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Mediating Student Teachers through Edmodo in an Extensive Listening Class

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ABSTRACT

The present study aims to explain student teachers' meaningful activities mediated through Edmodo and to explore their perceptions of this learning management system organized in an extensive listening class. Grounded in a qualitative case study, 38 students of English Education Department of an Islamic public university in Pekalongan, Central Java, Indonesia were recruited to participate. Data were collected through in-class observation and semi-structured interview. The findings expose that Edmodo's interactive features were used to mediate the student teachers in experiencing the meaningful exposure of extensive listening activities beyond the classroom wall. For instance, they could share online listening resources, had an online discussion, submitted their assignments online, and received beneficial feedback. Another result demonstrates that the student teachers revealed their positive perceptions of Edmodo integrated in the class. It portrays that the student teachers needed more exposure to practice their extensive listening in addition to the face-to-face interaction.

KEYWORDS:

Student teachers;
Edmodo;
Learning management system;
Extensive listening;

Introduction

The digital age in the 21st century has penetrated the education sector that fosters teachers and students to experience the proliferation of technology integration in teaching and learning processes. Krasnova & Demeshko (2015, p. 405), assert that the integration of information and communication technology (ICT) in teaching and learning processes has shifted the paradigm of education around the globe. This integration has been proven to enhance students' performance, autonomy, motivation, and study behavior (Xiao, L., R. Larkins, 2018). It is worth mentioning that the ICT integration may escalate students' engagement so as to bring an altered learning atmosphere in the classroom

setting, including student teachers at an initial teacher education (ITE) program.

Dealing with this paradigm, student teachers need to be mediated to face an era transformed by technology, in which ICT literacy may create various advantages, challenges, and expectations for them in the disruption era. This demand confirms three skills that are required in the 21st century, namely: 1) learning and innovation skills, 2) information, media, and technology skills, and 3) life and career skills (N. Ongardwanich, S. Kanjanawasee, 2015, p. 738). Student teachers, therefore, are expected to receive meaningful knowledge **and be skillful in the digital age's education demonstrating large-scale changes** in the current era of industry (Kozák, Š., E. Ružický, J. Štefanovič, 2018). This point may speak to that student teachers are supposed to gain pedagogical and subject knowledge and skills that need to be molded and enhanced during their ITE program since it plays a crucial role in shaping their beliefs and competencies (Widodo, H. P., 2016, p. 230).

The increasing emphasis of the paradigm is the use of learning management system – later known as LMS. Pribadi (2010, p. 18) points out that the application of LMS aims to create a successful learning. To manage an interactive LMS, the technology integration significantly affects the current educational system. The Law No. 20 of 2003 on the National Education System stipulates that educational institutions should implement the ICT-based educational system. It indicates that the government of Indonesia has committed to invest and introduce ICT for educational purposes. Since the use of technology is needed, ICT is expected to improve the competence in the educational settings, including an ITE program.

The LMS functions as the learning media provided by teachers to create an interesting teaching and learning process. The use of LMS is expected to make the students understand the material well. The most important characteristic of LMS is to achieve the idea of learning at anytime and anywhere (Pisey, S., P. L. Ramteke, 2012). Moreover, Löhner, van Joolingen, Savelsbergh, & van Hout-

Wolters (2005) have argued that the computer environment is a powerful tool for helping students to develop their understanding of the inquiry-based learning process in their studies.

One of emerging LMSs taken into consideration in the education sector is Edmodo. It is **free social platform created in 2008 by Nick Borg and Jeff O'Hara**, specified for an educational field, available at www.edmodo.com, Play Store, and iOS. Balasubramanian, K., V. Jaykumar (2014, p. 418) propose the difference between Edmodo and other social network sites is that Edmodo is a social learning platform designed for collaboration, communication, the sharing of knowledge, homework and discussion between students, teachers and parents. It, additionally, allows teachers and students to communicate with each other via messages, thus providing learners with the chance to communicate and collaborate in a virtual classroom environment (Ekici, 2017, p. 93).

