Universidad de **Valladolid**

Máster en Profesor de Educación Secundaria Obligatoria y Bachillerato, Formación Profesional y Enseñanza de Idiomas

Developing Writing Skills Through Educative Social Networks

Facultad de Educación y Trabajo Social
Facultad de Filosofía y Letras
Valladolid, 26 de junio de 2017

Autora: Alba Rodríguez Sánchez
Tutora: Marta Gutiérrez Rodríguez

Vº Bº de la tutora:

Table of Contents

Introduction

The present dissertation approaches social networks and their use in Secondary Education, particularly in the English as a Second Language Subject. There is not a shade of doubt that social media are an important part of people's lives nowadays, and, perhaps the extent of this importance is greater within teenagers, since personal relationships appear to gain significance during adolescence. On account of this fact, the incorporation of social networks in Education seems logical. However, even if there is a lot of investigation regarding the advantages and disadvantages of Information and Communication Technologies at school in general, the truth is that little research has been done as for their effects in the use of language. For that reason, this work seeks to study whether social networks help improve communicative skills in a foreign language, focusing on the writing competence in ESL.

I genuinely believe that writing skills can be improved through a proper use of social networks, and this belief is based on my own experience. At the age of eleven, I accessed by mistake a web portal where all users were English-speaking. The portal was about online games (pool, chess, or memory, among many others) and, while playing, you could chat with your opponents. I entered the place hoping to meet the classmate that had told me about it, and I quickly realised that this would not be possible, for I have entered the international address (ending *.com*) instead of the Spanish one (*.es*). However, I was not backed out, as I happily discovered how much I enjoyed exchanging messages with those unknown English-speaking players who were so keen on helping me improve my use of the language. My knowledge of the tongue was rather basic at that time –I would struggle to understand my opponents' questions and comments and find a proper way to answer them back–, but I progressively noticed I was becoming more fluent and, most importantly, deeply curious on the English language. With this I am not saying that that new 'hobby' I took up made me learn everything I know today, but it definitely triggered my interest in the language and in keeping practising.

More than a decade later, and hopefully on the verge of becoming an English teacher for teenage learners, I found myself thinking of ways to stimulate the students' concern in learning a foreign language and I immediately remember my anecdote. Today, in a greater extent than in the beginning of this century (when the classmate I referred to before and

I were the only students in my course who had Internet access at home), most Secondary students use social networks on a daily basis, so they are liable to enjoy learning English through virtual social platforms rather than with more traditional systems.

The combination of my experience as a young English learner and my current eagerness to delve into innovative teaching methods were enough to embark upon this project, where I study the social networks that can be implemented in the English lesson to improve writing skills. Like I said, not much has been written regarding social media and its use for learning a foreign language, since it is a relatively recent issue in Education. In my research, I skim through a number of social online networks and then decide on those which are considered most appropriate for their use with educative purposes.

First of all, some grounding on theory is needed, and the first pages will provide the reader with an overview of the use of ICTs and social media in Education and, more precisely, in the ESL classroom. After a review of the most popular social networks, their classification into different categories, and a brief analysis on their use at school, we bring this chapter to an end by choosing the three platforms that will have the leading role in the dissertation: Schoology, Edmodo, and Edoome. A thorough description of the three tools is given next, followed by a proposed didactic unit whose implementation is done almost exclusively using social educative platforms. The didactic unit is on the topic of cinema, and students are expected to complete activities by interacting with each other through the network. Also, in the interest of providing the optimal understanding of the platforms, we will give the reader the information required for accessing the webs and have a closer look at them. Eventually, the incorporation of the suggested didactic unit will be decisive to determine positive and negative aspects of the three networks, consequently guiding us to the selection of the most appropriate virtual tool to be employed in the English classroom.

1. Social Networks and Education

1.1. ICTs and Education

The term Information and Communication Technologies (from now on ICTs) is used to refer to "a diverse set of technological tools and resources used to communicate, and to create, disseminate, store, and manage information" (Blurton, 1999, p.1). These technologies comprise the Internet, wireless networks, and mobile phones, among others. During the last years, ICTs have provided society with a wide range of opportunities to communicate in real time, for example, via instant messaging, video-conferencing, and social networking websites, with other users across the world (Christensson, 2010).

With the advent of modern technology in the last few decades, ICTs are widely used in many aspects of life, as leisure, work, and studies, and today's children and teenagers are growing up with computers and mobile devices embedded in their daily lives. In fact, according to surveys conducted by the Spanish statistical office in 2016, 98.4 % of youngsters between 16 and 24 years old have used the Internet in the last three months; as of those between 10 and 15, the rate is 95.2 % (Instituto Nacional de Estadística, 2016). Further, research carried out by a Spanish editors' federation in 2012 revealed that most youngsters make use of the Internet to look for information (73.7 %), communicate via instant messages (51.6 %), access social networks (46.5 %) and watch contents on Youtube (45.9 %) (Federación de gremios de editores de España, 2012). As far as education is concerned, the Spanish Ministry of Education, Culture, and Sport revealed that in 2015, 92.7 % of schools in Spain were equipped with Internet access in each classroom (Ministerio de Educación, Cultura y Deporte, 2016).

Having the above-mentioned statistics in mind, it comes as no surprise the fact that there is an increasing interest in employing ICTs in Primary and Secondary Education. Modern computing began in the late 1930s but "it was not until 1980s that these information communication technologies were adopted for teaching within educational contexts" (McPherson, 2016, p. 77). In an article entitled "Evolution of Learning Technologies", McPherson (2016) collects the main technology innovations used for educational purposes during the past few decades: it all started with programmed learning and multimedia resources, which permitted computer-based training from home; from 1993 on, the Internet and the web, together with learning systems and mobile devices were

introduced in education; eventually, the 21ˢᵗ century imported gaming technologies, open educational resources, social and participatory media (blogs, wikis), virtual worlds, e-books and smart devices, massive open online courses, and big data and learning analytics. All these resources have been considered, to a greater or lesser extent, as a support for teaching and learning.

Although the correlation between the use of ICTs at school and good performance is not clear (Livingstone, 2012), there seems to be plenty of benefits to implementing these technologies for educational purposes. As remarked by Haddad (2008, p. 8), when used properly, ICTs "enhance the learning process" in multiple ways. Generally, activities performed with computers or mobile devices seem more enjoyable and motivating thanks to sound, colour, and movement. A suitable use of the web can lead to the development of skills related to exploration, and seek and selection of information. Additionally, modern technologies provide pupils with the opportunity to practice whatever skills in any moment and at any place. Today's students have access to countless resources worldwide and are able to communicate with peers and exchange their works. Unsurprisingly, the European Union considers digital competence as one of the eight key competences that must be put in place in compulsory education (Eurydice, 2012). It is reported that when using multimedia (e.g. interactive whiteboards), lessons are more effective, it is easier to attract the students' attention, and learners feel more motivated and participating (Schmid, 2008). Thus, a major reason for using ICTs in the classroom is to better prepare the current generation of students "for a workplace where ICTs, particularly computers, the Internet, and related technologies, are becoming more and more ubiquitous" (Tinio, 2003, p.6). Tinio highlights the importance of technological literacy as an essential skill in a greater and greater globalizing job market.

Notwithstanding, research carried out by Schmid (2008) has shown that the inappropriate use of technological devices may lead to drawbacks such as the cognitive overload (when students feel overwhelmed by the amount of information displayed) or the lack of commitment (when they find the pace too easy to follow and do not feel engaged with the lesson). Moreover, another barrier to the use of ICTs for educational purposes appears when teachers and learners lack basic technological knowledge. Besides, some authors (Riasati, Allahjar, & Tan, 2012; Lai & Kritsonis, 2006; Schmid, 2008) regard costs and inequity to access these technologies as an obstacle to adapting modern technological advances to school, but, as above-mentioned, most of today's schools have access to

computers and the Internet, and there is no need for a very sophisticated system to engage students in learning with multimedia. Overall, disadvantages are outweighed by advantages, and the utilization of ICTs at school is increasingly widespread.

1.1.1. Using ICTs in the ESL Classroom

As this paper is related to the acquisition of foreign languages, the use of ICTs in the foreign language classroom must be thoroughly considered. Technology has been used as a means of learning a second language since the appearance of the audiolingual method in the fifties. This method consisted of listening to and repeating short extracts so as to memorise them and assimilate grammar structures (Alcalde, 2011). This is considered as the first introduction of technology in the classroom, though it did not involve communication.

Methods for teaching a second language employ technology primarily in terms of listening comprehension skills, which is considered the most difficult skill to be acquired when learning a foreign language (Gómez, 2008). In an article entitled "Goodbye Cassette, Welcome ICTs!" Gómez (2008) gathers a number of digital resources to be used in class for practicing oral comprehension which replace the obsolete cassette. These resources, according to Gómez, are decisive both for motivation and achievement in learning a foreign language: they are inexpensive, simple, rapid, and effective; they offer a high sound and video quality and provide learners with authentic material. Most importantly, thanks to the recent installation of language laboratories, students can practice at their own pace, selecting material depending on difficulty or preferences, and repeating the recordings whenever they find it necessary, all of it contributing to diversity outreach.

Of course, not only oral skills can be improved by using ICTs. The Internet offers countless resources for students to practice reading skills, as many published contents are digitalised now and can be found on the World Wide Web. For example, students can improve their reading abilities by having a look at foreign newspapers or accessing online encyclopaedias. Regarding production, ICTs also offer possibilities for users to practice writing skills. For instance, instead of writing traditional letters, students can send e-mails, and they can easily find samples of different genres on the Internet. Also, students

can be encouraged to reflect their opinions or feelings on blogs. About speaking, learners are likely to find many resources to improve their pronunciation, like Audacity; interestingly, there are many popular and rather user-friendly video-conferencing systems that can encourage oral interaction, such as Skype.

Needless to say, one of the main advantages of technology for foreign language students is that they can practice their skills not only at school (e.g. in language labs) but also at home, which favours independent learning. For example, Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL) materials help students work on a one-to-one basis and practice listening, reading, writing, and pronunciation. Additionally, the Internet provides access to networking communities where learners can communicate and develop many a skill. However, Lai and Kritsonis (2006, p.4) point out that computers are not "intelligent enough to be truly interactive" yet, and they argue that training production without a teacher's support is an ambitious and challenging project. It seems, then, that at school, and particularly in second language learning, technologies and the Internet are generally used in a way that students get knowledge and improve their skills without much interaction.

It is true that computers themselves are not precisely interactive, but ICTs make people connect and communicate with each other. This dissertation focuses on one of the most popular Information and Communication Technologies in the information age: Social Networks. Considering the benefits of ICTs for education, the spread of these networks, and the need for enhancing interaction, our aim is to research on how social networks can be implemented in Secondary schools, and particularly in the ESL classroom to favour social interactivity.

1.2. Social Networks

1.2.1. Definition

Social Networks are Web services specialised in building relationships of any kind between people (De Haro, 2011). Through these networks, users can create a personal profile, connect with other users, keep in touch with them, and share digital contents. Sixdegrees.com was one of the first social networks, which worked from 1997 to 2001 (De Haro, 2011) and enabled sending private messages and writing on other users' walls depending on the degree of connection: a member could keep in touch with another if they had common contacts.

1.2.2. Classification

According to De Haro (2011), social networks can be classified depending on the types of relationships between users: the most relevant social networks are those where users get in touch with acquaintances and relatives; there are also professional social networks, in which users contact people with related careers; finally, some social networks are closed communities around particular interests.

An example of a social network that regards friendship is Facebook. Facebook was founded in 2004 by Mark Zuckerberg, who at the time was a student from the University of Harvard. The company offers users the possibility of exploring and sharing content while keeping in touch with family and friends. According to the *VIII Observatorio de Redes Sociales* (8th Social Networks Observatory) carried out in 2016 by The Cocktail Analysis (a Spanish consulting group specialised in consumer trends, communication, and new technologies), Facebook is the favourite network par excellence, with 88 % Internet users (The Cocktail Analysis, 2016, December 16). In particular, Facebook statistics claim that a total of 1,230 million users employed Facebook on a daily basis in December 2016 ("Información de la empresa", 2017).

On the other hand, LinkedIn is a network where users create professional profiles and connect with users from the same working field. It was founded by Reid Hoffman and Jeff Weiner in 2003 with the aim of connecting users worldwide and help them grow up professionally ("Sobre nosotros", 2017).

As mentioned before, some networks specialise in specific topics. For example, MySpace was created in 2003 and it was conceived as a place for musicians to share their work ("Press room, n.d."); another example of these types of networks is Instagram, which focuses exclusively on photography. Instagram was founded by Kevin Systrom and Mike Krieger in 2003 ("About us", 2017).

A further classification by De Haro (2011) refers to how social networks are accessed and created. In this respect, he identifies three types: social networks based on software, social networks based on websites, and sites where users design their own networks. In networks based on software, users download and install a programme in their own servers. An example of these is Elgg. It was founded in 2004 and it is addressed to universities and companies. It enables the creation of customizable frameworks and Content Management Systems for creating communities, and it includes blogs, updates sections and file-sharing ("Elgg master Documentation", 2013).

On the contrary, for those networks which are based on websites, no installation is required. Twitter and Facebook are examples of website networks. Twitter users write short messages (140 characters at the most) that are displayed chronologically on a wall. The main difference with other networks is that relationships are not mutual: user X can decide to follow user Y without user Y reading user X's messages. Media content can be added to posts ("Centro de Ayuda de Twitter", 2017).

Finally, Ning or Spruz are sites where users create and customise their own networks according to their preferences. Within Ning, users can communicate through a wall, private messages, or chat. Posts can include images, videos, or text files. Anyone can see another user's profile even if they are not connected ("Sobre Ning", 2017). Users in Spruz can create a web which can be entered by up to 50 other users (in the most basic version). Blogs, videos, photos, and events can be shared and commented on the page ("Spruz Website Features", 2016).

Considering the latter, De Haro (2011) also classifies networks into *vertical* and *horizontal*: the former are sites where users can create a closed net with selected members sharing a common interest, while the latter refer to those networks where users access a big net where many other individuals are participating.

On the other hand, Area (2008) offers a classification which combines some of the aspects considered by De Haro, admitting that differentiation of the three types is somewhat

complex. He distinguishes between *mega-communities* (also referred to as *general networks* or *mass networks*), *open networks* and *micro-communities* or *thematic networks.* The first group comprehends the most popular social networks, such as Facebook or Twitter, which have general purposes. Those networks considered open are places where users can share contents in particular formats, like Youtube (for videos), Slideshare (presentations) and Flickr (photographs). *Micro-communities* or *thematic networks* focus on specific interests, such as Ning, or Spruz. As explained before, in these networks users create groups (which can be personalised) around a particular topic. Members wishing to enter those groups must request permission to the creator.

1.3. Social Networks in Secondary Education

1.3.1. Advantages and Disadvantages

The use of social networks is widespread among people all over the world. The following are some astonishing statistics collected by Smith (2016):

- Out of 7.4 thousand million people in the world, 3.17 thousand million are Internet users, and 2.3 thousand million employ social networks actively.
- Every day, 1 million users enter a social network via their mobile phone for their first time; that is to say, 12 users every second.
- 60 thousand million messages are exchanged every day in Facebook Messenger and Whatsapp.

Additionally, according to a study by the Autonomous University of Barcelona and the Ramon Llull University, 87 % of Secondary students in Spain admit they use the Internet to surf social networks (Muñoz-Miralles, R. et al., 2014).

Bearing these statistics in mind, it is not remarkable the fact that social networks are increasingly applied in Secondary Education. The information age phenomenon has not gone unnoticed to education, which can benefit from everything that makes social networks be so attractive for young learners. According to De Haro (2011), these networks must be implemented in school considering two aspects: first, they can be an important part of students' future in terms of job promotion and mediation between

employers and employees; secondly, and most importantly, under the correct circumstances, social networks favour learning and increase students' interest in education, since they are a tool where they can develop their skills and knowledge together with their social abilities. Moreover, "social networks improve communication skills, enhance participation as well as social commitment, reinforce peer support, and ensure realization of education based on collaboration strategies" (Tiryakioglu, 2011, p. 136).

Despite the benefits to using social networks for educative purposes, negative effects to a general use have been outlined by some authors. Pérez (2011) puts forward that social networks affect youngsters' ability to socialise, as these networks do not foster interactivity and make relationships superficial. Additionally, according to Diomidous et al. (2016), some phenomena such as cyberbullying, addiction, and grooming, have appeared as a consequence of the use of social networks. A study carried out by the University of Guadalajara (Mexico) revealed that young learners find the following disadvantages to using social networks: students get distracted from school activities, they spend too much time on networks and they consider there is not enough privacy in communication (Islas et Carranza, 2011).

