Students’ Perception on The Use of Canvas-Based Learning Activities in Online Classroom: Focusing on Its Benefits

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Abstract
Canvas, a web-based learning management system, has been recently used to assist the students’ language learning and help teachers to manage digital classroom activities. In online learning situations, this software is valuable to support teacher and students' interaction with the help of an internet connection. This learning management system provides a systematic review that effortlessly presents online learning materials, assesses students’ learning progress, and encourages students to engage in courses. In this study, the student’s perception of the use of canvas as a learning platform in the online classroom was investigated. To gather the data, semi-structured interviews were given to three English Education Department students having Technology Enhanced Language Learning Class. Data were analyzed using thematic analysis. The results of this study indicate that students give positive perceptions of the use of canvas in TELL class. Students claimed that the usage of Canvas in learning activities has several benefits. Those benefits are (1) Various features of Canvas that help in learning, (2) Developing students’ engagement, and (3) Promoting students’ self-regulated learning.

Keywords: Students’ Perception; LMS; Canvas; Online Classroom

INTRODUCTION
In today's era, the use of technology has been mainly used for assisting the students’ language learning and become a valuable tool to help teachers conduct online learning classroom. Ghanizadeh et al., (2015) argued that technology was used in almost all areas of language learning. It offers a powerful way of enabling the student to be fully engaged in their language learning activities and become the new ways of presenting or representing information to the students (Cacheiro-Gonzalez, 2019; Fatimah et al., 2020; Fatimah & Santiana, 2017; Siti Fatimah & Sulastri, 2021). To manage this, higher education institutions
have started to use Learning Management Systems (LMS) for the organization of courses. LMS has educational tools on its website that enable faculty to organize instructional content and engage students in their learning (Gautreau, 2011). Moreover, the kinds of LMS including Moodle, Blackboard Learn, and Canvas developed to enhance the learning process also which assists in teaching-learning (Bhattacharya & Chaubey, 2015). Canvas is an LMS that provides flexibility both from an instructional and learning. Lonn & Teasley, (2009) noted that Canvas LMS provides a means to share instructional materials, make class announcements, and submit course assignments and online communication with each other. Canvas LMS allows teachers to upload content in a variety of ways such as a course syllabus, assignments, course-related files, course announcements, rubrics, quizzes, and discussion forums (Aldiab et al., 2019). Therefore, the ability to collaborate and coordinate learning materials and activities is a central benefit of its use. Canvas LMS simplifies things for learners and teachers by making it easy to create, deliver, and consume course content.

In the English study program at one University in Indonesia, some lecturers have already used LMS in the teaching and learning process. For example, Canvas, it has been used in Technology Enhance Language Learning (TELL) course by Sixth Semester Students of the English Education Department one of the State Universities in West Java, Indonesia. The lecturers used Canvas in order to deliver course materials. Moreover, the students could involve in terms of discussions and the students could get information about what they would do next in classroom activities. Canvas can be used to support instructor and student, student-to-student interaction, feedback, assessments and grade work. There is a positive tendency toward learning activities in TELL class, students tend to be satisfied with the use of Canvas LMS, such as submitting assignments, accessing course content, checking progress, and managing and receiving feedback on assignments. Besides, Canvas LMS can also play various instructional roles such as making the learners feel more relaxed to learn the various topics and tasks that also make the learners active. In the context of LMS, Abdel-Maksoud (2018) pointed out that perceived usefulness looks at a student’s beliefs that using Learning Management System will improve their performance in a course. As for perceived ease of use, when a student perceives Learning Management System as easy to use, the student is more likely to continue using that system (Venkatesh & Davis, 2000).

