

## SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS' LEARNING EXPERIENCES OF ONLINE ENGLISH LEARNING DURING PANDEMIC

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### ABSTRACT

*Senior high school students have to take English subjects since it is essential in senior high school in Indonesia. However, due to COVID-19 outbreaks, all activities are stopped, including the Educational Institution, which is forced every school to shift from face-to-face learning to online English learning. This situation leads students to experiences a lot of new things during the learning process. It does not only lead to generating various experiences but also various problems as well. This study was conducted at Senior High School in Sidoarjo, Indonesia. The main aim of the study was to explore the most useful online learning platform for learning English and to investigate the students' learning experiences in terms of the technological devices used for online English learning, the quality of online English learning, and the issues regarding online English learning during COVID-19 pandemic. This study used the quantitative research method to get numerical data. In this research, online-administered questionnaires were used to gather data. The finding indicated that the most useful online learning platform is Google Classroom. However, the students also experienced some issues regarding learning material, time management, enthusiasm, study environment, assignments, and internet access and technology accessibility.*

**Keywords:** online english learning, platform, learning experiences, covid-19

### INTRODUCTION

Starting from March 2020, Indonesia's President Joko Widodo announced the implications of social distancing after WHO confirmed the covid-19 as the pandemic on March 11, 2020. He commanded the Indonesian to work and study from home (Setyawan, Nur, Surtikanti, & Quinones, 2020). The covid-19 is a highly infectious disease originated in Wuhan, China has already infected people across the world (Remuzzi & Remuzzi, 2020). The covid-19 outbreaks had a significant impact on every sector around the country, including educational aspects. The only possible way to overcome pandemic covid-19 is by establishing the teaching and learning process through the internet, online learning (Sintema, 2020).

The Minister of Education and Culture, Nadien Makarim, dismissed all face-to face learning from each education level to minimize the possible risk of covid19 infection among the learners. He encouraged the teachers to conduct the teaching and learning process through online learning. Covid-19, as a pandemic, forces all learning processes, including the English learning process, to use online media, such as smartphones, laptops, personal computers, and other media (Hasyim, Kuswarini, & Kaharuddin, 2020). Senior high school students have to take English subjects since it is essential in senior high school in Indonesia (Atmojo & Nugroho, 2020).

Online learning is no longer an option but a necessity (Dhawan, 2020). It is on growth nowadays (Allen & Seaman, 2017) ), aside from the fact that the covid-19 outbreak

imposes it. From improving students' motivation, offering the time flexibility and enhancing student's performances, online learning give many benefits to the learners (Aristovnik, Keržič, Tomažević, & Umek, 2016; Escobar Fandiño, Muñoz, & Silva Velandia, 2019; Park & Kim, 2020). In the terms of Indonesia context, the online learning implementation has been running for two years, started from March 2020 until now. The forced implementation of Online English learning leads to generate different responses from students, which also reflects the students' perceptions of Online English learning (Ahmad, Mardiana, & Rusni, 2020).

Students experience many new things during the learning process; whether it is positive attitudes (Ituma, 2016) or negative attitudes (Asunka, 2015), each students has different perceptions of online English learning regarding to their experiences.

The number one problem faces by the students is that there are still many students who are not own smartphones because their parents cannot afford them (Atmojo & Nugroho, 2020). Even they have the devices, such as smartphones, most of them are not compatible with online learning (Kamil, 2020; Setyawan et al., 2020). Then, regarding the unequal access to the internet connection in Indonesia, most students have to face struggle and even risk their safety to get the internet connection (Atmojo & Nugroho, 2020; Bahasoan, Ayuandiani, & Mukhram, 2020; Setyawan et al., 2020). The lack of internet connection turns the internet quota to be wasteful. Kamil (2020), in the study, revealed that more than 18% of respondents answering the wasteful of internet quota due to the unexperienced and unstable internet connections. Furthermore, the students experience the burdensome of assignments

during English online learning (Setyawan et al., 2020).

The solution of giving Kemendikbud's free internet quota to all students, teachers, and lecturers in Indonesia raises more questions than problem-solving. The unequal division of the free quota made most of the students run out of the general quota. In contrast, the study quota, which can only access particular learning platforms, is useless. The fact that a free internet quota is helpful is undeniable, but the remaining study quota is wasted. Moreover, some platforms that should use the study quota use up the general quota. According to Indonesian Survey Flow (ASI, 2020) have shown the most often used platform for learning is Google Classroom with 26%, while the most often used media conferencing tool is Zoom. The two platforms stated before, in fact, rarely use up the study quota. Moreover, using an online learning platform often does not always mean it is useful. Kwary & Fauzie (2018) stated that the students are uncomfortable using online learning platforms and cannot understand it although the platform is being used for the everyday learning process.

