Exploring Digital Tools for Teaching Essay Writing Course in Higher Education: Padlet, Kahoot, YouTube, Essaybot, Grammarly

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Abstract—Enormous digital tools can assist teachers or students in the teaching and learning process in face-to-face meetings and virtual environments. During Pandemic Covid-19, government policy forced educators to decide and design online learning for all education levels from kindergarten, elementary, junior high school, senior high school, and university. Nevertheless, many free digital tools intended free access for educators that could be utilized as synchronous or asynchronous learning. This article explores utilizing five digital tools for online learning such as Padlet, Kahoot, YouTube, Essaybot, and Grammarly due to teaching Essay Writing course. It is descriptively explained how the researchers used a learning collaboration tool, a content creation tool, a content sharing tool to engage students' interaction in the Essay Writing course. This article was considered sharing information and recommendation for other teachers to implement free digital tools to increase their learning process and achieve learning outcomes. The teachers and instructional designers may explore these digital tools, adopt relevant tools to their discipline, and do further research.

Keywords—Padlet, Kahoot, YouTube, Essaybot, Grammarly, Essay Writing

1 Introduction

Nowadays, during the Covid-19 Pandemic, the tendency of the teaching and learning process transforms to synchronous and asynchronous learning that is supported by particular digital tools. The minimum interaction between teachers-students and students-students insists traditional face-to-face meetings shift to online learning. It is quite challenging for the educational institution and also teachers to concern about the student's health and the learning outcomes. Therefore, the utilization of digital tools is noticed as a solution for this issue [1].

Furthermore, digital tools have been significantly utilized by various teachers and also researchers in achieving various learning outcomes at all stages of education level. These all digital tools as advanced technology can facilitate interaction during online even autonomous learning in many ways and it can rise students' motivation in learning.

Therefore, teachers must share ideas, learning resources, and also experience in online learning. However, teachers should plan semester learning creatively and organizable.

One of the digital tools that can be adopted to organize teaching materials such as video form, pdf, link, and others is Padlet. It facilitates various forms in one homepage. Practically, it can reduce students' anxiety in learning [2], therefore, the students' achievement was increased significantly [3].

On the other hand, online learning can be more stressful than face-to-face meetings in the classroom [4]. The unfamiliar situation, low motivation [4], unstable signal, and supporting facilities [5] influence the learning achievement. Nevertheless, as teachers, we need to design teaching and learning processes effectively by adopting appropriate digital tools by considering pedagogical aspects instead. TPACK (Technological Pedagogical and Content Knowledge) can help teachers in selecting digital tools and designing teaching material.

In this study, we would like to share our experience in teaching Essay Writing Course by integrating some digital tools based on TPACK. It intends to share practical procedures in designing instructional materials of the Essay Writing course due to materials, assignments, and assessments. Hopefully, this study can provide further recommendations to educators in utilizing appropriate digital tools in designing a course.

2 Literature review

2.1 Padlet

Padlet is a digital online tool that has a similar function as an online whiteboard which is integrated easily in many types of files [6] such as PDF, doc, video, YouTube Video, PowerPoint Presentation, and other online links. This tool can be accessed by the personal computer as website-based (https://padlet.com) or handphone as an application. In operating, the users can download or post anything on the online wall without creating their account. This interface is transparent which is more visualized than other LMSs (learning management systems) because all content appears [7] on the wall. Besides, it provides a chance for distance collaborative work [8]–[12] that is effective in writing essays collaboratively in one file.

2.2 Kahoot

Kahoot is a kind of gamification digital tool that provides interactive learning that can reduce students' anxiety [2][13]–[15]. Its features allow the teacher to design appropriate online quizzes as the assessment of learning or learning assessment by managing the break. The teacher can use a quiz from the library of Kahoot Bank or create their quiz which several forms of assessment such as a True-False test, a Quiz (multiple-choices), a Type Answer test, a Puzzle test, a Poll, Open-ended, a word Cloud test, and a Brainstorm test [16]. Furthermore, there are two login types which as an educator or administrator in creating the quiz through https://create.kahoot.it/auth/login or as a visitor who joins an online quiz through https://kahoot.it/. When joining the playing, a visitor needs to type playing pin from the creator of that quiz. At the end

of playing the quiz, the winners will appear on the screen on the three highest podiums. This competition learning can directly increase students' motivation in learning [16]–[18].

2.3 YouTube

YouTube as a digital tool has been utilized for embedding content of learning by numerous teachers around the world [1][19]. Teachers can create suitable learning videos which refer to learning outcomes from the syllabus used and share them on their YouTube channel to be accessed where ever and whenever students need to learn [20][21].