A considerable amount of research studies has focused on how education online learners value various LMS tools (Borboa et al., 2014; Chawdhry & Paulet, 2011; Lonn & Teasley, 2009). Overall, these studies’ principal method was quantitative and also used questionnaires to investigate and gauge the students’ perception of the use of the LMS. Moreover, Lonn & Teasley, (2009) reported in their study about Saving Time or Innovating Practice: Investigating Perceptions and Uses of Learning Management Systems that these results reveal that students were less positive about LMS’s effect on their learning. They are likely to continue to view LMS as merely a quick and accessible means to retrieve course documents. By these concerns, this research focused on seeing how the benefits of using Canvas LMS in language learning is seen from students’ perceptions as well as this research used case study in qualitative research through interviews to dig deeper information and aims to fill the gaps in previous research. Henceforth, this research investigated higher
students’ perceptions on Canvas-based learning activates in Technology Enhanced Language Learning class.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Learning Management System (LMS) in Online EFL Classroom

In online learning situations, technology has a great role to support the success of students’ learning. Technology can provide many sources, sophisticated platforms, and appealing atmospheres which helps the students to have new authentic and meaningful learning experiences without time and place limitations (Duhaney, 2000; Fatimah & Santiana, 2017; Kern et al., 2008). There have been many devices and apps which facilitate the students to conduct online learning. Students need to have the opportunity to use various kinds of technology that can support the learning process. Different from the four wall classroom which forces the students to come on time on the classroom schedule, online learning platforms can be accessed anytime and facilitate the interaction and discussion of the instructor and their students. Online learning forces the use of the internet to access learning materials; interact with the content, instructor, and other learners; and obtain support during the learning process, in order to acquire knowledge, construct personal meaning, and grow from the learning experience (Campbell et al., 2004).

One of the apps which can help teachers to manage online learning classrooms is Learning Management System (LMS). Learning Management System (LMS) has been widely used by many instructors to support online classroom activities. As an online application, LMS helps educational institutions to give online educational services for helping teachers and students meet in the virtual context (Al-Adib et al., 2019). LMS provides many benefits by providing some features to deliver the material, manage the course, assessment, administration, and have classroom discussions. This environment can give different experiences and promote the students’ autonomy since they are forced to be responsible for their learning in the online learning classroom.

The use of Learning Management System (LMS) is valuable to manage classroom activities, material delivery, assessment and classroom discussion (Asiri et al., 2012). Teachers can track the students’ learning progress and know how many times the students access the materials. Although the requirement for internet connection is very high, this app is valuable to provide new classroom atmosphere which motivates the students to learn. Students can develop their knowledge and understanding of the materials since they can explore it using their LMS independently.

However, there are many Learning Management Systems that can be used in EFL Classrooms such as Moodle, Canvas, Schoology, or Edmodo. Teachers need to consider the appropriate LMS for their students to give suitable tool in teaching-learning process. There are some factors influencing the consideration of LMS selection. Howard & Major, (2005) mention that students become the most important factor which influences the LMS selection. Teachers
should recognize the students’ characteristics and their needs to provide Learning Management System which is appropriate for their students. In addition, there are some requirements of LMS to obtain effective online classroom atmospheres. They are 1) Accessibility, reliability, and flexibility, 2) technical support and features, and 3) cost. All of them will have the effects on the success of students’ language learning (Wright et al., n.d.).

**The Use Canvas as LMS In Online Learning**

Canvas was founded in 2008 by Brian Whitmer and Devlin Daley, with initial funding from Mozy founder Josh Coates. Canvas is the world’s fastest-growing learning management platform. As the most flexible, interactive, adaptable, and effective learning platform, Canvas allows for easy integration of the content, resources, and services that teachers need and students want. Canvas new mobile features, which are based on a native cloud-based platform, give students easy access to learning resources, allowing them to collaborate with peers, utilize it from anywhere, and even take online assessments (Garcia et al., 2020). Canvas is more easily and deeply accepted (or used by more users in more ways) than any other LMS. So, in the end, investing in 21st-century education technology makes teaching and learning easier.

