LANGUAGE CIRCLE: Journal of Language and Literature, 16(2) April 2022 p-ISSN 1858-0165
Available online at http://journal.unnes.ac.id e-ISSN 2460-853X

Secondary School Students' Perception on Edmodo as Online Learning Platform in English Learning

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Abstract

Considering the students as digital-natives, the integration of technology in English language learning is needed. It is in line with the 21st-century students required-skills that they have to master information communication and technology (ICT). Hence, Edmodo has been used by English teachers in secondary schools as an online learning platform to support and reach their learning objectives today. This current study aims to look over the secondary students' perception on the use of Edmodo in English learning. To reach this purpose, a mixed-method approach was applied. Forty students from four different secondary/junior high schools were involved in this study. In collecting the data, a closed-questionnaire consisted of 13 items and a semi-structured interview were carried out. The finding reveals that Edmodo was positively and well-perceived by the secondary students as an acceptable online learning platform for their English learning. Even the problem of an internet connection arises, most of the students admit Edmodo assists them in saving their learning time, reducing learning boredom, and creating better English learning.

Keywords: Edmodo, online learning platform, English learning, secondary school students, ICT

INTRODUCTION

The rapid advancement in information communication and technology (ICT) has brought a new era in all aspects of human life (Hidayati, 2016). This new era is known as the 21st-century era that has some changes in the economy, culture, technology, as well as education (Bedir, 2019; Cakrawati, 2017). In education, the 21st century introduces the term of 21st-century education and learning that ensures both teachers and students to survive and deal with its challenges. The teachers, especially, need to adjust their teaching and learning process by considering the 21st-century skills that are emphasized by the frameworks mainly called as Partnerships of the 21st century (P21). They are supposed to sharpen the learning process by focusing on collaboration, technology, and digital literacy, creative and critical thinking, and problem-solving (Greenhill, 2010; Kivunja, 2015; Motallebzadeh et al., 2018). This framework encourages teachers to develop their teaching and learning instructions in fulfillment of the students' 21st century expected skills and requirements.

Mastering ICT is becoming one of the students' skills that meets the requirements of 21st-century education. As the digital natives, the students are closely living with a technology-driven environment in which they are intimate with information access, media creation, technology outcome, and appropriate technology application (Inderawati et al., 2019; Lubis, 2018). ICT which is defined as any technology use has

been a part of students' lives and integrated into their way of learning (Beckinsale & Ram, 2006). The use of ICT also presents a better accessible manner to boost knowledge and eliminates the issue of distance and time in learning. ICT provides flexible time-space that facilitates interaction and information reception (Julio & Carmen, 2013; Julio & Carmen, 2012)

For the development of education quality-learning languages such as English, ICT should be integrated into teaching and learning processes. It is due to the transformative effect of ICT on education that eases the acquisition of knowledge (Ogott & Odera, 2012; Oyedele et al., 2013; Prastikawati, 2019). Further, ICT has given an improvement in the efficiency and effectiveness of the English teaching and learning process so that the teachers can do the administrative task easily as well as the students can learn English effectively (Akpabio & Ogiriki, 2017). Specifically, the involvement of ICT has proposed an authentic ad actual learning environment creating more prompting, entertaining, memorable, and appealing to both students and teachers by engaging them in various communication tasks and activities (Elliot, 2009; Nikitina, 2009; Prastikawati et al., 2020). As a result, incorporated e-learning into classrooms has been realized and matched to the digital era (Cowie & Sakui, 2013).

The use of Edmodo as an online learning platform is one of the ICT corporations in the teaching and learning process that promotes independent learning and inquiry-based learning. Edmodo is free social networking that can be used as an instructional utensil and device for teachers and students to get interaction and collaboration even they are not in the same room (Dewi, 2014). As Facebook, Edmodo has been developed and had its privacy and safety that secure the users to have an interface and communication (Hourdequin, 2014). It has been widely known by teachers and students as an accessible online learning platform through a web browser and smartphone applications (Hammonds et al., 2013). As a free of charge online learning platform, it presents many features that help the teachers to organize the teaching and learning process such as distributing the assignment, setting the deadline of submission, monitoring the students' learning progress, and giving feedback to the students. Furthermore, the students are allowed to comment, send the notes, files and assignments, and direct messages to their friends and the teacher (Al-said, 2015; Enriquez, 2014; Sumardi & Muamaroh, 2020). This facility also gives an opportunity for the introvert and weak students to ask questions and clarify what they have doubted in their learning (Looi & Yusop, 2011). The teachers also have chances to reward their students who have performed well in quizzes, assignments, and tests with badges (Hariri & Bahanshal, 2015; Manowong, 2016). With its benefits, Edmodo can be a potential tool in blended and e-learning to reach the maximum learning goals.