2.4 Essaybot

Essaybot is a kind of AI (Artificial Intelligence) that is suitable for assisting the writing process. This web-based application can be accessed through https://www.essaybot.com. It has the function to provide optional ideas to help students gather ideas in the pre-writing step of writing.

2.5 Grammarly

Grammarly is one of the automatic writing evaluations that is beneficial [22]–[24] for checking writings. For EFL (English for Foreign Language) students, grammar is a kind of horror competence that must be comprehended definitely in writing. This tool allows user to check their writing style refers to word choice, grammar used, mechanics used, sentence fragments, etc. Besides, it provides a feature to check the similarity index. So, it is helpfully used to ease teachers' effort in giving feedback to revise students' writing due to producing well-developed writing [25][26].

3 Methodology/materials

This study descriptively explains five digital tools adopted in designing Essay Writing Course. Particular procedures were explained how Padlet, YouTube, Kahoot, Essaybot, and Grammarly were designed for teaching third-semester students of English Language Department of one of the private universities in Indonesia. Seven Lessons are designed; Introduction to Essay and Its Components, Grammar Application to Writing, Argumentative Essay, Cause-Effect Essay, Comparative-Contrast Essay, Summary/ Respond Essay, and Narrative Essay.

4 Results and findings

The implementation of five digital tools in teaching the Essay Writing Course is explained as follows.

4.1   Padlet

Padlet is the main medium used to organize all for one semester which includes learning objectives, materials, tasks, learning activities, and also assessments of the learning. The teacher designed it by integrating it with various file types such as Videos from YouTube, online quizzes through Kahoot, AI links as Essaybot, Grammarly, and files from the local personal computers. All contents visually appear on the wall that becomes one of the advantage features offered. It is different from other LMS.

Regard to Essay Writing courses, there are eight homepages for one semester designed due to Introduction of course homepage (https://padlet.com/arimulianiah-mad/essayclasscontract), Lesson 1 Introduction of Essay and Its Components which can be accessed through (https://padlet.com/arimulianiahmad/essay1) and shown as Figure 1, Lesson 2 Grammar Application to Writing which can be accessed through (https://padlet.com/arimulianiahmad/essay2) and shown as Figure 2, Lesson 3 Argumentative Essay which can be accessed through (https://padlet.com/arimulianiahmad/essay3) and shown as Figure 3, Lesson 4 Cause and Effect Essay which can be accessed through (https://padlet.com/arimulianiahmad/essay4) and shown as Figure 4 and Lesson 5 Comparative and Contrast Essay which can be accessed through (https://padlet.com/arimulianiahmad/essay5) and shown as Figure 5, Lesson 6 Summary & Response Essay (https://padlet.com/arimulianiahmad/essay6) and shown as Figure 6, and Lesson 7 Narrative Essay which can be accessed through (https://padlet.com/arimulianiahmad/essay7) and shown as Figure 7. In addition, to run this learning material effectively, the teacher designed a Guide Book for the teachers and students too, but the teacher only shared the guide book for students on the Padlet to the Introduction homepage (https://padlet.com/arimulianiahmad/essayclasscontract). In asynchronous learning, students can follow the learning activities-based Project-based Learning which has been explained inside that book. In addition, synchronous learning was adopted to facilitate discussion for doing the projects.
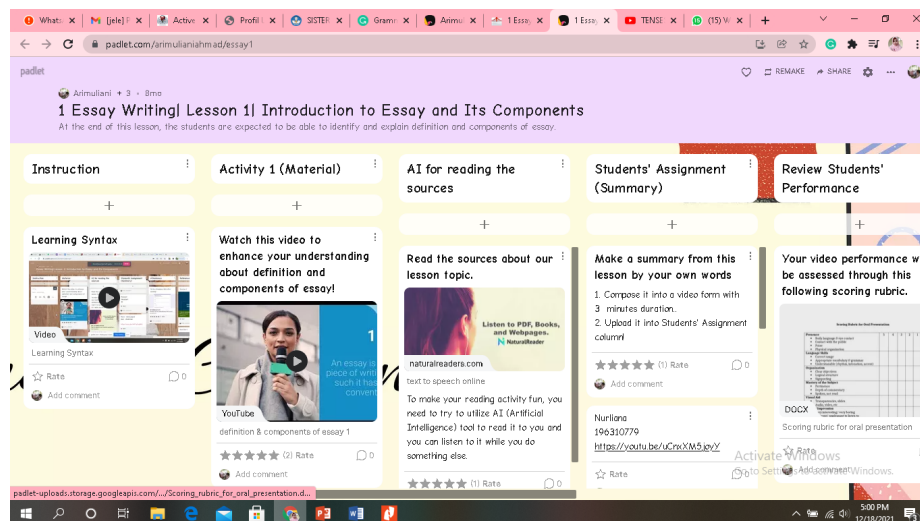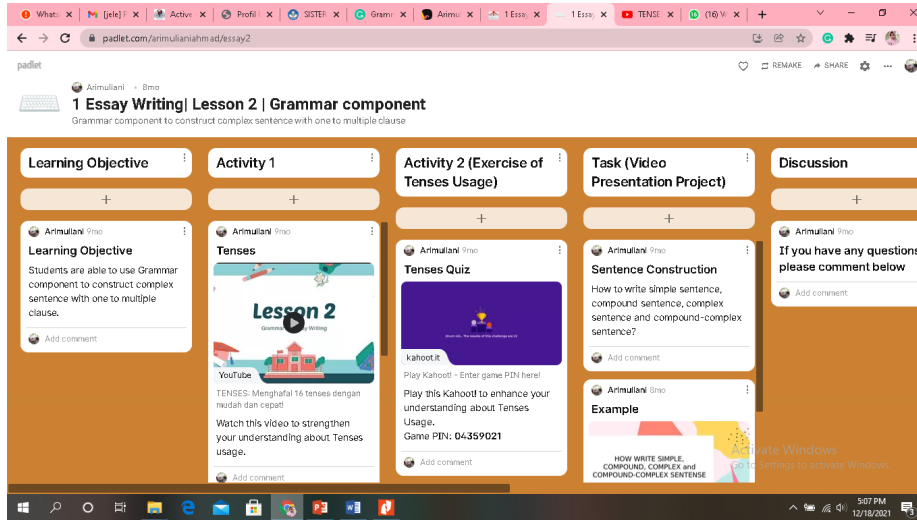