Canvas is a simple E-learning tool used to present the lesson contents, it is common to all operating systems of smartphones; it provides useful tools for students and teachers to engage online outside class anywhere and anytime (Fadilah Al Khoeri et al., 2021). Traditional classroom teacher can shift using the LMS to the classroom enjoyably and engagingly. With the development of technology, e-learning teaching is increasingly accepted as a means of English language instruction. This model uses the Learning Management System (LMS) platform called Canvas which has the beneficial feature to use Information Communication Technology in the teaching-learning process. The LMS not only provides the text material, but it also provides multimedia platform material like mp3, video, or external links to the other website and resources, it will be a good learning media to support the teaching and learning process.

Canvas includes all of the LMS features and functionality is identified as follows:

a. Announcements: Delivered automatically to the course activity stream of all users and other communications channels based on users’ individual notification preferences.
b. Assignments: Assignment submissions can include web pages, Word docs, video, audio, slide shows, links, and more.
c. Browser-enabled: Compatible with the latest two versions of Apple Safari, Google Chrome, Microsoft Internet Explorer, and Mozilla Firefox.
d. Calendar: Drag-and-drop functionality to schedule and reschedule calendar events, plus automatic event notifications and support for calendar feed subscription.
e. Chat: Synchronous text chats within a learning community.
f. Collaborations: Enable users to collaborate on projects using shared Canvas workspaces leveraging real-world tools such as Google Drive.
g. Conferences: Integrated, synchronous webinars/video conferencing, whiteboard, and live chat.
h. Discussions: Provides asynchronous, threaded, media-rich, gradable discussion forums for courses and groups.

i. ePortfolios: Students can create public or private ePortfolios to display and reflect on notable coursework.

j. Grades: Assignments, Discussions, and Quizzes can be scored by points, rubrics, percentages, letter grades, and complete/incomplete. Scoring can also reflect outcome performance and competencies.

k. Mobile access: Highly-rated, native mobile apps for Apple iOS and Android provide a complete student experience.

l. Professional Learning: Create opportunities for teachers to learn online and support institution-wide resource sharing.

m. Syllabus: Course calendar changes automatically update the course syllabus generated automatically by defined coursework.

n. User profile: Profile options include full name, display name, language preference, bio, photo, website links, registered web services, contact methods, time zone, and other options (Garcia et al., 2020).

Students are also entertained by modern digital media and promote the teaching of English in general, both within and outside the classroom. The Canvas Learning Management Platform helps schools to create a digital learning that more pleasant learning experience for both teachers and students. Canvas simplifies instruction, enhances learning, supports traditional learning tools and develops them.

METHOD

This study used a descriptive case study as a research method. It is used to describe an intervention or phenomenon and the real-life context in which it occurred. Moreover, the aimed to comprehend and enlighten the existing phenomena experienced by the subject of the research, such as attitude, perception, motivation, action, etc. Hence, the researcher applied this research design to collect, analyze and interpret data that is appropriate for the purpose of this research to get and find out the description of students’ perception of canvas-based learning activities.

This research was conducted in English Education Department one of the State Universities in West Java, Indonesia. Specifically, the study was conducted in one of TELL class which was class B. The participants of the interview involved three students from class B. The age of the participants ranged from 20 to 21 years old. They communicate in Sundanese as the first language (L1), Bahasa Indonesia as a second language (L2), and English as a foreign language (FL). They have experienced learning English using Canvas for one semester (six months). Several considerations of selecting it as a research setting and recruiting them as the participants because they were the students who had taken the TELL courses with the highest score.

The data was collected through semi-structured interview. The interview is an appropriate method to get deeper information in qualitative research (Creswell, 1998). Interviews
provide researchers with more detailed qualitative data to understand how they describe their experiences and the meaning they make from their experiences. The interviews were conducted after students state their willingness to be participants. All the recording data were collected, and then the researcher wrote the transcriptions of the recording.

