

The strengths and pitfalls of Edmodo to Indonesian EFL learners: Student and teachers' voices

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ABSTRACT

The Covid-19 pandemic impacted Indonesia's education system to change the teaching and learning activities immediately. Edmodo is one of the Learning Management System (LMS) platforms widely used for English teaching and learning in Indonesia. Previous studies about Edmodo focus on the positive impact of Edmodo on the student's competence and performance. However, few studies discuss the pitfalls of Edmodo in EFL settings. A survey design was employed through the administration of the questionnaire. This survey research aims to investigate the strengths and the pitfalls of Edmodo to Indonesian EFL learners, particularly in the university context. Fifteen university students and ten lecturers were involved in the survey. The study results indicate that students and teachers have the same opinion about the strengths of Edmodo in terms of practicality and efficiency. However, a different opinion occurs on the use of Edmodo to complement face-to-face activity. Some teachers agree that Edmodo could not facilitate collaborative learning, but some lecturers said it was possible to do collaborative learning. Furthermore, students and teachers stated that the weakness of Edmodo is that it needs a good Internet connection. This research, therefore, contributes some empirical insights into the use of Edmodo in English language teaching.

Keywords: *Edmodo; EFL learner; Online learning*

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1. Introduction

As technology continues to develop, it changes the way students learn and how teachers teach. The model and design of the material have also changed. It allows the teachers to design flexible and innovative material to enable students to collaborate and work together in a new way. The students may feel much more interactive and full of exciting fields when assisted by technology through the internet. In this era, teachers and students can do online learning outside the classroom by using several platforms that are already available on the internet. Learning Management System (LMS) is an e-learning platform that meets a set of features for creating and managing courses in the distance. Here, the Learning Management System (LMS) enables the students with their teachers to communicate and interact with each other doing the learning process together in enjoyable ways. Edmodo, Schoology, or Google classroom offers many forums that facilitate the teaching and learning process. Users may exchange information in different formats, such as text, image, video, and sound by using these resources. After 2016, smartphone and tablet formats have overtaken laptop formats in global Internet use, according to Statcounter (2016), and the use of these portable formats has become a popular experience for Generation Z students (Carter, 2018).

Previous studies have been conducted about Edmodo discussing the strength and the pitfall of Edmodo to EFL learners. For online learning, Pardede (2017) has acknowledged various advantages of Edmodo, such as its ability to promote intense communication that is highly important in the EFL environment, its ability to help run different forms of active learning, and helps teachers to address the needs of the different students, encourages a sense of community among students. Edmodo makes them feel valued and essential in the teaching and learning process. Furthermore, Edmodo provides not only flexibility but also accessibility and compatibility. Edmodo research studies have already recognized its potential and reported many indications that Edmodo can significantly help improve the language skills of learners, especially in improving the reading and writing skills of learners (Gay & Sofyan, 2017; Warawudhi, 2017), vocabulary mastery (Ewenddy & Harmer, 2016). However, most research focuses on the positive impact of Edmodo on the student's competence and performance. The weakness of Edmodo has remained unclear. This is increasingly important for language researcher to discuss the pitfalls or the weaknesses of Edmodo in English language teaching. This study aims to investigate the strengths and pitfalls of Edmodo to Indonesian Islamic university students from the point of view of the students and the lecturers.

2. Literature review

The industrial revolution 4.0 has led to unlimited technology such as a Learning Management System in education. It can support online learning to proceed effectively to be carried out even though the educators and students stayed in different places. Using technology when online learning is carried out as an alternative to the learning

process continues. Participants can learn as usual (Ahmadi, 2018) even though face-to-face learning cannot be carried out directly (Herliandry, Nurhasanah, Suban, & Kuswanto, 2020).