Fig. 1. Lesson 1 Introduction to Essay Writing
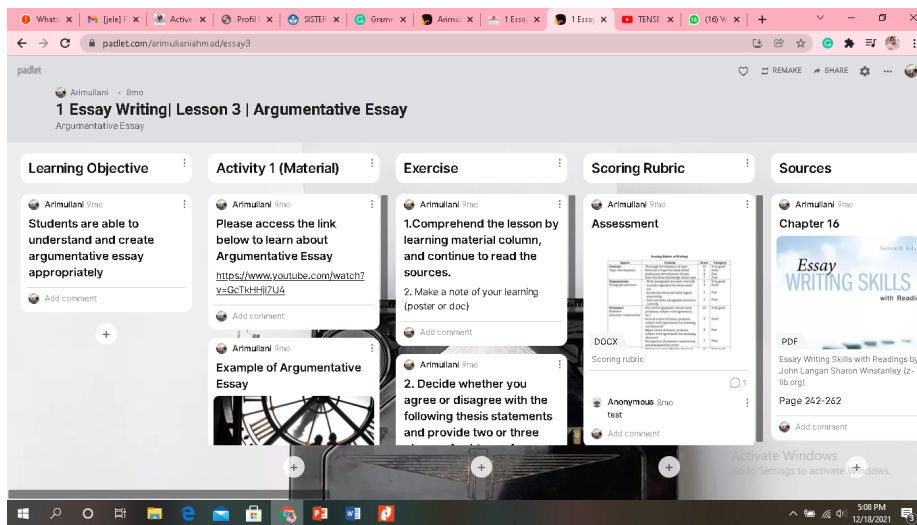
Fig. 2. Lesson 2 Grammar Components

