For instance, R14 reported that “she did not make any ICT plan during online learning because it was suddenly enforced without any preparation”. Accordingly, in addressing the problem, most teachers gave students extensions to submit their tasks. Alternatively, the teacher allowed the students to come to school with strict health protocol or initiated home-visit so that they could submit their assignments.

Despite the teachers’ thorough preparation for the process of organising learning outcomes during the virtual learning condition, most teachers reported that due to the inefficiency of the online teaching and learning process and limited interaction, in-person instruction gave better learning outcomes for students.

- (17) “Yes ... It was so different ... because it was difficult for the students to understand the material delivered through online classes”. R6

Nevertheless, teachers can determine how much students understand the materials based on their body language in face-to-face interaction. Moreover, full-online teaching during Covid-19 exhausted students as they got assignments from all teachers simultaneously. The condition worsened because of technical problems such as internet connection and a lack of smartphones.

- (18) “Yes, they were. It was totally different from face-to-face assessments. An online learning assessment had many limitations, including limited internet access, reduced interaction with teachers, lack of material mastery, and a lack of support in learning. These limitations greatly affected students’ achievement”. R10

Furthermore, one teacher, R15, informed that the decline in students’ learning outcomes during online learning was also caused by a lack of familiarity with autonomous learning. Although online learning during Covid-19 has not positively impacted student outcomes, the present study found that online learning mode still provides other benefits, such as parent involvement in monitoring their children's learning process and assignment completion and student creativity using technological devices. In addition, strong collaborations among teachers in solving students’ learning problems increased, and school principals found it easier to control teachers’ involvement in the learning and assessment processes, as reported by (R11, R12, R14, and R15). The excerpts mentioned above indicate that while applying several strategies to engage students in doing tasks, the assessment plan did not affect the student’s achievement during online learning.

To sum up, the teachers in this study recognised that the purpose of the assessment was to determine the student’s learning progress. Language assessment is different from the assessment in any other subject. Language teachers must understand the principles of teaching and learning a language and assessment because they must incorporate language skills and components into their instruction and evaluation plan. Furthermore, the teachers must also consider which language components are integrated with the language skills. In the present study, in assessing the students’ non-cognitive aspects in learning, the teachers designed the tasks to develop students’ positive attitudes, such as honesty and collaborative skills. However, during the Covid-19 pandemic, most teachers preferred to construct the instruments by adapting from several sources on the internet, reference books, and textbooks. Teachers utilised several online learning tools to assist them and their students in the assessment process. Nevertheless, several problems arose due to the sudden shift to online learning due to Covid-19, such as a lack of ICT skills, poor internet connection, and incompatible mobile phones. This condition required that teachers adapt their assessment by applying various online learning tools, allowing students to come to school and teachers to visit their students to carry out the assessment.

## **5. DISCUSSION**

Several researchers studied the condition of online learning assessment during Covid-19, which reported several considerations to change the learning assessment to

an online mode, such as government policy and contextual learning conditions. In addition, teachers experienced several challenges in conducting online assessments. This study intended to investigate the online assessment practised by EFL high school teachers in Indonesia, focusing on their readiness to construct the assessment devices and how they conducted online assessments. The findings of the present study are framed through principled eclecticism. The results show that the teachers understood the implementation of assessment in the context of EFL, except for their understanding of the validity and reliability of the instruments. [Fulcher \(2012\)](#) states that AL refers to the knowledge and skills in designing assessment instruments. The findings are consistent with [Koh \(2011\)](#) and [Zhang et al. \(2021\)](#), who found that teachers' assessment knowledge helps them design exams and ensures the quality of their assessments. Their understanding reflects their online assessment practices.

The teachers in this study used textbooks and resources from the internet to develop the test construct. Furthermore, they discussed the assessment goals through Zoom meetings, WhatsApp calls, voice notes, or Messenger. The results of the study show that the teachers used multimodalities to plan their assessments for effective and easy access. Briefly, the finding tunes in with procedures in developing a test; that is, the teachers should gather theoretical and empirical-based sources to define the test's construct and work it individually and with their colleagues to ensure the quality of the test ([Cheng & Fox, 2017](#); [Weigle, 2002](#)).

