The students' perspectives of platforms used in virtual learning environment: a survey during COVID-19 pandemic

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ABSTRACT

COVID-19 has been the pandemic in Indonesia since March 2020. Drastically, it impacts on educational segment; the condition makes the face-to-face learning activities are impossible to be held in classroom. Therefore, the platforms of digital tools are able to be the best alternative way to overwhelm this issue and to strengthen the material delivery conducted by educational institution including universities. The digital platforms can be beneficial tools in COVID-19 pandemic condition as teachers' assistance. Due to these issues, this study was conducted to determine students' perspective on the implementation of platforms in virtual learning environment during COVID-19 pandemic. This study involved 105 participants of the sixth semester students of English department of Universitas Pamulang. To obtain the data, the writer distributed a survey consisting 3 major questions (the platform reference, the advantages and the challenges), and the students shared their reflective notes to all questions related to the implementation of virtual learning in COVID-19 pandemic situation. The findings revealed that the students prefer having screen recording in learning activity (38.10%), Google Meeting (28.57%), Kahoot (19.04%), and Edpuzzle (14.29%). Furthermore, the advantages of the platforms are time flexibility, platforms effectiveness, quota-friendly, interactivities, fun application, the mastery of grammar. However, the challenges are monotonous activities the students' boredom, difficulties to create an account, poor responses, poor internet connection and different schedule. To conclude, the digital platforms are able to be alternative media to conduct teaching and learning process and lead to the students' perspectives in virtual learning including the most preferred platform, advantages and challenges.

Keywords: students' perspectives, virtual learning environment, platforms

Introduction

Recently, the societies in Indonesia have been shocked by the Corona Virus or Covid-19. Initially, it was spread in China and has been spreading around the world including Indonesia; it also becomes global pandemic. It turns into a massive impact on universal life and impacts on country's economy (Suminar, 2020). In addition, it influences many sectors: entrepreneurship, entertainment, advertisement, business, education, and others. The virus is harmful since it leads to the human's death. Furthermore, the government have tried to overcome this pandemic especially in educational institutions. Rajab (Rajab, 2020) argues Corona virus also gives effects on educational sector. Therefore, Indonesia applies social distancing in many sectors including education in order to decline the virus spread. In educational institutions, the government exclusively instructs students and teachers to conduct virtual learning environment or study from home. Reimers, et al (Reimers et al., 2020) claims online learning is one of the

supporting media to conquer the problems in educational world and continuing the teaching and learning activity during COVID-19 pandemic. Teachers should prepare the material through online learning, and students have to provide all things regarding the online learning like gadget, computer, or laptop to support the processes.

By the process, the government reinforces school and universities to solve the obstacles by providing proper virtual learning environment to run the teaching and learning processes. The use of computer in teaching and learning processes is called Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL). It can be the use of internet application like email, www, chat, video, e-learning, digital applications and others to create the virtual learning environments. It is applied on internet application such as world-wide website (www), email and chat application (Torat, 2000). It can be assumed that the use of those applications fits to virtual learning and can enhance the students'

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English achievement (Haryati, 2017). Virtual Learning explores the use of online means and applications to share learning process in virtual learning environment. It refers to learning process occurred in online classroom with cyberspace internet connection (Pannen, 1999). Ferriman (Ferriman, 2019) also defines a virtual classroom as "an online classroom that allows participants to communicate with one another, view presentations or videos, interact with other participants, and engage with resources in work groups."

Hence, implementing the digital platforms in virtual learning environments can be the best way out as it makes learning process keep running, and the learning goals can be reached. In this case, the success of learning and teaching process can be achieved with the use of platforms to draw the learning quality. They can be media to enhance lecturer's professional as the learning source and as the facilitator. One of the beneficial platforms in virtual learning environments to overcome the obstacle in pandemic is the use of audio-visual media such as video or screen recording. It is gradually enchanting a noticeable part in education around the world, particularly in online education environment (Thomson et al., 2014). Both teachers and students are familiar with video. Consequently, the screen recording can be effective tool to gain teaching and learning goals. It is in line with Scagnoli, et al. (Scagnoli et al., 2019) who sum up that video lectures or screen recording is considered as an effective means for delivering course content and substituting the teaching attendance in the virtual environment. The use of screen recording has become very famous in education. Their study on the students' perception on the use of video lectures in online classes agrees that students' approval with screen recording has a tough connection with positive overall learning experience and perception of effect of video on learning. It is also the feeling of engagement with content can be boosted by screen recording because learners can control the media and feel tutor's presence. In addition, Surjawo, et al. (Sujarwo et al., 2020) observes that virtual learning including the screen recording assists students to dig the deep material given by lecturers due to the flexibility of

