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Integrating Edmodo Into English Instruction: Students' Perceptions And Its Contribution To Autonomous Learning

Sri Wahyuni, Januarius Mujiyanto, Dwi Rukmini, Sri Wuli Fitriati, Budi Handoyo

Abstract: This paper aims at exploring the students' perceptions of the teacher's use of Edmodo in English instruction and its contribution to the development of autonomous learning. Therefore, the questions addressed in this study are 1) How do the students perceive the teacher's use of Edmodo in English instruction? and 2) How does the teacher's use of Edmodo contribute to the students' autonomous learning? An English teacher and 34 students of a public senior high school in Semarang, Central Java, Indonesia were recruited to involve in this study. The research data gained through questionnaires and interviews were analyzed qualitatively. It employed Thematic Analysis by Braun and Clarke (2006). The study revealed that the students were positive about the use of Edmodo to facilitate English learning. Edmodo was considered useful, helpful and practical both as learning and assessment media which enabled the students to enhance English ability. Besides, they could access it anywhere anytime with the support of mobile devices. Additionally, the students responded positively that Edmodo could contribute to student autonomous learning. Edmodo allowed the students to manage their own learning activities, for examples, monitoring learning, selecting appropriate learning strategies, controlling feelings, and enhancing motivation. In spite of the fact that sometimes they encountered problems accessing the site due to limited quota and unstable Internet connection.

Index Terms: autonomous learning, Edmodo, English instruction, integration, learning applications, students' perceptions, technology.

1. INTRODUCTION

Technology has been extensively exploited to facilitate teaching and learning activities. The emergence of it also encourages educators, teachers, and education practitioners to utilize technology for instructional purposes. One of the technology types generated by the Internet to promote classroom activities is Edmodo. As a Learning Management System (LMS), Edmodo is widely applied today. Since its emergence in 2008, designed by O'Hara and Borg, now it has been adopted by more than 81 million people all over the world (Scott, 2012; Hourdequin, 2014). As Edmodo resembles Facebook (Lu & Churchill, 2013), it is, therefore, perceived to be more user-friendly (Kongchan, 2012). Some other characteristics of Edmodo including its accessibility, connectivity, varied features, and low cost (Warawudhi, 2017) also encourage teachers to utilize it for advancing classroom instruction.

The massive use of Edmodo is also followed by the increasing research on its impacts on classroom activities worldwide.

The study by Balasubramanian, Jaykumar, and Fukey (2014) revealed that incorporating Edmodo into classroom practices encouraged both students' engagement and responsible learning. Besides, it found that the students preferred to use Edmodo for it facilitated students with such features as forum, discussion, and online class. Next, Al-Ruheili and Al-Saidi (2015) suggested that use of Edmodo raised students' motivation to participate and engage in different types of activities in and outside classrooms. Said (2015) pointed out that students perceived positively of Edmodo use because it facilitated and increased effective communication between teacher and students as well as interaction amongst students. Supporting the previous studies by Balasubramanian, Jaykumar, and Fukey (2014); and Al-Ruheili and Al-Saidi (2015), Manowong (2016) uncovered that Edmodo was perceived as a useful and beneficial instructional platform to alter face-to-face classroom practices for it provided various features assisting students' learning activities. It also suggested that this system was effective to enhance students' motivation, flexibility, and participation in virtual classrooms. This finding confirmed Alshawi and Alhomoud (2016). Wichadee (2017) implemented blended learning by making use of Edmodo. The result found that it was more effective than traditional learning proven by the increase of students' English proficiency and learning motivation. It was also supported by Al-Naibi, Al-Jabri, and Al-Kabani (2018) that it was particularly useful to help develop students' writing skills. In Indonesian context, a number of researchers such as Purnawarman, Susilawati, and Sundayana (2016); Insani, Suherdi, and Gustine (2018); Yusuf, Yusuf, Erdiana, and Pratama (2018); Puspitaloka, Rachmawati, and Sonjaya (2018); and Ngo and Ngadiman (2019) have adopted Edmodo into English language teaching and learning activities. The findings suggested that students' responses and attitudes were positive. Hence, it could increase not only students' participation, motivation, and interests towards learning but also students' academic achievement and language skills. It can be inferred that the previous studies focused on exploring the use of Edmodo as a learning platform and its positive impacts on students' learning achievement, English skills,