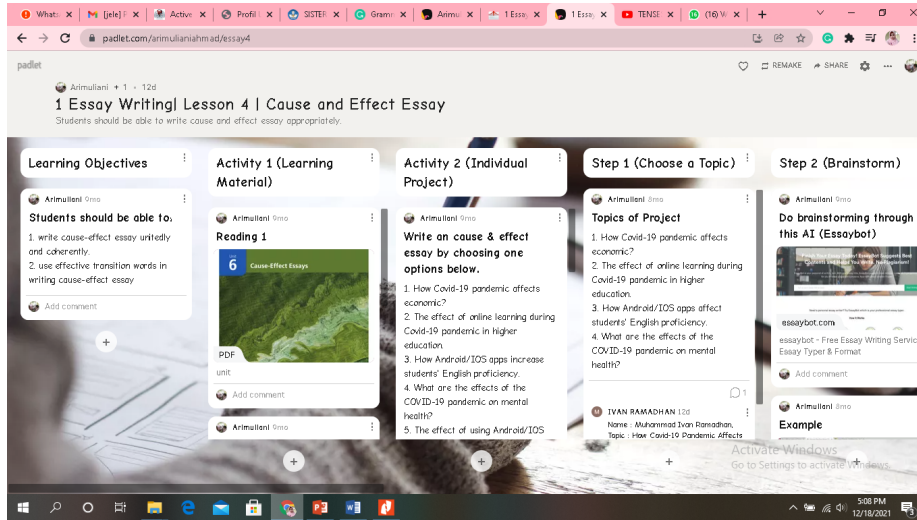**Fig. 3.** Lesson 3 Argumentative Essay

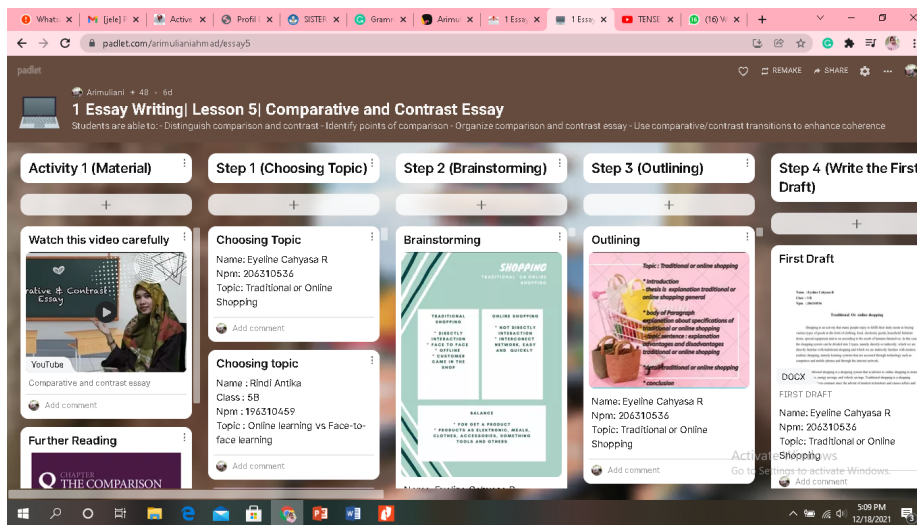**Fig. 4.** Lesson 4 Cause and Effect Essay

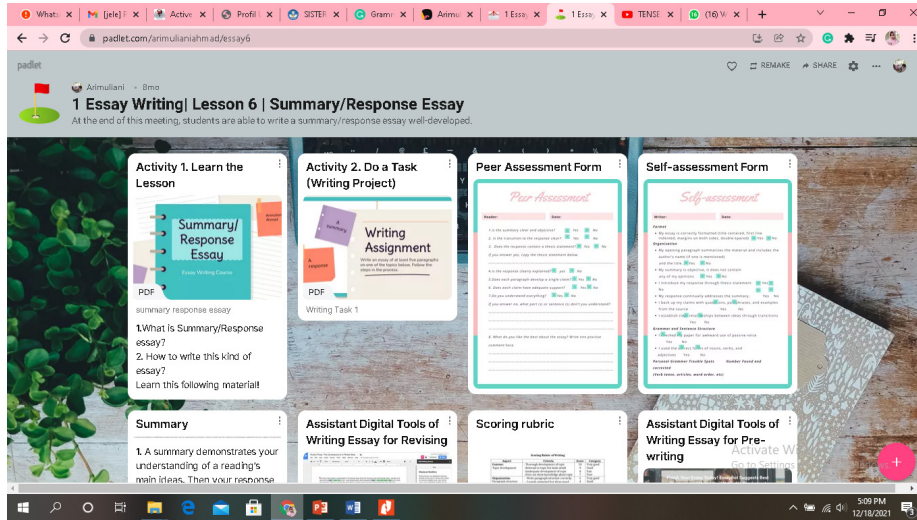**Fig. 5.** Lesson 5 Comparative and Contrast Essay
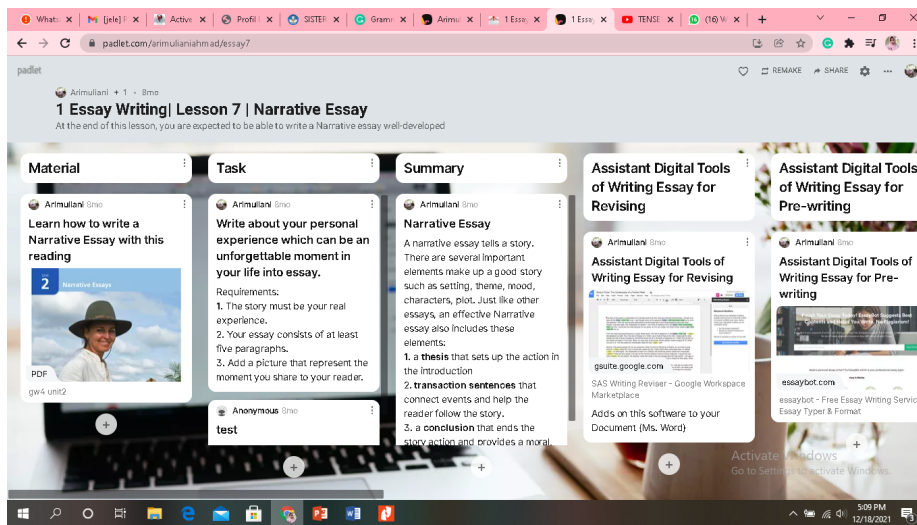
Fig. 6. Lesson 6 Summary/Response Essay