There are researches regarding students' learning experience of online learning in the undergraduate level, yet there is no studies conducted for high school level. A study from Atikah et al., (2020) evaluated the online learning experiences during covid-19 pandemic in Higher Education level. The result showed the need of improvement in the communication and learning process during online learning. Rahayu (2020) on their study focused on activities during synchronous zoom meeting at university level. There are three factors that shown positive answers: they could communicate well before, during and after the lessons; they were able to give

feedback through the share screen in zoom feature; and they could accessed and understood the online learning material. Another study from Park & Kim (2020) showed that using communicative devices in online learning improves the interaction between students and teachers, which also enhances the level of students' satisfaction during online learning.

Online English learning needs a friendly platform to gain the students' participation, not only to be used often but to be useful for learning. Therefore, this research also sees the useful online learning platform to support the online English learning process. The second purpose of this research was to investigate the learning experiences of senior high students about English learning from home during the school closure policy implemented in Indonesia. This purpose focused on learning experiences in the terms of the technological devices used for online English learning, the quality of online English learning, and the issues regarding online English learning.

## METHOD

This research uses a survey design that uses quantitative research methods to get the data. In this survey, online-administered questionnaires and interviews were used to gather data. The online questionnaires were hosted on GoogleForm and distributed through social media, while the interview was conducted through WhatsApp. The questionnaire consisted of 30 statements that contain informed consent, background information of the participants, the technological devices used for online English learning, the quality of online English learning, and the issues regarding online English learning. Meanwhile, the six questions for the interview session are limited

to the students' learning experience of online English learning during the covid-19 pandemic. The questionnaire was distributed randomly through social media Twitter to students across Sidoarjo. The interview was conducted after the researcher gathered the data from an online questionnaire.

There were 107 respondents responded to the online questionnaire. All participants are from public senior high schools (SMA Negeri) in Sidoarjo. The researcher was expected respondents from only three different public senior high schools. Nevertheless, unexpectedly, the respondents were from 10 different schools across Sidoarjo. Among the 107 students, the respondents were dominated by female students, namely 76.6% and male 23.4%. The 31 (29%) students were in grade 10, 41 (38.3%) students in grade 11, and 35 (32.7%) in grade 12. The data show that respondents represented all grades of senior high school students around Sidoarjo.

All responses from the online questionnaire in Google-Form were analyzed using Microsoft Excel 2013 to find out the percentage of each statement. Although the Google Form provided tables and graphs, the researcher migrated all the data into Microsoft Excel 2013. The researcher re-grouped the data by the respective themes, and then the unimportant data were reduced to minimize the unnecessary information. The researcher organizes and classifies the data and makes the tabulation from the classification. After that, the tabulation is made to calculate the frequency of the participants' answers. The results of the study are shown by using the visual table in the form of percentages.

Calculating the percentage of the data by using formula:

$$P = \frac{F}{n} \times 100\%$$

P = percentage

F = frequency of the data

n = number of participants

All responses from the interview session were in the form of voice notes and texts. Since the participants' answers were in Indonesian, the researcher also have to translate the data into English. The researcher transcribed the data to Microsoft Word 2013. To analyze the data, the researcher had to familiarize all the data by understanding the texts to obtain a general understanding of the data and picked out critical impressions and noted them.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents and discusses the findings to explore the online English learning platform the students considered useful to support learning and to explore students' learning experiences about English learning from home during the school closure policy implemented in Indonesia.

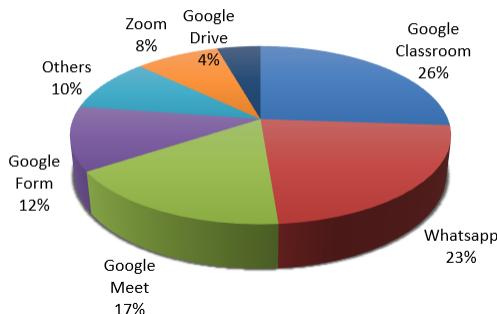
### Online Learning Platform

To support the implementation of online English learning, teachers used several platforms depend on the needs. Regarding to Kwary & Fauzie (2018) the students are uncomfortable using online learning platforms and cannot understand it even though it is being used for everyday learning. On the contrary, this research has shown that 84% of respondents stated that online platforms for learning English are useful and effective.

Regarding online platform used by the teacher during online English learning, whether for the synchronous and asynchronous meeting, students choose

Google Classroom (26%) as the most used one, followed by WhatsApp (23%), Google Meet (17%), Google Form (12%), Zoom (8%), Google Drive (4%), and another platform (see Figure 1). The majority of the students are using Google Meet because of its usefulness and manageable features. The duration during the online conference for English lessons per meeting was various depend on the situation. However, 16.8% of students admitted their teacher never carried out synchronous meetings and only implemented group discussions.