time used, and they can access it wherever they are. Students also argue that virtual learning through screen recording can be the best option to conquer material in this pandemic situation. Virtual leaning also presents the varieties of platforms: E-learning, social media, YouTube, Kahoot, screen recording video, *Edpuzzle*, wikis, blogs, email, voice boards and other applications. Those have been designed to support the education purposes. *Kahoot* is beneficial tool that can enhance the students' vocabulary and the students' score (Mansur & Fadhilawati, 2019), *Edpuzzle* can be designed as the interactive video from other sources: You tube, Khan Academy or also Crash Course; also, lecturers are able to create and edit the video for students in order to be adjusted to the students' ability (Amaliah, 2020), and *Google Meet* can be the platform used in the virtual learning environment to develop the students' knowledge and the learning outcome (Setyawan et al., 2020). In this pandemic, they are really accommodating the educational uses and achieving a learning outcome. Most activities lead students to experience that they can argue, comprehend the material, analyze one particular topic, and other activities conducted through online. However, lecturers and students have to arrange the schedule to conduct *Google Meet* in virtual activities in order to run the activity. The platforms also enhance their pronunciation, intonation, vocabulary, grammar achievement and interaction. It is confirmed by Dillenbourg (Dillenbourg, 2000) who also highlights that those platforms represent beneficial activities in virtual learning environment, and the lecturer and students will achieve optimistic teaching and learning goals.

According to the previous exploration, some digital platforms as the virtual learning environment are the alternative ways to conquer the material in this pandemic situation. Students are able to be familiar with many digital applications to assist them in learning process although they share some obstacle in engaging material and virtual activities. In brief, the writer has convincing eagerness to observe the students' perspectives of the platforms in virtual learning in COVID-19 pandemic situation.

METHOD

This study was carried out in English Department of Universitas Pamulang located in South Tangerang. This study applied descriptive qualitative in order to explore the students' perspectives of platforms in virtual learning environment in COVID-19 pandemic situation. Stake (Stake, 2010) defines "the qualitative research relies on human perception about the subjects and

understanding." There were 50 students of English Department as the sample in the study. The writer applied the purposive sampling to obtain the samples. Furthermore, the writer used two kinds of instrument: a questionnaire to find out the students' perspectives of platforms in virtual learning. Questionnaire is one of the techniques of collecting data conducted by stating a set of written

statements to the participants (Sugiyono, 2020). It has 3 major points of questions; the questions focused on the preference of the platforms used in the virtual learning, the advantages and the challenges of each platform.

The study involved some procedures: first, the students had already experienced with the kinds of learning platforms like *Google Meet*, Kahoot, *Edpuzzle*, and screen recording during the

Results and Discussion

This section presents three major findings in the study: the most dominant applications used by the students, the advantages of the activities through the use of applications and the challenges of the activities through the use of applications in virtual environment.

Table 1. The most preferred application

Platforms	n	%
Kahoot	20	19.04
Edpuzzle	15	14.29
Screen Recording Video	40	38.10
Google Meet	30	28.57
Total	105	100

The most preferred applications

Based on the above table, it reveals that the students have experienced to apply the applications of Kahoot, *Edpuzzle*, E-learning, and Screen Recording video in their virtual learning environment. From 105 participants in the study, 38.10% prefer selecting screen recording to support their learning process in this pandemic situation.

pandemic. Afterwards, the writer distributed a survey in the questionnaire form to find out the students' perspectives of platforms in virtual learning environments in COVID-19 pandemic. The last, the writer elaborated the data of the questionnaire in descriptive exploration.