In addition, Edmodo is also a full-featured social learning platform designed to connect and collaborate within the educational environment. Edmodo is easily installed on computers, laptops and android. It is the social media network which collaborates and connect, share content and get access for homework, school information, and grades (Ma'azi, H., 2018). The teachers use Edmodo as an online blackboard and inbox to post polls, quizzes, and assignment guidelines and invite student to submit finished assignment (Eveddy, S., 2016).

The features offered by Edmodo are deemed essential to be adapted in an extensive listening class. It is due to the consideration that student teachers need to experience a wide array of listening activities that allow learners to receive a lot of comprehensible and enjoyable listening input. Renandya, W. A. (2011, p. 52) declare that these activities can be teacher-directed listening or self-directed listening for pleasure that can be done outside the classroom. The key consideration here is that learners, including student teachers, get to do a lot of meaningful listening practice. It implies that the use of Edmodo for

mediating student teachers in an extensive listening class benefits the learning process and is in line with technological developments.

Several studies highlighting the use of Edmodo in the class have been conducted by some previous researchers. Ali & Eros (2018) conducted a study of using Edmodo in their classes. Their study reported that the students had improvement in their English skills, particularly reading and writing. Another research conducted by Ermawati (2016) conducted a research about the use Edmodo in learning process particularly in writing class. She exposed that Edmodo could realize positive academic environment at one of Islamic public universities in Surakarta. The teacher and the students integrated the use of Edmodo in their learning process collaboratively.

Meanwhile, Al-Kathiri (2015) revealed that a combination between traditional instruction and an online classroom via Edmodo is significantly verified to be an effective factor toward learning English. Lastly, Giang (2014) suggested that Edmodo had been successfully blended into the curricula in ELT Methodology. This LMS provided a better way of management of large-sized class, an easier usage and more effective media of assigning homework, an interactive test, and interesting way of giving discussion in teaching learning process.

Even though the use of Edmodo taken advantage in educational settings has been discussed by the previous studies, it is noteworthy that this LMS has received very scant attention to its application in an extensive listening class. This fact, therefore, triggers a further empirical investigation to promote why this research is essential to conduct. The present study aims to explain student **teachers' meaningful activities mediated through Edmodo and to explore their perceptions of this LMS organized for the student teachers in an extensive listening class.**

Method

Grounded in a qualitative case study, this research highlights the use of Edmodo as the learning management system to mediate student teachers in an extensive listening class. 38 students of English Education Department of an Islamic public university in Pekalongan, Central Java, Indonesia were recruited to participate in this study. The data were collected through in-class observation and semi-structured interview. The qualitative data from the in-class observation were presented to explain online learning activities using Edmodo as the LMS situated for the student teachers in an extensive listening class. Meanwhile, the data obtained from twelve student teachers taking part in the semi-structured interview were read repeatedly and grouped into themes that recur frequently by employing constructionist grounded theory analysis (Charmaz in Widodo, H. P., 2016) to explore their perceptions of the use of Edmodo in their class.

Result

Student Teachers' Meaningful Activities in Using Edmodo as a LMS in an Extensive Listening Class

The in-class observation exposed some meaningful activities that were carried by the student teachers on Edmodo as the LMS managed in an extensive listening class. It could be noticed that in the first meeting, the university teacher introduced Edmodo application to the student teachers. At this step, the teacher showed the students how to take advantage of Edmodo in their extensive listening class. It was explained that Edmodo had two versions, namely: windows/desktop and Android versions, which could be accessed easily by the student teachers. The teacher provided the students with the procedure of how to sign up on Edmodo step by step. At the homepage, they were asked to click *I'm a Student* and a new dialogue box will open up, and then they simply fill out that some personal data required, including e-mail and click *Sign up*. The two versions are shown in Figure 1 and 2.

After creating the group on Edmodo, the lecturer asked the students to join the group. First, the students visited www.edmodo.com and clicked on the menu *I'm a Student*. The student teachers needed to type the group code they received when they signed up. Afterwards, the students would be greeted with the screen noting that an e-mail is optional so that the student teachers did not receive any spam or e-mail from Edmodo (unless they set up e-mail notifications).