Edmodo is a free web platform that educators can use to create and manage an effective way to do online learning (Hakim & Kodriyah, 2015). This platform is available at www.edmodo.com; it was created in 2008 by Jeff O' Hara and Nick Borg (Kongchan, 2013). Edmodo has privacy access between teacher and student. It can be accessed only for students who have received the teacher's group code to register in the online class. Thus, students from another class cannot join the group. It is safe and more private without anyone else being able to spy and participate without permission from the group. Edmodo is social networking that was adjusted towards the students' necessity (Gushiken, 2013). It could significantly impact how students learn and collaborate in their world, rather than they grew up in the school setting. Edmodo and other platforms' differences are for sharing knowledge and discussing with teachers, students, and parents. Edmodo is an online learning platform established for communicative, collaborative, and interactive (Ekici, 2017). The students can also share material, take quizzes, submit assignments and homework, receive feedback from teachers, and give voting (Jarc, 2010).

In using Edmodo, the interaction between the teacher and students is more intensive. There are several ways to expand students' learning outcomes by implementing an online platform. Using Edmodo as an alternative for substitute face-to-face interaction, the student can improve their English proficiency. Since it will increase the interaction between the students and teachers and facilitate the students for peer feedback, they will create a productive learning environment (Gay & Sofyan, 2017a).

Numerous researchers have investigated the use of Edmodo as the media for learning English for various teaching and learning objectives. Fauzi (2017) asserted that the post-test score was better than the pre-test score, and there was a significant difference in the students' scores after being taught using Edmodo. Gay and Sofyan (2017) investigated Edmodo's effectiveness in the advanced writing course to increase the students' ability. This research investigated the effectiveness of using the Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC) device to improve the students' writing skills, especially to explore the use of Edmodo. The result revealed that the use of Edmodo is useful in facilitating the students' interest and motivate them in improving their writing skills.

Furthermore, Santoso (2014) claimed that Edmodo posting for teaching reading could improve the students' reading competence in comprehending English text, especially with reading skill indicators. However, most of the aforementioned studies employed experimental designs that aim to examine the effect of Edmodo as media in language teaching. Regarding this, previous researchers stated that the frequency of Edmodo Posting could improve reading competence. The findings of the strength of Edmodo could not be generalized for all courses and all types of students.

3. Method

This survey research was conducted from July to August 2020. The research explored the strengths and the pitfalls of Edmodo to Indonesian EFL learners by administering a questionnaire. Data about the strengths and the pitfalls of Edmodo to Indonesian EFL learners were collected by using a simple random sampling technique to get a smaller group as representative so that group generalization to a larger population is accurate (DeMarrais & Lapan, 2004). Fifteen English Language Education Department students were chosen randomly from the sixth-semester students because they had more experience utilizing Edmodo. Moreover, these respondents represent a diverse region in Indonesia. Ten English Language Education Department lecturers who have taught English utilizing Edmodo for more than two semesters were involved.

In order to determine validity and reliability, the questionnaire draft has been piloted in an online mode. The content validity was carried out by the one CALL senior lecturer of the Department of English Language Education. The questionnaire was placed in a Google form and circulated through the WhatsApp community online. It contained eighteen questions considering Indonesian EFL learners' and teacher voices about the strengths and weaknesses of Edmodo. The questionnaires were done anonymously to keep confidentiality. The questionnaires used a five-point Likert scale with varying choices "Strongly Agree (SA)," "Agree (A)," "Disagree (D)," and "Strongly Disagree (DS)." Moreover, there were four open-ended questions to provide students and teachers point of view on the strength and the weaknesses of Edmodo.

The questionnaire was developed by referring to the research of Khoirunnisa, Umamah and Sumardi. (2018). There were eighteen items of questions in the questionnaire. The first part consists of ten questions collected information about a positive statement. The second part of the questionnaires consists of eight questions that collected the preliminary information about negative statements. The questions with the negative statement were used to keep the consistency of the answer about Edmodo. The negative statement would be converted to support the last part of the questionnaires' findings.

The data were analyzed qualitatively. According to Mack, Woodsong, MacQueen, Guest, and Namey (2005), qualitative research is especially effective in obtaining culturally specific information about particular populations' values, behaviors, opinions, and social contexts. In this research, the incomplete answer to the questionnaires was eliminated. The researchers classified the answer based on the strength and the pitfalls of Edmodo. The responses were coded deductively to determine thematic analysis. The process confirmed accuracy because of the information gathered from both student's and teachers' voices. Finally, the data were presented in Chart, and the conclusion was drawn.