In an English language learning context, some studies relating to the implementation of Edmodo as an online learning platform have been conducted. Enriquez (2014) in Philipines conducted a study that mentioning Edmodo as an effective learning application. It helped the students actively participate in online discussions and tasks. In the similar vein, Al-said (2015) in Saudi Arabia also conducted a study revealing the students' viewpoint that Edmodo eased and supported effective communication in the teaching and learning process for it saved learning time. In Thailand, Kongchan (2012) revealed that Edmodo was well perceived by the teachers as a user-friendly social and an online learning platform that had helped them as non-digital native teachers to run enjoyable online teaching and learning. In Thailand, teachers' positive perception was also in line with the students' appreciation of Edmodo as a wonderful learning platform that supports their learning. Manowong (2016) also conducted a study on 94 EFL students' perceptions on Edmodo as an additional English learning utensil that encouraged their learning motivation in online learning. They mentioned that Edmodo presented a stimulating learning environment so that they were well encouraged to be active participants. This research finding is also in line with a study conducted by Çankaya et al. (2013) in Turkey that Edmodo presented an enjoyable learning

atmosphere that encouraged the students to improve their English skills.

In Indonesia, the positive attitude was shown in a study conducted by Dewi (2014). forty undergraduate students of the first semester participated and mentioned that Edmodo satisfied their expectations of an online learning platform. They agreed that the buttons and navigation of Edmodo were familiar, so they did not find the technical problems. Another study on the students' perception on Edmodo was done by (Purnawarman et al., 2016). The study exposed how Edmodo supported the students' engagement and integrated well in the genre-based academic (GBA) writing cycle. Even, this study also mentioned the students' barriers in using Edmodo such as smartphone incompatibility, connection problems, and bandwidth.

The previous studies have portrayed impressively on the implementation of Edmodo as an online learning platform and its potential as an online learning platform in English learning. Most of the studies conducted focus on EFL students at the level of universities. Nonetheless, based on the researchers' knowledge, little research was conducted to seek junior high school/secondary school students' views on the use of Edmodo in English learning process. Compared to university students who are grown up and sensible to the use of ICT, junior high school students are still in the phase of adapting themselves to an online learning platform (Jailani et al., 2017; Wiyaka et al., 2020). Point to that, it is crucial to figure out junior high school students' perception is important since they are newcomers in using ICT especially in learning English as a foreign language. This current study is addressing the existing gaps by centering the junior high school students' perception of the use of Edmodo as an online learning platform in their English learning. Thus, the study is attempting to address the research question, "What are the students' perceptions on Edmodo as an online learning platform in English learning?".

METHODS

Research Design

This study applied a mixed-method approach in which both quantitative and qualitative data were employed and put together. The use of a mixed-method approach was intended to present a better understanding in answering the research questions (Malik & Hamied, 2016). Thus, a mixed-method approach presents the robustness of qualitative and quantitative research (Creswell, 2014; Mohajan, 2018). Specifically, this approach was carried out for the researcher wants to provide both the quantitative and qualitative data of the students' perception on Edmodo as an online platform in the English classroom.

Participants

The participants were 40 students who came from four junior high schools (JHS) in Semarang, Indonesia. Those four different junior high schools had been observed to the use of the online learning platform in English subject. In this case, the researcher also ensured that all the participants had been taught using Edmodo as the online learning platform used by their English teachers. The participants' information is distributed in Table 1.