If the student teachers had signed up using Edmodo, they would not have needed a new account. All they need was to join the group. To do this, they signed in on Edmodo and on the left-hand side and then would see the class they joined. They merely needed to click *Join* and type the group code.

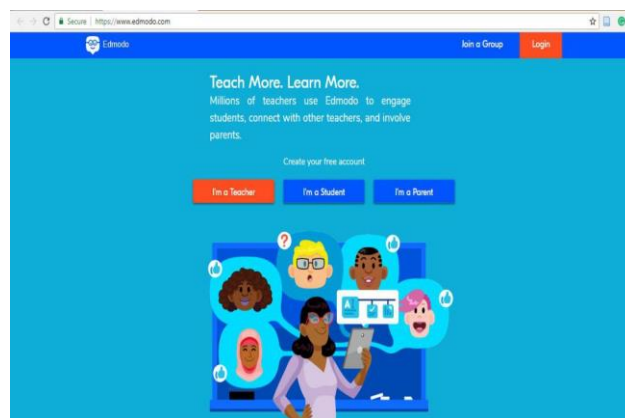


Figure 1. Edmodo's desktop version

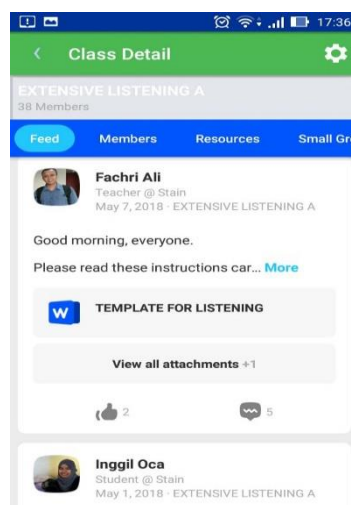


Figure 2. Edmodo's Android version

Interestingly, Edmodo has the features that can be used by the student teachers easily as it is shown in Figure 3. They can share information, discussing a listening resource posted, or doing assignment that was given by the teacher. Edmodo also helped the students interact with each other and the teacher through the menu of instant message. Thus, it enabled the student teachers to cooperate and collaborate in a virtual classroom environment. Teacher could easily assign students and set a deadline for homework.

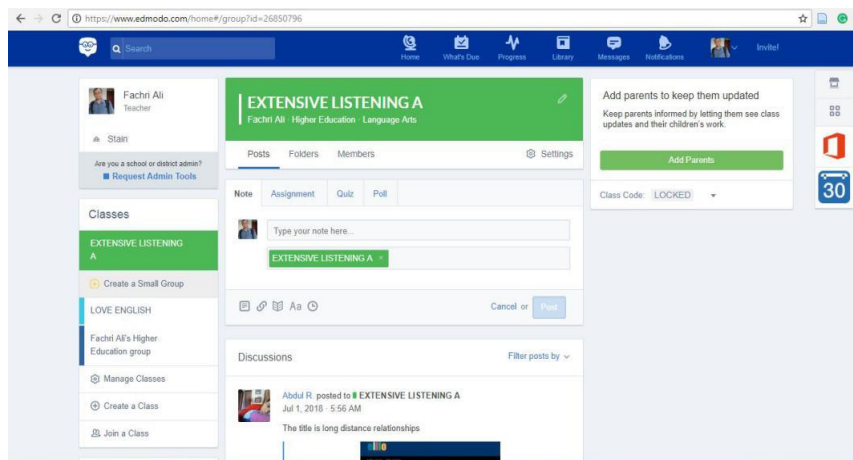


Figure 3. Edmodo's display and its features

Edmodo can be used as the online LMS in the extensive listening class for the student teachers. It means that the learning process can be organized in this online learning setting. The activities that the group participants did on Edmodo involved sharing a listening resource supported with accessible link, engaging in discussion through commenting in the chat slots, and submitting an assignment through the provided menu. Accordingly, the lecturer of extensive listening course fostered his students to have meaningful online discussion in the Edmodo group. It aimed to make the student teachers felt comfortable and to create an enjoy atmosphere in the online learning group.