4. Findings and discussions

Edmodo is a Learning Management Systems (LMS) platform that can

accommodate an online teaching and learning process. Both students and teachers may have different or similar voices about the strength and weaknesses of Edmodo. The description of the students' voices about Edmodo can be described below.

4.1. The strengths of Edmodo to EFL learners

This section describes the result of the strengths of using Edmodo based on the EFL learners' voice.

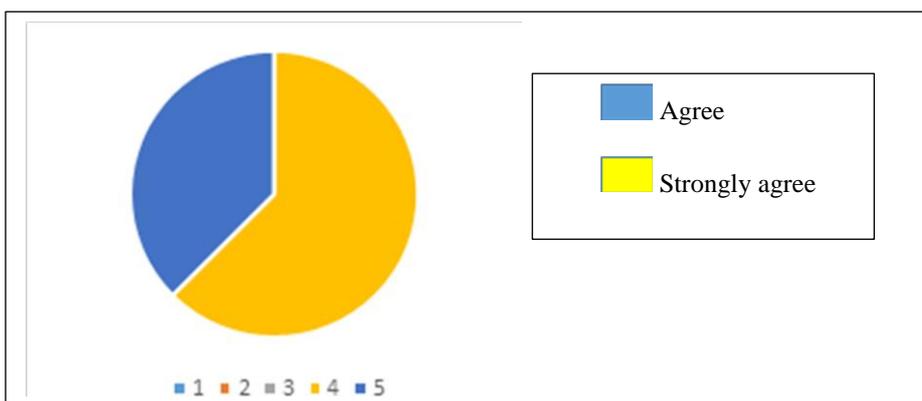


Figure 1. The students voice about the practicality of Edmodo.

Figure 1 shows that 73 % of the students state that they agree about the practicality of Edmodo. Moreover, 27% of the students state that they strongly agree about Edmodo's practicality, and nobody states neutral, disagree, or strongly disagree. On the other hand, the teachers' voices about Edmodo can be seen in the following figure:

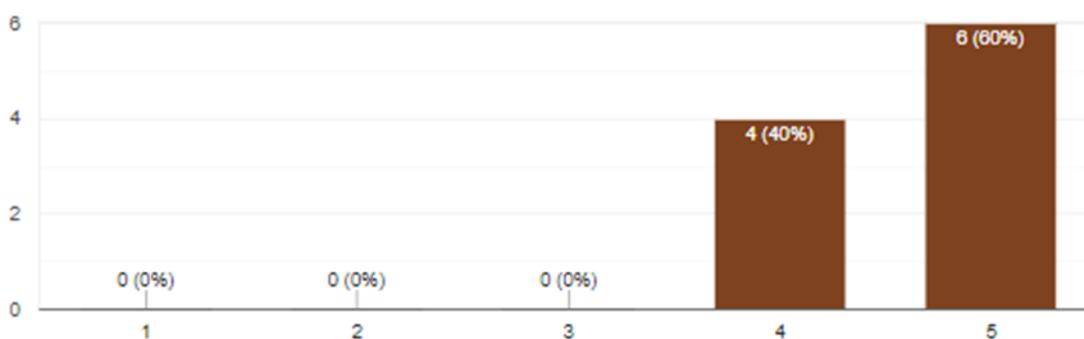


Figure 2. The teacher voices about the practicality of Edmodo.

Figure 2 shows that 40 % of the teacher states that they agree about the practicality of Edmodo. Moreover, 60% of the teacher states that they strongly agree about Edmodo's practicality, and nobody states neutral, disagree, or strongly disagree. Figure 1 and figure 2 indicate that Edmodo is easy to use for both students and the teacher. It is an essential finding in the understanding of the practicality of Edmodo. This is corroborated by the result of open-ended questionnaires shown in the following

excerpt with E referring to the excerpt and L to the lecturer.

