The Facebook of Education

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Abstract

As we all know, classical study methods of students are about to fade in the age of technology. Today's learners are not digital immigrants like we are, they were born into this technology age and they are mostly digital natives. For that reason they are better at using the technology than the digital immigrants- the people of 70s or 80s :) For that reason in our institution- Anadolu University School of Foreign Languages-we decided to run our courses with the assistance of Edmodo which is an online platform where teachers and students interact and share information. We may call it the Facebook of Education for its user-friendly interface. We decided to use this platform to enhance student autonomy by letting them choose the activities by themselves and share their topics of listening or reading with their classmates and also share their ideas on their selected topics by answering some questions.
In this study I wanted to evaluate their perception of using Edmodo by using the poll function of Edmodo. I worked with B2.1 level students-Intermediate English.

1. Overview

The majority of educators at universities follow the idea of "teaching as you were taught" [1] which I think has already faded because of the continuously developing technology and its effects on education. Even we have a new definition for today's learners by Prensky (2001) : "**Digital Natives**". Today's learners are called digital natives because they were born into this technology era and they are exposed to any kind of technological devices at the very early ages. When it comes to the teachers- the digital immigrants of the era-, it can be quite difficult and tiring to adapt themselves to the novelties in education. But most of us are really willing to follow these novelties and apply them into our teaching.

At this point we can find many educational tools on the internet and some can can be found free. One of these is Edmodo. Many people call it the Facebook of Education because of its easy-to-use interface that is so similar to that of Facebook. It is one of the best and the most famous educational social networking platform. If you are a Facebook user, it only takes one or two minutes to understand how to use it.

In todays world, students are more ready to use digital platforms in their learning. Most of them find this motivating. In my study, I tried to explore the perception of our students and their use of Edmodo in their learning.

1.2 Participants

The participants of this study are 23 students at the School of Foreign Languages. They aimed to use Edmodo to support their English learning. Their levels are mostly intermediate (B2 level according to CEFR)

1.3 Aims of the study

In this study I aimed to see the perceptions of my students about the use of Edmodo. By asking some poll questions, I wanted to see their attitude towards the use of this educational tool.

1.4 Research Questions

I asked 6 questions to my students by using the poll function of Edmodo. Here are the questions:

1- How often do you log in to Edmodo?
a) Everyday   b) 3-5 times a week   c) once a week   d) once a fortnight

Me to B2.1 Group13
6 minutes ago

How often do you log in to Edmodo?

everyday (0 votes - 0%)

3-5 times a week (0 votes - 0%)

once a week (0 votes - 0%)

once a fortnight (0 votes - 0%)

2- From which electronic device you're logging in Edmodo?
a) Cell phone   b) home computer   c) school lab

Me to B2.1 Group13
5 minutes ago

From which device you're logging in
Edmodo?

cell phone (0 votes - 0%)

home computer (0 votes - 0%)

school lab (0 votes - 0%)

3- Do you prefer completing your assignments on Edmodo or on paper?

Me to B2.1 Group13
4 minutes ago

Do you prefer completing your
assignments on Edmodo or on paper?

I prefer Edmodo (0 votes - 0%)

I prefer pen and paper (0 votes - 0%)

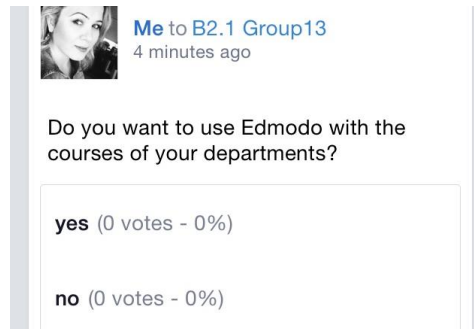4- Do you think that Edmodo has a positive impact on your learning? a)Yes   b) No

Me to B2.1 Group13
4 minutes ago

Do you think that Edmodo has a positive
impact on your learning?

yes (0 votes - 0%)

no (0 votes - 0%)

5- Do you want to use Edmodo with the courses of your departments?
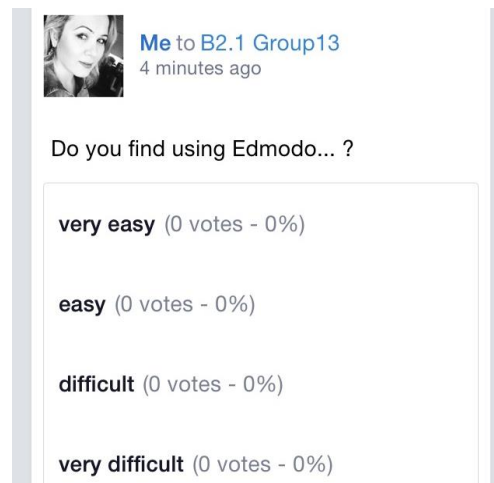
> **Me** to B2.1 Group13
> 4 minutes ago
>
> Do you want to use Edmodo with the courses of your departments?
>
> **yes** (0 votes - 0%)
>
> **no** (0 votes - 0%)

6- Do you find using Edmodo... ?
a) very easy   b) easy   c) difficult   d) very difficult

> **Me** to B2.1 Group13
> 4 minutes ago
>
> Do you find using Edmodo... ?
>
> **very easy** (0 votes - 0%)
>
> **easy** (0 votes - 0%)
>
> **difficult** (0 votes - 0%)
>
> **very difficult** (0 votes - 0%)

1.5 Review of Literature

About the use and the integration of technology into education, most of the studies have proven the benefits of using the Internet for a stronger student motivation. A number of benefits including increased motivation, improvement in self-concept and mastery of basic skills, more student-centered learning and engagement in the learning process, and more active processing, resulting in higher-order thinking skills and better recall have reported in some studies.[2].