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engagement, motivation, communication, interaction, and learning interests. However, studies on students' perceptions of the English teachers' use of Edmodo and its implications on student autonomous learning by using Tassinari's (2010) framework of Learner Autonomy: A Dynamic Model has not been very much explored. Therefore, to fill the research void, the present study aims at explaining the students' perception of the teachers' use of Edmodo in English instruction in high school context and explicating the contribution of Edmodo to autonomous learning. Learner Autonomy can be defined as learners' willingness and responsibility to plan and determine their own learning encompassing what and how they learn as well as why they need to learn (Thanasoulas, 2000). In a short term Masouleh and Jooneghani (2012, p.836) defined autonomous learning as "learner independence, self-directive, and independent learning". Moreover, Tassinari (2010) as cited in Tassinari (2012, p. 30) has developed a framework for evaluating learner autonomy in foreign language learning which covers components, competencies, and strategies. It was later translated into a dynamic model for learner autonomy with descriptors for attitudes, skills, and learning behaviors. Hence, the detailed model can be represented in Figure 1.

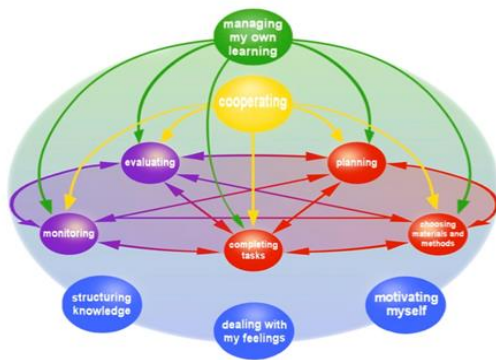


Fig. 1 The dynamic model of learner autonomy by Tassinari (2010, p. 203) taken from Tassinari (2012, p.30)

Each component of the dimensions is later developed into descriptors consisting of 33 macro-descriptors and 85 micro-descriptors (Tassinari, 2012). Due to the time constraints and needs of the present study, therefore, not all descriptors were adopted.

2 METHODOLOGY

The present research employed a descriptive qualitative approach with a case study method. It involved an English teacher of a state senior high school in Semarang, Central Java, Indonesia, Mr Hui, and his respected 34 students. Research instruments including questionnaires and interviews were designed and distributed to obtain the data. The questionnaires with a four-Likert scale were administered to obtain students' perceptions of their English learning with Edmodo and its contribution to autonomous learning. In addition, the interviews were addressed to both the teacher and students to confirm the questionnaire results. Tassinari's (2010) framework of Learner Autonomy: A Dynamic Model was adapted to evaluate the contribution of Edmodo to student autonomous learning. Finally, Thematic Analysis by Braun and

Clarke (2006) was applied for the data analysis method.

3 FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The present study concerned with the students' perceptions of the teacher's use of Edmodo and evaluated how it contributed to student autonomous learning. In regard to the first research question, a four-Likert scale questionnaire was distributed to the students and the result is presented in the following section.

3.1 Students' Perceptions of the Teacher's Use of Edmodo

Five questions were addressed to elicit information about technical characteristics of Edmodo. The finding suggests that majority of the students agreed and strongly agreed that they have been familiar with using Edmodo, the features of Edmodo, experienced in using Edmodo and Edmodo is easy to operate. The detailed result is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Students' Perceptions of the Edmodo Characteristics

No.	Questions	Disagree	Quite Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
		(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)
1	Familiarity with using Edmodo	0	2.9	35.3	61.8
2	Preference of using Edmodo	0	2.9	55.9	41.2
3	Skilful in using Edmodo	0	14.7	64.7	20.6
4	Familiarity with the features of Edmodo	2.9	14.7	44.1	38.2
5	Ease of use of Edmodo	2.9	8.8	50	38.2

In addition, the students said that they did not encounter any difficulties navigating Edmodo because they have experience of using the platform and other types of technology prior to entering senior high school. The student' voice is shown in the extract sample #1.