Table 1 Participants basic information

	State JHS 1	State JHS 2	Private JHS 1	Private JHS 2	Subtotal
Male	5	6	5	4	20
Female	5	4	5	6	20
Total	10	10	10	10	**40**

The four schools as the representative places of this study consist of two state junior high schools and two private junior high schools. The participants were selected through purposive random sampling. In this case, those 40 secondary school students were selected as they had actively participated and known well what Edmodo presented in English teaching and learning process/English class.

Data Collection

In collecting the data, a closed-ended questionnaire and interview were carried out. The closed-ended questionnaire consisted of 15 questions using a five-Likert scale. Those questions in the questionnaire were adapted, simplified, and developed from the previous studies carried by Manowong (2016) and Laxmi (2017). This questionnaire was distributed in order to figure out EFL students' perceptions on Edmodo as an online learning platform in English learning. It is in line with Mero-Jafe (2012) who stated that a questionnaire was able to use in collecting the data of people's perception and attitude. Relating to the questionnaire's validity, an inter-rater validity approach was carried out. The two university professors gave feedback and validated the final content and layout of questionnaires. Moreover, Cronbach's Alpha test was used to measure the questionnaires' reliability. According to the measurement, the calculated Alpha was 0.9 which means that the questionnaire had been accepted and had a high level of internal consistency.

Meanwhile, a semi-structured interview consisted of six questions was conducted to obtain rigorously information on the use of Edmodo applied in English learning and its benefits for the EFL students' English learning. This semi-structured interview was conducted after the administration of questionnaires was all finished. In its process, all of the participants were invited to join the interview, but not all participants agreed. There were six participants rejected to join the interview because of their personal reasons. Then, it remained 34 participants joining the interview. After accepting the invitation to an interview, the participants were asked their permission to record their responses. In the process of interviewing, note-taking was also done to emphasize the crucial points that support the data needed.

Data Analysis

A closed-ended questionnaire data were statistically analyzed in the form of percentages and interpreted descriptively. The rating scale of the closed-questionnaires was converted into numbers (1 for Strongly Disagree, 2 for Disagree, 3 for Undecided, 4 for Agree, and 5 for Strongly agree) and computed in Microsoft Excel to get the percentage of each statement. The overall data from a close-ended questionnaire was statistically computed using SPSS 23 to get the overall mean (M) and standard deviation (SD). It was intended for getting the level of perception of sub-part of the students' perception. On the other hand, the semi-structured interview was transcribed and translated into English. Then, the data wer analyzed using a qualitative coding technique to reveal the key features that were conformed with EFL students' perception on Edmodo as an online learning platform in English learning. Basically, this semi-structured interview data was used to provide more elaboration of EFL students' perception on Edmodo as an online learning platform as well as its benefits for EFL students' English learning.

FINDINGS

The findings of this study have shown some key points relating to how Edmodo as an online learning platform is perceived by junior high school students. Based on the closed-questionnaire result, the students show positive perception and attitude toward the use of Edmodo as an online learning platform in the teaching and learning process, especially in an English subject. As it is shown in table 2 the students' perception levels are shown a descriptive statistical analysis in the forms of the mean (M), standard deviation (SD), and the level of perception. The level of perception is needed to state to show whether the students' perception is at a high/moderate/low level. In this study, the students' perceptions were split into three; (1) perception on usefulness of Edmodo, (2) perception on ease of use in Edmodo, (3) perception on the students' barrier in using Edmodo.

Table 2 The result of a descriptive statistical analysis

Students' Perception	Mean	SD	Level of Perception
Usefulness of Edmodo	3.78	0.13	High

Ease of use in Edmodo (in the aspect of technology acceptance model)	3.75	0.10	High
Barriers faced by the students	3.50	0.07	Moderate
Overall mean	3.68	0.15	High

According to table 2, the students' overall perception shows a high perception in its level of perception. Meanwhile, based on each aspect of students' perception, positive or high perceptions were shown in the usefulness of Edmodo and the ease of use in Edmodo as an online learning platform in English learning. The moderate perception was shown in presenting the barriers that the students face in using Edmodo in English learning. Concerning that result, the finding was elaborated in three sections. The first, it is regarding the usefulness of Edmodo as an online learning platform to support the students' English learning. The second point of findings is relating to the ease of use in Edmodo that considers as technology acceptance model (TAM). Then, the last finding is about the barriers that has been faced by the students in using Edmodo as their online learning platform.