Table 1. The most used online learning platform



To post assignments for online English learning, the teachers used various online platforms. The most used platforms were Google Classroom, WhatsApp, Google Form, and other platforms. Meanwhile, to submit assignments, the platforms mostly used were Google Classroom, WhatsApp, Google Form, Google Drive, and other platforms.

Table 2. Online platform used for posting assignments

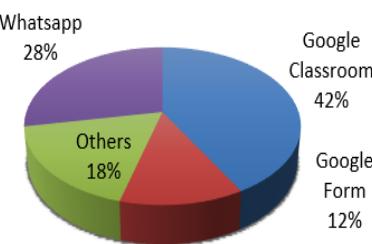
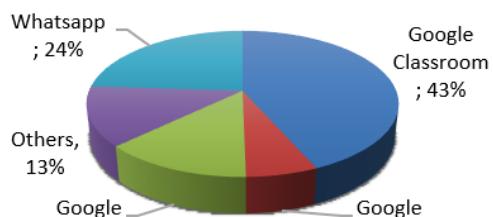
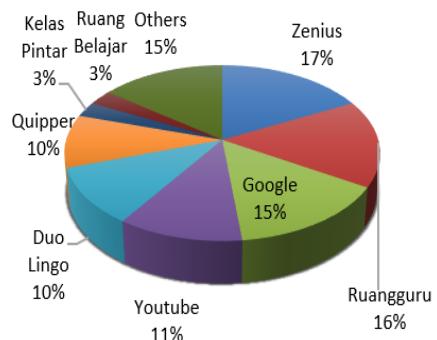


Table 3. Online platform used for submitting assignments



Apart from using textbooks, online platforms often used to find learning material related to assignments during online English learning were Zenius, RuangGuru, Google, Youtube, Duo Lingo and other platforms.

Figure 4. Online platform used for finding learning material



## Students' Learning Experiences of Online English Learning during COVID-19 Pandemic

This finding elicited three points: 1) the technological devices used for online English learning, 2) the quality of online English learning, and 3) the issues regarding online English learning.

### 1. Technological devices used for online English learning

A total of 107 students, 92.5% of them admitted that the learning mode during English lessons had been done online, only 0.7% conduct offline learning, while 6.5% were a combination between both learning modes. The result indicated that most students already experienced the implementation of online English learning

at their schools. Regarding the devices used by students to access online English learning, smartphones were more common than other devices. Regarding questionnaire data, 77.6 % of students used smartphones, 19.6% used laptops, and only 2.8% used personal computers. The majority of students are using a smartphone because of its flexibility of time and places. Using a smartphone, the internet data usage to access online learning can be lower than using a laptop or personal computer.

### 2. The quality of online English learning

This section covered 3 themes: efficiency, flexibility, and students' improved skills.

#### a. Efficiency

The respondents have shown agreement towards those two statements from the statements under the efficiency of online English learning. In the first statement, 29% of respondents disagreed that Online English learning allowed them to get immediate feedback, 29.9% were doubtless, and 41.1% agreed. In the second statement about students' comprehension regarding learning material, 31.8% of respondents were disagree, 24.3% were doubt, while 43.9% has shown agreement. The following statement has shown that the respondents agreed they could attend online English learning because of online English learning platforms. Social networking tools assist feedback from teachers to students, which provides efficient communication between them

(Archambault, Wetzel, Foulger, & Kim Williams, 2010).

b. Flexibility

Regarding the flexibility of the online learning platform, the first statement shows that 47.7% of respondents in this research agreed that the Online English learning platform used by their teachers help them in accessing learning material and assignments, 22.4% were doubt, while 30% disagreed. The Online English learning platform helps students to access learning material and assignments given by the teachers. In the second statement, 40.2% of this research disagreed that the Online English learning platform offered more opportunities to interact with teachers and peers. The percentage of agreeing and doubt was the same, namely 29.9%. In the third statement, most respondents (61.7%) agreed that online English learning platform is easily accessed anytime and anywhere; meanwhile, 28% of them disagree, and 10.3% were doubted. We can conclude that the online English learning platform is flexible in terms of place and time and the easy access to learning material and assignments by teachers. Meanwhile, in terms of interaction, online English learning does not help much. As the interview results, the students mentioned that online learning does not give many opportunities to interact with teachers and peers, especially from the virtual meeting since the teachers tend to focus on conveying the learning material.

c. Students' improved skills

From the statements under students' skills improvement, in the first and second statements, we can see that most of the respondents agreed that the online English learning platform helped them practicing language skills through conversations and provided a chance to do online presentations. The following statement also shows that 56.1% of respondents agreed with the statement 'Online learning platform helped me acquiring new English vocabulary.' In the last statement, 47.7% of respondents agreed that they improved their listening skills through the audio files uploaded on the online learning platform. The result was in line with Cakrawati (2017). Using online learning platform in English subjects helped them to implementing their language skills and help them to get new vocabularies.