Extract sample #1:

It is not difficult for me using Edmodo. When I was still in junior high school, I learnt English in the language laboratory which was more complete than this laboratory... so I used to have listening and speaking tests by using technology in the language laboratory. So when I have to use technology here in senior high school I don' find any difficulties because I have been experienced (Student #1, interview, 5 May 2019).

It indicates that the students obtained enough educational technology exposure which enabled them to use it when they went to senior high school. Besides, it appeared to be affected by the way they live today. They are millennials in which almost all aspects of their life are dominated by technology use. They asserted as in the extract samples #2 and #3.

Extract sample #2:

I think that I did not find difficulties accessing Edmodo and other technology because we are millennials ... and we do not feel that we are left behind in using technology ... so I think that I am skilful enough (Student #2, interview, 5 May 2019).

Extract sample #3:

In my opinion, using technology – Edmodo. I do not find difficulties because we know how to do it... the instruction is there ... it is clear... and if I find difficulties, I just search on YouTube...It is easy (Student 3#, interview, 5 May 2019).

It implies that the students as digital natives admitted that they seemed to be more technologically literate. Learning technology appears so simple that enables them to keep up with the advancement of technology.

Moreover, some students acknowledged that learning English with the support of technology such as computers, laptops, LCD projector, Internet, and learning applications seemed to be something new. This is in accordance with Lee (2016) that students' familiarity with technology-based learning environment seemed to be another challenge. Similarly, Alebaikan and Troudi (2010) argued that the students with less experiences using learning applications would take some time to adapt. However, they enjoyed learning which motivated them to enhance their technology use in the classroom. One student said as in the extract sample #4.

Extract sample #4

This is the first time I learn English using internet-based technology. I did not use technology when I was in junior high school... but I am eager to learn and gradually I learn.. at first I felt it was difficult...but now I think I am skillful in using technology and I can access it easily. My knowledge of technology is good now and when we are in the classroom using technology, I think that I am skillful enough (Student #4, interview, 5 May 2019).

Furthermore, Mr Hui said that the students are millenials and have been familiar with using technology outside classrooms. Therefore, it was easier and faster for them to learn technology for learning purposes and they were able to directly navigate the platform themselves (interview, 5 May 2019). Besides, he admitted that Edmodo itself is a user-friendly system and easy to operate. This is in line with Kongchan (2012) and Warawudhi (2012) that the learning platform is practical to adopt. It implies that the students do not need specific training to explore the functions of Edmodo features.

Table 2. Students' Perceptions of the Edmodo to Enhance English Learning

No.	Questions	Disagree	Quite Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
		(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)
6	Edmodo enhances Ss' English ability	0	5.9	58.9	35.3
7	Edmodo stimulates Ss to learn English more.	0	29.4	55.9	14.7
8	Edmodo allows Ss to be active using English.	0	29.4	16.1	23.5

Table 2 displays 56% - 59% of the students agreed that the use of Edmodo stimulated their English learning and triggered them to learn English more frequently. However, when asked

about use of Edmodo to enable learners to actively communicate in English, 23,5% strongly agreed and 16% agreed. This confirmed Mr. Hui's statement that he preferred to facilitate students' lived speaking activities by inviting students to directly converse in front of the class. According to him using technology tools for speaking activity was complicated. For examples, it would be time-consuming for both the teacher and students. The students would spend longer time recording and editing their dialogues before finally posting on the system. The teacher thought that it seemed impractical and inefficient for he had to download the students' work, watch it one by one before scoring and providing feedback. It seemed hard to manage for the teacher had a heavy teaching load and other administration work. However, the interview with the students revealed that Edmodo enabled them to explore more English learning models for understanding grammar and pronunciation. It also gave them a lot of opportunities to develop their reading and writing skills through the forum. This is in agreement with Yusuf, Yusuf, Erdiana, and Pratama (2018) that Edmodo as a learning tool assisted students to write better. Edmodo as a mobile learning application enables users to access it anytime anywhere as long as Internet connection is available. In regard to the students' perception of Edmodo as ubiquitous, between 35% - 53% of the students agreed and strongly agreed that the use of this platform has enabled learners to access English instructional materials and tasks as well as assignments anywhere and learn independently at any time convenient to them. However, there were times when students encountered problems with the Internet. It can be inferred that a few students might not have their personal Internet quota. Hence, this has to be the institution's concern to provide students with sufficient Internet access. This is in line with the previous study by Yusuf, Yusuf, Erdiana, and Pratama (2018) suggesting that not all students possessed devices such as laptops, cell phones, and enough quota. Therefore, it is recommended that the school could better facilitate students so that technology-based learning would happen. Table 3 shows the students' perception of Edmodo as ubiquitous.