Moreover, Edmodo has the feature to simplify the student teachers' works. For example, in managing an assignment, Edmodo has the feature to check whether or not the students have submitted their assignments. Moreover, the teacher also can manage the learning material in this LMS. Figure 4

demonstrates that the teacher managed topics for the extensive listening class based on the meetings which were organized in every single week.

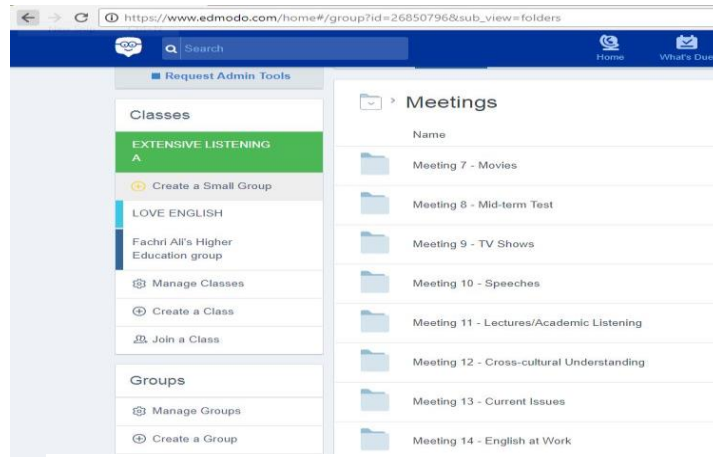


Figure 4. Extensive listening materials

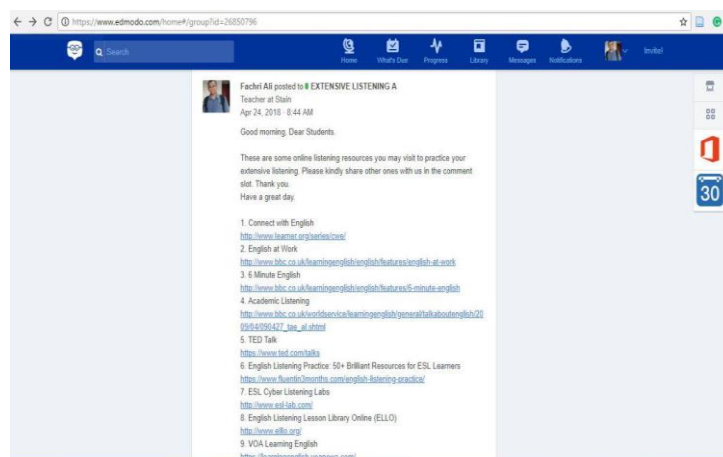


Figure 5. Online extensive listening resources

In addition, the teacher could share the material for the students. Figure 5 illustrates that the learning materials were supported with meaningful links that can be accessed by the student teachers as the learning resource for an extensive listening. Lastly, the student teachers were promoted to share information in various forms of multimodal texts. It can be audio and video files provided with accessible links. For supporting extensive listening learning, most of the student teachers shared the links that could be a learning source of this subject. Figure 6 portrays that most of them took them from YouTube, TED-Ed, VoiceTube, BBC News, and VOA.



Figure 6. A listening resource from YouTube

To facilitate the student teachers' meaningful activities, it has been previously described that Edmodo had promoted various features when the teacher managed the learning material, gave assignments and quizzes, and assessed the students' works. Figure 7 shows that teacher organized an assignment, monitored the submission of the students' works, and provided them with the gained a grade and meaningful feedback.

