

## **ANALYSIS OF STUDENT AUTONOMY IMPLEMENTATION VIA ONLINE PLATFORM WWW.EDMODO.COM**

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Nowadays, learning a language independently is being more widely used in the educational process. Independent learning implies learners' capacity to take responsibility and control their learning, choose what to do, where, when, and why, either in an institutional context or completely independent of a teacher or institution [1]. There are lots of ways of learning independently. In modern life it is more suitable and comfortable to use Internet approaches for autonomy learning. Today it is already possible to say that the Internet technologies are new ways of teaching and learning. It is also becoming easier to learn English independently through online tools such as social networking sites, mobile applications, and platforms. It helps to form their skills and abilities of all four skills, using materials of global network and different sites can help to develop students' receptive and productive skills independently. Now there are a huge number of sites and platforms which help students to solve some problems of developing listening, reading, writing, and speaking skills. One of these platforms Edmodo.com (<http://www.edmodo.com>), is presented in this research.

Independent learning is a chance to make students' learning fun by choosing the material that interests them. Learners can take responsibility for their progress and achievements. The learners can

work on the language skills which they particularly need to work on. Moreover, learners can enhance their confidence in learning new languages in the future and develop their effectiveness as learners. Due to the imposition of quarantine in our country, the use of Internet sites, computer programs, and mobile applications for educational purposes has become an urgent research topic for us.

The purpose of the study was to research online platforms in the framework of the e-learning method, their use in developing students' independent learning skills, and to develop methodological recommendations upon the study. "E-learning method: online platforms for the development of students' independent learning skills" project's participants were 16 pre-Bachelor, M.A., and Ph.D. students of the Theory and Practice of Foreign Languages department.

The experiment took place in an online class, which was created in the platform Edmodo.com. It is an educational Internet platform that offers communication, collaboration, and coaching tools to schools and teachers. We have conducted ten lessons, including other platforms, sites, and applications, which would help consolidate grammar and vocabulary that they were learning on English lessons at the university. Also, the participants have learned about language learning sites and applications that they can use for self-education or their future careers and develop their discipline and independent learning skills. Moreover, we have analyzed the students' feedback on the course, which was the source for compiling some methodological recommendations on the use of online platforms in education.

The study's relevance is that the results of the research can be used in self-study of the English language, improving the skills of independent work of students in universities and the training and professional development of teachers.

We published information about the recruitment of volunteers to learn English online. We asked respondees to take an online test to determine the level of English using the site <https://www.efset.org/ru/free-english-test/>. The EF SET program is developed based on serious research and development and an objective system of free standardized tests for all English levels - from elementary to advanced. Then, we have elaborated 16 students with an intermediate level of English with the help of this test. There were 1 Ph.D. student, 2 undergraduate and 13 pre-bachelor students in our course: 1 male and 15 female participants of 18-35 years old. The nationality of all of them was Kazakh. 20% of them had been learning English as a foreign language for 3-5 years, others – more than five years.

Moreover, we have conducted an online survey to find out about their language learning preferences, motivation to learn English online, and their opinions about e-learning. 80 % of participants have been learning English for work, and the other 20 % have aimed to study abroad. Besides, the participants were asked how to learn English, including watching movies, listening to songs, attending Speaking clubs, etc. They were allowed to choose more than one answer. According to the survey results, 80 % of the participants study English mainly on English lessons at the university, and the same number of surveyed students use textbooks such as Navigate, Face to face, English grammar in use, etc. on their own. 60 % of respondees complete the tasks in online platforms (Duolingo, Puzzle English, etc.). The number of students who watch English movies/TV shows and listen to the radio, songs, and podcasts comprised 40%. Finally, only 20 % of them answered that they attended Speaking clubs.

To conduct our course effectively, we created an online class in Edmodo.com. It is an educational Internet platform that offers communication, collaboration, and coaching tools to schools

and teachers. They have Privacy Policy that cares about their users' personal information and how it is used and shared, and they take their confidentiality gravely. This website has a mobile application that is accessible via the Apple App Store and the Android Marketplace. These mobile applications let learners and teachers access the group in Edmodo.com at any time.

Edmodo.com can be used as a platform for interaction both individual teachers (free and available for teachers anywhere in the world), as well as the school, the educational institution as a whole (administration and free private domain for the OS is available to schools in the US, UK, Australia, Canada, but flowing and ever changing marketplace is constantly being improved). Wanting to get away from standard tests and standardized performance indicators, many teachers use this virtual site to diversify the learning process, increase its efficiency and make it more attractive for young regulars of Facebook.com, Twitter, and Youtube.com.

Perhaps the most significant difference of Edmodo.com from Vkontakte.com and Facebook.com is that there is no external marketing after the authorization. For school groups, in which the teacher or the parents do not want to see annoying advertisements, it can be important. Registration is extremely simplified; no mobile phone numbers are required. The questionnaire does not ask for birthdays, first name, middle name, and other identifying information. Edmodo.com offers many opportunities for teachers. The possible field of use Edmodo.com may be:

1. The organization of the educational process;
2. Professional development of teachers;
3. The interaction between the administration, teachers, parents.