Table 3. Students' Perceptions of Edmodo as Ubiquitous

No.	Questions	Disagree	Quite Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
		(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)
9	Edmodo enables me to look for English learning materials independently	0	32.4	47.1	20.6
10	Edmodo allows me to learn English more independently	2.9	29.4	52.9	14.7
11	Edmodo allows Ss to access learning materials anytime anywhere	5.9	20.6	38.2	35.3
12	Edmodo allows Ss to access tasks and assignments anytime anywhere	0	2.9	47.1	50

Edmodo with its various features also enabled the teacher to design and deliver assessment as well as being helped by the correction system. This finding is supported by Balasubramanian, Jaykumar, and Fukey (2014); Al-Ruheili and Al-Saidi (2015); and Manowong (2016) that Edmodo with its multiple functions allowed teachers and students to use it for various purposes. According to the teacher, during preparation, using Edmodo for constructing assessment was considered burdensome. However, once the test instrument was completed, it could be repeatedly used for other parallel

classes and stored for future lessons. This was really helpful for the teacher with a 31-hour teaching load a week. Edmodo as an assessment tool was also considered practical as it provided students with direct results and feedback. On the teacher's side, he could obtain description of the test items in terms of validity and difficulty level. This was meaningful for the teacher to revisit and revise the items for there was no editing sessions during its first construction (Mr Hui, interview, 5 May 2019). Table 4 displays the students' perceptions of Edmodo for its practicality in test delivery.

Table 4. Students' Perceptions of Edmodo Contribution to Practical Test Delivery

No.	Questions	Disagree	Quite Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
		(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)
13	I like taking test via Edmodo	0	17.6	38.2	44.1
14	Taking test via Edmodo enables me to see the results right away	0	11.8	26.5	61.8
15	Taking test via Edmodo enables me to edit the wrong answers	2.9	20.6	41.2	35.3

Additionally, referring to Table 4, 44% - 62% of the students strongly agreed that they enjoyed taking tests via Edmodo since they could get the result immediately. They perceived that taking tests through the online system and making use of their smartphone was interesting and practical. Knowing how they did in the test and getting the score right after they completed the test was the most interesting part. One of the students said as in the extract sample #5.

Extract sample #5:

In my opinion, using Edmodo is more practical, if we use paper-based test, we have to write, it seems complicated. It is more enjoyable if we use Edmodo, we simply click, click, click, and we directly get the result. Besides, we can minimize the use of paper (Student #5, interview, 5 May 2019).

All in all, Edmodo with its technical characteristics enables students to easily explore and use it for various learning purposes. The students thought that it was practical to use Edmodo both as learning and assessment media. As a learning medium, it provides students with opportunities to access it anytime anywhere by using mobile devices. Edmodo as an assessment tool also enables students to take quizzes wherever whenever. In addition, Edmodo allows the test takers to immediately obtain the result of the tests.

3.2 Contributions of Edmodo to Student Autonomous Learning

Referring to the framework for developing student autonomous learning by Tassinari (2010, p. 203) as cited in Tassinari (2012), the present study selected and adopted 20 descriptors. The complete questionnaire result is presented in appendix A. Based on the result presented in Table 5 (see appendix A), it can be inferred that the students felt positive about the contributions of Edmodo to student autonomous learning. The descriptors of the action-oriented dimension and cognitive as well as metacognitive dimension including planning (statements 1-5), selecting materials and strategies (statements 6-8), completing tasks (statements 9-12), monitoring (statements 13-16), and cooperating (statements