While there seems to be more advantages than disadvantages, it is true that the drawbacks must not be overlooked, as they may cause serious effects on teenagers. Some of the mentioned difficulties are closely related to safety and privacy, which, with the appropriate tools and teachers' control can easily be overcome. De Haro (2011) considers that the best social networks for education are the vertical networks, which enable the creation of closed areas where users are away from other Internet users, thus solving the grooming phenomenon. Regarding social skills and interactivity, the incorporation of social networks in the classroom can be considered as a useful tool for students to learn how to interact virtually, which helps learners develop social and digital competences. Besides, about distractions, if the social network students work with is specialised in a learning field, they should not divert their mind more often than in regular lessons with traditional resources. However, regarding privacy and cyberbullying, without an administrator's control, it is complex to monitor every movement a user makes within the network. Therefore, if we aim to implement the use of social networks in Secondary Education, it is necessary to find the appropriate networks for teachers and students to

obtain as much benefits as possible without these disadvantages meaning a significant obstacle.

1.3.2. Examples of the implementation of social networks in Secondary Education

De Haro (2011) compiles educative experiences used with social networks that gives us examples of how these can be implemented in the classroom. For example, *Amor de Dios,* a school in Barcelona, created the first social network with educational purposes in Spain in 2008. It was designed through Ning, and it was addressed initially to Mathematics students in *E.S.O.* and *Bachillerato*. Later, more subjects were incorporated and in 2009 it had over 500 members.

Similarly, a Secondary School in Zaragoza, *I.E.S. Pablo Gargallo* implemented a network in Ning for the Economy lessons. When it was created, it consisted of 6 groups, three teachers and 54 *Bachillerato* students. The network is divided into three categories: *discussion forum* (where the 6 groups participate)*, groups* (one for each of the 6 classes)*, and *blog* (used as a noticeboard).

Noticias de cartón is another Ning community created in *La Casa de Cartón* School (Peru) for students aged 13-15. Unlike the two previous examples, this network is open, so anyone can visit it. It is focused on information and media, and it aims to develop critical thinking.

1.4. Social Networks in the ESL Classroom

1.4.1. General Considerations

Given the fact that social networks are about communicating and interacting, they are necessarily related to the acquisition of languages. As argued by Araujo (2014), social networking webs are frequent and habitual in students' lives. If learners use these services for being in touch with other users in their native tongues, then they are a good place for practicing foreign languages too.

Although Araujo (2014) admits that social network tools are relatively recent and have not been utilised extensively yet, there are relevant advantages to the use of social networks for learning a foreign language: students can practice the language at any time and place and in different contexts; students learn how to express themselves in writing; they make an effort to be understandable and learn from their interlocutors' language contributions; sometimes they must learn how to write in a concise and concrete manner; finally, with constant and ubiquitous practice, they become more confident using the language. Yunus, Salehi, and Chenzi (2012) also point out the fact that when writing on social network services in a foreign language, students are addressing a bigger audience and they get a sense of "global interaction" (Yunus, Salehi, & Chenzi, 2012, p. 44). Also, as these networks enhance peer and teacher communication, shy students feel more comfortable and confident with their practice. Besides, Sotomayor (2010) argues that social networks contribute to foreign language classrooms not only by facilitating communication in real contexts and with updated materials, but also by enhancing collaborative work.

As remarked by Dogoriti, "social interaction is undoubtedly another element which shapes effective learning experiences" (2015, p. 402). On the other hand, the syllabus for the region of Castile and Leon establishes that the use of new technologies contributes to learning foreign languages for three reasons: they give access to countless resources in a precise and rapid way; they permit getting in touch with other schools in order to establish real communicative exchanges through e-mail or videoconferences; and they favour the implementation of a variety of activities through different platforms (Orden EDU 363/2015, 2015). The combination of technologies and the need for social interactivity leads to the use of social networking services for learning a second language effectively.

This dissertation focuses on the use of social networks in the English subject. Given the wide variety of types and examples of social networks that we mentioned in previous sections, a thorough study of these services must be carried out deciding on the platforms that are more likely to have positive effects with Secondary Education ESL students. Hence, the following section covers a range of platforms and webs that must be considered when incorporating social networking in the classroom.

1.4.2. Selecting Appropriate Educative Social Platforms for Developing Writing Skills in the ESL Classroom

Social networks are most related with the acquisition of foreign languages in terms of reading and writing skills. Oral and aural skills are not put into practice as these services do not offer conferencing or videoconferencing systems. Additionally, the applications and services preferred by users are WhatsApp and Facebook (The Cocktail Analysis, 2015, December 16), therefore writing and reading skills are developed in a bigger extent than oral skills as far as social networks are concerned.

On the other hand, according to Yunus, Salehi, and Chenzi (2012), a disadvantage of integrating social networks in the ESL classroom is that students might find difficulty in reading texts online, because they are used to traditional paper-based books. Furthermore, it is true that interaction necessarily involves reading and writing, but this dissertation aims to focus mainly on writing skills, as we want students to participate in social media services in an active way.

As we have seen before, there are many different categories of social network services according to how users access them, what their purposes are, and what type of users participate in them. Accordingly, these differences are relevant when considering what the most appropriate platforms that shall be employed with English students are. In the following paragraphs, we review these services and the features they offer to ultimately decide on the platforms that are going to be used for our research.

Although they are not social networks, Language Management Systems (LMS) must be considered for our purpose. They are services used in education that permit the creation of virtual courses or are used as a support for in-person courses. Some examples of these systems are Chamilo, Dokeos, and Moodle, and they include features like files storage, members' management, assignments submission, grading, and communication via email. While these platforms enable the creation of closed communities, together with proper management and control over users, they have not been considered for this research as they do not foster peer interaction, and hence they cannot be considered as 'educative social networks'.

When implementing horizontal social networks (like Facebook or Twitter) in the classroom, it must be remarked that instructors cannot control and monitor their learners'

activity in the platforms, which can be counterproductive: students may not focus all their attention on the classroom, and may instead communicate with each other regarding unconnected topics. In this sense, we agree with De Haro (2011) in that vertical closed communities are more suitable for education, so this type of networks has been discarded too.

As for vertical networks (those which are created and customised by a user with a specific purpose and which control users' access to them), two major disadvantages for their use in education has been found: the creation of a community involves longer processes than simply creating an account on a regular social platform, and, perhaps specific computer skills that not all instructors have; plus, some of the most popular webs of this type (Ning, Spruz, and SocialGO) are not available for free.

Finally, four platforms which seem to gather all the ingredients needed for students to improve their skills and communicate in class and outside the class have been found: Edmodo, Edoome, Schoology, and Twiducate. They can be considered vertical social networks, but they are different from others in that they were designed exclusively for educational purposes and that users do not need to customise a site "from scratch". As they were conceived for being used in Primary, Secondary, or Higher Education, teachers control and manage their students in the platform, like LMS systems. Most remarkably, the four platforms offer plenty of interaction between teachers and students. Plus, the interfaces are user-friendly and similar to popular traditional social networks, so they sound familiar to most Internet users, and no specific computer skills are needed.

Consequently, the latter-mentioned platforms, which can be named "educative social networks", are those which compile the most positive aspects in order to be implemented in an ESL classroom with Secondary students. A close study of the four platforms, though, led us to discard Twiducate because its messaging system (like that of Twitter) does not enable users to insert local videos nor files (only URLs), which makes it more rudimentary than Schoology, Edmodo, and Edoome. Also, these three platforms offer a greater deal of features than Twiducate; these features, which will be described and shown further on, are very interesting and attractive both for teachers and students.

This research seeks to focus, therefore, on how English teenage students can develop writing skills through Schoology, Edmodo, and Edoome. We address this proposal to students in 4º E.S.O. level. The reason why this level has been chosen is that at that age

(around 15-16) students have the maturity to deal with social networks in a thoughtful and responsible way. On the other hand, students under 14 need permission from parents to access a social network (Ley Orgánica 15/1999, 1999); and students in *Bachillerato*, who are about to start Higher Education, may feel overwhelmed by the contents and demands of their regular lessons, so adding the use of a platform to their duties might be counterproductive.

The next chapters compile an in-depth description of the three platforms which will help the reader know more about how they work and how they can be implemented in the English subject. Right after that, we propose a didactic unit that serves as a model for analysing whether writing skills can be developed using the three platforms.

2. Description of the platforms

In this section of the dissertation, we collect a description of the three platforms both from the point of view of instructors and students, as some differences have been found between them. The three platforms are characterised by their user-friendly interfaces, which allow unskilled users to intuitively move around the pages. Schoology, Edmodo, and Edoome permit the creation of closed communities thanks to a code system: a teacher creates a group and a code is generated automatically in a way that only those who enter that code can access a course. Another common feature is that the three platforms are free, although some of them have upgrading options that are paid monthly or annually.

On the other hand, significant differences have been found between the three platforms. Therefore, in this section we provide a detailed description of what can be found in each platform. The explanations cover the contents or buttons of the platform in each section (e.g. *Wall, Home, Settings)*. Also, the description of the user's profile is included, as it can be customised with different information fields. The common sections in the three platforms are *Home page* and *Groups*/*Courses* (they use different terminology for the same concept sometimes), but they individually add extra features, all of them detailed in the descriptions.

The descriptions of the platforms from the students' position emphasize the differences with the teachers' view. Here, an additional section named *Accessing the platform* has been included for the following reason: when an instructor creates an account in any of the three platforms, the process is roughly the same (users fill in a form with their name and email address, and a password is asked); however, when it is students who access a course, the procedure is quite different in the three networks.

Screenshots have been included in the description with the aim of facilitating the understanding of how the platforms work. A general comparison of the three platforms is presented too. After the comparison, access codes for the three networks are provided in case the reader wishes to have a closer look at them.

2.1. From the point of view of instructors

2.1.1. Schoology

2.1.1.1. History

Schoology was created in 2009 by four students of the Washington University in St. Louis. The platform started off as a place to share notes and thoughts, and it grew as more features were demanded after its release. The company is headquartered in New York ("About", 2017).

2.1.1.2. Description

Schoology is organised around a row of buttons where the main activity and contents are kept. These buttons are: *Home, Courses, Groups,* and *Resources.* Next to this bar, there are small icons for accessing private messages, personal requests, notifications, personal profile, configuration, and support.

2.1.1.3. User's profile

When creating an account, instructors are proposed to introduce the school they work at into their profile so that communication with other teachers is enabled. In their personal profile, teachers can add a photo, write a short biography, and include activities and interests. The personal information, apart from the teacher's name, address, and gender, includes the subjects and levels taught, position, and birthday. Despite holding the teacher category, there is a section for choosing the type of learner a user is: auditory learner, visual learner, or hands-on learner. A short explanation of what each type of learner means accompanies each option.

2.1.1.4. Home page

The home page hosts the buttons *Recent Activity*, *Calendar*, *People, Messages,* and *App Centre*. These buttons appear on the left side of the screen, and by clicking on them, the information required appears in the middle of the page. On the right side, there is a section named *Upcoming*, which shows the closest events on the calendar. Here is a description of each of the mentioned buttons:

- *Recent Activity* is the place where the most recent updates are displayed chronologically. It is a compendium of all updates from every course the teacher is enrolled in. Posts, events, and assignments can be created from the homepage. To create an event, a date and title must be given. A description (where files, links, and resources can be attached) may be added, and the creator decides if comments are enabled or not. A more detailed account of these assignments and posts is given further on, because they can also be created from the *Courses* section.

- The *calendar* shows the events or assignments for the day selected. The view can be daily, weekly, or monthly. By clicking on one day, a teacher can write an assignment or event.

- By clicking the *Messages* button, users access their inbox and write messages in which files, links, and resources can be attached. Teachers and students can communicate in a more intimate way through these private messages.

- *People* is a list of users each member is connected to. These can be users from one's own school or from the Schoology community.

- The *App Centre* includes countless applications classified into ten categories which can improve the functions of the platform. For example, apart from file-hosting systems like OneDrive, or video-sharing platforms like Youtube or Vimeo (all of them can be downloaded for free), a popular application is Backchannel Chat, a discussion tool where all members of a course can exchange ideas in real time. It is important to remark that this app costs $15 though.

2.1.1.5. Courses

When clicking the *Courses* button, an instructor can either create or join a group. When a teacher creates a course, a name group, a level, and a subject area (Health & Physical

Education, Language Arts, Mathematics, Professional Development, Science, Social Studies, Special Education, Technology, Arts, or Other) are required. Levels are organized from 1 to 12, so a group corresponding to 4º E.S.O. would be level 10. When the creation is completed, the teacher receives a code, which will have to be sent to students (and parents, if wished) to invite them to join the group. If teachers want to join a course, they only need the accessing code and they will automatically form part of that group.

The course options permit: including a photograph for each course; adding details regarding the description, location, and schedule of the course; setting the course privacy (so as to decide who -everyone, Schoology users, school, course, or no one- can see the course profile, updates, materials, roster, or calendar); and adding external tools. Also, the deleted posts and recycle bin appear in this section.

Within each course, the platform organises tools and contents in different categories: *Materials, Updates, Gradebook, Badges, Attendance, Members, and Analytics.*
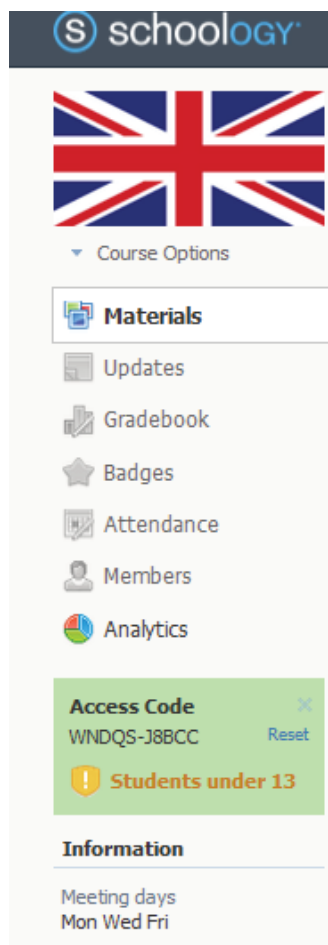

Figure 1. Schoology's group menu.

- *Materials* comprehend assignments, tests and quizzes, files, links, external tools, discussions, webpages, media albums, and packages. Let us now delve into how assignments, tests and quizzes, and discussions are created. (For the rest of the materials, selecting the contents from a folder or the Internet is enough to make it appear on the *Updates* section).
  - Assignments: they must be given a title. Optionally, a description can be added, in which format can be altered, and files, links, resources, and external tools can be attached; a due date can be included, as well as a maximum score. Each assignment must be given a category, e.g., *assessment, homework activity, class activity...* (they can be created by instructors) and there are other non-compulsory options: a scale or rubric can be included (numeric, A+/-, or others conceived by teachers), the assignment can be 'aligned' to learning objectives; the teacher can choose to be notified when a student submits the assignment, a grade statistic can be created, and comments can be enabled. Also, it is possible to send assignments to a student in particular, to a whole course, or to different courses at the same time.
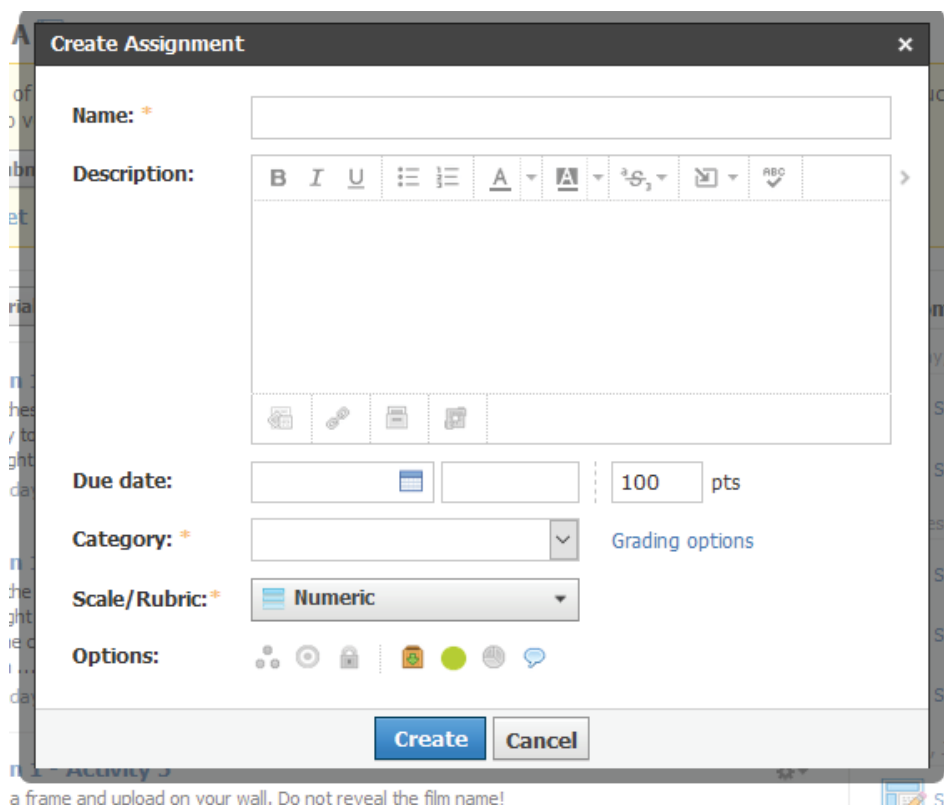

Figure 2. How to create an assignment in Schoology.

o Tests/quizzes: like assignments, tests and quizzes are given a name, a due date, a maximum score, a category, and a scale, and the same options as the assignments (alignment of objectives, enabling statistics and comments).