The Usefulness of Edmodo

The first data finding reveals how Edmodo was perceived by the students. This is an important data of students' perception to see whether or not Edmodo assists the students' learning especially in their English subject. In this case, the participants of this study were obligated by their English teachers to use Edmodo in their English learning/subject. According to the level of perception in table 2, the students showed high level of perception towards the usefulness of Edmodo. This high level of perception reflected their positive perception on Edmodo as a useful online learning platform that they used in their English learning. Moreover, the details were also presented in table 3.

Table 3 presented that students showed their agreements on the functionality and adequacy of Edmodo to support their English learning process. This was proved by the result of Q1 that the students mostly agreed that the reference materials provided in Edmodo helped them better in learning English. They also agreed in Q2 that Edmodo was an appropriate online learning platform that assisted them in submitting their assignments and an online quiz so that in Q3 they were invigorated to learn more.

The students also mentioned in Q4 and Q5 that Edmodo aided them in practicing English skills and acquiring their new vocabulary. The positive perception on the usefulness of Edmodo was also derived from Q6. Although there were students who were neutral/undecided, disagree, and strongly agree in Q6, but high percentages still could be noticed by those who agreed and strongly agreed to Edmodo's usefulness in presenting challenging and interesting.

Table 3 Students' perception on the usefulness of Edmodo

No	Question	SD (%)	DA (%)	Un (%)	A (%)	SA (%)
1	The reference materials, assignments, and tasks provided by my teacher in Edmodo aid me in learning English better.	-	10	7.5	60	22.5

2	Edmodo is suitable to use in submitting assignments, taking online English quizzes, and having interactions with friends and the teacher.	2.5	12.5	2.5	55	27.5
3	The online activities in Edmodo motivate me to learn more about the English lesson	5	7.5	7.5	60	20
4	Edmodo helps me in practicing my English skills	-	15	5	75	5
5	Edmodo assists me in gaining new English vocabularies	5	5	12.5	67.5	10
6	Edmodo makes my reading activities more interesting and challenging	5	15	7.5	60	12.5

Furthermore, those data findings were in line with what has been stated by the students in the interview. Most of the students revealed that Edmodo had saved their time in English learning so that they did not feel bored. Further, they mentioned that Edmodo allowed them to do the tasks and assignments given by their teacher in their free time as far as they had an internet connection. Here are some of the students' responses in the interview section that have been translated into English to be clearly stated:

"Edmodo is a fun online learning platform. It gives me more time to learn English in my spare time. I really like Edmodo."

" Edmodo is new for me but I like it because it saves my time in English learning. I never feel bored when using Edmodo."

"for me, Edmodo helps me in learning English better. This platform is challenging, so I am motivated more in English subject."

Edmodo was also regarded to support them in saving paper in their learning process since they did not need to use many papers or printed files. Except for saving time and paper, they also stated that Edmodo provided them faster results and feedback when they had tasks/assignments and an online quiz. These facts were also presented by the interview data. Here are the excerpts from the interview:

"What I like is that in Edmodo I save my money for I do not need to print the assignment. It saves my paper for sure. Then, when my assignment was submitted, my English teacher gives me feedback as soon as possible"

"It is so cool for me because in Edmodo I can get my English teacher's feedback in a short time. When having a quiz, I also receive faster results. No need of waiting too long anymore!"

Moreover, Edmodo was also considered a help for the students to have interactions with their friends and the teacher. Videos, online quizzes, and discussion were features found in Edmodo that let the students have face to face interaction and interactive communication among them. These are examples of the students' responses in the interview:

"I still have an interaction with my friends by using Edmodo. I can comment on my friends' post and they will reply to me"

"Edmodo facilitates us with face to face interaction too. I like when talking with others and I can see their face"

Hence, those findings prove that Edmodo brings a lot of advantages and usefulness of an online learning platform, especially in English learning.