(E1) Edmodo is an excellent tool for computer use and mobile learning. (L2)

(E2) Edmodo works with all browser types (L3)

Edmodo is also efficient in sharing information. The student's perspective about the efficiency of Edmodo to share information is presented in the following figure.

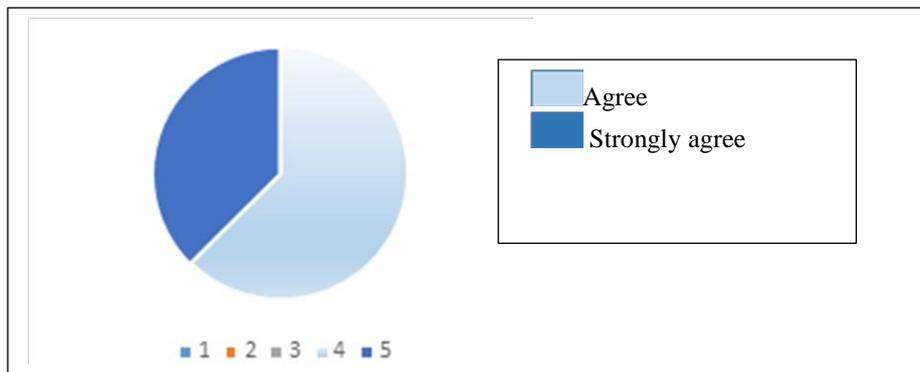


Figure 3. The students voice about the efficiency of Edmodo to share information.

Figure 3 shows that 73 % of the students state that they agree about the efficiency of Edmodo to share information. Moreover, 27% of the students state that they strongly agree about Edmodo's efficiency and nobody states neutral, disagree, or strongly disagree. The following excerpt also supported these findings: (E5) We can upload homework activities, take quizzes, surveys, and collect teacher ratings and reviews, and recommendations with one app (S5).

On the other hand, the teachers' voices about the efficiency of Edmodo to share information can be seen in the following figure:

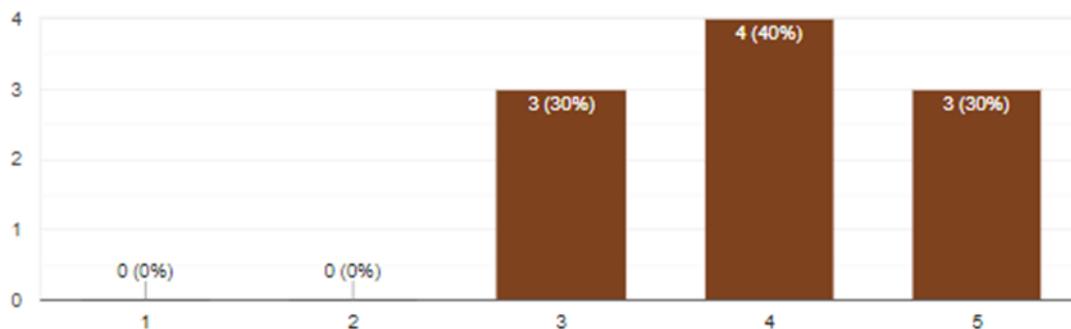


Figure 4. The students voice about the efficiency of Edmodo to share information.

Figure 4 shows that 30 % of the teacher states that they strongly agree about the efficiency of Edmodo to share information. Moreover, 40% of the teacher states that they strongly agree about the efficiency of Edmodo to share information, and 30 % of the teacher states neutral. However, nobody states disagree or strongly disagree. Figure

3 and figure 4 indicate that Edmodo is efficient in sharing information for both students and the teacher even though some teachers choose neutral. The present study confirmed the findings of the efficiency of Edmodo to share information because Edmodo has many features, such as homework activities, take quizzes, surveys, and collect teacher ratings.

Furthermore, time management is critical in online learning. Edmodo helps teachers and students to manage the time. The student's perspective about time management in Edmodo is presented in the following figure.