Regarding the teachers' lack of assessment literacy, the teachers suggested training to enhance their knowledge of assessment, which should be a priority in a teachers' professional development ([Popham, 2009](#)). An assessment covers a test as an instrument for measurement, and it is more than designing a test. Therefore, a test must fulfil the validity and reliability requirements to measure what should be measured and have consistent results ([Brown & Abeywickrama, 2018](#); [Carr, 2011](#); [Harmer, 2015](#); [Madya et al., 2020](#)). A planning stage in constructing test instruments is paramount to ensure the quality of the instrument ([Carr, 2011](#)), which covers a test context, purpose, structure, and tasks. The exams provide information on how effectively students can use the target language in a specific context ([Carr, 2011](#)). The test's context and purpose are related to administering the test, how the test is used, and how to interpret the results. The administered test is expected to measure what it is intended to measure. For instance, if students' writing skills are the purpose of the test, then the test developers must consider the components reflecting students' English writing skills. The findings of the present study indicate that the teachers considered how important the quality of the test is, despite their inadequate AL. Therefore, a professional development program is necessary to improve teachers' competencies. This issue aligns with the research conducted by [Tian et al. \(2021\)](#) regarding how teachers benefited from online assessment training during Covid-19.

English as a foreign language for communication is one of the educational aims in Indonesia. For instance, the writing exam should assess students' proficiency in composing English paragraphs. In addition, preparing feedback for improvement should be considered when the test is utilised for formative evaluation. [Russell et al. \(2006\)](#) claim that constructive feedback powerfully motivates students to learn. The results show that the teachers have prepared the test well by considering and choosing the language components to be included in the language skill tests. Language learning is different from learning other subjects. In constructing a language test, the teachers should be familiar with the principles of language learning, which integrate the

acquisition of the language components and language abilities (Adnan et al., 2019; Burton, 2011).

Prior research has not explored how EFL teachers integrated the language components and skills in their assessment practices. However, this study reported that some teachers integrated at least two language skills into the test: writing and speaking, which benefited students' language acquisition. Galaczi (2018) claims that combining tasks with a wide range of skills related to communicative purposes is necessary for students' language abilities. Hughes (2003) argues that someone is good at a language because their performance in one skill predicts the performance in another. Moreover, a study conducted by Cambridge involving over 465,000 test takers of Cambridge Qualification in 2015 reported by Galaczi (2018), uncovered that the correlation between speaking and writing is 0.64, which indicates that if the candidate scores high on the speaking test, he also gets high scores in writing or vice versa. However, integrating two skills in an assessment is challenging in the development and delivery to meet the assessment principles concerning validity and reliability aspects. Therefore, teachers' LA should be enhanced.

Cognitive and non-cognitive skills should be integrated into the language assessment. Language inputs in terms of vocabulary, grammar, and the pronunciation of the words in English will maximise the language used. Accordingly, as the research participants, the teachers designed an effective test during the virtual class. The current curriculum used in the Indonesian educational system expects the integration of affective, cognitive, and psychomotor domains in language learning and assessment (Retnawati et al., 2016). The affective aspects are categorised as the character of the students. The curriculum explains that character education involves three strategies: subject integration, local content, and self-development activities (Ministry of National Education of Republic of Indonesia., 2011). Subject integration is carried out to develop lesson plans, teaching materials, learning activities, and assessments.

The teachers considered the language components and combined them with language and soft skills. For example, besides assessing students' speaking performance, they also assessed students' language knowledge. Moreover, they designed a test format that enabled them to assess students' honesty through a project-based task. These teachers' preferences meet the principled eclecticism and curriculum demands. Despite several online assessment barriers during the Covid-19 pandemic, the teachers found strategies to cope with the problems. Their approach to assessing students during the pandemic aligns with the eclectic approach theorised by scholars (e.g. Kumar, 2013; Larsen-Freeman, 2000; Mellow, 2002). Our research findings provide important information regarding the implementation of the eclectic approach in the assessment context.