Furthermore, interview data was analyzed with Thematic Analysis. Braun, V., & Clarke, (2006) argued that “Thematic analysis is a method for identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns (themes) within data” (p. 6). Thematic analysis can be used to identify participants’ lived experiences, views and perspectives, and behavior and practices; ‘experiential’ research which seeks to understand what participants think, feel, and do (Braun, V., & Clarke, 2006). The reason to choose thematic analysis is because it is flexible. The flexibility inherent in thematic features enables researchers to explore deeply about what actually happens in an event or incident. The researchers transcribe the interview and then analyze the results of the transcribed data. The sixth-phase to Thematic Analysis (Braun, V., & Clarke, 2006) includes:

1. **Familiarizing the data**
The researchers collected data by interviewing participants and using a mobile recorder to record the interviews. The researcher listened and transcribed the audio recording from the conducted interview to get a grip of the data well. This phase involves immersing the data that researcher should reading and re-reading the transcripts.

2. **Generating initial codes**
Phase 2 begins the systematic analysis of the data through coding. Coding means highlighting sections of the text. The researchers coded the transcript of the interview results through highlights in different colors corresponding to different codes. Each code described the idea or feeling expressed in the part of text

3. **Searching for themes**
In this phase, the researchers identified the themes from the data that has been categorized and highlighted earlier in the second step.

4. **Reviewing Themes**
The researchers reviewed the themes that have been created. This phase is essentially about quality checking. If there are themes that are considered inappropriate, then the theme can be reduced or discarded.

5. **Defining and naming themes**
The researchers gave a name for each theme and define each of them. Defining themes involved formulating clearly state what is specific about each theme and figuring out how it helped researcher understand the data.

6. **Producing the report.**
The researchers wrote a report on the results of the thematic analysis of interview transcript and reported what have been gained from this study.
FINDINGS

This present study aims to reveal students’ perceptions on the benefits of Canvas-based learning activities in Technology Enhanced Language Learning class. Based on the findings, students claimed that the usage of Canvas in learning has several benefits. First, the participants perceived that Canvas has various features that helps in learning. It has feature for sharing materials, announcement, assignments, discussion boards, support to check grades and conferencing tools for online meeting. Second, it can develop the students’ engagement. Students feel engaged, active and they can express their thoughts and ideas confidently. Third, this apps can promote the students’ self-regulated learning. Students were motivated to learn independently with the help of an authentic materials provided by the lecturers.

4.1 Various Features of Canvas that Helps in Learning

Based on the findings, the writer found that canvas features can help in learning. It is proved by students’ answers on the interviews, more detailed information are follows:

Excerpt 1

P1: Canvas is effective because so many features in Canvas which can help students easily do learning activities such as Canvas allows me to get immediate feedback from my lecturer and my friends, I can easily access class material, notification, checking score, doing discussion in video conference, etc.

P2: I feel comfortable learning through canvas because the features on canvas are complete and support learning. First, Canvas allows me to easily access and I can read reference materials (e.g. articles, online videos, power point files, etc) provided by the lecturer. Second, announcements feature, I can see all the notifications in my course. Third, I can comment and give/recieve feedback Fourth, I made a presentation through the conference feature on canvas. Last, with the grade feature.

P3: Canvas is very helpful in the learning process because in the canvas there is a module feature, canvas has an announcement feature makes easier for me to follow the lesson and I don’t miss any information, canvas makes it easy for me to upload assignments, so friends and lecturers can comment or give feedback directly in the comments column, and grade feature also conference

(Translated by the author, interview recorded on 2nd September 2021)

From the statement above it that students who used Canvas felt helped in learning activities. Canvas is the latest platform that has many features that can help teaching and learning processes (Fadilah Al Khoeri et al., 2021). Canvas offers various features such as modules for sharing materials, announcement, assignments, discussion boards, grades and conferencing tools for online meeting.