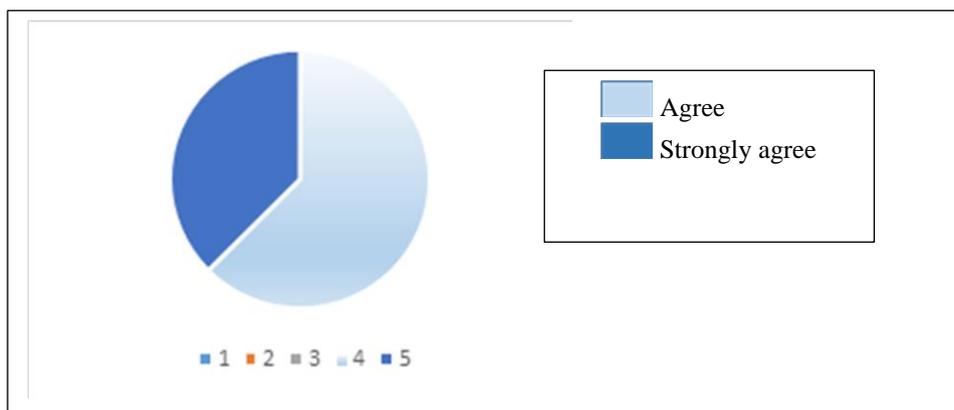


Figure 5. The student's voices about how Edmodo can save their time.

Figure 5 shows that 67 % of the students agree that Edmodo can save their time. Moreover, 33% of the students state that they strongly agree about how Edmodo can save their time. On the other hand, the teachers' voices about the time management of Edmodo can be seen in the following figure:

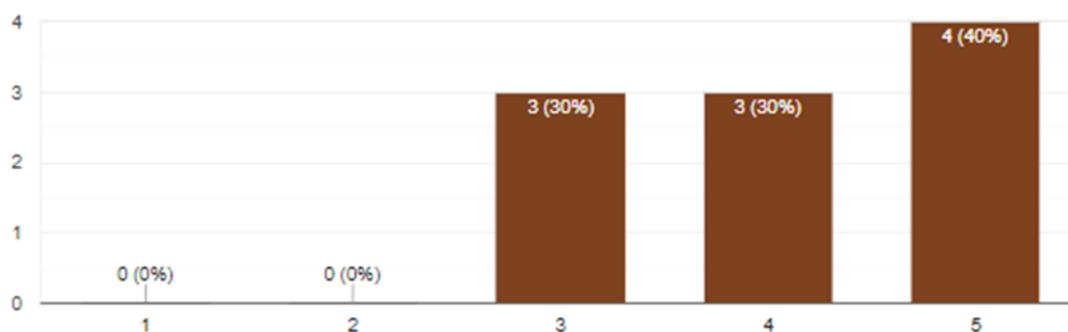


Figure 6. The teachers' voices about how Edmodo can save their time.

Figure 6 shows that 30 % of the teacher agrees that Edmodo can save their time. Moreover, 40% of the teacher states that they strongly agree that Edmodo can save their time, and 30 % of the teacher states neutral. However, nobody states disagree or strongly disagree. Figure 5 and figure 6 confirm how Edmodo can save time for both students and the teacher even though some teachers choose neutral.

As online learning, Edmodo can be used as a complement to face-to-face learning

activities. The students' opinion about how Edmodo can complement face-to-face activity, the finding can be described in the following figures.

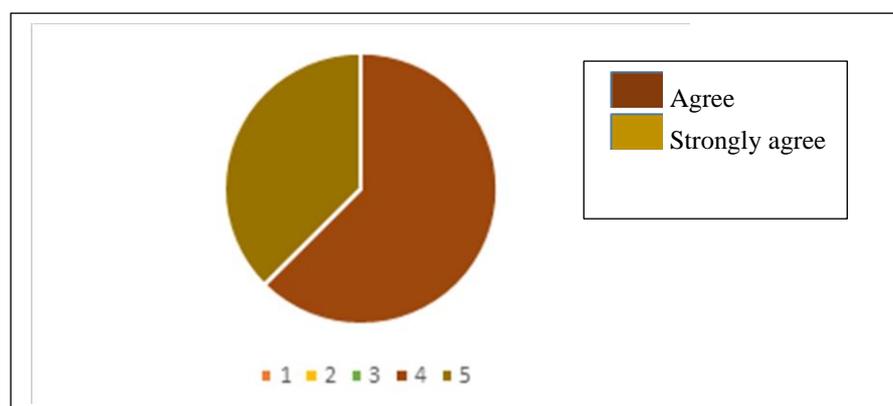


Figure 7. The student's voices about how Edmodo can complement face-to-face activity.