Once a test or quiz is created, more details can be added. There are six types of questions: true/false, multiple choice, ordering, short-answer/essay question, fill in the blank, and matching. Questions can be customized by adding instructions or descriptions, and content (links, images, and media) can be attached. Plus, each question can be given different scores. Also, different settings can be chosen: instructors can choose the dates when submissions are enabled; a time limit and attempt limits can be set; the questions order may be randomized; questions can appear together or in different pages; a language keyboard can be used; students can review their questions before submitting; quizzes are resumable; and students may or not be allowed to view their submissions, with or without correct answers.

Teachers can see a preview of the test before posting it, as well as results of the students and comments.
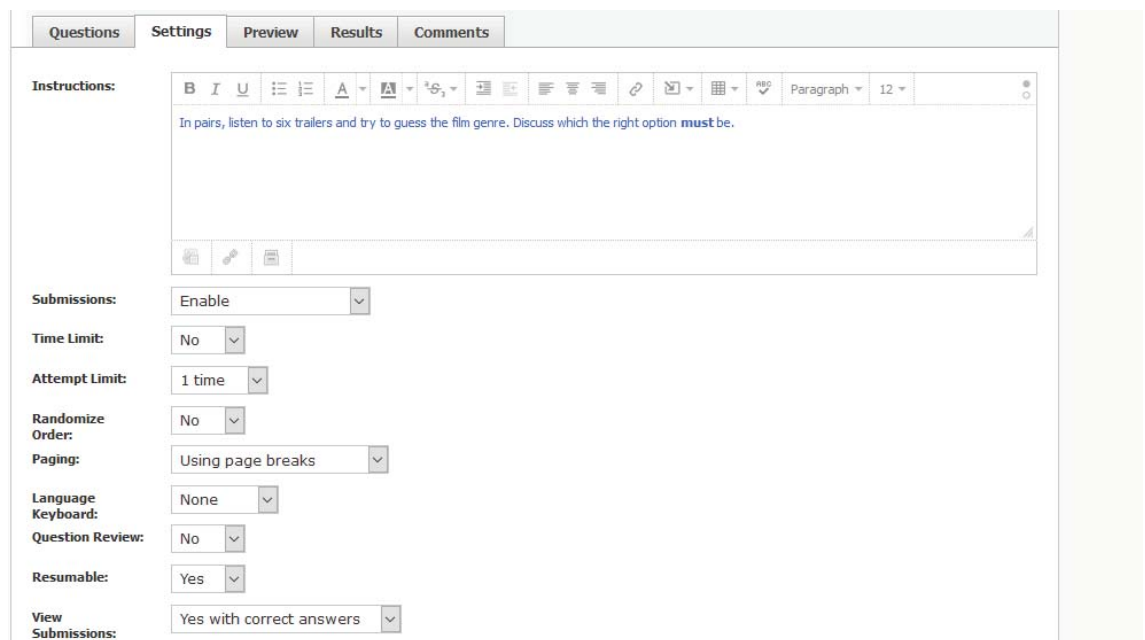

Figure 3. How to create a test in Schoology.

o Discussions: they work in a similar way to assignments and quizzes. There is a title and a deadline, and students can be graded for their participation. The assignment can be individual or collective, objective learnings can be

22

aligned and the teacher can set whether users are allowed to see other responses before participating. The comments on the discussion admit the attachment of content.

- *Updates*: this section is the place where users post comments that can be commented or liked. Together with written texts, the user can add links, files, resources, and polls. Users may choose to address these updates to one or more courses, or to some students in particular. Apart from appearing in the course *updates* section, the posts appear in the home page too.
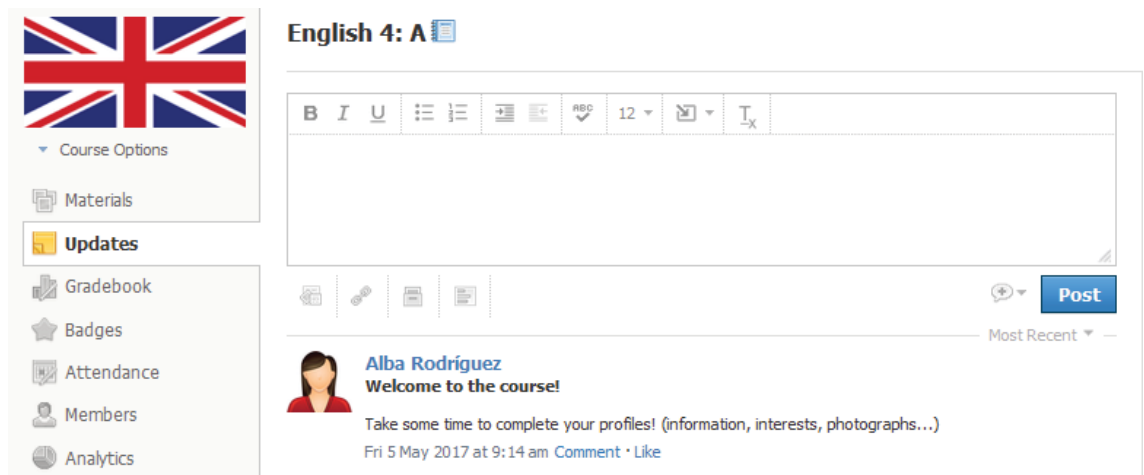
Figure 4. Schoology's *Updates* section.

- *Gradebook:* it shows a list with all the participants in the course. The grades either appear automatically when they take tests, or are introduced manually by teachers.
- *Badges*: Schoology has a badge system to reward students for their performance. Among many others, some badges are: *perfect attendance, good listener, homework, leadership,* or *most improved*. Instructors can design specific badges too.
- *Attendance list*: the names of all participants in the course appear in this list together with a calendar. Each day, instructors can mark if their pupils are present, absent, late, or excused, and they can add a comment that may or not be displayed to the student.
- *Members*: it is the place where a roster of all the teachers, parents, and students of the course are listed. Instructors can select students and send them private messages, preview the students' course (check how the student sees the course contents), change their password, and enrol them.

- *Analytics*: a summary including relevant statistics regarding the course, users, assignments, links, and discussions, can be found in this section, together with a control over the students access to the platform.

In the *Courses* section appears the access code to invite students and parents and the course information given by its creator (e.g. the meeting days).

2.1.1.6. Groups

They are public communities to be created or joined in. They work as discussion groups where users (especially teachers) share ideas or resources around a particular interest. Some of these public groups are *Foreign Language, Response to Intervention, Science, Social Studies, or Blended Learning*. Anyone can join a group and write posts on the wall, participate in discussions, and upload photographs to the albums or files to the resources. In the right bottom side of the screen there is a *Suggested Groups* section where the most popular groups are displayed for users to join. Additionally, any teacher can create a group.

2.1.1.7. Resources

This section is divided into *Personal*, *Public*, *Group*, or *Apps*. The *personal resources* are private and can include files, assignments, tests, quizzes, links, or discussions, as well as learning objectives. For example, when instructors create an assignment in a course, they can choose to keep it in resources so as to reuse it with other courses. The *public resources* comprehend everything that has been posted on public groups by the community, and it is organised by subject, resource type, level, file format, or rate (as users can assess what other colleagues share). The *group resources* are those that are shared within the school or the groups a user is member of. Finally, the *apps* section collects all the applications that have been downloaded (e.g. Youtube, Google Drive, Dropbox).

2.1.2. Edmodo

2.1.2.1. History

Edmodo was founded in Chicago, Illinois, in 2008, by two school district employees who wanted to connect the students' education at school with their way of life outside school by bringing education into a modern environment. The company is based in San Mateo, California ("About Edmodo", 2016).

2.1.2.2. Description

Edmodo organises its content and activity around a top navigation bar where the *Home, Progress, Library, Spotlight, Notifications,* and *Account* sections can be found.

2.1.2.3. User's profile

The personal profile in Edmodo includes an avatar, as well as information regarding personal facts, schedules, and education. Instructors can change information about their position and the year they started teaching; there is a section where descriptions and professional experience can be added and where teachers can share their Twitter, LinkedIn, and Pinterest accounts. As far as schedule information is concerned, teachers add schedules for their pupils to set where and when they can meet. The educational information section is the place where instructors enter information about their educational background. A user's profile may also include preferred links. Finally, the badges awarded by Edmodo are displayed on personal profiles.

2.1.2.4. Home page

On the left side of the home page there is the user's name and avatar, the groups the user has joined, a section called *Topics*, and another one named *Communities*. As said before, the *Groups* section displays the names of the courses a user is member of, together with three buttons: *manage groups*, where users can modify a group's settings, *create group*,

and *join group* (which can be done by accessing an enter code). How to create a group is explained in detail further on. *Communities* are places where teachers discuss particular subject areas or topics. There are plenty of communities that users can follow. *Topics* are the subjects the different communities are talking about. Users can check what the most popular topics are and browse others of their interest. Thanks to the communities and topics, teachers can connect with other teachers and share opinions and resources.
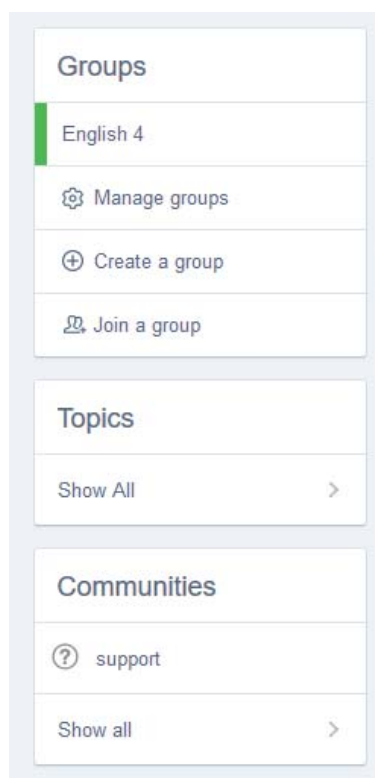
Figure 5. Edmodo's home menu.

The central part of the home page is dedicated to updates from every group a user is a member of. Notes, assignments, quizzes, and polls can be created either from the home page or within each group. A detailed description of these tools is given ahead on. Plus, the posts in the home page have an option called *Snapshot*. This is a tool designed by Edmodo addressed to Math and ELA (English Language Arts) students that consists on customized quizzes based on standards set by teachers.

On the right side of the page there is an option to connect with teachers from the same school, as well as the *Help Centre*. There are also five small buttons: *Spotlight Apps, Office Online, Edmodo Planner,* and *Snapshot*.

- *Spotlight Apps*: Spotlight is a place where resources are shared, collected, and reviewed. It consists of applications that can be freely downloaded or purchased. This button, as well as the one that appears next to *Notifications* in the top row of buttons, opens a new tab where activities, lessons, and topics can be browsed. Users can also upload their own work too.
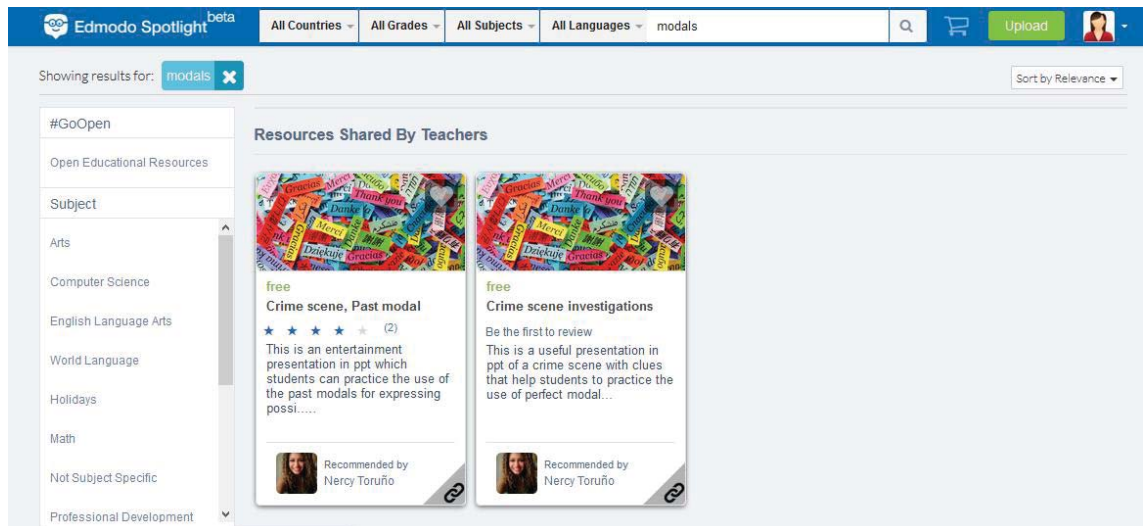

Figure 6. *Edmodo Spotlight*.

- *Office online*: this button permits the creation of files in different formats (Word, Power Point, Excel) which will be automatically saved in the Library.
- *Edmodo Planner*: it is a calendar where teachers and students check the important events happening in each group, such as assignments, or tests.
- *Snapshot*: As previously explained, Snapshot is a tool for automatically creating quizzes based on standards. This button accesses a page where quizzes are designed by introducing a student group, a subject (ELA or Math), the grade (e.g. 10th), the standards, and a name for the quiz (called 'Snapshot'), with its due date and time limit.

2.1.2.5. Library

This is the place where teachers add and manage the files that are going to be used for the lessons. For example, if a teacher wants to attach an image to a quiz, the file must be on the library before creating the quiz. Edmodo is connected to OneDrive and Google Drive too, so teachers can keep their files in these stores too.

2.1.2.6. Progress

In this section, teachers can check the badges that can be awarded to their students: *Profile Complete, Good Citizen, Good Question, Hard Worker, Homework Helper, Participant, Perfect Attendance, Star Performer,* and *Student of the Month*. Instructors can create their own badges too. To do so, they must give it a title, a description, and an image. Also, they can choose to share the badge with other teachers. To award a badge, the teacher presses the button *Badges* in this section and chooses a student. Clicking on the student's name, a new page is open with the student's profile and the option *Award badge*.

The *Progress* section is also a place for teachers to grade their students. When an instructor chooses a group, he or she accesses the member list of that group and views a chart with all the assignments and quizzes for that group. Results for quizzes appear automatically, but teachers add the marks for assignments. The chart can be exported in excel format.

2.1.2.7. Groups

When creating a group, it must be given a name, a grade, and a subject area (*Computer Technologies, Creative Arts, Mathematics, Professional Development, Science, Social Studies, Special Education, Vocational Studies,* or *World Languages*). Sometimes, when a category is chosen, the user is asked to select a specific subject. For example, for *Language Arts* the options are: *English, ESL, Journalism, Reading,* and *Speech*. Plus, in order to organise groups better, each one can be assigned a different colour. Finally, a description of 260 characters (at most) can be written.
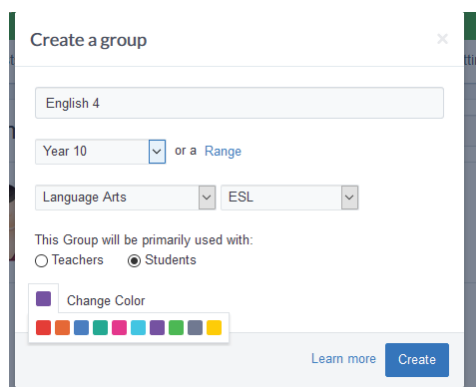

Figure 7. How to create a group in Edmodo.

The *Groups* page is divided into *Posts, Folders,* and *Members.*

- *Posts* consist of *Notes, Assignment, Quiz, Poll,* and *Snapshot* categories:
    - *Notes* can be addressed to a student, a teacher, or one or more groups. In these notes, files, links, and contents from the Library can be attached, and they can be set so as to be posted at a later date or time.
    - *Assignments*: They must be given a title, a due date, a description, and someone to be addressed to (a student or group). If a teacher wants to use an assignment that was created for another group or in another school year, it can be loaded, as assignments are kept in the library. The assignment description can include files, links, and contents from the Library or Google Drive.
    - *Quiz*: like assignments, quizzes can be created or loaded from the collection, which is found in the library. There are five types of questions: multiple choice, true-false, short answer, fill in the blank, or matching. Both question prompts and responses can be accompanied by links or files (that must be previously uploaded into the library). Quizzes are given a title by default that can be modified. Additionally, teachers can set the points for each question, a time limit, and a description of the quiz. Results can be shown or not, and questions can be randomised.
    - *Polls*: a poll can be designed by writing a question and suggesting as many possible answers as wished. Participants in the post can then choose the response they prefer and write comments too. Like notes, assignments, and quizzes, polls can be addressed to users or groups, and be set to be posted at convenience.
    - *Snapshot*: this is another button (apart from the one that is displayed on the homepage) to create and post a Snapshot. There is a short explanation of how Snapshot works and a button that gives access to the page where Snapshot quizzes are designed.
- *Folders*: it is a place where teachers upload folders (where files, assignments, and quizzes are kept) that can be shared with students at convenience.
- *Members*: a list of all members participating in the group. Here, teachers can check their students' progress (posts, replies, badges, results) and manage their roles (student or 'read only') as well as check their parent code and their password.