Audio-visual media such as screen recording video are gradually enchanting a noticeable part in education around the world, particularly in online education environment (Thomson, Bridgstock, & Willes, 2014). Moreover, *Kahoot* places the second preference; it shares 28.57%. It dominates the students' activity in enhancing the students' grammar mastery. The following preference is the use of *Kahoot* platforms; there were 20 (19,04%) students selecting *Kahoot* to encourage them to learn more in virtual environment. It is brief that *Kahoot* platform provides comprehensive features to learn: vocabulary, grammar, and others. Furthermore, *Edpuzzle* places the last dominant preference among students; it shares only 14.29%. *Edpuzzle* is rarely applied by in the virtual environment due to the lack of lecturers' and students' knowledge of the platform. It focuses on more listening, improving pronunciation and intonation activity than exploring and integrating other skills. It can be concluded that those platforms have been introduced and applied in the virtual activity to overcome the learning processes in this pandemic situation. However, the 105 participants involved in this study shared their distinctive perspective and preferences.

Table 2. The advantages and the challenges of screen recording platform

Screen recording platform	Students' Statements	n = 40	%
Advantages	It is more effective than other platforms	18	45
	It has time flexibility	12	30
	It spends less quota	10	25
Challenges	Poor interactive learning in groups	28	70
	Poor responses from the lecturer	12	30

The advantages and challenges of each platform

From the above table, it reveals that most students have their distinctive perspectives of applying the screen recording in the virtual learning environment. There were 40 students sharing their encouraging perspective of applying screen recording in learning material. 45% students corresponded positively to use screen recording to assist their learning process; it is one of the effective

platforms to learn topics. It is in line with Scagnoli, Choo, & Tian ((Scagnoli et al., 2019) who assumed that video lectures (screen recording), considered as an effective means for delivering course content and substituting teaching presence in the virtual environment have become very famous in education. Moreover, 30% students claim that it provides the time flexibly for the students working or having other activities. Furthermore, 25% students agree to apply it in virtual learning environment since they do not

require to spend a lot of quota during the learning activity. The detail students 'perspective can be

When the pandemic came in Indonesia, the lecturers just introduced the platform of campus, it is only one platform that we can use. However, then, we are encouraged to be familiar with screen recording. It helps me to get more understanding of the topic or material

Screen recording really assists me as a student to obtain more explanation of the topic because I can play the recording until I gain the points. Moreover, I can see the lecturers during I have free time or I work.

I, almost 8 months, use screen recording to learn at home. Now, I have been familiar with it; it is so beneficial for my friends and I as it is shared through class WhatsApp group. I personally think that it is so effective and easily use it (45%).

From the students' perspectives of screen recording above, it can be concluded that they have progressive perspective of applying screen recording to assist them to learn new material from the lecturer. It consciously enhances the process of material mastery; they are able to repeat the recording for several times until they achieve the good understanding. Therefore, this process leads to the advanced comprehension. As the result, the comprehensive process will influence their English achievement. Moreover, it is effective platform since it is easily operated; it can be shared through *WhatsApp*; hence, they do not need the perfect capability in operating it. Trouble-free application impacts on definite students' mental since they do not need to learn instruction to use it, but they operate it by downloading the recording.

*It is so flexible application to learn the material because I can play it when I have the leisure time. It doesn't concern the time and the place. I can play it at my workplace or anywhere (30%). *

The above perspective reveals that the students shared other encouraging perspectives in applying screen recording. The students of Universitas Pamulang are primary students and half are workers; hence, it can be complicated thing for them to learn while working. It really assists them to manage their time properly; they are able to study in the leisure time and at comfortable place without any obstacle of internet connection.

In this pandemic, the use of screen recording strongly affects in the learning activity. Therefore, I think screen recording can be the best application to learn

seen from the following statements:

the material because it does not cost much in quota. I only download for several seconds, and I can operate it without spending other cost (25%).

The above statement is other students' perspectives of applying screen recording. It is assumed that the pandemic affects the students' activities and habits. Most of activities are conducted online so that they cost much quota. However, the use of screen recording to learn material given by the lecturers does not spend much; it is beneficial, simple and economical tool to upgrade their knowledge in this situation.