The Ease of Use in Edmodo

Supporting the students' positive perception on the usefulness of Edmodo in English learning, Edmodo's ease of use was also well and positively perceived by the students. It was noticed in table 2

that the students' level of their perceptions in the ease of use in Edmodo was high. This means that the students accepted the ease of use in Edmodo as an online learning platform that presented its simplicity in appearance and uses. To clarify the positive perception on the ease of use, table 5 showed the details of closed-questionnaire data gained from the students' responses.

Table 4 Students' perception on the ease of use in Edmodo

No	Question	SD (%)	DA (%)	Un (%)	A (%)	SA (%)
7	Edmodo is designed with visually appealing pages and navigation buttons	2.5	15	12.5	57.5	12.5
8	Edmodo provides pertinent illustrations and animations in its lesson and material.	-	15	5	67.5	12.5
9	Edmodo presents the information and instructions for learning materials in a clear and readable way.	5	7.5	-	70	17.5
10	Edmodo displays persistent visual themes	5	12.5	5	60	17.5

As seen in table 5, students mostly agree and strongly agree that Edmodo was presented in visually appealing pages and navigation buttons (in Q7) that the students were easy to work with. Although there were students who did not agree with that, most of them still agreed and strongly agreed to the visually appealing pages and navigation buttons presented by Edmodo. It was also supported by the result of Q8. The students agreed that Edmodo supported the lesson and material in a pertinent illustration and animation.

Further, in Q9 more than 70% of students agreed that Edmodo displayed the information and instructions for learning materials in a clear and readable way. This means that Edmodo facilitated the students to have better and clear material so that the students' learning process was well-improved. Relating to Edmodo's appearance, the students' responses in Q10 showed that they agreed to the persistent and visual themes that were presented in Edmodo.

This second perception on the ease of use in Edmodo was also related to what had been stated in the interview. Here are some excerpts from the interview;

"Edmodo is a simple online learning platform. It is quite similar to Facebook that I have familiar with. The visual themes in Edmodo are nice too."

"I have difficulty in using Edmodo because Edmodo provides clear instruction and information for me."

The Barriers Faced by the Students in Using Edmodo

The last students' perception on Edmodo was about the barriers that were faced by the students in using Edmodo. Even the previous findings mentioned that the majority of students show their positive perception on Edmodo's usefulness and ease of use, they still faced some obstacles. As it was mentioned in table 2 that students' perception related to their barriers in using Edmodo was at a moderate level. The details were shown in table 5. It showed how the students face problems with an internet connection, mobile access, and bandwidth.

Table 5 Students' Perception on their barriers in using Edmodo

No	Question	SD (%)	DA (%)	Un (%)	A (%)	SA (%)
11	I think it is hard to use Edmodo on a slow-speed internet connection	10	17.5	5	55	12.5
12	I think it is difficult to use Edmodo as a mobile learning application	2.5	22.5	10	50	15
13	The smoothness of Edmodo access depends on the bandwidth	2.5	17.5	7.5	65	7.5

According to table 5, most students (in Q11) got difficulties in accessing Edmodo when they were on a slow-speed internet connection. As it is known, using Edmodo asked the students to remain online when they were having tasks and doing the online quiz. Thus, when the internet connection was low in its speed, that required condition of English learning activity remained hard for the students. This is also in line with the excerpts in interview:

"I need a stable internet when I have to do assignment and quiz from my English teacher. It is quite difficult for me actually because I do not have wifi at home"

"I am difficult to access Edmodo when I have slow and bad internet connection such as when it is raining. Meanwhile, I need to access it for doing my assignment. To stay online remains a difficulty in that condition"

Meanwhile, there were some of them did not regard internet connection as the problem in accessing Edmodo. In the interview, they preferred to find an internet free accessed place rather than using their personal internet data. Here are the examples of the students' statements in interview time:

"The problem is that Edmodo needs a good connection, so I go to a place where wifi is available or going to free internet access with my mom"

"When it is about internet connection, I always go to my neighbor's house that allows me to have their wifi. It is then not a problem anymore for me in accessing Edmodo.

Other barriers were found in terms of synchronicity of Edmodo as a mobile learning application and its bandwidth. Based on Q12, students found it difficult to use Edmodo as a mobile learning application. This was also supported by the interview data that Edmodo was fine when it was accessed on a personal computer(PC) or laptop. On the other hand, it was hard to do on a mobile phone for the students could not open the media and questions easily. Further, in Q13, the students revealed the fact that the smoothness of Edmodo depended on its bandwidth. All those barriers showed that Edmodo had some limitations and weaknesses.