Teachers can remove students' avatars and make them quit the group too. This section also contains the group code and a button to invite members via e-mail, connections (existing students and teachers in the community) or by sending a link with the group.

Interestingly, small groups can be created within each group. The instructor creates small groups, gives them a name, and adds members to it. Small groups work in an exact way as the 'big' groups.

2.1.3. Edoome

2.1.3.1. History

Edoome was founded in 2012 in Santiago de Chile with the aim of supporting teachers' work (planning, assessment, etc.) in a user-friendly, digital way (W. Terband, personal communication, May 11, 2017).

2.1.3.2. Description

Edoome is characterised by its plain and simple interface. The main menu appears on a bar on the left side of the screen and it includes the following sections: *Home, Setup, More Options,* and *My Courses*, together with two buttons to create and join courses. The *Setup* is the section where users can choose whether to receive email notifications regarding posts, documents, assignments, and grades. The language can be selected too (English, Spanish, or Portuguese), and the password can be changed. The *More Options* section includes the user's profile, and *Help & Suggestions* and *Support.*

2.1.3.3. User's profile

Members can upload an avatar and give information regarding their birthday, country, sex, and email. Additionally, a Facebook account can be associated.

2.1.3.4. Home page

As seen in Figure 8, the home page shows the courses a user is member of, and it is displayed on the left side of the screen. The central part of the screen is covered by the *Recent Activity* section, where all the posts, assignments, and quizzes from all the courses are displayed chronologically.
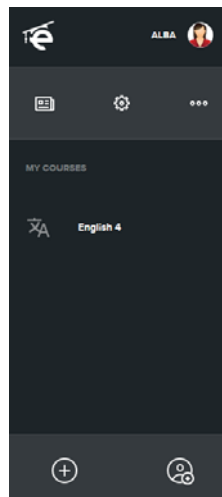

Figure 8. Edoome's home page.

2.1.3.5. Courses

When creating a course, a classroom name, a level, and a subject are needed. The levels are: *Pre-kinder, Kinder,* levels from 1° to 12°, *Technical, Higher Education,* and *Professional.* And the subjects to choose from are the following: *Mathematics, English, Social Sciences, Natural Science, Sports, Arts, Music, Orientation, Technology, Philosophy, Biology, Physics, Chemistry,* and *Foreign Language.*

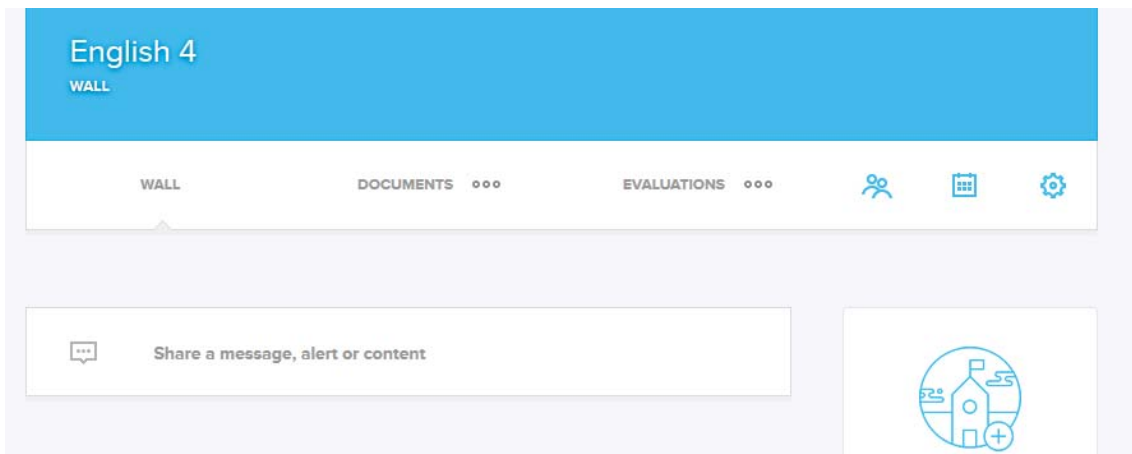Within the course page, three main sections can be found: *Wall, Documents,* and *Evaluations.*

Figure 9. Edoome's wall.

- *Wall:* it is the place where users can communicate by posting messages in which files can be attached. These messages have got a header and can be posted in several different courses simultaneously, and they have *comment* and *like* buttons. The assignments and quizzes created by instructors are displayed on the wall too.

- *Documents:* this section is divided into two categories: *Shelf* and *Backpack*. The former is a folder for the teacher to upload material to specific courses. If the teacher includes files in an assignment or quiz, they will automatically appear in the shelf. The *Backpack* has the same function but it is used only by students.

- *Evaluations:* users can find here the *Assignment, Quiz,* and *Grades* sections.
  - *Assignments* are given a title, a start and end date, and a description. Their publication can be done automatically (according to the dates that have been set) or manually. In this case, the instructor clicks on the *Publish* button to make an assignment appear on the students' wall. The text in the description can be formatted (bold, italics, paragraphing) and one attachment can be added.
  - *Quiz*: like assignments, quizzes must have a title, and a start date. Questions are multiple choice, and one image file can be attached to each question. The time limit varies from 5 minutes to a maximum of 150 minutes.
  - *Grades*: in this part, a list of all assignments and quizzes is provided, together with the students' results. These grades can be exported to an Excel file.

There are also the *Members, Calendar,* and *About this course* buttons:

32

- *Members:* it shows a list with all the participants in each group. Participants can have three roles: teacher, student, or parent. Teachers can delete members from the group in this section and invite new members by writing their email addresses.
- *Calendar*: a monthly calendar where assignments and quizzes are displayed for users to check. By clicking on a day, an instructor can add events. Events have a name and a description, as well as the beginning hour. Comments can be written on events.

Figure 10. How to create an event on Edoome.

- *About this course*: in this section users can check each group's access code. Teachers can add a description and objectives (a maximum of 500 characters is permitted in each part), and the syllabus can be attached too.

2.2. From the point of view of students

2.2.1. Schoology

2.2.1.1. Accessing the platform

The user accesses the Schoology webpage and chooses the option *Sign up>Student.* Then, user must enter the access code provided by his or her instructor; a form with personal information must be afterwards filled in: *First Name, Last Name, Email address, Password,* and Birthday. By clicking the button *Register* the student has access to the course. Students receive an email from Schoology to verify their account.

2.2.1.2. User's profile

Students can upload a picture from their computers or choose an avatar. To complete their profiles, students can write a short biography and add their gender and birthday. They also choose the learner type they are (auditory learner, visual learner, or hands-on learner). There is a section for activities and interests too, and the contact information includes email, phone, websites, and address.

2.2.1.3. Home page

Students share the same top row buttons as teachers: *Home, Courses, Groups, Resources, Messages, Requests, and Notifications.* In the *Home* page, students can check the *Recent Activity, Grades/Attendance, Calendar,* and *Messages.* Therefore, the buttons *People* and *App Center* disappear. From the *Recent Activity* page, students can only post events, while teachers are also enabled to post assignments and updates.

The *Grades/Attendance* button shows a summary of the students' results and attendance in the courses he or she has joined. There are no differences regarding the working of the *Calendar* and *Messages* system. Like teachers, students view the upcoming events on the right side of the screen.

2.2.1.4. Courses

The menu in the *Courses* section consists of *Materials, Updates, Grades, Attendance,* and *Members:*

- *Materials*: this section shows a list of all the materials (assignments, quizzes, discussions) provided by the teacher. Students can check the material and work on it but cannot add anything. For assignments, students can read the instructions, write comments on it, and submit files by clicking the button *Submit Assignment*. As of quizzes, they can also write comments on them and view their results. To do a quiz, it is necessary to click on the button *Start New Attempt*.

Figure 11. An assignment in Schoology.

Figure 12. Quiz instructions in Schoology.

- *Updates*: it is the space for communication between teachers and students. Students upload posts where files, links, resources, and polls can be added. They can comment and like other members' posts too.

- *Grades*: a list with all the assessments, assignments, and quizzes is displayed in this section, together with due dates and results.
- *Attendance:* each student can check in this section the summary of the days they were absent, late, and excused, and read the comments the teacher may have written regarding attendance.
- *Members:* a list with all the members participating in the group. From this page, students can send private messages only to teachers.

From the *Courses* section, students can also check the information provided by the teacher about the course, like the meeting days. The upcoming events keep appearing on the right side of the page.
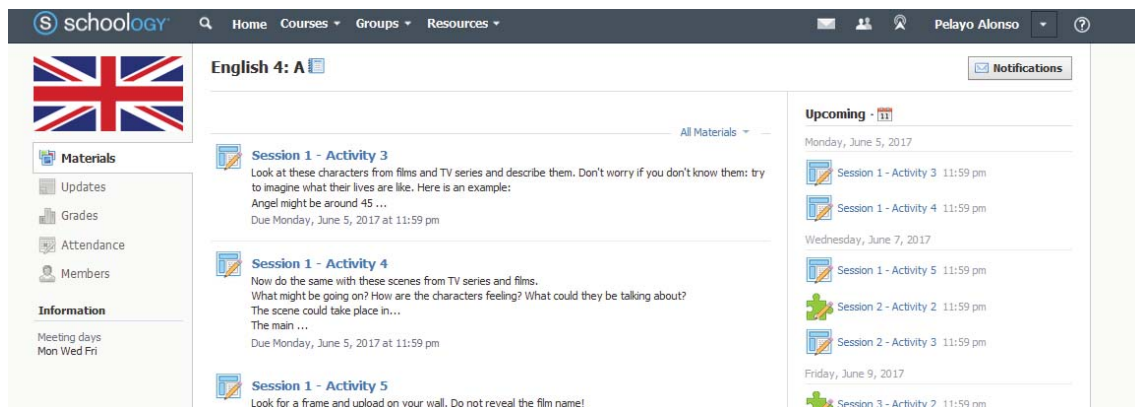
Figure 13. Schoology's group appearance.

2.2.1.5. Groups

Students can join groups in which they can connect with other Schoology users and share material and views. Unlike teachers, students cannot create groups; also, groups are not public, so in order to join a group, a student must be first given an access code by the group administrator.

2.2.1.6. Resources

This section consists of *Personal, Group,* and *Apps*. The *Personal* folder is a place where students can store files and links for their particular use. The *Group* folder is the area where all the resources shared by the groups a user is a member of are displayed. Finally, as in the teacher's resources, the *Apps* button is useful to download applications offered by Schoology (such as Youtube, Dropbox, or Vimeo) for a better use of the platform.

2.2.2. Edmodo

2.2.2.1. Accessing the platform

The user enters the Edmodo home page and chooses the option *Create your free account>I'm a Student.* The next step consists of providing the following information: *First Name, Last Name, Group Code, Username, Email* (optional), and *Password.* When the form has been completed, Edmodo asks students to enter their parent's contact information (mobile phone or email) so that they can notify them. The parent then receives an email or text message inviting them to join the group. A different access code is provided. Having done this, the student gets access to the course.

2.2.2.2. User's profile

Students can edit their profile picture by uploading an image or designing an avatar. The avatar can be personalised by changing the background colour, face, clothes, eyes, mouth, eyebrows, hair, and glasses. There is also an option to create a random avatar. To change the avatar, the students are required to write their password.

The information in the personal profile includes the students' name and a summary of their posts, replies, groups, and badges. Students can select their favourite way to learn (hands-on, listening, or visually) and a career goal: *Building & Fixing Things, Computers, Helping People, Law & Order, Managing Money, Math, Music & Arts, Nature, Reading, Science, Social Science, Social Studies,* and *Sports.* Within each category, students can find examples of jobs and a long explanation of what they consist of.
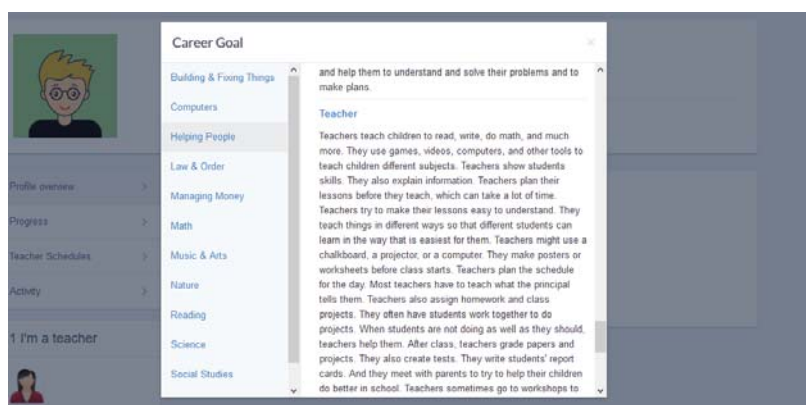

Figure 14. Personal profile in Edmodo.

In this section, students can also see their progress (results in assignments and tests) and activity (posts and replies on groups), and request schedules with their teachers. When this happens, an email is sent to the teacher. They can also check a list with their teachers and classmates.

2.2.2.3. Home page

On the left side, the home page shows the student name and avatar, the groups students are members of (together with the option *Join a group*), and a code to invite parents to Edmodo.

The central part shows the latest posts and a place where to write notes (which can include files, links, and material from the *Backpack* and Google drive). These notes can be sent to a teacher or a group. Below, there are the latest post by teachers or students belonging to the same groups.

On the right side, there is a section named *Play Daily Teaser*. Each day, questions that can cover any learning area (Chemistry, Geography, History, etc.) appear on this section and students can receive points if they choose the correct answer. Students earn 5 points for each correct answer. If their answer is wrong, they still get 1 point for trying. Additionally, students can check whether other students from the other schools have guessed the answers or not and write comments on them. Below the *Play Daily Teaser,* the *Assignment Center* informs whether there are assignments to turn in during that week. Like in the teacher's view, students can find the buttons for the *Office Online, Edmodo Planner,* and *Snapshot.* When students click on the *Snapshot* button, students get a message that says: '*Ask your ELA/Math teacher! Check with your teacher about Snapshot to see your progress.'*
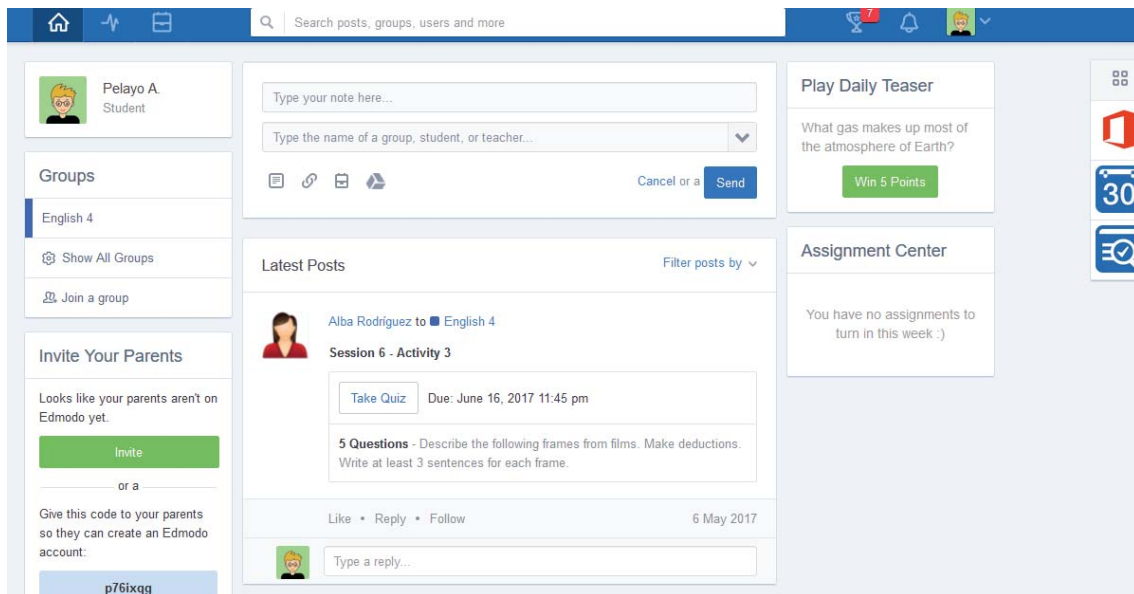
Figure 15. Edmodo's group appearance.

2.2.2.4. Progress

This section covers the results in the assignments and tests submitted or taken by the student, together with the posts and replies that a student has written on each group, and the badges that have been awarded. It is the same page that appears on the personal profile section.

2.2.2.5. Backpack

Whereas teachers have a *Library,* students have a *Backpack.* Although these tools hold different names, the procedure is the same: students upload files and folders to their backpack. These files can be added from the computer or from One Drive or Google Drive.