17-18) gained students' positive responses. It is shown by 34.2% - 65.8% of the students agreed and strongly agreed with the aforementioned statements. In addition, the students also responded quite positively towards the descriptors of the affective and emotional dimensions (statements 19-20) proven by 31.6% - 47.4% of the students agreed and strongly agreed. Allowing learners to plan their own learning, determining course content and selecting learning strategies that meets their needs would help them develop learning autonomy (Nunan, 2003). With technology-enhanced learning such as Edmodo, learning could take place anytime anywhere. The students were also encouraged to organize their own learning activities, for examples, monitoring learning, developing collaboration with peers, controlling feelings and motivation. This is in complementary with the study by Al-Ruheili and Al-Saidi (2015) that the use of Edmodo was considered to be able to encourage students' motivation and engagement in instructional activities which finally enabled them to develop their autonomous learning. In the interview, the student said as in the extract sample #6.

Extract sample #6.

I think using Edmodo helps me to be an independent learner.. yes independent enough because Mr Hui often gives us assignment and quizzes via Edmodo.. so we are taught to be honest.. not cheating.. I mean.. we cannot copy our classmates' work.. our work is there...our friends can see it ...so it encourages us to be more creative .. our work must be better than others. I think using Edmodo makes us learn more about the content.. English lesson.. and learn how to use technology itself (Student #6, interview, 5 May 2019).

It indicates that use of Edmodo allows students to be independent learners. Besides, they were given opportunities to explore more learning resources as they were connected to the Internet. Posting their assignments on Edmodo promoted students' awareness of being sincere. It means that they were able to learn and monitor themselves not to plagiarize. This also allowed students to develop their creativity and motivate them to achieve better. In addition, not only did the students learn English lesson better but also enhanced their technology knowledge and skill. In the interviews, the teacher was of the opinion that Edmodo was enough to facilitate students learning for it served multiple functions including storing, organizing, and managing learning materials and media, designing and giving assignments, as well as providing a forum for both the teacher and students to communicate and interact. Accordingly, the students were given opportunities to manage their own learning concerning learning strategies, when and where they access learning materials. This is in agreement with Louis (2015) that learning with technology enables students to monitor their own learning by taking part in selecting the learning contents, tasks and activities, and assessment. Besides, Edmodo had much simpler features so that it was much easier to operate. This teacher's voice implied that Edmodo had complete facilities that enabled learners to plan, act, and evaluate their own learning. Its look which was similar to Facebook also attracted students to access it without feeling bored. It is supported by the student's voice as in the extract sample #7.

Extract sample #7:

Yes, learning with technology makes me curious... talking about curiosity ... yes that makes me curious .. because what... when learning using technology I do not feel bored...we usually learn by using books, papers... just like that... but if we use technology for examples Edmodo or Quizziz... its look is interesting.. we do not get bored... just like playing games.. playing games but learning...laughter... (Student #7, interview, 5 May 2019).

This implicates that learning English using Edmodo enabled learners to develop their curiosity and learners with high curiosity would be able to learn more. Technology with its multimodal resources has attracted students' attention, interests, and motivation to engage in learning. This is supported by Al-Ruheili and Al-Saidi (2015) that the use of Edmodo raised students' motivation to participate and engage in different types of activities in and outside classrooms. Accordingly, learning would be more fun. When students enjoy learning it would result in better achievement. In addition, this online learning system also enabled learners to explore other learning sites. This was supported by the students' voices that while they were working on Edmodo it did not make them feel bored. It was always fun because they could easily switch to other channels (Student #3, interview, 5 May 2019). Edmodo as a learning tool allowed teachers to post learning materials. Therefore, this permitted students to explore and learn anywhere any time prior to taking quizzes. One student recalled as in the extract sample #8.

Extract sample #8

Something fun about using Edmodo is that the teacher can share the materials on Edmodo first. Every time he has a new materials he will share it, and ask us to learn it first before giving a quiz. So he does not only directly give a quiz but also gives learning materials on Edmodo... so we can learn and be well-prepared using Edmodo (Student #8, interview, 5 May 2019).