DISCUSSION

The focus of this current research is on how the use of Edmodo was perceived by the secondary students as well as the barriers they faced in using it. According to the findings, students show their positive perceptions on Edmodo as an online learning platform in English learning. Thus, the students' positive perceptions can be clarified at some points.

The first perception of the use of Edmodo as an online learning platform in secondary schools was relating to its usefulness. The prior usefulness of Edmodo was stated that it helped them in learning English better since they saved their learning time. In this case, the students still could access Edmodo and its English learning content as far as they wanted to. It is in line with the concept of an online learning platform that should bring evocative learning to the students in every time they wanted to start their learning process (Archambault et al., 2010; Chapelle et al., 2003; Ekmekçi, 2016). The accessible online learning such as Edmodo invigorated the students to learn at any

time and any places through their personal computer (PC), smartphones, or tablets they had (Manowong, 2016; Wallace, 2013). This condition became a new atmosphere for the students' online learning and stimulated them to have better English learning. Thus, their interest in learning English was raised as well as their learning experience (Çankaya et al., 2013; Chapelle et al., 2003; Manowong, 2016).

Another usefulness of Edmodo was derived from its potential to reduce learning boredom. The use of Edmodo had significantly eliminated the boredom in English learning activity. It is due to the Edmodo features such as online tasks, discussion, or even the provided materials in Edmodo that were clear and visually interesting. This finding has supported the study done by Cakrawati (2017). It was mentioned that the students' boredom in English learning was decreased when they were given pleasant learning activities on an online platform. The students stated that their reading activities were challenging for they did not just read the text on paper. Their reading activities in Edmodo was more interesting. This is similar to what had been revealed by Mustafa (2015) who clarified that students' reading boredom was decreased through Edmodo. The use of Edmodo as social media utensils expanded the students' learning experience inasmuch of the level of engagement was increased in raising the students' educational outputs (Batsila et al., 2014).

Since Edmodo was a new online learning platform for the students in secondary school, they also needed an adjustment. In this case, this kind of adjustment was fast acquired by the students. It is due to the simple appearance of Edmodo in which it presents many visual themes (Dewi, 2014) that interest the students in secondary school. This finding was supported by Al-said (2015) that the interface of Edmodo was unpretentious that reflected its ease of use. Due to its ease of use, Edmodo did not retain any technical problems when it is used by the students.

Relating to the barriers to use Edmodo as an online learning platform, the issue of internet connection was the main problem that arose. It had been clearly stated by the students that they found it as the main barrier in using Edmodo in English learning. This research finding was also related to the research findings done by Purnawarman et al. (2016) and Dewi (2014) that internet connection became the flaw in using Edmodo. When the students had to do tasks and assignments they were expected in a constant and sustained internet connection (Ekmekçi, 2016). On the other hand, not all the students met this good access requirement. The smoothness in Edmodo also remained a problem for students because it was influenced by the bandwidth (Al-kathiri, 2015; Kongchan, 2012). However, some students tried to overcome this barrier by finding free internet accessed-places as a solution for them.

Hence, this current study presents the confirmation to the previous studies that technology and ICT involvement is needed in English language learning. Edmodo, as one of the technology insertion, has fulfilled the requirements of an online learning platform in terms of usefulness in English learning and the ease of its use. Even the problem of internet connection appears, it still can be overcome by the students so that the English learning process runs better and reaches its learning goals.

CONCLUSION

This present study concludes that Edmodo was perceived positively as an online learning platform in English learning by the students in secondary schools. This is due to the usefulness and the ease of use that are provided by Edmodo. The factors such as saving learning time, decreasing the students' boredom in English learning, and its simple interface become the crucial keys that lead Edmodo is successfully applied for English learning. Point to that, it is suggested for the English teachers to integrate the use of Edmodo in learning. However, further and better study is recommended to seek the other potentials of Edmodo as an online learning platform. The larger subjects of the study are also required to be undertaken to see the students' perception in larger views.

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