2.2.2.6. Play

This button, which appears on the top toolbar (where students have the *Snapshot* button) is related to the *Play Daily Teaser* explained before. *Play* is a place where students can find quizzes and games to put their knowledge into practice and improve their skills. They

can earn points, compete with other members of the Edmodo community, and see a ranking of the best players on each level. Each question or game has a discussion section where students can communicate and exchange ideas. Instead of *liking* comments, students can *boomz* them.
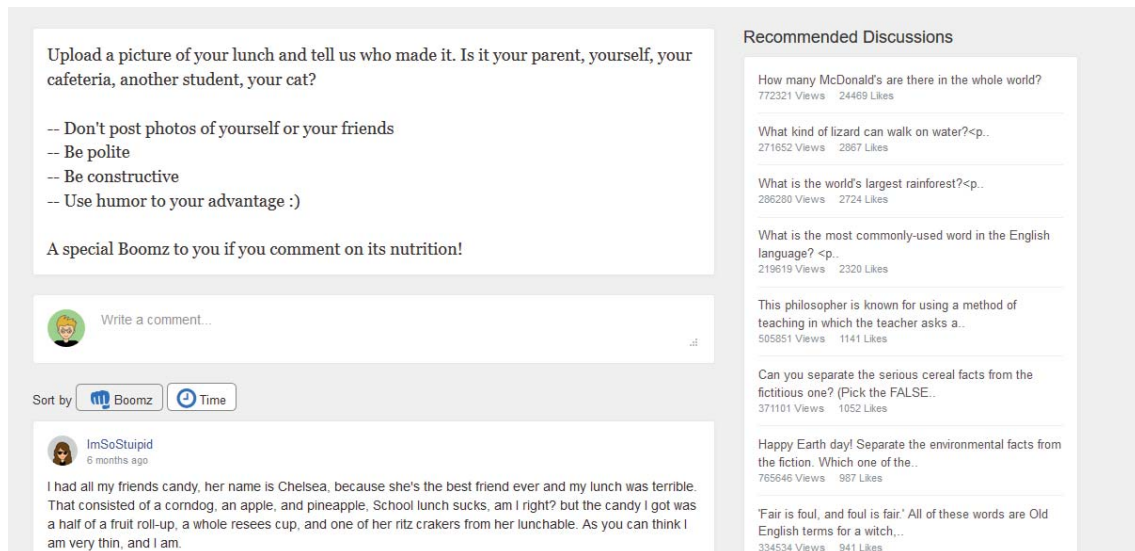
Figure 16. *Edmodo Play*.

2.2.2.7. Groups

Like teachers, students can personalise the groups they belong to by assigning a different colour to each of them. The organisation of the contents in this section is similar to that of the teachers: it is organised around *Posts, Folders,* and *Members.*

- *Posts:* students write notes (in the same way as they do from the home page) and check the latest news (quizzes, polls, assignments). To complete a task, they press the buttons *Take Quiz* or *Open Assignment.* To turn in an assignment, they can either create a response (which can be a text response or a Word, PowerPoint or Excel file done with *Office* Online) or attach it from their computers. Then, they click on *Turn in Assignment*, and the work is done. The polls appearance is like that of posts, so students just select the option they find more convenient to complete the voting.
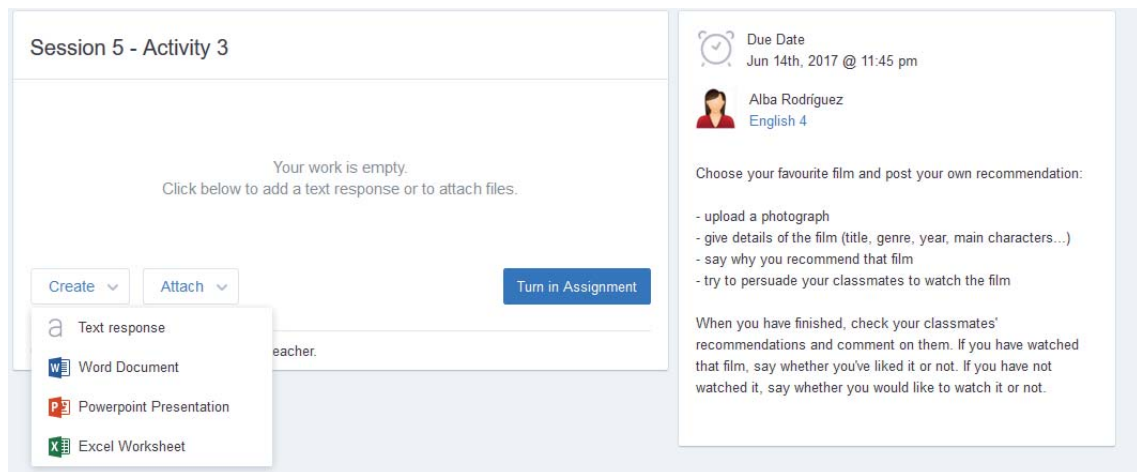
Figure 17. Submitting an assignment on Edmodo.

- *Folders:* in this section students can check the material both the teachers and the classmates have uploaded to the group. If they wish, they can add the resources to their *Backpack.*
- *Members:* a list with all the members participating in the group.

Students can decide whether to show groups in the *Home* page or not, and if they want to receive SMS and email updates. This can be done by clicking the *Group settings* button which is next to *Members.*

Like in *Home,* on the right side of the screen there are the *Assignment Center, Office Online, Edmodo Planner,* and *Snapshot.*

2.2.3. Edoome

2.2.3.1. Accessing the platform

The user enters the Edoome home page and chooses the option *Sign up as a student>Join your classroom.* The student is asked to enter the access code and click on the *Continue* button. Then, the email address and a password are required. Once this information is entered, the user accesses the platform and is asked to insert their personal information: profile picture, name, last name, and country. Having done this, the student has access to the course they have just joined.

2.2.3.2. User's profile

Users can add a personal picture from their computers and fill in the following information: *Birthday, Country, Gender, Email, Facebook,* and *Parents*.

2.2.3.3. Home page

The display is the same as in the teacher's view: the *Home* page shows the courses a student is a member of, and the central part of the page is dedicated to the recent activities (posts, assignments, quizzes). From this section, users cannot write comments, but they are enabled to like or comment posts.

The button for joining a course appears on this section too, as well as the *Setup* and *More Options*, which have the same functions as in the teacher's view.

2.2.3.4. Courses

Again, the organisation of courses coincides with that for teachers. Contents are managed around three main sections: *Wall, Documents,* and *Evaluations.*

- *Wall:* here, students have a place where they can share messages, alerts, or contents. Like teachers, these messages must have a header, and links and files can be attached. Also, these contents can be posted to more than one group course simultaneously.
  Students check the activity in the course through the posts that appear chronologically on it. They can comment and like the posts, quizzes, and assignments, but they cannot access them from this page.
- *Documents:* this section is divided in *Shelf* and *Backpack*. The *Shelf* is the place where teachers upload material to be used in the course. Students can access this material but cannot add more resources. The *Backpack* is the area for students to upload the contents they find interesting. Each student has their own personal backpack.
- *Evaluations*: it is the section where *Assignments, Quizzes,* and *Grades* are stored.

- Students can check on the *Wall* or *Calendar* when there is a new assignment. To submit it, they access the *Assignments* section and see a list of all the pending tasks. They press the button *Submit Assignment* to view the description and due date. Comments can be written on the assignments, and one file can be attached. When finished, students click the button *Submit Assignment*.

- As with the assignments, students are alerted on the *Wall* and *Calendar* when there is a new quiz. They then press the *Quizzes* button and click on *Start quiz*. Before starting, they are warned of the limited number of attempts they have. If there is a time limit for the quiz, a countdown appears on the screen. Students answer the questions and press the *Submit* button.

- *Grades*: in this section, a list with the results of all the quizzes and assignments is provided. The grades of the quizzes appear automatically when a quiz is submitted. Students must wait for teachers to upload their marks in assignments to see their grades.

Like teachers, students can check the *Calendar* and *Members* of each group. Also, they can read the *About this Course* section to know more about the group description, objectives, and course syllabus.

2.3. Summary of the main features and services provided by the platforms

As we have seen, Schoology, Edmodo, and Edoome have several features in common: they are free, students access to closed groups or courses through a code given by teachers, the three of them are available in English (as well as other languages) and their functionalities are very similar. Basically, the three platforms allow members to communicate through a wall where updates are displayed and interaction is enabled by commenting or liking them. These updates may contain files in many formats, links, videos, or images. Additionally, assignments and tests can be created through these platforms, and students are assessed and graded online. Remarkable events (tests and assignments) are displayed on a calendar. Plus, instructors and teachers have a place in these platforms where to store files safely.

Notwithstanding, a close look at the three platforms reveal that, apart from the similarities above-mentioned, there are plenty of dissimilarities between them that are detailed below:

- As far as parent control is concerned, both Schoology and Edmodo let parents access the groups or courses (using a code too), have a look at the contents and communicate with teachers, while Edoome lacks this option. On the other hand, when a student creates an account, Edmodo verifies parents (via email or phone) and invites them to join the group. Parents in Schoology and Edoome are not notified.

- Regarding communication, Schoology provides a private messaging system thanks to which teachers can communicate with students individually and in an intimate way. Also, Schoology users can choose to purchase an application named *Backchannel Chat* for instant messaging. This platform also offers the possibility for teachers to create discussion forums that can be assessed and graded. On the other hand, Edoome and Edmodo enable communication only through a public wall.

- All platforms enable a description of groups, but Edoome also offers the chance to add the group objectives and the course syllabus. On the other hand, within each group in Edmodo, teachers can create and manage subgroups, which enables team work.

- In Schoology and Edmodo members can find a community where to interact with users from other schools all over the world. In Edmodo, users can only interact with members participating in the same group, and there is no way to communicate with teachers or students from the same school or from other institutions worldwide.

- Schoology and Edmodo have a badge system. Badges can be awarded to students according to their performance in the platform. There is no badge system in Edoome.

- Schoology and Edmodo permit the creation of polls, while Edoome does not include this resource.

- Schoology includes a section where users can download applications to improve the platform's use. For example, if a student wants to share a video on the wall, he or she can do it directly by using the Youtube application. External applications are not offered in Edoome or Edmodo.

- Edmodo offers games for students to compete with users from other schools and countries. Online games are not included in Edoome or Schoology.

Below is a summary of the similarities and differences between the three platforms:

	Schoology	Edmodo	Edoome
Free	✓	✓	✓
Access code	✓	✓	✓
Parent access	✓	✓	✗
The platform notifies parents when an account is created	✗	✓	✗
English language	✓	✓	✓
Wall	✓	✓	✓
Courses / Groups	✓	✓	✓
Group / Course description	✓	✓	✓
Subgroups	✗	✓	✗
Instant messages	✓ [1]	✗	✗
Private messages	✓ [2]	✗	✗
Assignments	✓	✓	✓
Tests / Quizzes	✓	✓	✓
Grades	✓	✓	✓
Files storage	✓	✓	✓
Badges	✓	✓	✗
Polls	✓	✓	✗
Calendar	✓	✓	✓
Discussion forums	✓	✗	✗
Community	✓	✓	✗
Apps	✓	✗	✗
Games	✗	✓	✗

Table 1: Common and differentiated features in Schoology, Edmodo, and Edoome.

Access codes:

The following codes give access to the fictitious English courses created for this research. Readers are welcome to enter these codes into the three platforms and check how the activities presented in the didactic unit (detailed in the next chapter) can be performed by students.

- **Schoology:** WNDQS-J8BCC

- **Edmodo:** 64s8x2

- **Edoome:** llbqh9tk

---

[1] Only if a 15$ application is downloaded.
[2] Communication teacher-student; no communication student-student.

3. Didactic Unit: *'Lights, camera… action!'*

3.1. General Description

This section covers general aspects of the unit such as the feature of the course, how the tasks are carried out using the platforms, and the class management, timing, and resources. Also, we explain the objectives, contents, standards, evaluation criteria and key competences, and we include a list with all the sessions and activities.

Course:

4th year of Secondary Education. Group of 20 students with A2 level.

Topic:

Cinema.

Timing:

6 sessions, each one lasting 60 minutes. The syllabus stipulates that for the 4th course of Secondary Education, there are three sessions per week (Orden EDU 363/2015, 2015); therefore, this didactic unit takes place during two weeks, with sessions on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays.

Procedure and purposes:

The following proposal is designed to be implemented exclusively using one of the three social educative platforms described before: Schoology, Edmodo, and Edoome. To do so, courses have been created in the three networks and all materials and resources needed have been included, in a way that this didactic unit can be carried out likewise in the three platforms. Therefore, we further on can compare the manner with which students and teachers can work with the three different sites.

The sessions are organised as follows: every day there is a warm-up activity that is done orally and that introduces the topic for the session. They consist of small talks with the students about the issues that will be dealt with in each session or that are related to the topic; all the next activities (introduction, reinforcement, and relaxation) are completed on the platform. The introduction and reinforcement activities comprise assignments and quizzes, they involve peer interaction and are guided by the teacher: the students read the

instructions for the activities on the platform and complete them, while the teacher monitors them and gives feedback (through the platform). On the other hand, the relaxation activities, which take place at the end of the session, consist of a team project that students must face in groups and in a more autonomous way: they are all given the same task and are free to use the platform in the way they find most appropriate to complete it.

This differentiation between the 'guided' activities and the 'autonomous' activities reflect a difference in the way students use the English language: the aim of the introduction and reinforcement activities is for students to learn and employ particular features of the language; however, as far as relaxation activities are concerned, the language is a tool to complete the task, and students are expected to use a wide range of grammatical structures and vocabulary which are not necessarily related to the grammar points and vocabulary studied in the unit.

The following are the general aims of this unit:

- To make deductions, and express certainty and probability; to give recommendations.
- To know different film genres.
- To write a film review.
- To use an educative social network.
- To plan and create a cinema club using a social network.

List of activities:

This summary compiles all the activities that comprehend this didactic unit:

Session 1

- Activity 1: "Accessing the platform"
- Activity 2: "Introducing ourselves"
- Activity 3: "Who are they?"
- Activity 4: "What is happening? I"
- Activity 5: "What is happening? II"
- Activity 6: "Cinema Club I"

- Activity 1: "What is your favourite film genre?"

- Activity 2: "Listen and guess the genre"

- Activity 3: "Describe and guess"

- Activity 4: "Cinema Club II"

Session 3

- Activity 1: "Did you like the end?"

- Activity 2: "What happens next? (1)"

- Activity 3: "What happens next? (2)"

- Activity 4: "Cinema Club III"

Session 4

- Activity 1: "Your favourite film"

- Activity 2: "Reading: a review"

- Activity 3: "Writing: a review"

- Activity 4: "Cinema club IV"

Session 5

- Activity 1: "I'd like to watch a film tonight"

- Activity 2: "Recommendations (I)"

- Activity 3: "Recommendations (II)"

- Activity 4: "Cinema Club V"

Session 6 (Review session)

- Activity 1: "Home or Cinema?"

- Activity 2: "Final quiz (part 1)"

- Activity 3: "Final quiz (part 2)"

- Activity 4: "Cinema Club VI"

Class management and resources:

The six sessions will take place in the computer laboratory. At least 20 computers with Internet access and headsets are required. Depending on the activities, students will work individually, in pairs, or in groups of three or four. The computer will be shared when

students work in pairs or groups. A digital whiteboard and a traditional board are also needed. A *resources* section is included in the activities where extra material is needed.

General Objectives:

The general objectives (retrieved and translated from Orden EDU 363/2015, 2015) for this didactic unit are the following:

b) To develop and consolidate habits in the areas of discipline, study, and individual and group work as a necessary requirement for successfully performing learning tasks as a means of personal development.

e) To develop basic skills regarding the use of information sources in order to acquire new knowledge through a critical approach; to achieve basic competence in the area of technology, particularly in terms of information and communication.

g) To develop an entrepreneurial spirit and self-confidence, a participative spirit, critical awareness, personal initiative, and the ability to learn how to learn, plan, make decisions and assume responsibilities.

i) To understand and express oneself appropriately in one or more foreign languages.

Key competences:

The European Parliament and the European Council recommend eight key competences for lifelong learning (European Parliament and Council Recommendation of 18 December 2006, 2006). Among those, the following are the competences that are developed in this didactic unit:

- Linguistic and communication competence.
- Digital competence.
- Sense of initiative and entrepreneurship.
- Social and civic competence.
- Cultural awareness and expression.

Assessment / Feedback:

The teacher gives general feedback of the students' work during or after an activity. Individual feedback can be given privately too. Some of the activities set on the platform can be graded (whether quantitatively or qualitatively). Also, the final session is a review

session where students do two assessment activities on the platform. Students are reminded that high participation and motivation, together with the use of the English language in the classroom are an important part of their final mark.

Homework:

The cinema club project is expected to be worked on at home, as there may not be enough time in class. Also, when students do not have time to finish a task in class, they are asked to do it at home.

Contents, Evaluation Criteria, and Learning Standards:

The following table comprehends the contents, evaluation criteria, and learning standards included in the didactic unit. They are translated and adapted from the syllabus in the region of Castile and Leon (Orden EDU 363/2015, 2015).