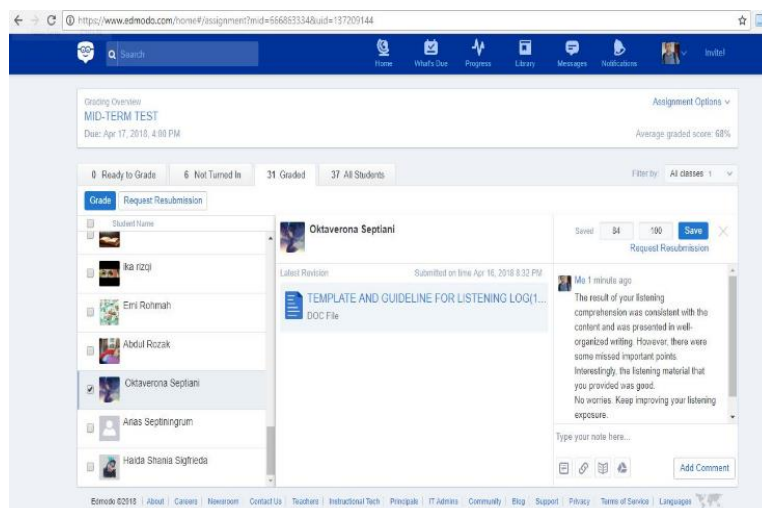


Figure 7. Submission of the students' works

Student Teachers' Perceptions of the Use of Edmodo as a LMS in an Extensive Listening Class

Regarding the result of the semi-structured interview addressed to the twelve student teachers, they positively commented on the use of Edmodo in their extensive listening class. The first question tried to seek the answer of whether the instructions provided in the Edmodo group was clear. 10 students promoted that the instructions given were clear although there were two students who needed more adjustment to this LMS. They, additionally, could respond to both the learning materials posted by the lecturer and their **classmates' works posted on the Edmodo group**. They might share and comment with the university teacher or their peers on the group.

The second question explored their perceptions of whether the extensive listening class organized by using Edmodo enabled the students to turn in the assignments given. Three students commented that they found some problems to submit the assignments that were organized on the Edmodo features. The following question was dealing with the ease of access in more flexible time and setting when the student teachers practiced **extensive listening by using Edmodo**. **All of the student teachers' comments were positive.**

The fourth question coped with their perceptions of whether online-based extensive listening on Edmodo provided the students with more chances to have discussion. All of the student teachers commented that Edmodo facilitated group discussion although only few students actively participated in the group. In addition, the group discussion could run well if the teacher encouraged the students with certain learning materials posted on the Edmodo group. The last question covered their perceptions of whether the online learning by using Edmodo gave more opportunities for the student teachers to get feedback on extensive listening activities. The twelve student teachers stated Edmodo benefited in getting feedback from the teacher and their peers.

Discussion

Electronic Learning (e-learning) is a learning conducted by electronic device or online communication in some way to provide educational or learning material. It refers to the way people communicate and learn electronically which has only recently known as a key source of some advantages in the information society (Löhner, S., W. R. van Joolingen, E. R. Savelsbergh, 2005). In other words, this present study highlights that e-learning is a significant innovation that contributes to the changes in teaching and learning. It is also an important thing to facilitate teaching and learning process which helps student teachers to manage their own learning.

The presence of Edmodo managed in the extensive listening class is **consistent with Rahmawati's (2015) view stating that there are some choices to implement e-learning as a media in the teaching learning process, namely: 1) developing e-learning by ourselves, 2) buying a system, and 3) using open source e-learning.** There are lots of free and open source e-learning applications that can be used by both teachers and students, such as: Edmodo, Google Classroom, Moodle, Eduslide, Yacapaca, Quipper School, and so forth.

Edmodo is an educational technology offering communication and collaboration an online classroom. This result is relevant to **Arroyo's (2011) statement proposing Edmodo as an excellent communication tool for knowledge construction based on social networking and collaboration.** It also provides a more secure learning platform for learners and educators. Al-Kathiri (2015) also points out that Edmodo is private social platform that provides educational material online. Through Edmodo account, the teachers can send **the quizzes, assignments, giving feedback, and monitor the students' interaction.** This activity enables the teacher to link with the students in learning process.

Smart teachers seek for a student-centered approach to increase their **students' engagement** in teaching and learning processes. Edmodo seems to have a potential to change the way students learn, stimulate their motivation,

and push them forward. This point may speak to Alsmari (2019, p. 48) study depicting that Like Facebook, Edmodo is free service with the aim of facilitating learning and teaching and helping educators use social media to create a customizable learning environment. Edmodo also provides extensive learning activities functionally, including the incorporation and use of other social tools. In Al-Said's (2015) point of view, to bring learning communities together in the field of language education, Edmodo can become a powerful social networking tool to promote collaborative learning through meaningful interactions for language learners. This denotes that Edmodo supports the use of multiple simultaneous discussions, where the teacher can create collaborative groups.