The next point is that students should be ready to do the activities and participate in the platform readily and willingly. Haddad and Drexler [3] said that an effective teaching/learning process must stimulate intellectual curiosity and offer a sense of enjoyment that will move the students from the passive role of recipients of information to the active role of builders of knowledge

2. Methodology

I used an online questionnaire created within the poll function of EDMODO. The data gathered from 23 students were commented according to data percentage and the statements of the students given to the teacher in lesson hours.

3. Results and Discussions

According to the findings gathered from this research, virtual learning environments like EDMODO have a positive impact on students. Most of the students are eager and motivated to follow courses and do activities on EDMODO rather than on paper. Commenting on the responses of students to the poll questions will make these statements even more clear.

Question 1- How often do you log in to Edmodo?

a) Everyday (%47.8 -**11 students**))   b) 3-5 times a week (%34.7- **8 students**))
c) once a week (%13.4 - **3 students**)   d) once a fortnight (%4.34 - **1 student**)

According to these data, most of the students prefer logging in once a week (11 students) and they stated that checking what other students posted is another way to improve their listening and reading skills.

Question 2- From which electronic device you're logging in Edmodo?
a) Cell phone (%52.17- **12 students**)   b) home computer (%39.13 - **9 students**)
c) school lab (%7.4- **2 students**)

It's not surprising to see that most of the students los in Edmodo by using their mobile devices like cell phones, tablets and home computer. It's not surprising because most of the students have already had an electronic device that helps them to connect to the Internet whenever they want.

Question 3- Do you prefer completing your assignments on Edmodo or on paper?

14 students (%52.17) preferred to complete their assignments on Edmodo rather than on paper. This can be interpreted that they are mostly digital natives. When we compare it to the digital immigrants, we mostly prefer to complete our tasks on paper. On the other hand there are still some students (**9 students)** who prefers to complete their assignments on paper. (%39.13)

Question 4- Do you think that Edmodo has a positive impact on your learning?
a)Yes (%91.3 -**21 students**) b) No (%7.4 - **2 students)**

According to the responses of the students to this question, the majority of the students believe that Edmodo allow them to easily access reference materials provided by the teacher, interact and participate with the classmates and the teacher and also it motivates them to learn more about the course. [4]

Question 5- Do you want to use Edmodo with the courses of your departments?
a)Yes (%91.3 -**21 students**) b) No (%7.4 - **2 students)**

Again the majority of our students preferred to use online educational platforms like EDMODO with the courses of their own departments. Since we are teaching at English prep. school, the use of Edmodo can be counted as a good start for them in using online platforms.

Question 6- Do you find using Edmodo... ?
a) very easy (%65.3 - **15 students**) b) easy (% 34.7 - **8 students**) c) difficult d) very difficult

When we look at the results of this question, here the title of my study (the Facebook of Education) proves itself. In today's world, it is very difficult-nearly impossible to find students even ordinary people without a Facebook account. So when we evaluate their perception of using EDMODO, it is normal for them to find using it **very easy.** Since the students of today born into this technology era, using online educational platforms is not difficult, actually it's a piece of cake for them.

4. Conclusions
Based on the survey results, Edmodo, one of the most popular online educational platforms, is a very good tool for teachers to supplement their courses and a very motivating and student friendly tool for our students.
In my study, I worked with 23 prep. school students and most of them liked the way they use EDMODO in their learning process. We used this online platform to develop their self-study skills by interacting with their classmates and teachers and choosing the material by themselves. We thought that choosing what you will study is a good motivator for you as you are the one to decide what to listen or read. Besides giving assignments via EDMODO, I sometimes posted extra materials like writing topics, extra readings and some multiple choice tests to help them develop their English skills.
What's more, we not only supported our lesson materials, but also we supported face to face discussions. From time to time I used EDMODO as a flipped classroom tool, where I can send the lesson material beforehand and do the activities in the classroom then.

As a result one can conclude from the results of the poll questions that EDMODO is a very effective online tool that supports students' learning. Most of the students of today's world are ready and motivated to use such platforms to enhance their learning.

References

[1] Fawcett g. and Juliana M. (2002) Teaching in the Digital Age: "Teaching as You Were Taught" Won't Work

[2] Brownlee-Conyers, J. (1996). Voices from networked classrooms. *Educational Leadership, 54*(3), 34-37.

[3] Haddad, W. D. and Drexler, A. (2002). The Dynamics of Technologies in Education.

[4] Enriquez, Marc Angelo (2014) presented at DLSU research congress