	Contents	Evaluation Criteria	Learning Standards
Block 4: Written production	To clearly express the message adjusting to the models and formulas of each type of text. To make suggestions. To make predictions. To express certainty and probability. Syntactic-discursive contents: *may, might, could,* etc. *should/shouldn't* II conditional	To write, in paper or electronic format, short or medium-sized, coherent and well-structured texts, about daily-life, personal interest, or less common topics, in a formal, neutral, or informal register, using properly cohesive basic resources, basic orthographic conventions, and the most common punctuation marks, with a reasonable command of	4. Writing notes, announcements, short messages, and comments, on any format, in which information and simple opinions are conveyed or requested, remarking the most important aspects (e.g. on a youth webpage or magazine, addressed to a partner or teacher), and respecting standards and register. 6. Writing letters, and participating in forums, blogs, and chats, in which experiences, opinions

		expressions, structures, and frequent usage vocabulary, both in general and specific registers within personal interests. To know and use written common vocabulary related to general subjects, own interests, or studies, and a limited repertoire of expressions and frequent idioms.	and feelings are described; expressing, in a linear and coherent way, issues related to personal interests, activities, and past experiences (e.g. travel, holiday, important events, a book, a film), or imaginary facts; and exchanging information and ideas about specific topics, remarking the most relevant aspects and briefly justifying opinions.

Table 2. General contents, evaluation criteria, and learning standards

The next sections offer a detailed account of each of the six sessions of the didactic unit. Specific contents, evaluation criteria and learning standards (adapted from the general ones from Table 2) are described. The explanation of the activities follows this scheme: we identify the type of activity (warm-up, introduction, reinforcement, relaxation, or assessment), the approximate timing, the manner with which the tasks are performed (individually, in pairs, in groups, or the whole class as a group), and give more details of the activity.

3.2. Session 1

Contents:	To express certainty and possibility based on frames from popular films and using modal verbs for deduction.
Evaluation criteria:	To write, in collaboration with a classmate, short descriptions in electronic format, in which deductions regarding frames are made and appropriate modal verbs are used.
Learning Standards:	Writing comments on an educative social platform in which deductions regarding a film are expressed.

Activity 1. "Accessing the platform"

Type: Warm-up.

Timing: 5 minutes.

Work: Individual.

Description: Being the first activity of the didactic unit, students are told that the main topic for the following sessions is cinema. Plus, they are explained that almost all the activities will be performed on a social educative platform and that they will be asked to create a project in teams on which they will work every day. The first activity consists of accessing the platform and completing the personal profile. Students are given the access code and complete the information about themselves (name, address, interests, etc.) The teacher walks around the classroom to monitor the students' work and solve any problem that may arise.

Resources: access codes for the courses.

Activity 2. "Introducing ourselves"

Type: Introduction.

Timing: 10 minutes.

Work: Pairs.

Description: Students are asked to orally describe their partner both physically and personally. The teacher walks around the classroom, listens to the students' output and makes corrections, if necessary. When students have finished talking, the teacher gets feedback from some of them.

Activity 3. "Who are they?"

Type: Reinforcement (1).

Timing: 10 minutes.

Work: Pairs.

Description: On the platform, four photographs with characters from films or TV series are found. The teacher describes the first one making it clear that he or she does not know the person, so deductions must be made. The structures *might, may, could, must, can't, it seems/looks/appears that,* and *look/seem/appear* + adjective are introduced. To make sure students have understood the concept, they are asked to make deductions of the three other characters and write them on the platform.

Activity 4. "What is happening? I"

Type: Reinforcement (2).

Timing: 15 minutes.

Work: Pairs.

Description: This time students must make deductions for scenes from films or TV series. They are given some examples of phrases they can use, like '*The scene could take place in…',* or *'The main character might be thinking about…'.*

Activity 5. "What is happening? II"

Type: Reinforcement (3).

Timing: 10 minutes.

Work: Individual.

Description: Students are asked to search for a film frame on the Internet and post it on their wall. Then, they are asked to comment on at least 3 of their classmates' frames, making predictions of what is going on in the frame. Students are reminded that if they do not have time to finish the activity in class, they are expected to do it as homework.

Activity 6. "Cinema Club I"

Type: Relaxation.

Timing: 10 minutes.

Work: Groups of 4.

Description: Students are explained the project they will be dealing with for the next two weeks. In groups of 4, they are creating a project for a cinema club that might be implemented at the school. They are told this project could be a good idea for raising money for their end-of-year trip. All the decisions the group make must be collected on the platform for the teacher to check and assess. Their first duty is to figure out what they need in order to set up a cinema club.

3.3. Session 2

Contents:	To express certainty and possibility based on trailers and short descriptions from popular films, using vocabulary related to film genres and using modal verbs for deduction.
Evaluation criteria:	To write, in collaboration with a classmate, short texts in electronic format, in which deductions regarding trailers and descriptions from films are made, using vocabulary related to film genres and appropriate modal verbs for deduction.
Learning Standards:	Writing comments on an educative social platform in which deductions regarding a film are expressed.

Activity 1. "What is your favourite film genre?"

<u>Type</u>: Warm-up.

<u>Timing</u>: 10 minutes.

<u>Work</u>: The whole group.

<u>Description</u>: The teacher asks different students what their favourite film genres are. As students speak, the teacher writes down the genres on the board. The students are expected to know some related vocabulary beforehand, and the teacher helps them with new words if needed.

Activity 2. "Listen and guess the genre"

Type: Introduction.

Timing: 15 minutes.

Work: Pairs.

Description: On the platform, students listen to six trailers from popular films and are asked to try to guess what genre they belong to. They are given four options to choose from. They are expected to orally discuss with their partner the different possibilities, by using the modals and phrases of deduction that they practised the day before. Whether they are right or wrong does not matter, so they are not to going be assessed according to the result of the test, but to the proper use of the language. The teacher walks around the classroom and monitors the students' output and makes sure they are using the expected phrases and expressions. When students have finished the activity and before giving them the right solution, the teacher gets feedback from some of the pairs.

Activity 3. "Describe and guess"

Type: Reinforcement.

Timing: 20 minutes.

Work: Pairs or groups of 3.

Description: Each pair or group is given information about a film (year, director, protagonist, and plot) and are asked to write a short description using that information and post it on the wall. Then they read all the descriptions and try to guess which genre the films belong to by writing deduction sentences. An example is provided for them to use as a model. The teacher reads the post on the platform while students are working on it and when the activity is finished, gives general feedback of the most positive and negative aspects.

Resources: Model text and information. (See Annex 1, page 83).

Activity 4. "Cinema Club II"

Type: Relaxation.

Timing: 15 minutes.

Work: The whole class / groups of 4.

Description: The students share the ideas they have come up with regarding what is needed to set up a cinema club. The brainstorming is expected to lead to the following issues:

- a name for the club.

- where the film will be shown and what equipment they will need.

- how often they will show a film.

- how they will raise money.

- which genres and films they will show.

- how they will advertise the club.

Each group is asked to organise themselves and cover the first three points mentioned. They are reminded that their decisions must appear on the platform for everyone to see. The teacher monitors the students' work, gives advice and suggestions, and corrects mistakes.

3.4. Session 3

Contents:	To express predictions based on scenes from popular films, using appropriate modal verbs for deduction.
Evaluation Criteria:	To write, in collaboration with a classmate, short descriptions in electronic format, in which predictions based on scenes from popular films are made, using appropriate modal verbs for deduction.
Learning Standards:	Writing comments on an educative social platform in which predictions regarding a film are expressed.

Activity 1. "Did you like the end?"

Type: Warm-up.

Timing: 10 minutes.

Work: Whole group.

Description: The teacher asks some students what the last film they watched was and whether they liked the end or not. They teacher talks about unexpected endings and asks if they are good at guessing what is going to happen next.

Activity 2. "What happens next? (1)"

Type: Introduction

Timing: 20 minutes.

Work: Pairs.

Description: On the platform, students watch 8 short scenes from films and are asked to try to guess what is going to happen next. They must write their answers and use deduction modal verbs. It is also a good opportunity to review the use of *will* for predictions. Before getting the students to work, the teacher displays a short scene on the digital board and, with the help of the students, gives examples of how the activity can be done. The teacher checks the students' work on the platform and gives feedback.

Activity 3. "What happens next? (2)"

Type: Reinforcement.

Timing: 20 minutes.

Work: Individual.

Description: Each student looks for a scene on the Internet and posts it on the wall. Students are told that each scene must not last more than 5 minutes. When they have chosen and uploaded the scene, they watch some of their classmates work and comment on them by predicting what is happening next. The teacher monitors the students' work on the platform and gives feedback.

Activity 4. "Cinema Club III"

Type: Relaxation.

Timing: 10 minutes.

Work: Groups.

Description: Today students must deal with the money-raising issue. Each group will discuss what the best way for raising money with the club is. Students are expected to take some notes before reaching a final decision and then post it on the wall. The teacher monitors the students' progress and helps by giving advice on the project or on language issues.

3.5. Session 4

Contents:	To give information and opinions on a film adjusting to the samples and features of film reviews.
Evaluation criteria:	To know and use a repertoire of written vocabulary and common phrases to be used in film reviews.
Learning Standards:	Writing texts in electronic format in which relevant information and opinions about a film are expressed.

Activity 1. "Your favourite film"

Type: Warm-up.

Timing: 5 minutes.

Work: Whole group.

Description: The teacher asks a few students what their favourite film is and why they like it. The teacher helps the students use a range of adjectives such as *emotional, fast-moving, original, brilliant, fun, exciting, entertaining, intriguing*, *scary*, etc.

Activity 2. "Reading: a review"

Type: Introduction.

Timing: 15 minutes.

Work: Individual.

Description: On the platform, students read a review from the film *Boyhood* (2014). They focus on the different parts of the review and on some words and phrases. They students have to comment on the platform if they have watched that film; then, they answer questions regarding the issues covered by the review (title, genre, plot, setting, etc.). The aim of the activity is to get to know the main features of this type of text. The students write their answers on the platform and then the teacher gives general feedback of the answers.

Resources: Sample review. (See Annex 2, page 85).

Activity 3. "Writing: a review"

<u>Type</u>: Reinforcement.

<u>Timing</u>: 30 minutes.

<u>Work</u>: Individual.

<u>Description</u>: Now students are asked to write a review of a film they have watched and enjoyed. They are encouraged to follow some given steps before starting to write and are given a few tips. The teacher walks around the classroom to help students with any language problem that may arise.

<u>Resources</u>: Instructions and tips. (See Annex 3, page 86).

Activity 4. "Cinema club IV"

<u>Type</u>: Relaxation.

<u>Timing</u>: 10 minutes.

<u>Work</u>: Groups of four.

<u>Description</u>: Today's task consists on deciding which genres are most appropriate for the club. They can focus on one or several genres for the club, and they must choose which film they will show first. As usual, the teacher checks the students' progress, gives feedback, and assists them with his or her advice.

3.6. Session 5

Contents:	To make suggestions and recommendations on films using appropriate modal verbs (*should*) and second conditional sentences.
Evaluation criteria:	To write short texts in electronic format, in which recommendations on films are expressed, using appropriate modal verbs (*should*) and second conditional sentences.
Learning Standards:	Participating in forums in which recommendations and opinions regarding a film are described.

Activity 1. "I'd like to watch a film tonight"

<u>Type</u>: Warm-up.

<u>Timing</u>: 10 minutes.

<u>Work</u>: Whole group.

<u>Description</u>: The teacher tells the students that today he or she would like to rent a film from the video store but needs advice on what film to choose. The students give suggestions and the teacher encourages the use of *should, shouldn't, why don't you,* and *if I were you, I would,* etc.

Activity 2. "Recommendations (I)"

<u>Type</u>: Introduction.

<u>Timing</u>: 15 minutes.

<u>Work</u>: Pairs.

<u>Description</u>: Each pair is given a list with five films. They must choose two of them and write recommendations for their classmates on the platform, using the verbs and phrases practiced on the warm-up activity. They are also encouraged to accompany the recommendations with short descriptions of the film (as practiced in session 2). The teacher reads the students' work on the platform and gives feedback.

Resources: List of films. (See Annex 4, page 87).

Activity 3. "Recommendations (II)"

Type: Reinforcement.

Timing: 20 minutes.

Work: Individual.

Description: Now each student chooses a film and writes a recommendation on the wall, including a photograph from the film, relevant information, and the reason why they recommend that film. They must try to persuade their classmates to watch that film. When finished, they comment on some of their classmates' recommendations and say if they have watched the film or not, if they have liked it or if they would like to watch it. The teacher monitors the students' work, assists them with any language problem that may arise and gives feedback.

Activity 4. "Cinema Club V"

Type: Relaxation.

Timing: 15 minutes.

Work: Groups of 4.

Description: Students work on the publicity of their club. They must create an advertisement addressed to every student at school in which they offer relevant information about the club: how much it cost, when and where it takes place, what the first film shown is going to be… Students are asked to be creative and design an attractive announcement that will be posted on the platform.

3.7. Session 6 (Review Session)

Contents:	To express certainty and possibility based on frames from popular films and using modal verbs for deduction.
Evaluation criteria:	To write, without help or assistance, short descriptions in electronic format, in which deductions regarding frames are made and appropriate modal verbs are used.
Learning Standards:	Writing descriptions on an educative social platform in which deductions regarding a film are expressed.

Activity 1. "Home or Cinema?"

<u>Type</u>: Warm-up.

<u>Timing</u>: 5 minutes.

<u>Work</u>: Whole group.

<u>Description</u>: The teacher asks a few students whether they prefer to watch films at home or at the cinema. The teacher tries to get different points of view and elicit advantages and disadvantages of each of the two options.

Activity 2. "Final quiz (part 1)"

<u>Type</u>: Assessment.

<u>Timing</u>: 15 minutes.

<u>Work</u>: Individual.

<u>Description</u>: On the platform, students do a quiz in which they practice modal verbs and phrases for deductions. They are given a frame and three answers with deductions and they must choose the incorrect one. They get automatic feedback.

<u>Resources</u>: Final quiz (part 1). (See Annex 5, page 88).

Activity 3. "Final quiz (part 2)"

Type: Assessment.

Timing: 30 minutes.

Work: Individual.

Description: On the platform, students are given 5 frames and are asked to write a short description including what they can see in the photograph and what they think might be going on. Feedback from this task is given in following sessions.

Resources: Final quiz (part 2). (See Annex 6, page 89).

Activity 4. "**Cinema Club VI"**

Type: Relaxation.

Timing: 10 minutes.

Work: Whole group.

Description: All cinema clubs are already settled and students have had time to check the other groups' work. Today they must give peer feedback and vote for the best cinema club. The voting and feedback is done through the platform. When the class has agreed on a winner, students are asked if they think it is possible to actually carry out this project at school and are encouraged to ask the headteacher for permission to set up their cinema club.

4. Findings

Schoology, Edmodo, and Edoome were created with similar purposes and this becomes evident as the same didactic unit has been implemented in the three of them. In a previous chapter, a detailed description and comparison of the three platforms has been given; however, when incorporating the activities from the didactic unit into the three of them, more differences in terms of features, tools, and appearance have been revealed. These dissimilarities determine the way instructors prepare the resources and upload them to the platform as well as the way students handle the activities.

As it has been gathered from the section where the three platforms are described, creating an account and a group or course in each of the three educative social networks does not make a big difference for teachers. Nevertheless, although Schoology, Edmodo, and Edoome provide a wide range of activities that can be done in class with ESL students, the organising processes differ from each other, sometimes significantly.

Communication through the wall is done in very similar ways in the three platforms. Members write notes in which attachments can be added, and these notes can be 'liked' or 'commented' by other users. The main relevant difference for this common tool is that Schoology permits formatting text (e.g. the user has options to write the text in bold, italics, or underlined, change the font size, or make number lists, among others), while Edmodo and Edoome do not offer these options. The consequence for this is that the updates' appearance is clearer in Schoology than in Edmodo and Edoome. Notwithstanding, it must be remarked that the three platforms enable formatting options for the assignments' instructions.

Attaching files is the aspect where the most significant difference has been found regarding the manner instructors present the activities to the class. As seen, several assignments include photographs for students to make comments on them. Regarding this, the platforms work in three different ways.

Schoology displays all the photographs belonging to a given assignment together and in a small size. If students want to have a closer look at them, they click on them and they are opened in a bigger size. Also, members are given the option of downloading the image.

Figure 18. Display of images in Schoology (1).

Figure 19. Display of attached images in Schoology (2).