**3. The issues regarding online English learning.**

This finding explained the issues faced by students during online English learning. They were based on the online questionnaire responses.

a. Learning material

The first problem was, the students could not understand the learning materials during online English learning. 65.4% of respondents agreed with the statement, while 11.2% disagreed, and the rest were doubtful. Despite the updated and provided learning material and the direct access from the teacher, the students still get trouble understanding

the learning material. This problem might happen since some teachers did not provide various sources of learning material and stuck to the course book. In the interview session, they also mentioned that some teachers could not maximize the online platform, and because of indirect guidance, students somehow missed interpretation of the conveyed material. The problem above can happen because the students cannot fully accept online learning as the learning mode (Setyawan et al., 2020).

b. Time management

The second problem was that students had poor time-management. The data showed that 74.8% of respondents agreed with the statement, 13.1% doubted, while 12.1% disagreed. Most of the students agreed that they had trouble with time management because of online English learning. Even though online learning offers time flexibility, students have several subjects to study aside from English subjects leads time flexibility into a problem, especially for students who is not serious. The result was in line with Dhawan (2020) statement that time management is one of the weaknesses of online learning. The following statement is regarding postponing duty to do assignments. There were 69.2% of respondents agreed, 14% disagreed, while 16.8% left to doubt. This problem is in line with the first statement. The students postponed their duty to do assignments, leading to difficulty managing their time—both of the

problems related to self-regulation (Chamorro, 2018).

c. Enthusiasm

Regarding enthusiasm during online English learning, 59.8% of respondents were not enthusiastic, 27.1% doubted, 13.1% were enthusiasts. The students also feel stress because of online English learning. 65.4% of respondents agreed with this statement, 18.7% doubted, 15.9% disagreed. The students were customized to offline learning, then the outspread of COVID-19 forced them to join online learning for the whole year. They experienced boredom, and somehow, they missed the interaction with their schoolmates. The statement was in line with Setyawan et al. (2020) stated that most students felt not enthusiastic during the online learning, and the whole situation made them frustrating. Moreover, the burden of the assignments made the students want to cut out the online learning.

d. Study environment

Having no private study room was also one of the problems the students experienced during online English learning. A total of 107 students, 72.8% agreed with the statement, 12.1% were doubtful, and 11.2% disagreed. The following statement is the poor study environment during online English learning. There were 68.2% of students agreed, 23.4% left undecided, and 11.2% disagreed. These two statements were intertwined. The environment plays a crucial point in the process of online learning. The

classroom is considered a friendly environment to study, while the house might be less friendly, especially for students who had a poor study environment and no private study room. The distraction students have to face when studying at home can affect learning (Kirovska-simjanoska, 2016).

e. The burden of assignments

The following issue experienced by students during online English learning was that they got many assignments, with 65.1% of respondents agreed, 23.4% doubt, and 11.2% disagreed. According to table 8, there were various types of assignments they had to do. The highest percentage was doing assignments from textbooks (34%), following by looking at information regarding current learning material (23%), making a summary and making a video (13%), and other types of assignments. The assignment was often mentioned at the interview session. The students complained about the number of assignments given by the teacher. They felt burdened because not only English teachers but all teachers give assignments. Moreover, some teachers have not explained the learning material and only giving assignments. The number of assignments oppressed them (Setyawan et al., 2020).

f. Internet access and technology accessibility

Besides the problems mentioned above, the different questions asked the students' obstacles regarding accessibility. There were

32% of respondents having a slow internet connection, 19% of respondents were having a shortage of internet data, 12% of respondents were having no access to the internet network and having Kemendikbud's quota but unable to use, and following by another obstacles namely incompatible devices, having no internet data, and having no access to computers. Regarding internet access and technology accessibility, we can conclude that students' are facing many problems during online English learning.

## CONCLUSION

Online learning offers the efficiency of communication, flexibility to access everywhere and anywhere, and more possibility of improving students' skill in several aspects. The use of online learning platforms helps a lot in assisting the online English learning process. Despite the different needs of online learning platform, the most used platform is Google Classroom. This platform is free, user-friendly and also accessible to all devices including smartphone that is mostly used by students. Majority of students felt the conveniences of the learning platforms mentioned above because they often used them during the class. However, students also experienced problem from technical, environmental, and personal aspects. The internet connection, unsupported study environment, and poor time-management are the issues experienced by students during online English learning. The teachers' role plays a huge role in managing the online learning process. To conclude, since this study focused on students' perspective, future research is expected to

explore the teachers' experiences when carrying out online learning during the pandemic. Alongside positive experiences regarding online English learning, the students experienced the problems as well.

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