Many previous studies reveal that technical and internet connection problems are the most significant problems during online learning (e.g. Abduh, 2021; Perwitasari et al., 2021; Wahid et al., 2021). It was difficult for some students to complete their tasks due to these problems. They have difficulty submitting their assignments in the form of videos and pictures. Nevertheless, another problem discovered in the current study is that students could not use the free internet data provided by the government as a subsidy for learning during the Covid-19 because most students only had incompatible mobile phones. As a result, not all students could access the task sent via any online platforms used by the teachers, such as Google Classroom or communication tools such as WhatsApp, which is a convenient social

media application for sending messages (Chen & Neo, 2019; Giordano et al., 2015; Mpungose, 2020). In addressing these challenges, teachers in this study adjusted their assessment practice by visiting the students at home or suggesting them to submit their tasks at the school. In addition, the problem of students' cell phones which were not equipped with a compatible operating system, such as Android and Apple iOS, has rarely been reported in previous studies related to challenges of online learning in Indonesia (e.g. Adedoyin & Soykan, 2020; Zhang et al., 2021). The discrepancy between the merit of ICT and the contextual problems during the pandemic in Indonesia indicates that the presence of ICT is not a panacea for all educational issues.

Other obstacles faced in implementing the online-based learning process and assessments during Covid-19 are reported by Guangul et al. (2020). They revealed that the main challenges are academic dishonesty, infrastructure, and lack of commitment to submit assessments resulting in students' low learning outcomes. As a result, even though teachers had prepared the assessment, the student's learning achievements were unsatisfactory. Thus, all teachers recommended professional training for EFL teachers to design attractive learning strategies and assessments to motivate them to learn. Learning a language is different from learning other subjects in some aspects. In language learning, teachers provide language input and improve students' language performance through practice. Despite the ineffectiveness of the online assessment during the Covid-19 in terms of students' achievement, the online assessment apparently benefits pedagogical practices. ICT allows teachers to design assessments in different forms to facilitate students to document their achievements and progress in various ways and at different timescales, such as e-portfolios (Timmis et al., 2015). Thus, teachers can engage students to learn by involving students' active roles in self and peer assessments. These types of assessments allow students to do self-reflection and adjust their learning (Earl & Katz, 2006). Additionally, an e-portfolio enables teachers to determine the student's learning progress, provide feedback/scaffolding and revise their teaching strategies for improvement. Finally, the development of teachers' ICT literacy can be achieved through a professional development program.

## 6. CONCLUSION

This study aims to explore teachers' online assessment practices during Covid-19 in Indonesia. This study specifically looked at how teachers prepared and conducted assessments from a framework of the eclectic approach. The findings show that teachers constructed tests from various reading sources and discussed them with colleagues through mixed and easily accessible ICT tools. However, teachers needed more AL, particularly in validity and reliability, to produce quality instruments. Additionally, regarding the implementation of assessment to measure students' language competencies, the teachers carefully considered how to holistically integrate language skills, components, and soft skills into the assessment instruments by considering some aspects, such as the characteristics of the language skills and students' learning conditions. Despite some challenges in online learning, the teachers believed in the importance of assessment. Accordingly, the teachers combined activities to continue the assessment process thoroughly during the pandemic. Finally, it is evident from the data that the online assessment practices conducted by the teachers were in line with the principles of an eclectic approach.

This study has some limitations, including a small sample size. Therefore, the results of this study cannot be generalised to other cases. Further analysis can use various research designs by recruiting more participants. In the era of the industrial revolution 4.0, the online teaching and learning process will be thriving, so that to minimise problems in online learning, collaborations between the central and local governments are needed. For example, the free internet data policy for learning can be helpful if internet-accessing devices are available. In addition, educational policymakers should integrate ICT literacy into teachers' professional training. Finally, the school syllabus should include ICT training to improve students' ICT literacy.

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