Edmodo displays a maximum of three photographs per assignment. Thus, if the assignment consists of four photographs, students are asked to click on the option *Show 1 more attachment*… and then the fourth image is displayed. Images appear in a slightly bigger size than in Schoology.
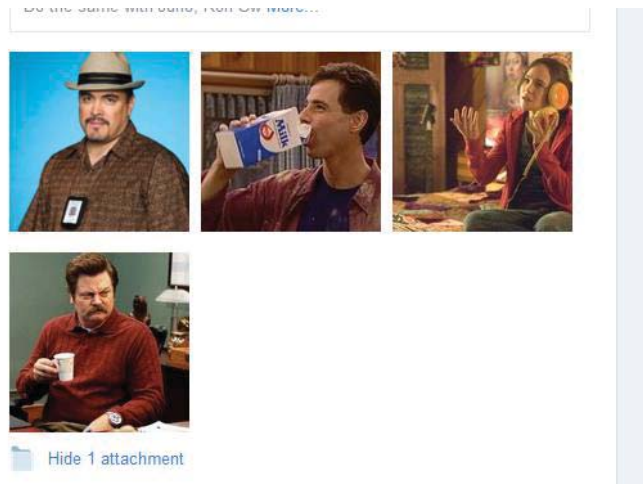

Figure 20. Display of attached images in Edmodo (1).

Figure 21. Display of attached images in Edmodo (2).

With Edoome, photograph attachments are not displayed. Instead, members click on the attachment and download it on their devices. For this reason, on our didactic unit, sometimes in the notes or assignments that included photographs the files were modified in a way that all the images were compiled in the same photograph.
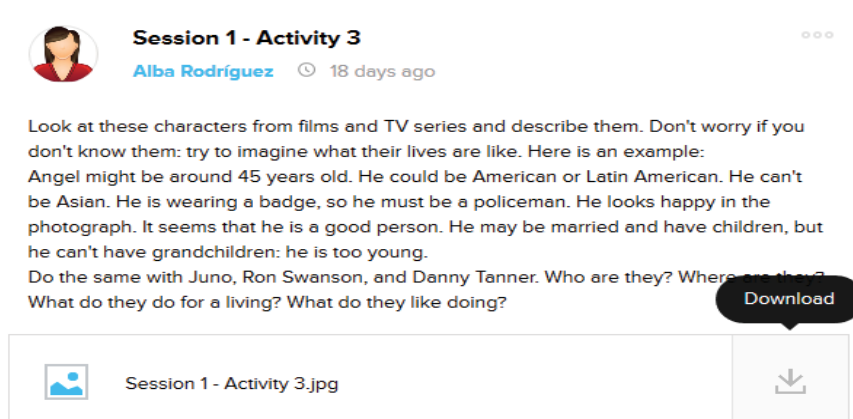

Figure 22. Display of attached images in Edoome.

The consequence for this aspect is not truly relevant for Schoology and Edmodo, though it is quite interesting the fact that Schoology permits downloading the files that instructors attach in assignments; however, the option provided by Edoome is less comfortable, as either the personal computers from the computer laboratory get filled with a big number of downloaded files or the teacher spends more time compiling all photographs in one image.

As for students, the way assignments and quizzes are carried out on the platforms does not bring significant positive or negative effects. The same applies to communication through the wall, as replying comments and 'liking' them function in the same way for

the three social networks. Notwithstanding, the three of them have particular features that might determine the students' preferences should they be given the opportunity to choose the platform they prefer. Undoubtedly, for a teenage student, Edmodo would seem more appealing due to two characteristics: first, the creation and customisation of an avatar, which is likely to attract young learners; secondly, and most importantly, the possibility to participate in games and to compete with other students – from the same school or schools from other cities and countries– through the *Play* section. On the other hand, students may want to benefit from the forum discussions that can be created in Schoology. About Edoome, its simpler interface might appeal younger learners who are not yet accustomed to using virtual social networks.

Special consideration must be taken with regard to the project proposed in our didactic unit: the 'Cinema Club'. As explained before, this group activity takes place during the last minutes of each session, and students are free to use the English language and the educative social network in the way they find most appropriate as long as they complete their task. Learners are required to communicate through the platform so that the teacher can monitor and assess their progress, and communication can be achieved publicly through the wall, but some of the platforms offer other options where the exchange of opinions and ideas can be done in a more intimate way.

In Schoology, students can communicate through private messages, so each of the groups may create a conversation and use it for presenting their plans for the project. These conversations are possible provided the teacher is included in the group (as we have seen that private peer-to-peer message system is not offered by the platform); another possibility in Schoology is for the teacher to create separate discussion forums with each group. These forums would work in the same way as private messages, the only difference being that this can be set so as to be assessed and graded by the teacher, like assignments are.

Edmodo's main distinguishing characteristic plays an important role for group projects, given the fact that it is the only platform where subgroups can be created within a class. In this way, once the groups have been set, the instructor creates and manages the subgroups and students are given a space where they communicate and develop their project without peers from other groups accessing their work.

Edoome, on the contrary, only leaves the option of communicating through the public wall. Without the teacher's support and control, this activity may result in an unneat newsfeed section filled with out-of-context updates dealing with varied topics and long lists of replies on each of them. Even if a protocol for posting notes regarding the project is established, there is still the inconvenience of students reading other classmates' work, which makes it easy for learners to copy their partners' ideas and, at the same time, eliminates the element of surprise (as students are not supposed to know about other groups' solutions until the last session).

The study of the three platforms, together with the implementation of a whole didactic unit into them, reveal that there are three major purposes to their use with teenage students: they allow communication through the newsfeed section and the calendar, so that learners are aware of the main events of the course; they provide a safe place where teachers and students store and share useful resources; and they offer both assignments and tests, which facilitate assessment and grading by teachers. Getting to know these functions and designing a didactic unit with the support of Schoology, Edmodo, and Edoome, has made us consider, on the one hand, that using educative social platforms as the main support for English lessons is, by all means, feasible; on the other hand, it is our belief that, if wished, these virtual networks might substitute other more traditional approaches. The reason why we have reached these conclusions is that we have been able to adapt what could have been a regular didactic unit into a didactic unit based exclusively on social media, helping enhance not only the writing competence but also social interactivity.

Referring to the classification of social networks provided by De Haro (2011), Edoome can be regarded as a *horizontal* network, while Schoology and Edmodo are *vertical*: groups in Edoome are entirely secretive, for students only have access to members from the same group (i.e., their teacher and classmates); however, Schoology and Edmodo, while are based on secret and private courses, are open communities which permit users to get in touch with other teachers or students –via the *Groups* section in Schoology, and the *Communities* section (for teachers) and the *Play* section (for students) in Edmodo–. Despite the fact that horizontal networks are more suitable for educative purposes (De Haro, 2011), we seek to foster virtual social interactivity with our students to help develop writing skills in a greater extent. It is for that reason that we hold the idea that Edoome is not as effective for our purpose than Schoology and Edmodo.

Furthermore, concerning the social interaction issue, we would like to underline that we have found the *Play* section in Edmodo especially appealing. Any student user that enters this application will observe that the community using this function is entirely English based (mostly North American). This way, students can spend part of their free time competing in educative games and, at the same time, collaborating and exchanging comments with native speakers. As a result, they will not only have an entertaining time, but they will also practice their virtual social skills and they will benefit from noticing the use of language by interacting with English native speakers. While it is true that Schoology also offers an open community (through the *Groups* section), it is not as interactive as *Play*. They are useful for sharing information, resources, or opinions, but it must be remembered that entering groups by students in Schoology is quite a limited option, as a code access is required, therefore this fact makes it difficult for learners to access groups created by unknown users.

In addition to the provision of virtual interactivity found in Edmodo, the characteristic related to the creation of subgroups within a class is highly remarkable, as it enables cooperative learning over a neat and clear environment with the appropriate control and assistance by the instructor. Overall, in spite of the fact that the three platforms have proved to be valid for the implementation of English as a Second Language in the classroom, we conclude that Edmodo gathers more elements that facilitate the development of writing skills and of social abilities.

The didactic unit proposed in this dissertation has not been put into practice with a real classroom yet, but we, from the point of view of future Secondary teachers and former students, consider it as an interesting idea which could show different results. Our investigation has found that out of the three platforms, one complies with more suitable features than the others, and it is our firm belief that it would be advantageous to further this research by exploring deeply how different didactic units would work within the three platforms and *real* –rather than virtual– students and teachers.

5. Conclusions

This dissertation has reviewed the subject of social networks and how they can be implemented in the English classroom for developing writing skills. It has been discussed that the use of this type of media can be beneficial for strengthening students' social abilities as well as for encouraging them towards the learning process. Given the fact that social networks are all about communication, we have considered that they must be at least favourable for foreign language learners.

With this idea as our main support, we have designed a didactic unit about cinema and have implemented it in three educative social platforms: Schoology, Edmodo, and Edoome. Among other options, these networks offer teachers the opportunity to be in touch with their students and grade and assess them through online assignments and tests. A fictitious course has been created in each of the platforms and we have uploaded into them all the activities from the didactic unit. This process has resulted in the inevitable study and analysis of the manner with which the activities can be employed in the three platforms, thus assisting us on the decision of which the most appropriate tool for its use in the ESL classroom is.

The selected one has been Edmodo, for it permits communication in a simple and clear way, it offers countless useful resources for instructors and leaners, and it enables plenty of interaction that helps students learn the foreign language while interacting with native English speakers of their age and interests in a secure way. Schoology and Edoome have also proved to be perfectly valid, too, but we have remarked several disadvantages among them –some of them considerably relevant, but most of them insignificant.

Interestingly, a university in Thailand has already carried out a study analysing whether Edmodo enhances writing skills with 25 high school students. The research does not give much information about the type of writing activities performed by the English learners, but it showed that this platform helped improve both the writing competence and the students' motivation (Janpho et al., 2014).

Regrettably, we have not had the chance to put this didactic unit into practice with a real Secondary classroom, so we cannot but consider that our findings and conclusions are incomplete for the time being. Meanwhile, and with the hope of furthering this investigation soon, we would recommend the use of Edmodo in the classroom, but we

also would like to suggest the reader to try Schoology and Edoome too, for a matter of preferences or learning objectives might change the personal view of the three platforms.

6. References

Works cited

About Edmodo. (2016). Retrieved from https://www.edmodo.com/about

About us. (2017). Retrieved from https://www.instagram.com/about/us/

About. (2017). Retrieved from https://www.schoology.com/about

Alcalde, N. (2011). Principales métodos de enseñanza de lenguas extranjeras en Alemania. *Revista De Lingüística Y Lenguas Aplicadas*, *6*, 15-16. doi:10.4995/rlyla.2011.878

Araujo, J.C. (2014). El uso de blogs, wikis y redes sociales en la enseñanza de lenguas. *Revista Electrónica de Tecnología Educativa, 49*, 1-27. doi:10.21556/edutec.2014.49.227

Area, M. (2008). Las redes sociales como espacios para la formación del profesorado. *Razón y palabra*, 13 (63), 2-12. Retrieved from http://www.redalyc.org/articulo.oa?id=199520798005

Blurton, C. (1999). *New Directions of ICT-Use in Education.* Retrieved from http://www.unesco.org/education/educprog/lwf/dl/edict.pdf

Centro de Ayuda de Twitter. (2017). Retrieved from https://support.twitter.com/categories/281#

Christensson, P. (2010). *ICT Definition*. Retrieved from https://techterms.com/definition/ict

De Haro, J.J. (2011). *Redes sociales para la educación*. Madrid: Anaya.

Diomidous, M., Chardalias, K., Magita, A., Koutonias, P., Panagiotopoulou P., AND Mantas, J. (2016). Social and Psychological Effects of the Internet Use. *Acta Informatica Medica, 24 (1), 66-69. doi:*10.5455/aim.2016.24.66-69

Dogoriti, E. (2015). Towards an instructional tool for the teaching of English as a second/foreign language (ESL/EEL) in Higher Education. *ICICTE 2015 Proceedings.* Retrieved from http://www.icicte.org/ICICTE2015Proceedings(Papers)/11.2%20Gogoriti.pdf

Elgg master Documentation. (2013). Retrieved from http://learn.elgg.org/en/stable/

European Comission/EACEA/Eurydice. (2012). *El desarrollo de las competencias clave en el contexto escolar en Europa: desafíos y oportunidades para la política en la materia. Informe de Eurydice.* Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union

Federación de Gremios de Editores de España. (2013). *Hábitos de lectura y compra de libros en España 2012.* Retrieved from http://www.editoresmadrid.org/media/43692/h%C3%A1bitos%20lectura%20a%C3%B1o%202012.pdf

Gómez, S. (2008). Good bye cassette, welcome ICT! Las TICs en la enseñanza de la destreza auditiva en lengua extranjera. In C. Guilarte Martín-Calero (Ed.). *Innovación docente: docencia y TICs* (pp. 409-422). Valladolid: Universidad de Valladolid

Haddad, W.D. (2008). *ICTs for Education: A Reference Handbook.* Retrieved from http://www.ictinedtoolkit.org/usere/p_page.php?section_number=0

Información de la empresa. (2017). Retrieved from https://es.newsroom.fb.com/company-info/

Instituto Nacional de Estadística. (2016). *Encuesta sobre Equipamiento y Uso de Tecnologías de la Información y Comunicación en los Hogares*. [Fact sheet]. Retrieved from http://www.ine.es/ss/Satellite?L=es_ES&c=INESeccion_C&cid=1259925528782&p=1254735110672&pagename=ProductosYServicios%2FPYSLayout

Islas, C. & Carranza, M.R. (2011). Uso de las redes sociales como estrategias de aprendizaje. ¿Transformación educativa? *Apertura, 3* (2), 6-15. doi:10.18381/198

Janpho, J. Chaeturat, C., Multa, D., Harnburut, K, & Kwangsawad, T. (2014). Enhancing English Writing Skill by Using Online Social Network Edmodo. *Journal of Education, Mahasarakham University (Special Issue).* Retrieved from https://edu.msu.ac.th/ncer/fullpaper/paper/N54.pdf

Lai, C. & Kritsonis, W.A. (2006). The Advantages and Disadvantages of Computer Technology in Second Language Acquisition. National Journal for Publishing and Mentoring Doctoral Student Research, 3, (1), 1-6. Retrieved from https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED492159

Ley Orgánica 15/1999, de 13 de diciembre, de Protección de Datos de Carácter Personal. (1999). *Boletín Oficial del Estado*, 298, 42088-43089.

Livingstone, S. (2012). Critical Reflection on the benefits of ICT in education. *Oxford Review of Education*, *38* (1), 9-24. doi: 10.1080/03054985.2011.577938

McPherson, M. (2016). Evolution of Learning Technologies. In N. Rusby & D.W. Surry (Eds.). *The Wiley Handbook of Learning Technology* (pp. 77-95). Chichester: Wiley

Ministerio de Educación, Cultura y Deporte. (2016). *La conexión a Internet en los centros escolares de España está generalizada*. [Press release]. Retrieved from http://www.mecd.gob.es/prensa-mecd/ca/actualidad/2016/08/20160812-internet.html

Muñoz-Miralles, R., Ortega-González, R., Batalla-Martínez, C., López-Morón, M.R., Manresa, J.P., Torán-Monserrat, P. (2014). Access and use of new information and telecommunication technologies among teenagers at high school, health implications. JOITIC Study. *Atención Primaria,* 2, 77-88. doi:10.1016/j.aprim.2013.06.001

Orden EDU/363/2015, de 4 de mayo, por la que se establece el currículo y se regula la implantación, evaluación y desarrollo del bachillerato en la Comunidad de Castilla y León. (2015). *Boletín Oficial de Castilla y León*, 86, 32481-32984.

Pérez, B. (2011). El alcance de la educación multimedia: las redes y la transformación social. *Eticanet*, 10, 1-20. Retrieved from https://dialnet.unirioja.es/descarga/articulo/3702728.pdf

Pressroom. (n.d.). Retrieved from https://myspace.com/pressroom

Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006 on key competences for lifelong learning. (2006). *Official Journal of the European Union*, L394, 10-18.