Excerpt 2
Announcement features are used effectively in learning activities (Hariri, 2013). Based on research, students effortlessly obtain information about the course. It has been found that the announcement can be very useful for students to receive important notifications such as discussion topic, exams time, message about uploading new material and assignment. It serves as encouragement to the students, helps keep students mindful of what they have covered and keep the workload more manageable (Onodipe et al., 2020). Similarly, students can focus on their discipline because lecturer allots time to submit the task. Students can see the instruction about what the topic and deadline of assignment. This makes the learning process more efficient in terms of time management, and there is no reason for students to forget about the assignment given by the teacher (Rachma et al., 2020).

Excerpt 3

Before meetings take place, students can see the outline of the material and download materials (e.g. articles, online videos, power point files, etc) directly in Canvas. Wallace (2014) stated that LMS can help students to increase levels of attendance and participation in learning activities. This is because Canvas allows students to download and share digital resources easily. Furthermore, course materials and additional materials provided through Canvas were another sources for students to gain and develop their knowledge.
P1: I can upload assignment easily. Canvas allows me to get immediate feedback from my lecturer and my friends.
P2: On canvas, I can comment and give/recieve feedback. It is important for me because I can immediately learn, upgrade our knowledge, introspect ourselves and my weak.
P3: Canvas makes it easy for me to upload assignments, so friends and lecturers can comment or give feedback directly in the comments column. It really helped me to be better on doing my assignments

(Translated by the author, interview recorded on 2nd September 2021)

In addition, Canvas allows the students to submit their assignments to be graded by their lecturer. Then, students easily submit assignment anywhere via handphone or laptop. All members of Canvas have the ability to post comments or give some responses or feedback to other members' notes or assignments. Students claimed that feedbacks they got on Canvas helped them to improve their work. Feedback on students' learning helps them plan, set goals, and lay out strategies to be successful in the class (Onodipe et al., 2020).

Excerpt 5

P1: We used the conference feature in learning activities. So this feature helps me to discuss with each other, and I am more engaged in this subject
P2: I am more confident to speak to speak and make a presentation in the conference feature
P3: I'm more involved in the presentation through the conference feature

(Translated by the author, interview recorded on 2nd September 2021)

Moreover, by having discussions, students have opportunities to think more thoroughly about the subject (Fadilah Al Khoeri et al., 2021). Interactions between two or more individuals are possible through discussions also students may engage in the conversations with an entire class at conference. Video conferencing allows the lecturer and students to have face-to-face synchronous communication in real-time. The conference enables students and the lecturer, in real-time, to broadcast audio and video, and share presentations (Fadilah Al Khoeri et al., 2021).

Excerpt 6

P1: Canvas allows me check grades. Each student can see the results of the quiz or exam. So, with this feature I know my progress, know how far and how well we have done or I can improve my learning.
P2: With the grade feature, it motivates me to study hard also I can set a target to pursue the best score.
P3: Grade feature and discussions on Canvas motivate me to learn more about the course.

(Translated by the author, interview recorded on 2nd September 2021)
As seen above, students can know result of assignment, participation, attendance, mid-term test, extra credit, presentation and final project. A lecturer will give grade and students can see directly from their Canvas. Therefore, students feel that the grades can motivate them to learn more.

4.2 Developing Student Engagement

Based on the data, it is found that Canvas enhanced student engagement in their learning. It is proved by students’ answers on the interviews, more detailed information are follows:

Excerpt 7

P1: by using Canvas, I submitted the assignment on time. We used the conference feature in learning activities. So this feature helps me to discuss with each other, and I am more engaged in this subject.

P2: I am a quiet person or less active in class but on canvas makes me more actively involved in learning. For examples I am more confident to speak in the conference, make a presentation, and give feedback to my friend also express my ideas on comment section.

P3: I’m a bit shy in classroom. But through this canvas, I am more active and engaged because when the lecturer ask the question in the discussion, I am more confident to be involved in answering the lecturer’s question or being involved in the presentation.