Likewise, Edmodo as a LMS helps students interact with each other and teachers through instant message, thus enabling learners to cooperate and **collaborate in virtual classroom environment. It confirms that Edmodo is “a powerful technological tool that can bring various benefits to the learning process through meaningful interactions that can address pedagogical problems in class”** (Luaran, 2012). It implies that teachers can easily assign students and set a deadline for homework. It is a secure platform since students can only login with the special code provided by teachers. Parents can also monitor and check their homework with another special code created only for them. This point agrees **Majid's** (2011) outlook suggesting that through Edmodo, students, teachers, and parents can reach out to one another and connect by sharing ideas, problems, and helpful tips. This elaboration demonstrates that teachers can assign and grade work on Edmodo, student teachers can get help from the entire class on Edmodo. It is a safe environment. In addition, parents can join the class to bring a level of transparency that is difficult to achieve without technology.

Edmodo is a great companion to just about any class. It is presented as a social platform used for teachers, students and also for parents. To facilitate learning online for student teachers, including extensive listening, Edmodo at first glance looks like Facebook because the colors like Facebook but in terms

of Edmodo and Facebook functions are obviously very different. Moreover, Edmodo provides a safe and easy way in a virtual classroom. Design owned Edmodo almost same with Facebook but with Edmodo teacher can send assignment and quiz to student (Shams-Abadi, B. B., Ahmadi, S. D., & Mehrdad, 2015). Lastly, in Edmodo there is a special code to join for student. If the student wants to join the Edmodo class, the student knows the code from the teacher.

Dealing with extensive listening, it is defined as the type of listening activities that allow learners to receive comprehensible and enjoyable listening inputs. That is one of the reasons why extensive listening for student teachers requires to be supported with appropriate LMS for it can be done through self-directed listening activities. It affirms Renandya, W. A. (2011) promoting that extensive listening activities can be teacher-directed dictations or self-directed listening for pleasure that can be done outside the classroom. The key consideration here is that learners have a lot of meaningful listening practice. It is believed that extensive listening might just be the kind of approach that may help EFL students deal with their listening problems.

To facilitate extensive listening, the student teachers need to learn about materials, demanding current language capacity and topical knowledge. They also need to have sufficient lexicon grammatical resources; lexicon-grammar is seen as a resource for meaning making while doing extensive listening. **Language learners use the term 'lexicon-grammar' to indicate that both grammar and vocabulary go together to form a variety of texts.** This finding is consistent with Widodo, H. P. (2016) viewpoint declaring that conceptually, extensive listening is an innovative way to move listening beyond the teacher-fronted action zone. It is a starting point for listening fluidity in which students can make sense based on not only on linguistic parameters but also on social and cultural parameters.

Conclusion

The current study promotes Edmodo, one of meaningful learning management system (LMS), for mediating student teachers in an extensive listening class. Interestingly, the research findings expose that Edmodo proposes interactive features that can be utilized to mediate the student teachers in experiencing the meaningful exposure of extensive listening activities beyond the classroom wall. For instance, they could share online listening resources supported with accessible links, had an online discussion by commenting on other group **members' works, submitted their assignments on the slot managed by the** university teacher, and received beneficial feedback from both the teacher and their peers.

Another result demonstrates that the student teachers revealed their attractive perceptions of Edmodo that was integrated to mediate them in the extensive listening class. Their perceptions were noticed when the student teachers responded positively to the questions provided in the semi-structured interview highlighting their engagement in the online extensive listening class mediated through Edmodo. It illustrates that the student teachers needed more exposure to practice their extensive listening in addition to the face-to-face interaction. This study, therefore, recommends further researchers could investigate the use of Edmodo blended with the extensive listening activities organized in the classroom setting so as to portray its benefits, barriers, and prospects for language learners, particularly for student teachers in an initial teacher education (ITE) program.

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