Figure 7 shows that 30 % of the teacher strongly agree that Edmodo can complement face-to-face activity. Moreover, 40% of the teachers agree that Edmodo can save their time, and 20 % of the teacher states are neutral. However, 10 % of teacher states disagree, but nobody states firmly disagree. The following excerpt also supported these findings: In teaching reading, I provided a reflective form and posted it on Edmodo as a post-reading activity (E9). I could monitor the student's answer and grade it quickly (L5).

Figures 7 and 8 indicate that Edmodo can complement face-to-face activity for both students and the teacher even though some teachers choose neutral and disagree.

The following excerpt also supported these findings:

(A12) Some students got no notification from Edmodo when we give the badge and quiz. Therefore, we still need other media to inform the progress, such as a video conference (A12). The given feedback could not easily be understood. Further explanation should be given in a virtual face to face session (L7).

4.2. The pitfall of Edmodo to EFL learners

Online learning needs a good Internet connection. The student's voice about the Internet connection shows one of the Edmodo pitfalls. The description of the student's voices can be seen in the following figure:

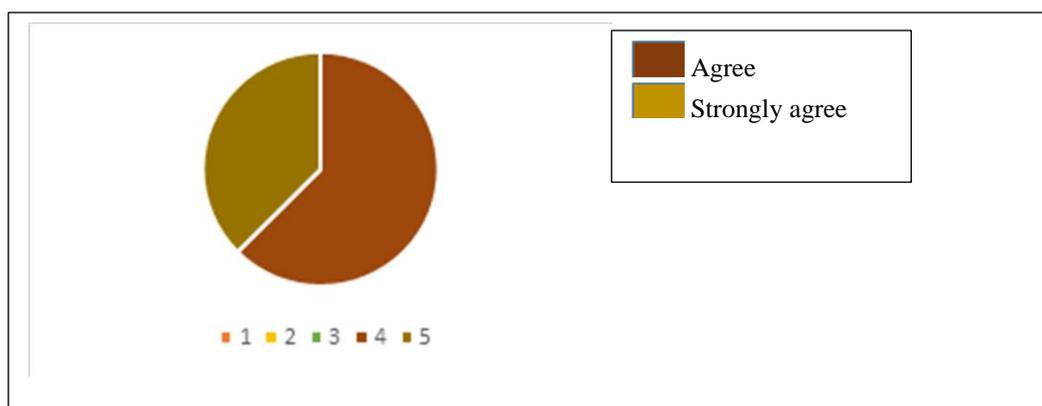


Figure 8. The student's voices about how Edmodo needs a good Internet connection.

Figure 8 shows that 67% of the students agree that Edmodo needs a good Internet connection. Moreover, 33% of the student state that they strongly agree when using Edmodo need a good Internet connection. The following excerpt supported these findings: I have to go to the Internet café or coffee shop to get a good Internet connection, especially when we have an online quiz with Edmodo (A11). The Internet connection is not good in my house (S11).

On the other hand, the teachers' voices about how Edmodo needs a good Internet connection can be seen in the following figure:

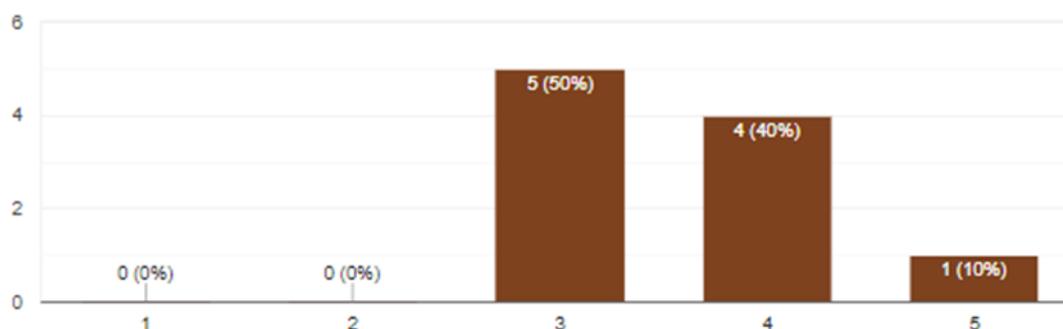


Figure 9. The teacher voices about how Edmodo needs a good Internet connection

Figure 9 shows that 40 % of the teachers agree that Edmodo needs a good Internet connection. Moreover, 50% of the teacher states are neutral, and only 10% strongly agree.

Figure 9 and figure 10 indicate that a good Internet connection is the main issue for both students and the teacher, even though some teachers choose neutral. The other pitfalls come from the teachers' perspective, and it is described in the following figure.

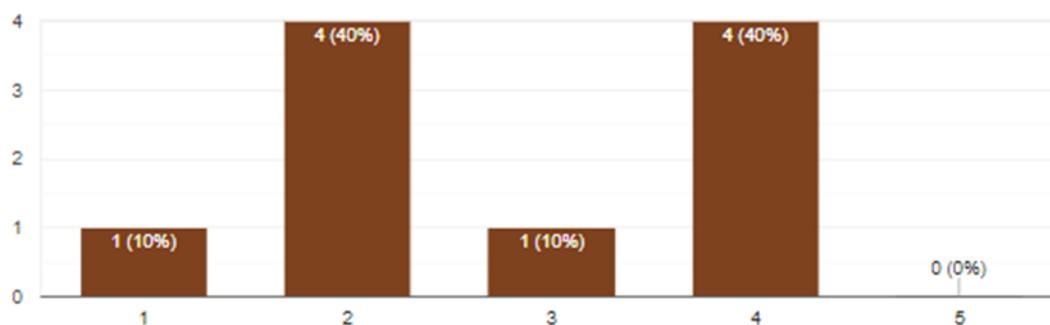


Figure 10. The teacher voices about how Edmodo could not facilitate collaborative.

Figure 10 shows that 40 % of the teacher agree that Edmodo could not facilitate collaborative learning. However, 40% of the teacher states disagree, and only 10% of the teachers' states strongly disagree and neutral. Figure 10 indicates that one of the issues of online learning is collaborative learning. The following excerpt supported these findings:

Students can do collaborative learning by comments and discussion through group blogs and the Edmodo community, but the collaboration was difficult to be done if they have limited Internet access (A13). Some students give a late response, so students become lazy to comment (L10).

During the Covid-19 outbreak, the students and the teachers have participated using Edmodo in online learning activities. In the implementation of the online teaching and learning process, both students and teachers are actively engaged. Many teachers use online learning as a way to complement face-to-face teaching activities. The development of technology has attracted some teachers and students to use a learning management system to explore and accommodate their teaching and learning process. The teacher could share assignments and grades, schedule appointments, conduct discussions, and post videos, creating and taking polls. Edmodo is a learning management system operated by teachers or lecturers, students, and parents. The teacher might post various assignments, then students' learning performance could be graded quickly. Moreover, actual discussion topics, videos, appointments, and students' polls can be utilized within the teaching-learning process.

In exploring the teacher and students' voices about using Edmodo for the online learning activity, Edmodo has much strength because the percentage of responses is quite lively, with an average of 50%. The finding is in line with Manowong's (2016) statement that Edmodo can be an online learning tool that complemented face-to-face activity in the classroom provides several features assisting the students' learning process. However, this finding of current research is not in line with Al-Said's (2015) statement that the students have confused when using Edmodo. Besides, Irawan (2020) stated that using Edmodo is slow loading when it lacks an Internet connection.