(Translated by the author, interview recorded on 2nd September 2021)

Based on the previous statements, Canvas allows the lecturer and students to stay connected effortlessly. Various features of Canvas allow students to participate and get actively engaged. Canvas offers modern learning tools that support collaboration and student engagement (Fadilah Al Khoeri et al., 2021). Student engagement can be seen in the students’ willingness in participating in learning activities such as attending the lessons, submitting the assignment on time, and following the teachers’ instructions in the classroom. The various features of Canvas available within the system (such as module, discussion, conference, chat, and others) can be utilized very effectively by the lecturer to improve students’ engagement and contribution to the subject.

Furthermore, Canvas provides opportunities for flipping the classroom or video conference, which has the potential to engage and activate students, and to provide opportunities to use face-to-face-time, broadcast audio, chat, polls, and video, where students may take a more active part such as in discussions and presentation. It can encourage students’ confidence, and motivation. This app can also facilitate shy students to interact more with lecturer and their peers. It is clearly seen that Canvas can encourage active participation in online class activities. Students claimed that they did talk much in class or confidently expressed ideas verbally during the class discussion and they felt confident to express ideas by posting statements or giving comments online. In this space, students can engage more readily, and they can express their thoughts and ideas freely. The use of Canvas based learning activities encourages students to be more active in their learning in a safe virtual space where they can pose questions or answers without feeling anxiety. In addition, students feel that LMS can reduce their anxiety during the learning activities (Ekmekçi, 2016).
4.3 Promoting Self-regulated Learning

Based on the data, it is found that Canvas encourages students to develop self-regulated learning. It is proved by students’ answers on the interviews, more detailed information are follows:

Excerpt 8

P1: I can become an independent learner because learning materials are available and can be accessed at any time. We are directed to be required to study independently when the lecturer gives us a module that we must read and understand before class meetings. For example, the meeting is held on Thursday and then on Monday, the material can be downloaded on Canvas. It makes easier for us to prepare our background knowledge related to the material that will be taught by the lecturer in the conference session. Therefore, the use of this canvas guides us to become independent learners.

P2: Lecturers always send learning modules such as articles or some PPT materials. Before starting class meetings, I always read the module, syllabus or read the presentation material and it makes my reading skills improve.

P3: Before entering the class meeting in the conference feature, I read the material on the canvas. So when the lecturer asks about the material, I can answer it and understand more about the material presented by the lecturer.

(Translated by the author, interview recorded on 2nd September 2021)

Self-regulated learning is learning strategies that can make students study independently. Self-regulated learning means that students can set their own learning goals (Hidayat et al., 2019). The Canvas facilitates students with the features allowing them to work independently. It can motivate students to learn and continuously seek information in an attempt to enhance their abilities (Hwa Khoo, 2018). By providing the materials in Canvas, students have opportunities to learn independently and understand the materials. Once they did not understand the materials they learned, they could re-read and explore the materials according to their needs because the materials can be accessed easily. Therefore, Learning Management System is able to promote students’ self-regulated learning (Negeri Semarang & Sunan Gunung Jati, 2019).

CONCLUSION

This present study aims to reveal students’ perceptions on the benefits of Canvas-based learning activities in Technology Enhanced Language Learning class. Based on the findings, students claimed that the usage of Canvas in learning has several benefits. First, the participants perceived that Canvas has various features that helps in learning. It has feature for sharing materials, announcement, assignments, discussion boards, support to check grades and conferencing tools for online meeting. Second, it can develop students’ engagement. Students feel engaged, and they can express their thoughts and ideas freely. Third, it can promote the students’ self-regulated learning. Students were motivated to learn...
independently with the help of an authentic materials provided by the lecturers. Canvas allows students to browse many sources on the internet and they can prepare to read them before joining the discussion in the classroom activities. Therefore, their responsibility of learning is enhanced and developed.

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