Riasati, M.J., Allahyar, N. & Tan, K-E. (2012). Technology in Language Education: Benefits and Barriers. *Journal of Education and Practice, 3,* (5), 25-30. Retrieved from http://www.iiste.org/Journals/index.php/JEP/article/view/1495

Schmid, E.C. (2008). Potential pedagogical benefits and drawbacks of multimedia use in the English language classroom equipped with interactive whiteboard technology. *Computers & Education, 51,* (4), 1553-1568. Doi:10.1016/j.compedu.2008.02.005

Smith, K. (August 8, 2016). *96 estadísticas y datos increíbles de las redes sociales para 2016.* [Web log post]. Retrieved from https://www.brandwatch.com/es/2016/08/96-estadisticas-redes-sociales-2016/

Sobre Ning. (2017). Retrieved from https://www.ning.com/es/about-us/

Sobre nosotros. (2017). Retrieved from https://press.linkedin.com/es-es/about-linkedin

Sotomayor, G. (2010). Las redes sociales como entornos de aprendizaje colaborativo mediado para segundas lenguas (L2). *Revista Electrónica de Tecnología Educativa, 34,* 1-16. doi: 10.21556/edutec.2010.34.423

Spruz Website Features. (2016). Retrieved from http://www.spruz.com/?display=Features

The Cocktail Analysis. (2015, December 16). *VII Observatorio Redes Sociales.* [Web log post]. Retrieved from http://tcanalysis.com/blog/posts/vii-observatorio-redes-sociales

The Cocktail Analysis. (2016, December 16). *VIII Observatorio de Redes Sociales.* [Web log post]. Retrieved from http://tcanalysis.com/blog/posts/viii-observatorio-de-redes-sociales

Tinio, V. (2003). *ITC in Education.* Retrieved from http://unpan1.un.org/intradoc/groups/public/documents/unpan/unpan037270.pdf

Tiryakioglu, F. (2011) Use of Social Networks as an Education Tool. *Contemporary Educational Technology, 2* (2), 135-150. Retrieved from http://dergipark.gov.tr/download/article-file/252152

Yunus, M., Salehi, H. and Chenzi, C. (2012). Integrating Social Networking Tools into ESL Writing Classroom: Strengths and Weaknesses. *English Language Teaching, 5*(8), 42-48. doi:10.5539/elt.v5n8p42

Materials used for the didactic unit

1. The video and audio files uploaded to the three platforms derive from the following sources:

Andrew Henderson (2009). *The Shining Trailer.* [Video file]. Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5Cb3ik6zP2I

Dizsturbed (2013). *Forrest Gump – First time Forrest meet Jenny in the school bus (Clip).* [Video file]. Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y3m9dAst7_g

Hamudiz (2011). *Big (1988) – Piano Scene.* [Video file]. Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LzvrzLJxnko

Ian Abrams (2009). *262-01-Lloyd on clock.* [Video file]. Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hr2aj1ibVYE

John Maverick (2015). *SHREK (2001) Scene: "I'm making waffles!"* [Video file]. Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1Gz8d4Kay84

Lad (2016). *Zootopia – Sloth scene car chase.* [Video file]. Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dM-li2Cn5Pw

Movieclips Coming Soon (2012). *The Impossible NEW TRAILER (2012) Ewan McGregor, Naomi Watts Movie HD.* [Video file]. Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bgw394ZKsis

Movieclips Trailer Vault (2014). *Tomorrow Never Dies (1997) Official Trailer – Pierce Brosnan James Bond Movie HD.* [Video file]. Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eqrk7-mx2D0

MoviesHistory (2009). *Toy Story – Official Trailer #1 [1995].* [Video file]. Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KYz2wyBy3kc

MrGajkk (2013). *Indiana Jones – Motorcycle Chase (Full).* [Video file]. Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jIRxsCHViPk

Nathansmoviereviews (2012). *Gladiator trailer.* [Video file]. Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=owK1qxDselE

Paramount Movies (2012). *Mouse Hunt – Trailer*. [Video file]. Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zgjUMHGjO0k

Sk (2011). *Cleaning your braces – From the movie Shorts! (2009)*. [Video file]. Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YC2StC_QXac

Ultimate Woody fan (2015). *Toy story 3 Woody escape Sunnyside*. [Video file]. Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M7ZyluDv3GI

2. The image files uploaded to the platforms come from the following sources:

Angel Batista (n.d.). *Wikipedia, the free encyclopaedia*. Retrieved from http://normasapa.com/como-citar-referenciar-wikipedia-normas-apa/

Batty, R. (2017). *Lo único que Morgan Freeman odia de The Shawshank Redemption y por qué fue un fracaso en taquilla.* Retrieved from https://mundocinefilo.com/lo-unico-morgan-freeman-odia-the-shawshank-redemption-fue-fracaso-taquilla/

Cultura Inquieta. (Octubre 9, 2016). Cinema Paradiso: el montaje de los besos. [Web log post]. Retrieved from http://culturainquieta.com/es/inspiring/item/4626-cinema-paradiso-el-montaje-de-los-besos.html

Dinsmore, J. (2013). *A new perspective on THE SOPRANOS' final scene.* Retrieved from http://hbowatch.com/a-new-perspective-on-the-sopranos-final-scene/

El elenco de The Big Bang Theory sacrifica su sueldo millonario por dos de sus compañeras. (2017). Retrieved from http://www.lanacion.com.ar/1988929-el-elenco-de-the-big-bang-theory-sacrifica-su-sueldo-millonario-por-dos-de-sus-companeras

Garza, T. (2010). *John Morris y Andy: su aventura por Toy Story de la niñez a la edad adulta.* Retrieved from http://checalamovie.net/2010/10/24/john-morris-y-andy-su-aventura-por-toy-story-de-la-ninez-a-la-edad-adulta/

Hobson, R. (January 21, 2015). *Whiplash*. [Web log post]. Retrieved from https://rickysfilmreviews.com/2015/01/24/whiplash/

Howell, K. (2016). *2016 Presidential Election as Told by Ron Swanson.* Retrieved from https://www.theodysseyonline.com/2016-presidential-election-as-told-by-nbcs-ron-swanson

Konow, D. (2013). *The Shining and the Steadicam*. Retrieved from http://www.tested.com/art/movies/457145-shining-and-steadicam/

Kwai, W. (2016). *Top 10 Thai films of 2015*. [Web log post]. Retrieved from http://thaifilmjournal.blogspot.com.es/2016/01/top-10-thai-films-of-2015.html

Madden, S. (August 19, 2015). *This recently discovered deleted 'friends' scene has everyone talking*. [Web log post]. Retrieved from http://blog.peopleschoice.com/2015/08/19/friends-deleted-airport-scene-2001/

Mooney, J. (2013). *The bicycle thieves and Italian neorealism*. Retrieved from https://filmandphilosophy.com/2013/03/08/the-bicycle-thieves-and-italian-neorealism/

Murphy, M. (February 11, 2015). *Composing 'The Theory of Everything'*. [Web log post]. Retrieved from https://carpetbagger.blogs.nytimes.com/2015/02/11/composing-the-theory-of-everything/?_r=0

Scene Magazine. (2014). *Interstellar Trailer – Scene TV*. [Video file]. Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CDx-7Ae3CSA

Sidea, A. (2010). *The Godfather: Morality, in all its contradictions*. [Web log post]. Retrieved from https://andrewsidea.wordpress.com/2010/10/02/the-godfather-morality-in-all-its-contradictions/

Taylor, L. (n.d.). *13 things to know about 1994 best picture winner, 'Forrest Gump'*. Retrieved from https://www.phactual.com/13-things-to-know-about-1994-best-picture-winner-forrest-gump/

Tech. (2008). *Oscar Worthy Gadgets: Juno's Hamburguer Phone*. Retrieved from https://www.popsugar.com/tech/Oscar-Worthy-Gadgets-Juno-Hamburger-Phone-1047574

The German Movies (n.d.). Retrieved from http://www.sound-of-music.com/sound-of-music/the-movie/

The Holiday 2006 (n.d.). Retrieved from https://yifymovie.re/movie/the-holiday-2006-720p/

The Trouble with Danny (n.d.). *The Full House Wiki.* Retrieved from
http://fullhouse.wikia.com/wiki/The_Trouble_with_Danny

3. The worksheets designed for the activities 2 and 3 in session 4 are based on the following sources:

Boyhood (n.d.). Retrieved from https://www.filmaffinity.com/en/film175667.html

Film review (n.d.). Retrieved from http://learnenglishteens.britishcouncil.org/skills/writing-skills-practice/film-review

7. Annexes

Annex 1

Session 2. Activity 3. Model text and worksheet.

The teacher hands out the example cut-out to all the groups and one of the cut-outs to each group:

EXAMPLE: E.T.

Year: 1982.
Director: Steven Spielberg.
Protagonist: A boy named Elliot and an alien.
Plot: Boy finds alien. Boy hides alien. Alien gets sick.

This 1982 film directed by Steven Spielberg tells the story of a boy named Elliot who finds an alien in his garden. Elliot calls the alien E.T. and hides it at home. But E.T. wants to return to its planet and gets sick. Can you guess this film's genre?

Possible answers:
a) It can't be a romantic comedy.
b) It might be a cartoon film.
c) It must be science-fiction film.
d) It looks like it is a drama film.

GROUP 1: The Notebook.

Year: 2004.
Director: Nick Cassavetes.
Protagonist: Noah and Allie.
Plot: Allie meets Noah. They fall in love. Allie is rich. Noah is poor.

GROUP 2: Coneheads.

Year: 1993.
Director: Steve Barron.
Protagonist: Beldar and Prymaat.
Plot: Two aliens land on planet Earth. They are secret agents. Life is different on planet Earth. Difficulties.

GROUP 3: The Conjuring

Year: 2013.
Director: James Wan.
Protagonist: The Perron family.
Plot: A family moves to a beautiful house. The family's dog doesn't want to come into the house. Strange things happen. They are frightened.

GROUP 4: Camp Rock

Year: 2008.
Director: Matthew Diamond.
Protagonist: Mitchie and Shane.
Plot: Mitchie wants to be a singer. Mitchie goes to Camp Rock. Shane is a singer in Camp Rock. Mitchie meets Shane.

GROUP 5: Titanic.

Year: 1997.
Director: James Cameron.
Protagonist: Rose and Jack.
Plot: Rose and Jack meet in a big luxury ship. Rose is rich. Jack is poor. The ship crashes into an iceberg.

GROUP 6: Up

Year: 2009.
Director: Pete Docter.
Protagonist: Carl and Russel.
Plot: Carl is going to lose his home. Carl ties house with balloons. Russell is in the house. They fly up in the sky.

GROUP 7: Home Alone

Year: 1990.
Director: Chris Colombus.
Protagonist: Kevin.
Plot: Christmas. Kevin's family go on holiday. Kevin is alone. A thief tries to break into the house.

GROUP 8: Hachi: A Dog's Tale

Year: 2009.
Director: Lesse Hallström.
Protagonist: Professor Parker and Hachi.
Plot: A professor finds a dog. They become friends. They spend time together. The professor dies.

Annex 2

Session 4. Activity 2. Sample review

Read the following film review[3]. Focus on the words and phrases in **bold**.

Boyhood

Drama, childhood, adolescence. 2014

Boyhood is **about** the life of Mason from ages 6 to 18. He lives in Texas with his single mother and his sister. **It describes** Mason's troubles with his family, schools, and friendships. **The film is set** in the United States and it starts in 2002.

I **love** the acting of this film. Ellar Coltrane and Ethan Hawke **star as** Mason, and Lorelei Linklater **plays the role of** Mason's sister, Samantha. **My favourite character is** Mason **because** he is very kind and clever. I like this film because its production is very original: it began in 2002 and finished in 2013.

I think this is an ideal film for teenagers. It is a bit sad at times but there are also lots of good moments. **You should watch it if** you love drama films. I give Boyhood ****. **Go and watch it soon**!

***** Fantastic!
**** Really good!
*** OK
** Bad
* Terrible

1. Does the review cover any of these issues?

1. title
2. genre
3. plot
4. setting (when and where)
5. stars
6. main characters
7. favourite character and why
8. who would like this film

2. Have you watched this film? If so, did you enjoy it?

---

[3] Adapted from http://learnenglishteens.britishcouncil.org/skills/writing-skills-practice/film-review

Annex 3

Session 4. Activity 3. Instructions and tips for writing a review

---

Follow the steps below to write your own film review. [4]

1. Think of a film you have watched and enjoyed.

2. Make notes for each of the 8 issues in activity 2.

3. Write your own review using your notes and the model text (*Boyhood*). Use some of the remarked words and phrases.

Remember:

- Write the title, genre, and year of the film.

- Explain the film's story, but don't explain how it ends.

- Give your opinion of the film.

- Say if people should go and watch the film.

You can add a frame from the film.

When you have finished, check your classmates' reviews. Have you watched that movie? If so, did you like it? Why? If not, would you like to watch it? Why?

---

[4] Adapted from http://learnenglishteens.britishcouncil.org/skills/writing-skills-practice/film-review

Annex 4

Session 5. Activity 2. List of films

The teacher cuts out the lists of films and hands them out to the corresponding groups.

Groups 1 and 3	Groups 2 and 4
The Lion King Mary Poppins E.T. Casablanca Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade	Peter Pan Slumdog Millionaire Charlie and the Chocolate Factory Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone Devil Wears Prada
Groups 5 and 7	Groups 6 and 8
The Jungle Book Star Wars Frozen James Bond: Die Another Day Home Alone	The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring The Wolf of Wall Street Four Weddings and a Funeral Shrek The Hunger Games

Annex 5

Session 6. Activity 2. Final quiz (part 1)

The following screenshots are samples of the final quiz (part 1) in the three platforms:
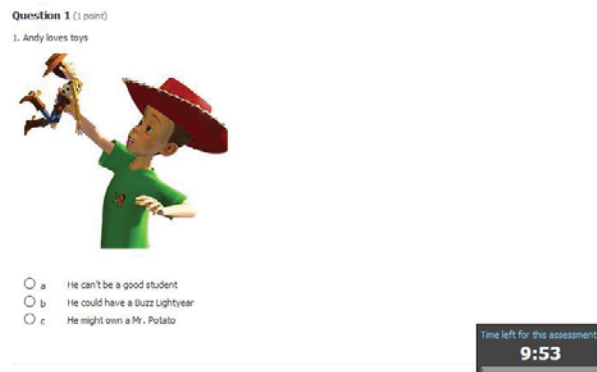

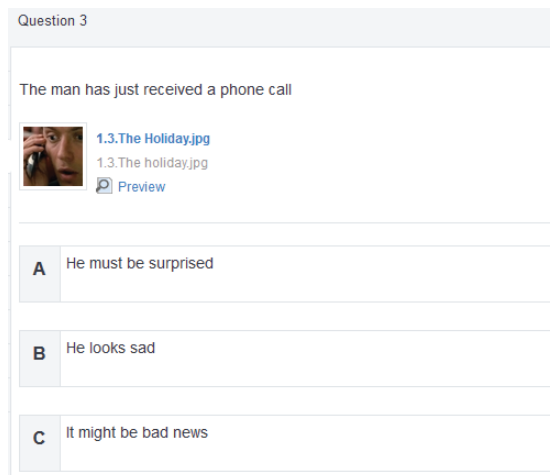Figure 23. A question from the Final Quiz (part 1) in Schoology.

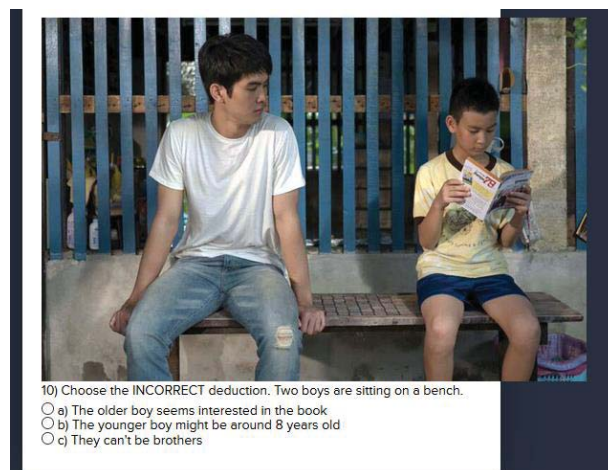Figure 24. A question from the Final Quiz (part 1) in Edmodo.

Figure 25. A question from the Final Quiz (part 1) in Edoome.

Annex 6

Session 6. Activity 3. Final quiz (part 2)

The following screenshots are samples of the final quiz (part 2) in the three platforms:

Figure 26. A question from the Final Quiz (part 2) in Schoology.
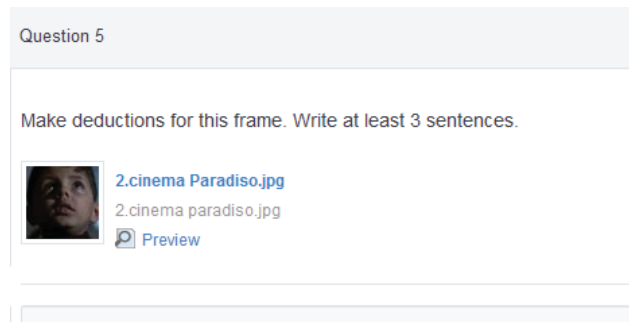

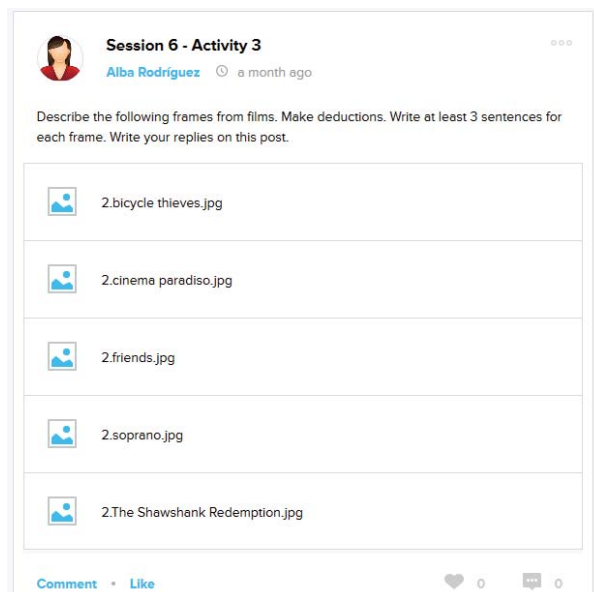Figure 27. A question from the Final Quiz (part 2) in Schoology.

Figure 28. A question from the Final Quiz (part 2) in Schoology.