According to the table 2, the students also shared their challenges in applying screen recording in virtual learning environment. There are 70% students experiencing a lot of obstacles in poor interaction among groups in class. Most students reflect that it allows students and lecturers to have lack of social interaction. They cannot interact with their peers and lecturers directly and visually. They can only see the recording of sound the lecturers' photograph on it. They cannot interact with their class at the same time so that they choose *WhatsApp* group to conquer the topic; however, it rarely happens. Screen recording also presents poor responses from the lecturers (30%). Poor responses mean that the students are not able to ask the crucial point directly so that it diminishes the students' encouragement of learning and exploring the topic. The interaction can be produced when the students chat their lecturers. Moreover, lecturer cannot have any students' active responses as they cannot see whether they have gained more comprehension or not so that it becomes dramatic; it means lecturers fail to create the interaction between lecturers and students in learning activity. Furthermore, the students are hesitant to ask a lot to their lecturers and discuss with their peers. Here is the summary of the students' perspectives.

It is beneficial platform for the students including me; however, it is complicated for me to build interaction among participants. I need to discuss with my friend in WhatsApp group, and contact my lecturers privately to ask unclear points (70%).

When we do not understand the particular points or statements, we need to ask our lecturers through WhatsApp and sometimes, he does not respond immediately. We think it spends time a lot because we have other tasks (30%).

Table 3. The advantages and challenges of *Google Meet*

Google Meet	Students' Statements	n = 30	%
Advantage	Creating interaction among participants	30	100

Challenges	Poor internet connection and Spend the quota a lot	21	70
	Different schedules	9	30

Based on the above table, it can be assumed that 30 students selected *Google Meet* as the best platform to conquer the learning material in the pandemic situation. Creating social interaction among participants on *Google Meet* is the best intention to apply it. Social interaction is created during the process of learning that the students are able to see the lecture, to question unclear points, to discuss with other peers. *Google Meet* provides the ability to interact with other participants through video conferencing, enabling businesses and schools, to conduct video meetings and lessons through a variety of aps and devices (de Looper et al., 2020). Besides, lecturers can perceive the students' responses regarding their comprehension. As the result, it leads to the encouraging material achievement and learning goals.

The students' positive perspective can be seen in the following statements.

have been familiar about Google Meet since COVID-19 pandemic. When I firstly used it, it is adorable tool for me because it seems that I have the conventional learning in the classroom. I can meet my friends and the lecturer visually. It also reduces the boredom due to the social interaction creation
I really miss my friends and want to discuss about something because other application limits us to communicate. However, this platform allows me to interact with others, to ask many questions to the lecturers and to get direct responses from the participants (100%).

The above perspectives reveal that the students prefer having *Google Meet* compared to other platforms due to the social interaction. It is believed that it can upgrade the student's motivation in learning and reduce their boredom staying at home. It also impacts on the students' material mastery. It is easily for them to comprehend the material since they see the visual objects, ask, discuss, and analyze at the same time with others.

The above table shows 30 students responded that the use of *Google Meet* provides some obstacles among them; two of them are having poor connection (70%) and spending much quota and having different schedule (30%). The challenges produce the poor quality of video and audio, and they have impact on the students' comprehension of the material given during meeting. Shah (Shah, 2020) also argues that *Google Meet* presents the poor internet connection that impacts on the poor video and audio delivery during the conference or meeting. Here are the students' perspectives of applying *Google Meet*.

Google Meet is one of updated applications that students can use in learning virtually. However, after chatting with others, we think that the use of Google Meet spends a lot the internet quota. It is difficult to afford the quota in this pandemic situation so that we have to spare the quota for all subjects we learn. Also, while learning through Google Meet, we sometimes face poor internet connection. It happens not only once but also often during the learning activity (70%)
For me, Google Meet can be beneficial tool to learn at home or everywhere the students are; meanwhile, for the students working, it is difficult to have equal schedule with other students and lecturers. I think my friends have also the same arguments. (30%).

It can be concluded that those participants share some bad experiences in applying *Google Meet* during the teaching and learning process. They are able to enjoy the learning process through *Google Meet*; however, they face some challenges like they experience to have poor internet connection during the learning process. While listening and discussing with others, they unexpectedly lose the internet connection; it impacts on the material mastery, and the poor motivation grows. Moreover, some students are also workers who must be able to manage their time to learn and work. The experience with the different schedules with the *Google Meet* schedule offered by the lecturers. Hence, they are not able to participate the link of *Google Meet* and impacts on having poor learning comprehension.