The strengths of Edmodo are supported by the result of Thongmak (2013) and Majid (2011), who have found the usefulness of Edmodo, creating these findings even more specific. Nevertheless, it should be noted that the primary points behind this positive manner are instrumental in orientation (Alfawzan, 2012; Al-Zubeiry, 2012). This point ensures that most EFL students see English as a significant role in their academic life because their principal is the English Education Department.

More interesting is the finding in terms of the EFL learner towards the use of Edmodo. The result of using Edmodo in contexts of the EFL learner is impressive. It shows the real suitability of the various advantages that Edmodo can provide the teaching and learning process. These results support the appearing consensus that learners should develop their learning opportunities by taking advantage of new technologies (Hanafiah, 2012). Edmodo reveals a high acceptance sufficiently as social interaction tools (Kongchan, 2013). Edmodo's feature chat enables students to expand both the type and amount of their communication, on the other hand, extending them opportunities to increase their confidence and motivation (Lukitasari et al., 2019). Edmodo can also overcome students' shy problems by facilitating face-to-face meetings with other students or teachers.

One of the exciting findings of this study is that even though Edmodo has many features such as video, appointments, and student polls, both students and teachers agree that Edmodo is easy to use. Figure 1 and Figure 2 indicate that all of the students and the teacher had no difficulties utilizing Edmodo. Some possible factors may contribute to this finding. The first factor is the students and the lecturers' digital literacy level. Today, both teachers and students can easily be exposed to online tutorials. Most people have owned their personal computers or cellular phone. They could get a video tutorial on YouTube or other social media. Therefore, an individual's ability to find, evaluate, and write on various digital platforms becomes critical. Digital literacy can be evaluated by assessing students' and teachers' abilities in typing skills and producing text, images, audio, and designs using technology. Chan et al. (2017) assign digital literacy competence to comprehend and use information in multiple formats, emphasizing critical thinking rather than information and communication technology skills. In line with this definition, the researcher believes that if students and teachers have an excellent digital literacy level, they would have no difficulty in utilizing and understanding the features of Edmodo. This finding is in line with Said's (2015) study, which found students' positive perspective towards Edmodo at Taibah University as a platform for the online learning environment.

The second possible factor contributing to the first finding is the teachers' role in modelling the activity. A good teacher can usually perform all of the teachers' roles. Makovec (2018) states that two factors influence the role of the teacher. Internal factors cover the teacher's perspective of his or her role in teaching. On the other hand, external factors involve the teacher's expectations and sight, which appear within other stakeholders, such as students, colleagues, school leaders, parents, and the public. Both

factors are also an essential part of a teacher's professional identity. The teachers' internal factors that affect the teacher's role can be divided into two parts: the teacher's beliefs about which role is essential and the teacher's expectations for their role.

Using Edmodo during the Covid-19 pandemic can be a benchmark for educators preparing to continue learning technology development. Developing collaborative learning could be one of the promising future of online learning in the Indonesian EFL context. Edmodo's use will provide them with flexibility in learning and opportunities to explore their English skills.

5. Conclusion

The present study explored the strengths and weaknesses of Edmodo in English language teaching in Indonesia. This study found that students have a similar opinion with the teachers' opinion about the strengths of Edmodo. Students and teachers in English Language Education Department of UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya claimed the strengths of Edmodo in terms of the practicality and efficiency. However, a different opinion occurs on the use of Edmodo to complement face to face activity.

This study also indicates another different opinion about the weaknesses of Edmodo. Some lecturers agree that Edmodo could not facilitate collaborative learning, but some lecturers said it was possible to do collaborative learning. Furthermore, students and teachers believed that Edmodo needs a good Internet connection, especially for the quiz.

How it looks similar to Facebook makes it easier for learners to practice it. Besides, using Edmodo can involve parents in the learning process. The teachers can send out parent codes, and they can also join and keep an eye on their students' progress because parental involvement is essential. However, the Internet access is one of the major pitfalls when using Edmodo as an online learning activity. The limitation observed in this study is related to the number of sample of the participants. Therefore, possible areas for more research can address the impact of Edmodo on the students' achievement, the readiness of students to utilize Edmodo, and the possible methods to make it appropriate for the necessity of students from more areas in Indonesia.

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