Fig. 7. Lesson 7 Narrative Essay

4.2 YouTube

YouTube was utilized to share the video as content material or students' tasks. To explain relevant material for every lesson, the teacher created and shared the original video which was designed by considering the learning objective of the particular topics. Every video should include the title, learning objective, and also content. After uploading, the teacher linked the YouTube links to Padlet. So, all videos can be accessed equally which is suitable for every lesson they should learn along the semester. Several

videos have been designed such as Definition and Component of Essay in Lesson 1 can be accessed through https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VGc9qzyVIXI&feature=youtu.be, Tenses: Menghapal 16 Tenses dengan Mudah dan Cepat for Lesson 2 through https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oHhTMUM6WOU, Argumentative Video through https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GcTkHHjl7U4 for Lesson 3, and Comparative and Contrast Essay through https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FWE9ynFT-LSU&feature=youtu.be for Lesson 5.

4.3 Kahoot

Online quizzes are intended to provide students with learning experiences in fun and competitive ways. This effort aims to strengthen students understanding of Grammar which refers to Tenses Usage and Sentence Constructions. The teacher designed two quizzes addresses the issue of students' lack of grammatical competence which is required in writing with 25 questions for each quiz. However, it is one of the crucial aspects that should be mastered by the students. This Kahoot integration is designed at the beginning of the lesson and in the prewriting step before they have to write essays. So, these quizzes have been posted on the Lesson 2 wall. See Figure 2 for the appearances.

4.4 Essaybot

Affiliated with students' problem in writing essays due to conveying the relevant ideas to their topic, the teacher provided integration of AI in the writing process. Essaybot can be accessed online from its website. The link has been posted by the teacher on the Padlet wall for Lesson 3 to Lesson 7.

4.5 Grammarly

The teacher realized that her students face Grammatical problems in the writing process. To overcome that classical problem, the teacher applied Grammarly as a checking assistant tool in writing essays. The teacher posted its website link to the Padlet homepage, and instruct the students to check their writing before submitting their essay. On the other hand, the teacher utilized it to check and assess students' essays refers to grammar use, vocabulary, mechanics, and similarity check.

5 Conclusion

Digital tools in learning are all programs, websites, or sources that are applied to ease the teacher and students to achieve the learning objective of particular courses. In achieving the learning objectives of the Essay Writing Course, teachers used five valuable digital tools such as Padlet, YouTube, Kahoot, Essaybot, and Grammarly. Each type of that tools takes a specific function in the writing process to help students accomplish their Essays well. Moreover, the teachers applied Padlet to organize all the learning materials for one semester which includes the learning objectives, materials, tasks, learning activities, and evaluation results. Besides, in constructing students' understanding of specific topics, teacher use videos shared through YouTube, and that

links were posted on Padlet to be accessed. Furthermore, to sharpen students' comprehension toward Grammar to writing, the teacher designs some online quizzes through Kahoot and shared the links on Padlet. in addition, to help students convey relevant ideas on their writing topics, teachers allowed them to use Essaybot as well. And the last, the students should check their writing through Grammarly and revise it before submitting on Padlet to be assessed by the teacher. On the other hand, the teacher applied Grammarly to check the students' errors in writing and also the similarity index to avoid plagiarism effort.

6   References

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