Table 4. The advantages and challenges of *Kahoot*

Kahoot	Students' Statements	n = 40	%
Advantages	It is fun application	12	60
	It enhances the students' grammar comprehension	18	40
Challenge	Monotonous Activities	40	100

It can be concluded that *Kahoot* encourages the student's motivation; it is seen from their positive perspective. Fun application is one of the

characteristics of *Kahoot* (60%); it presents interesting and colorful features for the users (40%). Furthermore, Budiati (Budiati, 2017) sums up that *Kahoot* can be the blended learning that mixes the learning activity and playing game. It can be done in classrooms or other conducive places; the teachers are the game controller and the students are the players. As the result, it becomes fun activity and entertain them in this pandemic situation. They can attract the student's interest to join Kahoot. Moreover, *Kahoot* application mostly focuses on the use of correct grammatical sentences. Hence, its contents automatically encourage the users to comprehend the grammar properly through games and time. The feature also allows the users to compete by having the highest score. Thus, the understanding of grammar will enhance automatically after several times applying it in learning activity. Here are the students' perspectives.

Actually, it is not the first time for me to use Kahoot in learning activity at home; it is fun for me and my friends since we can compete our grammar mastery. It leads us to compete each other positively. The

application is simple to operate, and the features have various colors to attract my eyes (60%).
Sometimes, it is difficult for me to understand the topics of grammar, but Kahoot really helps me a lot understand the topics in fun activities like games (40%).

Although, some students (40) agree to apply Kahoot, they have undesirable perspective on it. *Kahoot* presents monotonous activities for the students due to its activities It allows them to have the quiz and compete with other peers. If this activity is repeatedly done, it decreases their motivation to join. It is clear that the students facing the pandemic situation are eager to have the varieties in learning process. Furthermore, the instructions impose them to have the grammar task; they need the improvement of the task. The summary of the students' perspectives is seen below.

It is an interesting application; I really like using it to improve my grammar, but almost 8 months, I use it, it makes me bored because I repeatedly do the same activities and no changes (100%)

Table 5. The advantage and challenge of *Edpuzzle*

Edpuzzle	Students' Statements	n = 15	%
Advantage	It is fun process	15	100
Challenge	Having no account	15	100

Edpuzzle is not too familiar among the participants in the study. They were introduced to apply it when they need to do virtual activities. Listening to the audio, without having images inside, causes the students' boredom. *Edpuzzle* provides distinctive facilities in it; it presents the multiple choices questions or open-ended questions, videos with images like YouTube, and the students are able to access the score automatically. In addition to the features, the students assume that *Edpuzzle* motivates the students to listen more and more (15%); hence, *Edpuzzle* not only enhances their motivation but also presents the fascinating activity. Here is the summary of the students' perspectives. Amaliah (Amaliah, 2020)) also highlights that *Edpuzzle* can entertain the students since they are able to see the image visually while listening and it can be effective tool due to the editing feature. The lecturers can add or remove the audio, correct the answers directly and select the video based on the students' ability.

Using Edpuzzle is interesting for me and my friends.

I love it; I listen more and more and directly gain the score (100%).

It provides the effectiveness during the activities but the students need to have an account to participate in the application before joining the platform. Some students face difficulties to join due to this account (15). The obstacle comes from their lack of knowledge how to use it, and it must be linked to their email address. Here is the summary of the students' perspectives.

It is something new for us as the college students; it also improves my listening ability since I get exposure during the activity, but I face difficulty at
the initial step. I need to create an account linked to the email. It spends time a lot and needs the lecturer' guidance. (100%)

Conclusion

Overall, the study reveals that from four kinds of digital platforms used in the virtual learning environment during the pandemic, screen recording (38.10%) places the top position among others, *Google Meet* (28.57%), *Kahoot* (19.04) and *Edpuzzle* (14.29%) are the following places. Each platform delivers some

advantages and challenges among the students. Screen recording is the effective tool to enhance the students' material comprehension and time flexibility; meanwhile, it presents the poor interaction among users. *Google Meet*, moreover, can be platform to improve the interaction among participants, but it spends quota a lot and interferences the quality of audio and video. *Kahoot* is one of new platforms among the students; it is used to learn grammar comprehensively. It entertains the students since it is fun to operate, but it can be monotonous learning activity. *Edpuzzle* can be the visual platform to enhance the students listening ability, yet it is complicated to apply since the participants need to create the account to operate it.

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