On the whole, use of Edmodo seemed to contribute to student autonomous learning. This is supported by Nowlan (2008) that use of the Internet and technology imparted autonomy in language learning. It means that students as English language learners managed to employ their own strategies which might be more appropriate with their own situation (Lengkanawati, 2014a) in Lengkanawati (2017). With its various features, Edmodo facilitates teachers to share learning materials. Therefore, the students will be encouraged to plan what, how, and when to learn and this is central to students' learning (Nunan, 2003). It implies that the teacher's support plays an important role in promoting students' learning. This is in accordance with Nowlan (2012) that being autonomous students should be scaffolded by the teacher. As Edmodo is generated by the Internet, it enabled the students to select more appropriate learning materials and strategies to learn it. Besides used for sharing learning materials, Edmodo allowed teachers to post assignments which could be done outside classrooms. This stimulated students to manage their own plan of when and where to learn as well as how they would deal with it. As Edmodo was an online learning platform, it was

possible for the teacher to provide students with comments and feedback at any time. This is also confirmed by Permanasari, Saleh, Rukmini, and Mujiyanto (2019) that the use of online instructional strategy allowed teachers and students to have more time for learning. Finally, Edmodo provided students with multimodal affordances, therefore, it altered students' learning strategies which resulted in fun learning activities. This is in line with Lengkanawati (2014b) in Lengkanawati (2017) that if students employed learning strategies that would cause them to be autonomous learners which would support them to achieve better.

4 CONCLUSION

It could be summarized that the students responded positively towards the use of Edmodo (Al-Naibi, Al-Jabri, & Al-Kabani, 2018) as the learning tool to facilitate English learning. Students also acknowledged that using Edmodo provided them as learners with unlimited time and space to explore and enhance knowledge. Its' ubiquitous characteristic allowed the teacher to update information anywhere anytime. In addition, teacher could also provide room for discussion which enabled students to respond and interact with peers. In spite of the fact that users, in this case, the teacher and students obtained a variety of advantages of using Edmodo, they sometimes also encountered a minor problem. The teacher clarified that there were two out of 34 students who did not have their own personal cell phones. However, this minor problem could simply be solved by lending them the teacher's gadget. Another problem encountered by some students was that sometimes the Internet connection was so slow that it made them lose some time doing tasks and assignments.

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APPENDIX A

Table 5. Questionnaire Result of the Contributions of Edmodo to Student Autonomous Learning

No	Questions	Disagree	Quite Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
		(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)
Planning					
1	Edmodo enables me to evaluate my own language competencies.	0	10.5	52.6	36.8
2	Edmodo helps me recognize my own needs.	0	15.8	42.1	42.1
3	Edmodo helps me set my learning goals.	0	2.6	63.2	34.2
4	Edmodo enables me to plan a time and place for learning.	0	23.7	44.7	31.6
5	Edmodo enables me to achieve my pre-set learning goals.	0	7.9	47.4	44.7
Selecting Learning Materials and Strategies					
6	Edmodo enables me familiar with a variety of language learning materials and resources	0	7.9	26.3	65.8
7	Edmodo enables me to choose authentic materials	0	18.4	28.9	52.6
8	Edmodo enables me to try different learning strategies	0	7.9	42.1	50
Completing Tasks					
9	Edmodo enables me to organize a time and place for learning	2.6	21.1	39.5	36.8
10	Edmodo helps me structure my learning independently	2.6	21.2	36.8	39.5
11	Edmodo allows me to use a variety of learning materials and resources	0	2.6	34.2	63.2
12	Edmodo allows me to employ a variety of learning strategies	0	18.4	42.1	39.5
Monitoring					
13	Edmodo helps me recognize my strengths and weaknesses as a learner	0	13.2	34.2	52.6
14	Edmodo helps me recognize my own learning motivation	0	13.2	39.5	47.4
15	Edmodo helps me recognize what prevents me from completing the tasks	1	5.3	50	39.5
16	Edmodo enables me to get the teacher's feedback anywhere anytime so that I can enhance my English skills	0	0	50	60
Cooperating					
17	Edmodo enables me to cooperate with peers and teachers	0	2.6	36.8	60.5
18	Edmodo helps me decide with whom I should cooperate with to structure my learning better.	0	7.9	34.2	57.9
Feelings					
19	Edmodo enables me to control my feelings/emotions when I feel bored and afraid of talking to others.	0	23.7	31.6	44.7
	Edmodo enables me motivate myself to speak English even though I feel nervous and worried about making mistakes.	0	23.7	47.4	1595 28.9