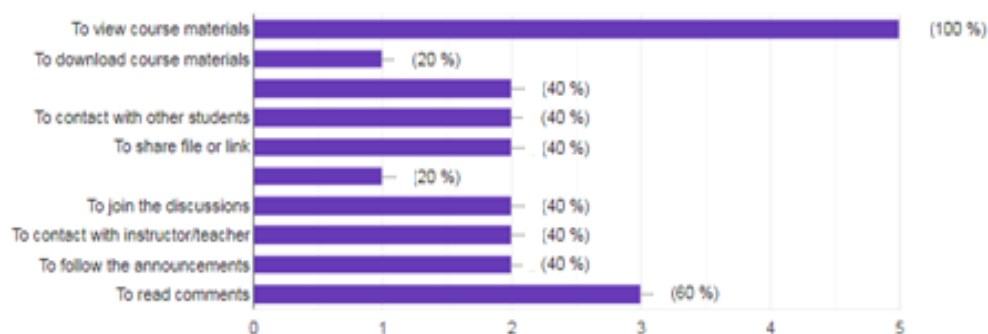
Our course "Online English" in Edmodo was designed for the students who continued studying General English. The course focused on speaking, listening, reading, writing skills, vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation. We have set up certain aims and objectives of the course. We claim that students are always supposed to be informed about them before any course. Since most of the participants were 3rd-year students, we decided to choose the lexical and grammatical material according to the English language upper-intermediate course that they were currently studying at the university.

We started to work on the Edmodo.com web site in April. We have created a group in WhatsApp, and at first, we had to remind the students that we had uploaded a lesson. Then, we enabled notifications for posts so that students would receive emails every time we uploaded a post. We also send the instructions on Edmodo.com's use with the help of a computer/laptop or mobile phone. One of Edmodo.com's important advantages is that users can access anywhere at any time, which makes the work and training more mobile.

We have conducted ten online lessons for 2 weeks. Our course was asynchronous, so the participants could complete the tasks whenever they could. Moreover, they were given an extra week to complete all the tasks. We have used dozens of resources, including online platforms, sites, and mobile applications such as *Quizlet*, *Trello*, *Lyrics Training*, *Engvid.com*, *Esl-lounge*, etc. to make the learning effective.

To sum up our research, we have surveyed in order to know the effectiveness of using e-learning environment Edmodo.com for building up learners' autonomy study skills and improving their English skills. They were asked about the activities which they did during the course (see Graph 1).

For what purpose(s) did you use Edmodo during our course?



Graph 1 – The students' experience in Edmodo.com

In Graph 1, we notice that the learners used these platforms to view and download course materials, upload assignments, homework or presentations, contact with other students, etc. It means that even ten lessons are enough to see all the possibilities which Edmodo.com provides with. After having some experience as course creators in Edmodo, we would like to allocate several features of an effective e-learning course:

- detailed planning of the activities of the students and its organization, clear statement of tasks and learning objectives, availability of necessary training materials;
- regular interactive communication between the learner and the teacher, between the learner and the learning material, the possibility of group training;
- the presence of feedback, allowing students to validate their education and learning;
- one of the most important factors in the participation of the e-learning course is motivation. Various methods and tools are used to maintain a high level of motivation. For example, the course's modular structure helps students track the progress of learning in modules, but too large modules reduce the students' motivation.

Some components need to be taken into account, regardless of the structure, nature, and topic of the course being developed:

1. General information about the course, its purpose, goals, objectives, content (structure), conditions for admission to study groups, and final documents. This information must be openly provided to those who are interested.
2. Training materials must be in printed or electronic form for the subject area of the course.
3. A survey allows teachers to connect with learners and get the necessary information about students required to build training, develop a course, and implement an individual approach to each student.
4. Structured, divided into more or less equal modules, a training course consisting of various types of materials aimed at developing different types of perception.
5. Blocks of tasks, test, and verification tasks aimed at mastering the material and checking its assimilation.

6. The presence of a block of creative tasks performed independently or in groups, aimed at applying the acquired knowledge and skills to solve a specific problem, the presence of practical work that implies group or independent performance.

When creating and editing an online course, the teachers should not forget about the main aspects of the teacher's activity: presentation of educational material, practice, feedback, which is important in traditional teaching as well. Preparing new training material that follows a step-by-step flow of information and monitoring all the knowledge gained is problematic. Teachers have to reconstruct their lectures and teaching materials based on the e-learning method's features and strictly follow them since the exclusion of one component can jeopardize the entire educational process. Another important problem in the organization of e-learning is the training of teachers-moderators who coordinate the created course. There is no higher educational institution for teacher training in the country, which offers a training program for specialists in e-learning, whereas the success of the entire distance learning process depends on their skills and leadership. Based on this, it is necessary to develop and include a program for training specialists in this particular profile.

### **Literature**

1. The Higher Education Academy, Independent learning //Teaching resource, 28th July, 2014